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Narratives of Belonging: Experiences of Learning and Using Welsh of Adult “New Speakers” in North West Wales

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Narratives of Belonging: Experiences of Learning and Using Welsh of Adult “New Speakers” in North West Wales

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Sociology and Social Policy

School of History, Philosophy and Social Sciences

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Abstract

Recent changes in approaches to second language learning have meant that learning is increasingly seen as a social, rather than an individual activity, which involves negotiating membership of a new language community as well as technical mastery of the language. At the same time, the use of language as a boundary between different social and national groups means that aspiring “new speakers” may face challenges to their legitimacy. This may be the case when minority language speakers seek acceptance by a majority language community, but contestation may also be experienced when the membership sought is of a minority language group whose language is under threat.

Relatively few studies, and very few using a social identity approach, have been carried out in Wales, where the social context may be particularly difficult for new speakers given historical contestations between the minority and majority languages, especially since many aspiring new speakers speak the majority language. Most existing studies have investigated the barriers faced by “Welsh learners” but not the continuing negotiation of identities as previous learners seek to become new speakers of Welsh, or how the trajectories undergone may vary according to initial social position and setting.

The present study, carried out in North West Wales between 2015 and 2019, takes a biographical narrative approach with the aim of tracing how Welsh speaking identities are negotiated through time and in different social spaces. A purposive sample of 24 current and previous learners, several of whom also kept language diaries, were interviewed over 2015 and 2016. The data was analysed using a narrative ethnography approach (Gubrium and Holstein 2009) to map out how identities were negotiated in the various dimensions within which the narrative is framed – prior dispositions, life course orientations, close relationships, the Welsh class, wider community, and workplace. Trajectories were seen to be shaped by interaction between these different dimensions, with cultural capital, life course orientation, and social setting exercising a strong influence on participant experiences and on the speaker position negotiated. Interactions in the Welsh class were sometimes seen to be impacted by the external social context, rather than always being carried out in a

protected “safe space”. Participants had choices regarding how to position themselves on encountering challenges to their legitimacy, which were particularly overt in “high stakes” situations such as civic participation or working through the medium of Welsh.

As an alternative to typologies which categorise speakers according to the level of competence achieved, for example “non speaker” or “semi speaker”, a more complex six-part typology has been devised using Weber’s construction of “ideal types”, with the aim of differentiating between and fully describing the varying “speaker trajectories” experienced by participants.

Finally, the implications of the findings for Welsh for Adults provision and Welsh language policy are discussed. It is argued that language policy needs to be re-conceptualised to factor in new speakers at unofficial as well as official, micro as well as macro levels.

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Yr wyf drwy hyn yn datgan mai canlyniad fy ymchwil fy hun yw'r thesis hwn, ac eithrio lle nodir yn wahanol. Caiff ffynonellau eraill eu cydnabod gan droednodiadau yn rhoi cyfeiriadau eglur. Nid yw sylwedd y gwaith hwn wedi cael ei dderbyn o'r blaen ar gyfer unrhyw radd, ac nid yw'n cael ei gyflwyno ar yr un pryd mewn ymgeisiaeth am unrhyw radd oni bai ei fod, fel y cytunwyd gan y Brifysgol, am gymwysterau deuol cymeradwy.

I hereby declare that this thesis is the results of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. All other sources are acknowledged by bibliographic references. This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree unless, as agreed by the University, for approved dual awards.

Introduction

The question of how membership of political communities is established is of supreme importance in the current globalised world. The question is, of course, linked to the epistemological question of the nature of social identity. Epistemologically, our view of how we relate to and come to know the social world has currently shifted from one where identities are determined by the social structures within which we interact with one another and the social world, to one where identities are more freely constructed (Giddens 1990). At the same time, this greater freedom has been accompanied by an increasing number of power struggles over who is entitled to allocate membership of social categories (Yuval-Davis 2011).

Given the salience of language as a badge of social identity (Bourdieu 1991, Anderson 2006) and the increasing frequency of migration and therefore the need to acquire new languages, the question of whether, and to what extent, individuals can become members of new language communities assumes an important place in these debates. This is evidenced by the coining of the concept of the “new speaker”, and the publication of an increasing number of “new speaker” studies, as discussed in Chapter 2. This thesis poses the above questions in the context of contemporary North West Wales.

As the narrative has been viewed as the means through which social actors weave macro level cultural resources into the fabric of individual, micro level identities (Martin-Jones et al. 2012), a narrative approach has been taken to providing the answers. It is through language that linguistic identities are constituted. Imagining and executing the research therefore also forms part of my own life narrative. In the paragraphs which follow, I have written the narrative of how the themes of cultural and linguistic identity running through my life came to be woven into the research process.

I was born in Devon, and was to be called Fiona, until my Scottish mother heard the way (“Feeaaawna”) the name was pronounced by my English grandmother. My father came up with “Irene”, inspired by the song “Goodnight Irene” popular at the time; my mother re-negotiated this to “Eileen”, which was at least Irish if not Scottish. It was my first experience of how key a tool language is in establishing links between individuals and whatever social groups may wish to lay a claim to them.

My second language lesson was learned at school, where the ridicule my English surname of "Mewse" attracted from classmates named Campbell, MacKinlay, MacAlpine, MacArthur or MacSporran, showed me how language could become a badge of *not* belonging. Later, I learned French, lived in France for a year, and came back to Scotland feeling that I had grown a new, different, French speaking self, which showed that I could own a linguistic identity as well as being owned by it.

It was not until much later, however, when I moved to Wales and learned a minority language, that I fully appreciated how closely language, sense of self, and the different social constructions which lie beyond and beneath them, were bound together; and how the whole construction could morph and change in response to shifting balances of power. In North West Wales, Welsh speaking encounters were nested within wider constructions of identity, at the level of community, region, nation, where the survival of the language was key to the self-definition of the shrinking group of people who spoke it, with the threat to survival coming from "non-speakers". I felt caught up in the middle of these contestations. More Welsh speakers were required, but could I ever balance the Welsh speaking self I wanted to become with the "sort of half Welsh, half Scottish" self other people thought I could be? Was I part of the solution, or part of the problem?

It was this personal experience of the complex power dynamic underlying the relationship between language and identity which gave rise to a desire to master the academic language which would enable me to fully understand it, and eventually to the writing of this thesis. Issues around the relationship between the individual and wider social constructions such as community, region, and nation, were explored in the "Researching Community" module of the Masters in Sociology and Social Policy course I followed from 2012 to 2013; the Research Methodology module explored issues of researcher positionality, an important underpinning theme of the thesis. Neither of these modules fully explored the role of language in the construction of identity, and in the literature review stages of the research, I was faced with learning a new language, the language of sociolinguistics. Sociology and Sociolinguistics constructed the process of acquiring a new linguistic identity in different ways; attempting to reconcile the two felt similar in many ways to attempting to reconcile my Welsh speaking and non Welsh speaking selves. The thesis which emerged

incorporates themes and perspectives from both disciplines, as can be seen in the structural description which follows.

The Thesis Structure

The thesis falls into three main parts. The first part (Chapters One and Two) reviews the Sociological and Sociolinguistics literature to establish the contextual and conceptual background to the study. The second part (Chapters Three through Seven) reports on the empirical findings. The third part (Chapter Eight) discusses the policy implications of the study and pulls the different strands of the research together.

Chapter One discusses the various social contexts in which second languages are learned, first in general and then in the Welsh context. These include the relationship between languages and the social groups which speak them, and, importantly, whether an essentialist or a constructivist view is taken of this relationship. In the minority language context, essentialist or constructivist epistemologies may influence the orientation of language revitalisation policies towards non-members of the minority linguistic group who attempt to learn the minority language.

Chapter Two reviews how constructivist versus essentialist epistemologies are reflected in the literature of second language learning, tracing the move from views of linguistic competence as intrinsic to specific national groups, towards the view that learning is possible but varies according to individual characteristics, and then to a view of learning as situated not within the individual, but within the social context within which the language is learned. This more constructivist view of linguistic identity opens up the possibility of being recognised as a “new speaker” of the target language. Existing studies of individuals learning Welsh are reviewed in terms of what light they throw on the process of becoming a “new speaker of Welsh”.

Chapter Three discusses the research methods, with particular emphasis on the influence of epistemological orientation on the choice of setting, sample, and methods of data collection and analysis. A symbolic interactionist perspective is taken on the negotiation of linguistic identities. At the same time, a broadly poststructuralist view is taken of the interaction between macro and micro dimensions involved in negotiation. Biographical narrative interviews have been selected as the most appropriate method of accommodating both perspectives.

Chapters Four through Seven analyse the process of identity negotiation, which has been viewed as a dynamic process, progressing through starting points, turning points and endpoints, and taking place simultaneously within different dimensions – close relationships, interaction in public spaces, the Welsh class, community activities, the workplace (Gubrium and Holstein 2009). Chapter Four analyses how the process started, Chapters Five and Six how it progressed, and Chapter Seven discusses the eventual outcome.

Chapter Four lays the conceptual foundation for the negotiation of linguistic identities. The prior dispositions acquired during participants' primary socialisation, along with their orientations towards the experience of coming to Wales and learning Welsh, are seen as key influences on the nature of participants' initial contact with the Welsh language community, and on the extent and direction of their subsequent linguistic trajectories.

Chapter Five analyses how, following initial contact, participants proceeded to negotiate identities in the dimensions "closest to home", and how trajectories diverged increasingly depending on cultural capital, life course orientation, and geographical location. Chapter Six traces the process through the dimensions further away from the social individual – the Welsh class, interactions in public spaces, community activities and the workplace.

Chapter Seven proposes a typology of "new speakers of Welsh in North West Wales" based on Weber's construction of ideal types. The typology identifies commonalities and differences in relationships with the language community across the different dimensions, and through the starting points, turning points, and endpoints, to generate a multidimensional description of the differing relationships attained at the point of data collection.

Chapter Eight discusses what light the research throws on the current relationship of "new speakers" to the Welsh language community in North West Wales, including positioning in relation to language revitalisation policy, and how policies and relationships might be re-constructed.

1. What Welsh Speaking Future?

Introduction

C. Wright Mills (1967) famously wrote that social science is about turning personal troubles into public issues. I think it is therefore worthwhile for me to devote the opening section of the chapter to describing how my personal experience of learning Welsh led me to theoretical reflection on the “public issues” this might involve. The fact that the “subjective unease” mentioned in the preamble seemed to be shared by a number of my Welsh learning acquaintances led me, first of all, to believe that this was indeed a social, rather than a purely personal phenomenon, and that it raised a number of interesting questions about languages and the people who speak them. I had been led to believe that, on moving to North West Wales, to be “on the side of the angels”, I had to learn Welsh. This was because Welsh was a minority language which deserved to emerge from the suppression it had suffered through the centuries; and by learning Welsh I would be added to the recorded number of “speakers”, and therefore help with the rescue effort. However, the reaction I experienced from a few Welsh speaking people – that my attempts to speak Welsh were unexpected and somehow illegitimate - led me to question the value of my learning. It was only years later that I found my own experience reflected in the literature, in a quote from Fiona Bowie’s work (1993): “I don’t know why they bother – they can never *be* Welsh!”

The implication that individuals who are “not Welsh” might be thought not to be able to contribute to language revitalisation, while on the other hand being encouraged to learn the language, highlights the extreme complexity of language revitalisation issues. Even the Census figures (Welsh Government 2011) indicating that the overall numbers of Welsh speakers have fallen from 582,000 in 2001 to 562,000 in 2011 are not simple to interpret. In the first place, they are based on a subjective, and therefore possibly inaccurate, estimation of ability. Secondly, what is measured, namely the ability to speak, understand, read and/or write Welsh, is debateable as an accurate indicator of the state of the language. Level of use is possibly a more realistic measure; this is the view taken in recent official reports (Welsh Government 2012), but though it may be a realistic measure, usage is difficult to gauge. Thirdly, even when measured, level of usage alone does not indicate why the language is not used; this may occur

because of various social barriers or because those individuals who could use the language have moved out of Wales (Hywel M.Jones 2010).

The difficulties above demonstrate that language revitalisation is complex primarily because language is always used within a particular social context. In considering why, although having the numerical potential to swell the number of “Welsh speakers” (statistical data (Welsh Government 2013) record individuals learning Welsh in 2011/2 as numbering 18,050), Welsh learners might be thought not able to contribute to revitalising the language, it is therefore necessary to consider the social context within which use of the Welsh language is framed. This social context will encompass the relationship between languages and the social groups, or “speech communities”, which speak them, and of how individuals come to be regarded as belonging, or not, to these social groups. This relationship will in turn inevitably involve the set of beliefs about appropriate language practice which the speech community shares (Spolsky 2004, 14). In the case of “national languages”, like Welsh, these may include beliefs about the concept of “the nation” and who belongs to it. Use of the language is framed within the context of the nexus of social relationships through which theories of minority languages revitalisation are generated. The first chapter of the thesis will consider how these social contexts may impact on the way individuals learning Welsh have been, and are currently, construed by and within the Welsh language community.

The first of these contexts, the relationship between social groups, language, and nation, and how recent epistemological shifts have changed the way in which these relationships are viewed, will be discussed in the next section. Secondly, the social and epistemological context of language revitalisation, and how this may specifically affect “new speakers” of the minority language, will be addressed. The focus will then move to how these factors play out within Wales; the complex relationship, in the Welsh context, between social groups, language and nation; the decline and revitalisation of the Welsh language, with emphasis on the epistemological assumptions underpinning language policy; how the above factors affect new speakers of Welsh; and finally, the need for re-evaluation and re-conceptualisation. Since these are all wide topics on which substantial amounts of literature exist, they will be reviewed briefly rather than comprehensively, with a view to extracting their relevance to the present discussion.

Relationships between Social Groups, “Ethnicity”, Language, and the Nation

In analysing the Welsh social context, given that Welsh is an “official” language, account needs to be taken of how membership of social groups, the language spoken by these groups, and the concept of “the nation”, may be linked. “The nation” has traditionally been seen as composed of people who feel they belong together, united by a sense of social solidarity and collective identity, or “ethnicity”; with the caveat that, although held together by feelings of communality, nations also define the legislative and political frameworks governing the collective lives of their members: they are “*units of social organisation* which consist of members who define themselves, or are defined, by a sense of common historical origins that may include religious beliefs, a similar language, or a shared culture” (Stone and Piya 2007). Views differ, firstly, as to the exact nature of these collective ties – whether they can only be conferred via the “congruities of blood, speech, custom, and so on” which stem from “being born into a particular...community” (Geertz 1973, 259), or whether less “primordial” forms of attachment are possible. Calhoun (1993, 231) cites Barth as viewing ethnicity in terms of “the existence of recognised group boundaries ...an ethnic group is simply a bounded set of individuals, not necessarily characterised by any internal pattern of relationships, much less one of kinship or descent”. “Ethnicity” is clearly a contested concept. Secondly, views differ as to whether ethnic ties create, or are alternatively created by, the nation. Among those viewing these “ethnic ties” as pre-dating the nation, is Smith (1986), who views the formation of the nation as dependent on “the persistence of myths, memories, symbols and customs associated with the dominant ethnic” (Day and Thompson 2004, 68). The importance of territoriality for the development of collective ties has been emphasised, with Smith (1991, 13) defining nations as “territorially bounded units of population”.

Alternatively, the “more modern” nation is viewed as having been formed on the basis not of pre-existing cultural ties, but of the needs of industrialism. Industry required “the erosion of the multiple petty binding local organisations and their replacement by mobile, anonymous, literate, identity-conferring cultures” (Gellner 1983, 86). Culture, according to this view, does not create the nation, but is created by it; however, it still constitutes a means by which individuals feel themselves to collectively belong to national entities, and to share similarities with others who inhabit it. Subscribers to the view that ethnic ties create the nation tend towards an essentialist view of such ties as

intrinsic to particular social groups, and therefore not easily acquired by non-members of the group, and those who view the nation as creating culture towards a more constructivist view of culture as flexible and acquirable. Essentialist and constructivist interpretations of national belonging therefore differ as to how easy collective identities are to acquire.

Belonging to the nation and to particular ethnic groups may conflict, particularly where national collectivities contain more than one such group, leading to power struggles and allegations of non-inclusivity (Kymlicka 1996). From the eighteenth century on, with the advent of the French Revolution and the American Declaration of Independence, the principle of nationhood as based on democracy and consensus is established (Chaliand 1989). Membership of the nation is seen as being acquired not through ethnic belonging (ethnic nationalism), but simply through birth or residence in the national territory, without any sense of communality other than that of being subject to the same laws and form of government (civic nationalism – or sometimes, “geographic nationalism” (Kohn 1968). The forms of attachment which connect members to the two kinds of collectivity are viewed as fundamentally different. In the former case, “an individual’s deepest attachments are inherited, not chosen” (Ignatieff 1993, 4), whereas in the latter “what holds a society together is not common roots but law...national belonging can be a form of rational attachment”. These two forms of attachment may be taken as roughly equating to the “Gesellschaft” and “Gemeinschaft” (“community” and “society”) mentioned by Tönnies (1955). While civic, as opposed to ethnic nationalism, has been viewed as conveying a more inclusive form of belonging (Rawls 1971), it has also been viewed as antithetical to “affectual” or “subjective” attachments (Weber 1968, 4), and, in contexts where minority cultures perceive themselves as under threat, as undermining the rights of such cultures to self-expression (Kymlicka op. cit., May 2012).

In terms of where national languages fit into the conceptual framework within which “the nation” is constructed, language may be seen as a key “marker of ethnicity” (Fishman 1991), and as an important means of consolidating collective ties, with social groups who share the same language sharing common ways of feeling, thinking, and viewing the world. Language is not the only “badge of ethnicity” possible – as Crystal (2000, 121) notes:- “...people in an indigenous community (may) believe that they are part of that community even though they do not speak its ancestral language, and

(may) manifest their sense of identity in other choices they make in their appearance and behaviour". As is the case with cultural ties in general, opinions differ as to whether language creates, or is created by, the nation; language can be viewed as intrinsic to particular social groups; a language associated with a particular culture "is...best able to name the artefacts, and to formulate or express the interests, values and world-view of that culture" (ibid. 21).

Alternatively, language may be viewed as a key instrument of nation-building (Anderson 2006), with the invention of print enabling populations to become aware of the others in their particular language-field, thereby creating national consciousness, and by the same token nationally imagined communities. As with debates over cultural ties in general, the former interpretation tends towards essentialism, and therefore perhaps towards a more exclusive view of national languages as "belonging" to particular national groups; and the latter towards constructivism, and a more "inclusive" view of membership and belonging. The question of how national languages are acquired and that of how membership of national groups is established can be seen to be closely connected, and the competing interpretations of how both occur to be allied to competing "takes" on the social world. How group membership is conceived at national level has implications for the extent to which, at micro level, the social individual is recognised as meriting legitimate access to the national language. Exactly how collective and individual linguistic identities may interact is discussed in the next section.

The Decline of Traditional Collective Identifications and the Rise of "Free Floating Identities"

The debates on nationhood discussed above are very much focussed on the collective entities known as "nations"; how they are formed and how individuals come to belong to them. From the latter half of the twentieth century onwards, in parallel with the transformations concomitant to globalisation, and the breaking up of the "old" structures of national states and communities within which identities were generally framed (Giddens 1990), scholarly attention has increasingly focussed less on collective entities, and more on the social individual, and on how individual and collective identities are constructed by and within social practice (Jenkins 2014). Categories which were formerly regarded as fixed and immutable – gender, social

class, “race”, ethnicity, and nationality – are increasingly regarded as fluid and subject to change. Attention therefore moves from what constitutes “the nation” to the mechanics of how the social individual constructs individual and collective identity and belonging.

Constructivist accounts of both individual and collective identities describe a dialectical process involving both “internal” and “external” dimensions:- “how we identify ourselves, how others identify us, and the ongoing interplay of these in processes of social identification” (Jenkins 2000, 7). Both individual and collective identities are constructed during interaction; however they are distinguishable in that individual identities emphasise difference, while collective identities are weighted towards similarity (Jenkins 2014, 85). The process through which collective similarities are established is described in many constructivist accounts as one involving the construction of symbolic boundaries (Barth 1969, Cohen 1985), which are not fixed and immutable, but which can change and evolve over time. Cohen particularly emphasises the importance of language as a symbolic boundary of this nature. If language is a moveable boundary, whose limits can be reconfigured over time, the social groups viewed as constituting the “language community” can surely by implication also be reconfigured and reclassified.

Also viewing sociolinguistic groups as reconfigurable, but from a socio-psychological rather than a sociological perspective, is Tajfel’s influential “social identity” theory (Tajfel 1974), which emphasises the importance of what happens when groups meet face-to-face, “in-groups” viewing themselves as having a common cultural and/or ethnic identity using language as a strategic device to maintain the integrity of that identity, and excluding non-members of the group (the “out-group”). Such moves to include or exclude may involve a certain amount of negotiation and movement between groups. Although constructivist in nature, such accounts – which are discussed more fully in the next chapter - have been criticised for their emphasis on face-to-face contact, and their consequent failure to take account of “the encounter between the internal and the external, the individual and institutional orders, which defines what is truly “social” in the process of group interaction” (Jenkins 2014, 46).

These various constructivist descriptions of the drawing up of new linguistic boundaries, although they may differ, concur in questioning the existence of an

immutable link between nation, ethnic group, and language. This means that different languages may be accommodated within the nation; in the post-national world “the linguistic ideologies of the past, based on standard monolingualism, are losing their legitimacy, and a post-national linguistic order is emerging” (Pujolar 2007, 90) ; but also that, given this new, more dynamic conception of culture and language (May 2001), the boundaries which separate different language communities are permeable and subject to change

The drawing up of new boundaries is seen as a complex process involving interplay between individual and collective dimensions. This complexity means that boundary negotiation may not occur without contestation. Collective identifications ultimately depend on the ability of individuals to recognise who else is a member or non-member of “their” social group, based on characteristics which determine how they should be “categorised” (Jenkins 2014). Such characteristics, and the ability of individuals to recognise them, although socially constructed, may be physically embodied, examples being gender, “race”, age, and, in the case of language, perhaps also accent. Physical embodiment may limit the scope for negotiation, revision and change (ibid. 129); obtaining recognition for an “internally” experienced identity which is different from the “external” identity perceived by others may involve struggle. Identities constructed during early interaction between the individual and the external world may be internalised, resulting in a set of internally experienced characteristics - the Bourdieusian concept of “habitus” (Maton 2102) – which may be difficult for the individual to reconstruct, let alone for others to recognise.

In the internal/external dialectic through which identities are negotiated, power relationships may also play a part. The fluidity associated with the breaking down of established structures has been regarded as leading to power struggles over who is entitled to allocate membership of social categories: “cultural stuff needs to be described as a rich resource....which is used selectively by different social agents in various social projects.... gender, class, membership in a collectivity, stage in the life cycle, ability – all affect the access and availability of these resources and the specific positionings from which they are being used” (Yuval-Davis 2011, 43). The concept of differential power relationships is also fundamental to Bourdieu’s view of how identities are constructed, with some forms of “habitus” being allocated greater value than others, and the process of negotiating new social positions dependent on the

acquisition of more bargaining power or “capital”. Language plays a key role in terms of both allocation of value and acquisition of capital, being viewed as fundamental to the value allocated to the social individual (Bourdieu 1991), and to the exercise of symbolic power by dominant social groups; some forms of language, at collective level, attract greater value than others. As language forms part of Bourdieusian “habitus”, it is susceptible to gradual change (ibid.); acquiring new forms of language, although perhaps difficult both internally and externally, can therefore constitute an important element in the acquisition of more capital and of new forms of identification.

Individual linguistic identities are, therefore, capable of being changed, although not without struggle and contestation, as the negotiation of new linguistic boundaries involves complex interplay between the individual and the collective, with ever-shifting balances and imbalances of power.

Social and Epistemological Context of Language Revitalisation

The context within which membership of the language group is negotiated may be particularly fraught if the language in question is a threatened one. In minority language contexts, complex interplays may be at work between language, ethnicity, concepts of nationhood, and constructions of power. The revitalisation of threatened languages has been associated with the reassertion of minority identities following the decline of the traditional nation-state, and their liberation from a repressive process whereby “with the aid of national education systems, a monolingual culture, and social welfare programmes, the nation state consolidated around an internally homogenised population” (Grenoble and Whaley 2006, 2). However, civic constructions of nationhood may envisage any assertion of ethnicity, even on the part of a previously oppressed group, as excluding individuals not deemed to “belong” to the group. Attempts to revitalise the minority language by reinforcing the identity of the ethnolinguistic group which speaks it may be associated with essentialist definitions of group identity, and to thereby exclude individuals who are not viewed as members of the group in question. Such perceived exclusions may particularly affect individuals who aspire to be recognised as “speakers” of the language, but who not only do not originate from the group in question, but also speak a “majority language” from which the threat to the minority language is seen to come.

This arguably essentialist underpinning of language revitalisation initiatives is discernible in some scholarly accounts of what happens in situations of language contact, and in the ways in which these accounts have been translated into policy interventions. Contact between language groups has been traditionally viewed as leading inevitably, given certain demographic scenarios, particularly the increasing demographic density of majority language speakers, to “language shift”, or replacement of the minority by the majority language (Gunther 2000, 242). Gunther cites the demise of Cornish, Alderney Norman French, and Manx, as evidence of this claim. At the root of such instances of language death is the failure of intergenerational transmission, where the language is not passed on within the family. This operates as follows:- “this (second) generation are native speakers of the old language, but during the course of their life, they learn to understand the new language, and to speak it to some extent. They are bilingual, but their competence in the new language is influenced by the old, the latter is seen as a barrier to social advancement; their generation do not, therefore, pass it on to their children”; then:- “this (third) generation are native speakers of the new language, but they grew up to understand the old language, because they hear their grandparents using it to each other and their parents. They are bilingual, but their competence in the old language is influenced by the new”; and eventually:- “this (fourth) generation speaks only the new language”.

The majority language threat is viewed as being counteractable by means of “diglossia”, or the creation of a “breathing space” within which the minority language can be spoken without “interference” from the majority language. The two languages are used in separate contexts, the more powerful majority language being designated the “high” language, generally reserved for formal situations, for example in educational, religious and government institutions and the mass media; the less powerful minority language, designated the “low” language (Ferguson 1959), is acquired at home and used in familial and familiar interactions. Assuring that the “low” language remains the language of the family ensures that intergenerational transmission takes place. This model has been viewed as typifying the respective use of English and Welsh during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Aitchison and Carter 2000), reflecting a view of Wales as subject to English hegemonic power; although it has been pointed out that a “high” Welsh also existed, and continued to be used in Welsh literature and in the Church (May 2012, 275). Where “high” and “low”

languages are forced to compete in the home and family, it is thought that intergenerational transmission of the “low” language will not occur, resulting in loss of status, shrinking of the territorial base, and eventually, language death.

If linguistically desirable, the aim of complete separation of the minority from the majority language within the home would seem to imply a form of segregation which might be viewed as rather socially controversial. The view of linguistic contact between majority and minority languages as undesirable raises questions regarding how the groups and individuals who speak the languages relate to one another, and places majority language individuals wishing to acquire the minority language in a particularly ambivalent position.

The assumption that contact between the two languages will inevitably result in one of them no longer being spoken has been criticised as overly deterministic (Sachdev and Bourhis 2001), on the basis that people are not the “situational automatons” which such models seem to assume, and may creatively negotiate language use to dynamically re-define social norms. Other models, for example the influential “Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale” developed by Fishman (1991), while accepting that failure of intergenerational transmission is at the root of language shift, take the view that targeted intervention at crucial points may have the power to remedy the situation. At GIDS Level 8, that of greatest threat, most vestigial users of the minority language are socially isolated elderly people, and the language “needs to be re-assembled from their mouths” (p. 88). At Level 7, the elderly language users are still socially integrated, but being beyond childbearing age, cannot pass the language on to their children. At Level 6, the minority language is still the normal language of informal, spoken interaction between and within all three generations of the family. Securing and consolidating Level 6 is therefore viewed as the key to enabling the language to recover and progress to the higher stages, until eventually, at Level 1, it is used in “higher level educational, occupational, governmental and media efforts” (p. 107). Consolidation of Level 6 is viewed as being achieved by means of bottom-up community-building efforts, where the minority language first becomes the language of the family, then the language used between families, then the language of the entire community, in a process of “home-family-neighbourhood-community-reinforcement” (p. 398).

Also more constructivist in orientation, the concept of “ethnolinguistic vitality” likewise offers hope that demographic change may not mean inevitable language death. The future of the linguistic group’s existence rests on its vitality, defined as an ability to “behave as a distinctive and active collective entity in intergroup situations” (Giles et al. 1977, 308). Three variables are seen as determining vitality; the language’s perceived social and economic status; demographic factors such as in-and-out migration, births and deaths; and institutional support - all of which influence and interact with each other. Although low levels of all three might still signal the “death knell” of a minority language, favourable changes in one or the other might work towards reversing language shift. A subsequent UNESCO study (UNESCO 2003) replaced Giles’ three variables with nine criteria, changes in any or some of which might again lead to positive developments.

These models are less deterministic than previous configurations, but have been nevertheless been criticised for taking an insufficiently constructivist view of the social context of language change and revitalisation. Clyne (2003, 69), commenting on GIDS, questions the simplistic ethnolinguistic basis of the binary “majority versus minority” model, emphasising that language use reflects the dynamic nature of social practice, and the existence of multiple, rather than binary identities.

“New Speakers” and Language Revitalisation

The particularly contested relationship between language, ethnolinguistic group, and nation likely in language revitalisation contexts, as described above, raises questions of how group and inter-group identities are constructed in such contexts. More especially, it raises questions over the position of aspiring speakers of the minority language who do not belong to the threatened ethnolinguistic group, who may find themselves in the “front line” of such contestations. The concept of the “new speaker” of the minority language is more fully discussed in Chapter 2. At this point, it is possibly to define the new speaker as any individual who “...has acquired the language in a formal setting; is positively disposed toward the language being learned; and might not originate from the ethnolinguistic group in question” (Hornsby 2015 a, 108). In the context of revitalising a language which is seen as an expression of the identity of a minority ethnolinguistic group, membership of the group by individuals who do not “belong” may be seen as problematic. This may particularly be the case if these

individuals belong to the majority language group which is seen as the source of the threat to the minority language.

The ambivalence of who is viewed as having the right to “belong” to the minority language community is implicit in many of Fishman’s writings. Some references to “communities of interest and commitment” (p. 91) which can be built up partly through online social networking might be taken to imply that anyone can belong, and the emphasis on building from the bottom up, and the consequent absence of macro-level power relationships, to imply equality and inclusion. However other references to “demographic concentration”, the “clustering of families into communities”, (p. 94), and “own group and own language marriage partners” (p 403) do not sound quite so inclusive. The view that intergenerational transmission is the sole and prime agent of language revitalisation seems, in itself, to raise questions as to the right of those who have not had the language passed down to them by previous generations to participate in its continued reproduction.

Taking a more constructivist view of language reproduction, new speakers form an integral part of the social world within which the language is constructed and reconstructed on a day-to-day basis. As is noted by Dunmore (2018, 38):- “The feasibility of posing a straightforward relationship between the minority language and its traditional speaker community as a basis for language revitalisation in late modernity has been repeatedly questioned”. That the family is necessarily the sole vehicle for the transmission of the language is contested by Romaine (2006). More constructivist views of language revitalisation would see language reproduction as a dynamic process affected by interaction in society as a whole, including the relationship of different socio-linguistic groups to each other and to the wider social world. In the light of this perspective, how “new speakers” construe, and are construed by, traditional speakers, and how this interaction impacts on the reproduction of the language, would be equally relevant to language policy as interaction within the minority linguistic group.

Contestations over Language, Identity and Nationhood in Wales

The differing ways in which individuals are viewed as coming to belong to national or linguistic communities, and the differing epistemological orientations of language revitalisation agendas, as discussed above, inevitably exercise a substantial influence

on how the politics of language operate within particular national contexts. In the context of Wales, the relationship between language and nationhood has been an ambivalent one, which has, over the centuries, been seen to constantly shift. Following the 1282 conquest of Wales by Edward I, English colonial rule, and the subsequent Acts of Union of 1536 and 1542, Welsh was increasingly marginalised; English became the language of both Welsh and English elites, and Welsh the language of the artisan and peasant classes. Industrialisation of South Wales during the nineteenth century led initially to a revival of Welsh in industrialised areas as, until the middle of the century, most of the migrants to the South Wales coalfields came from the rural Welsh-speaking areas of Wales (Aitchison and Carter 2000, 31). In addition, Adamson (1991) identifies the rise of a Welsh speaking capitalist class composed of the owners of coal mines and factories as leading to the use of the Welsh language, together with non-conformist religion, as a key symbolic resource with which to oppose the political and financial power of the English speaking landed elite.

However, increasing in-migration of workers from England, accompanied by the breaking down of geographical barriers with the coming of the railways, eventually led to growing Anglicisation of industrial South East Wales (Aitchison and Carter, *op. cit.*, 40). In the UK as a whole, late nineteenth century industrialisation was accompanied by an increasing sense of working class solidarity, marked by the foundation of the Labour Party in 1900. In Wales, the Labour movement came to be associated with anglicisation; English speaking workers and Welsh speaking capitalists grew politically further apart, undermining their ability to ally against an English speaking elite. Meanwhile, in less industrialised North and West Wales, the language remained relatively strong. These internal divisions, with schisms on the basis of both language and social class, have persisted, and have meant that attitudes towards Welsh “nationhood” have remained ambivalent up to and perhaps after the 1997 Devolution referendum, which was only narrowly won (Wyn Jones 2012).

The Welsh language can therefore be seen to have on occasion been used by particular groups as the focus of bids for political power, but not to have provided a strong enough focus to unite Wales as a whole. Social class and the institutional power of the British state also exercised a strong “pull” on Welsh identities. Not a single, but three separate “Welsh identities”, have been identified (Zimmern 1921, Balsom 1985) - Welsh-speaking Wales (Y Fro Gymraeg), concentrated in the North and West, with

a strong sense of identity based on the language; “Welsh Wales”, centred on the industrial heartlands of the South West, where a strong working class consciousness had developed; and “British Wales”, in the East and South-East, whose inhabitants viewed themselves as being British, rather than Welsh. Giggs and Pattie (1991) view Wales as a “plural society”, with a multiplicity of different identities occupying the same social space. Having a “Welsh identity” is not always synonymous with speaking Welsh. Many people in Wales, particularly in the South and East, view themselves as Welsh without being Welsh speakers. Others, particularly in the North West and West, view the language as a key marker of “Welshness”, and feel themselves to be strongly impacted by historical and current, language loss. In-migrants from England may still view Wales as part of the UK, rather than as a nation with a separate identity. The lack of a clear alignment between language and nation has led, post-Devolution, to a lack of clarity as to the role of language within the gradually evolving “political community” of Wales. Was the Welsh language to be regarded as the basis for a particular group identity contributing towards the “plurality” of Wales? Or as a key marker of nationhood, “the central element of Welsh identity” (Brooks 2009, 3) – and if so, did this signal a need to reinstate the language after centuries of institutional discrimination, or a need to define how its reinstatement might affect the many people living in Wales who did not speak Welsh? These tensions can be clearly seen in the development of language revitalisation policies both pre-and post-Devolution.

Language Decline and Revitalisation in Wales

It is not the intention here to provide a comprehensive account either of the decline of the Welsh language or of efforts to revitalise it, both of which are complex areas influenced by a number of social, political and economic factors, but rather to discuss the ways in which, in the Welsh context, language revitalisation policies have been influenced by differing views of the relationship between language and nation.

The decline, from 1901 through to 2011, in the number and percentage of the population able to speak Welsh, is reflected in the figures from the National Census reproduced in the table below.

Table 1: Percentage and Numbers of Welsh Speakers in Wales, 1901 - 2011

1901	1911	1921	1931	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
49.9%	43.5%	37.1%	36.8%	28.9%	26.0%	20.8%	18.9%	18.5%	20.8%	19%
929,800	977,400	922,100	909,300	714,700	656,000	524,000	508,200	500,000	582,400	562,000

Parallel.Cymru.(n.d.)

However, the decline in numbers is extremely unevenly distributed, with traditionally Welsh speaking areas in the “Fro Gymraeg” recording much smaller reductions. As can be seen, the latest (2011) census records an overall figure of 19%. Although the more recent Annual Population Survey (Welsh Government 2019) records a somewhat higher figure of 29.8%, it has been pointed out (Chief Statistician 2019) that this difference may be explicable in terms of the differing methods by which the Census and APS data have been obtained – statutory self-completion questionnaire versus voluntary survey. The Chief Statistician is clear that the Census figures represent the more definitive yardstick against which progress towards the target of a million speakers by 2050 will be measured.

Measures to secure the language had already been implemented prior to Devolution in 1999. This was largely due to pressure from Plaid Cymru and Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg, the British state, along with in-migration of English speakers, being seen as one of the chief factors contributing to the decline of Welsh; to quote Colin Williams (2000 b, 17) “At the beginning of the twentieth century English had emerged as the dominant language in Wales, primarily as a result of in-migration and state policy”. The first Welsh Language Act (U.K. Government 1993), establishing the right to the unrestricted use of Welsh in the courts, was passed in 1967 (Aitchison and Carter 2000, 46). The establishment of the Welsh Language Council (Cyngor yr Iaith Gymraeg) was followed by a report on “The Future of the Welsh Language” (Welsh Language Council 1978). The founding of the Welsh language television channel S4C in 1982 constituted another landmark. In 1993 the passing of the Welsh Language Act provided a statutory framework for the treatment of Welsh and English on the basis of equality (Williams op. cit., 30) and for the setting up of the Welsh Language Board to oversee the planning and implementation of language policy. Subsequent to the

setting up of the National Assembly for Wales in 1999, an increasing amount of attention has been paid to the language, with two major policy documents, *Iaith Pawb* (Welsh Government 2003) and *Iaith Fyw Iaith Byw* (Welsh Government 2012); the creation, also in 2012, of a new post of Welsh Language Commissioner; and the introduction of Welsh Language Standards (Welsh Government 2015).

However, language policy both pre-and post-devolution has attracted criticism on various bases and from various quarters. Firstly, the Welsh Language Act and the related activities of the Welsh Language Board has been criticised as taking an approach insufficiently robust to ensure the normalisation of the language in everyday interaction. The Board's language revitalisation strategy (Welsh Language Board 2000, 89) identified the four main challenges to be faced as:-

- 1) increasing the number of people who are to speak Welsh
- 2) providing opportunities to use the language
- 3) changing habits of language use and encouraging people to take advantage of the opportunities provided
- 4) strengthening Welsh as a community language.

Language revitalisation subsequent to the Welsh language act has been regarded as attaining a degree of success, Baker and Prys Jones (2000, 116) stating that "...the Welsh language would appear to have reached a relatively stabilized numerical state...partly if not mainly due to Welsh-medium education which has recently grown and flourished". Colin Williams (op. cit., 25) states that in urban areas "the Welsh medium school system has done more than any other agency to reproduce the language". However the interventions possible under the terms of the Welsh Language Act have also been regarded as insufficiently robust to change habits of language use and strengthen Welsh as a community language. Williams' evaluation (ibid.) found that the duty placed on public bodies to plan and implement language schemes had had very variable results, as, given power imbalances in favour of English within society at large, "...without committed political leadership exercised by the heads of organisations, it is unlikely that routine decisions will automatically favour Welsh as an official and de facto language within Welsh speaking areas" (ibid. 45). Similarly, Glyn Jones' and Williams' evaluation of the effectiveness of bilingual education initiatives in Cardiff (2000, 138) showed patchy implementation varying according to

local levels of commitment, demonstrating that “bilingual education is not a natural government-planned service....it is nearly always a struggle between a beleaguered minority and a hegemonic state majority....it forms part of a much larger struggle, namely the construction of a Welsh society...”

These criticisms centre on the failure of the civic state to protect the rights of a vulnerable group over which supposedly neutral state institutions exercise hegemonic power. Therefore, whereas the Board themselves regard partnership between state and voluntary and commercial organisations as having led to “more extensive opportunities to use Welsh language in all aspects of life”, (Welsh Language Board 2000, 95), Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg (2005) points out “the neo-liberal roots of the legislation – a tradition that has seen the role of the state as ‘arm’s length promoters’ rather than agents who guarantee rights”, highlighting the exemption of the private sector from the obligations of the 1993 Act as evidencing the valorisation of “neoliberal” ideologies which prioritise capitalist (“English”) over community (“Welsh”) interests.

The National Assembly of Wales, established in 1999, was viewed by Welsh language activists as an embryonic “Welsh” state more likely to champion the language than the previous “English” state – it was “a form of self-government....a response to the democratic deficit in Wales” (Williams 2000 c, 33) and therefore “the high point of the language struggle towards normalization...(and) a bilingual society” (ibid.). However, the “plurality” of Welsh society, and the predominance of the Labour party in the Assembly Government, meant that building a Welsh nation held together by a communal sense of belonging based on language was an unlikely prospect. The advisory group which defined the underpinning ethos of the new Government is described as endeavouring to cater for this plurality by building “a civic sense of identity” (Davies 1999, 8), working towards “inclusivity” by taking account of all conceivable interest groups - gender, geography, pressure groups, business and trade unions (ibid.28). Although Welsh language pressure groups were among those included - “We threw the doors open to groups that wanted to come in, groups like Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg” (ibid.30) – the importance accorded to the language was unclear, and the language policy eventually put in place by the new Government less thoroughgoing than language activists desired.

Brooks (2009, 12) criticises the policy of “inclusivity” as part of the discourse by means of which the majority language seeks to perpetuate its power and avoid its responsibilities towards the Welsh language:- “In this new paradigm, minority language discourse was often imagined as “ethnic”, and normative majority language discourse as “civic”minority language discourse could be implied to be exclusive, monocultural and intolerant, and majority language discourse as inclusive, multicultural and open”. “Ethnic” groups are here viewed as excluding “outsiders” who do not share certain intrinsic group characteristics - for example black people, who Brooks states are very welcome to learn Welsh. The voluntary and commercial organisations the Government has embraced as language policy partners are viewed as embodiments of the hegemonic “English” state. Hence Colin Williams (2005, 7) views the doctrine of “plenary inclusion” underpinning Iaith Pawb, the Welsh Government’s (2003) statement of language policy, as being “replete with neoliberal propositions”, and as failing to take sufficiently robust state action to secure the statutory basis of Welsh. On the other side of the argument, Lewis (2011, 1017) cites some English speakers in Wales as taking the view that “policies that seek to revive the prospects of minority languages transgress important liberal principles”.

These post-Devolution conflicts over the greater validity of a “nationhood” based on collective linguistic ties, or alternatively of a nationhood which outwardly denies the validity of subjective identifications but which is allegedly, in reality, based on the primacy of English, centre on contestations over the definition of the social space known as “Wales”. Proponents of a renewed sense of collective identification based on language regard themselves as escaping from the “false consciousness” of nationhood based on a language which is not theirs. The extent to which individual social actors caught up in these contestations can define their own identity boundaries, rather than being defined by boundaries imposed by others, is debateable. Brooks’ narrative, while rejecting “primordial” characteristics as criteria for group membership, nevertheless seems to impose other boundaries and criteria - being black is acceptable, being English speaking may not be. How individuals who are “not Welsh”, and who may be categorised as “English speakers” while aspiring to be “Welsh speakers”, are positioned within this contested social space, and how they should position themselves, is unclear. Can individuals negotiate new linguistic identifications across these contested collective boundaries?

Language Policy and “New Speakers” of Welsh

The difficulties in positioning which may be experienced by “new speakers” of Welsh are reflected in how they are positioned by Welsh language policy. The term “language policy” is here taken as encompassing both “official” language policies and “unofficial” language beliefs and practices (Spolsky 2004). Opposition between official and unofficial policies has also been described as being between “overt” and “covert” (Shohamy 2006, 50), overt referring to “language policies which are explicit, formalised, de jure, codified and manifest” and covert to “languages policies that are implicit, informal, unstated, de facto, grass roots, and latent”. The two are described as coming into conflict:- “language policies and planning are often ignored, as there are bottom-up forces in society that will try to introduce their own language ideologies and agendas (ibid. 51). “Official” language policy documents may also show evidence of both explicit and implicit ideological content.

Different Official Welsh Government language policy documents, firstly, use language in ways which appear to embody differing, and sometimes ambivalent, views of the relationship between language and the groups assumed to be “speakers”. Iaithe Pawb (op. cit.) is generally cited as embracing “inclusivity” in aspiring to make Wales “a truly bilingual nation, by which we mean a country where people can choose to live their lives through Welsh or English, *or both*” – implying that Welsh and English are not mutually exclusive (although some versions of the text simply state “a country where people can choose to live their lives through Welsh *or* English”, implying that “Welsh” people will speak Welsh, and “English” people will speak English). Inclusivity is also implied by the emphasis placed, in the section on boosting the use of Welsh within the community, on community, rather than on language, the section being entitled “The Welsh language *as part of* the fabric of the community” (p. 30). It is then stated that “*Within the compass of its economic development and community regeneration strategies, the Assembly Government is pursuing a number of initiatives which explicitly recognise the importance of the Welsh language in certain communities*” (ibid). Again, economic development strategies come first and language second.

The later policy document Iaithe Fyw, Iaithe Byw (Welsh Government 2012), the content of which was influenced by criticisms of “Iaithe Pawb”, adopts a different tack, going much further than its predecessor in support of building up Welsh speaking

communities from within; the section on the language in the community states an aim of “Strengthening the position of the Welsh language in the community” (p. 33), the emphasis now being primarily on language rather than on community. Rather than concentrating on economic development, policies will address specific challenges to the language such as “the availability of affordable housing, lack of employment opportunities, low numbers of parents/carers transmitting Welsh to their children, low status of the language within the community, lack of opportunities to use the language, and inward and outward migration”. (p. 34). Although it is fair to say that neither *Iaith Pawb* nor *Iaith Fyw*, *Iaith Byw* extensively discuss learning Welsh as contributing to language revitalisation – which is perhaps in itself an indication of the lack of importance afforded to “new speakers” - the section of *Iaith Fyw*, *Iaith Byw* where “learners” are mentioned is cited by Selleck (2018, 49) as evidence of a view that the “Welsh speaking communities” to be built up can consist only of “native speakers”. “Second language Welsh speakers” are referred to as likely to have “limited fluency” (p. 8), and there is a need for the language “to be used and supported in the home” in preference to being learned at school (p. 12).

By contrast to *Iaith Fyw*, the most recent Welsh Government policy document, “*Cymraeg 2050: Miliwn o Siaradwyr*” (Welsh Government 2017 a), while still emphasising the importance of the family and the contribution of young people, does seem to represent a small conceptual step forward in terms of recognition of new speakers, as their existence and potential contribution is at least acknowledged (p. 17), and a brief reference is made to the new speakers literature.

Concurrence between views advocating the importance of intergenerational transmission and of building communities from within, and apparently exclusionary views of the composition of such Welsh speaking communities, can also be seen in some commentaries on language revitalisation initiatives. Cefin Campbell’s account (2000, 250) of *Menter Cwm Gwendraeth Menter Iaith*, for example, states that: “The rapid language shift...has highlighted the need ...to *batten down the hatches* and to *strengthen the language situation from within*”, and again (p. 256) “Many *native Welsh* speakers harbour a negative perception of the relevance and social value of their *mother tongue*...raising the profile of the Welsh language and stimulating a greater awareness of the integral role it plays...have been key priorities” (author’s italics). Whereas building up deprived communities and raising the profile of Welsh are

undeniably important, it is clear that these communities are viewed here as consisting solely of “Native Welsh Speakers”, and intergenerational transmission as the primary vehicle for revitalising the language. This view has been encountered on a personal basis by the author of this thesis; during a conversation (2014) with a Menter Iaith official on the occasion of a “panad a sgwrs” get-together in Bethesda, the official described Menter Iaith as working to revitalise the language by increasing the confidence of “siaradwyr Cymraeg” (*Welsh speakers*). When asked, in this context “Beth amdanan ni?” (*What about us* - meaning people who learn Welsh ?) he replied:- “Does dim lot ohonoch chi sy’n dod yn rhugl” (*There aren’t many of you who become fluent*).

Not all commentators view new speakers as being automatically excluded from language revitalisation. The unilateral importance of ensuring intergenerational transmission and nurturing monolingual Welsh speaking communities has been questioned, and the involvement of a wider range of individuals in language revitalisation efforts advocated; for example Carter (2002) points out that social change means a shift from home and family as the sole arena within which the language is transmitted - the decline of manufacturing and the rise of the global knowledge economy will inevitably hasten the decline of the traditional, homogeneous rural communities which were, in the past, the mainstay of the Welsh language. Consequently, the future of the language “must rest not solely and explicitly on the old heartland, but on a wide bilingualism where the division of the past into Cymru Gymraeg and Cymru Ddigymraeg no longer predominates”. Similarly, Evas (2000: 293) regards “second language speakers” as “becoming increasingly important as time goes by”, and remarks that they are “a rather neglected target group within academic language planning in Wales”. Bobi Jones (2002, 34) emphasises the necessity for traditional Welsh speakers to think about the relationship new speakers have to the language group, and to consider them in efforts to revitalise the language:- “Pan fydd seicoleg y protestiwr yng Nghymru wedi newid yn gyfryw fel y bydd yn barod (yn gyfredol â’r protestio os dymunir) i roi awr yr wythnos hefyd i gynorthwyo dysgwyr o oedolyn mewn sgwrs, y pryd hynny y bydd gogwydd yr iaith yn newid” (*When the psychology of the protestors in Wales has changed so that, in parallel with protesting, if you wish, they are willing to also devote an hour a week to helping*

learners to hold a conversation, then the pendulum will swing in favour of the language).

The mutual exclusiveness of intergenerational transmission within monolingual Welsh families on the one hand, and a wider basis for transmission of the language on the other, has also been questioned. It has been pointed out that many families are now neither monolingual Welsh nor monolingual English, but bilingual. Aitchison and Carter's statistical analysis of household composition (1997, 362) shows that of households with Welsh speakers, 46.4% were at that time "partly Welsh speaking". Whether non Welsh speaking adults in such households acquire the ability to speak Welsh, what language parents speak with one another, and what language they each speak with the children, may be the subject of a great deal of thought and negotiation, and may influence the subsequent language choice of their children (Harding-Esch and Riley 2003), and hence the number of people who may, in future generations, self-identify, or be identified as, "Welsh speakers".

In terms of how learners are viewed by "unofficial" language policy, researchers investigating the learning and use of Welsh, for example Trosset (1986), Bowie (1993), and Newcombe (2002, 2007), whose work is discussed in detail in the next chapter, have described the difficulties which individuals can experience. On the one hand, appreciation ("lip-service") can be routinely expressed for the effort individuals have made to learn Welsh. On the other hand, individuals can feel their Welsh is constantly being evaluated, and they themselves "shown off" as "successful learners", rather than being treated on the same basis as any other Welsh speaker. Trosset states (p. 189) that one never "finishes" being a "learner":- "to be a Welsh learner is to occupy not a social category, but a transitional state. It is only by moving beyond this state and adopting the full status, linguistic and cultural, of Welsh speaker, that it is possible for a non-native speaker to achieve a legitimate social identity within Welsh-Wales". This perceived lack of legitimacy is encapsulated in the comment, mentioned earlier, made to Bowie: "I don't know why they bother – they can never be Welsh!" Bowie also cites the derogatory way "Welsh learners" are portrayed in many Welsh language radio and television programmes. These "unofficial" views are more fully described in Chapter 3.

The “unofficial language policy” underlying Welsh for Adults Provision

The ambivalence with which Welsh language policy regards new speakers of Welsh is also evidenced in the way Welsh for Adults teaching provision has developed, and in how it is currently configured. First of all, it is noticeable that policy documents relating to the Welsh language rarely contain more than a fleeting mention of the teaching of Welsh to adults; detailed recommendations on Welsh for Adults provision generally appear in separate reports published shortly afterwards. This seems symptomatic of uncertainty as to whether Welsh for Adults can be regarded as a legitimate part of language policy.

A connection with language policy can certainly be seen in the chronology of how provision developed. It was the increasing awareness of the importance of the language following the setting up of Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg in 1962, combined with public concern over the 1961 and 1971 Census figures, which led to the expansion and improved co-ordination of a sector that had existed in an uncoordinated and patchy form for some years. The setting up of Welsh medium nursery schools under the auspices of the Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin, founded in 1971, may also have been a contributory factor; pre-school nursery provision was desirable for parents but could be problematic if provided in a language they did not speak (Morris 2000b, 240). The passing of the Welsh Language Act in 1993 inspired the next policy review, as a result of the need, in consequence of the Act, for individuals to learn for employment purposes (Morris 2000a). Further reviews accompanied the publication of *Iaith Pawb* (National Foundation for Educational Research 2003) and *Iaith Fyw Iaith Byw* (Welsh Government 2013).

However, although these reports were inspired by language revitalisation concerns, a strong theme running through them all is that of tension between Welsh for Adults as a “leisure interest” whose proper home is in the Adult Education Section of the Further Education Sector, and Welsh for Adults as having an important contribution to make to the language, and therefore as more appropriately placed in the language policy area. “Welsh learners” emerge as a group whose contribution to the language is considerably more marginal than that of “first language speakers”. This tension is also reflected in commentaries such as that of Morris (2000a, 208), who remarks, of provision up to the early 1990s, that “These were predominantly short one-a-week

classes, intermixed with classes on cookery and flower arranging”. The number of instructional hours undertaken by most learners fell far short of the optimum considered desirable to achieve fluency. A 1965 study by Williams (Williams 1965) found the motivators for undertaking WFA courses to be primarily leisure-orientated:-

- to understand the news on radio and TV
- to join in social life with friends
- popular light reading
- an interest in languages

Although the adoption in many areas, from the 1970s onwards, of the intensive Wlpan method, pioneered in Israel to quickly teach non-Hebrew speaking Jewish incomers Hebrew, did much to remedy the “one night a week” model, to some extent the “leisure interest” legacy remained (Steve Morris 2000 b, 240). The lack of a language planning approach may account for the ongoing lack, noted in most official reports, of co-ordinated statistical data recording overall student numbers and progression from one level to the next.

As discussed below, reports often compare the UK model unfavourably with the Basque system, where provision is an integral and important component of policy provision for the normalisation of the Basque language, and aims at integrating non-Basque speakers into the Basque language community, learners receiving 1500 hours of instruction – a much higher total than the hundred-odd hours common in the UK. However no report goes as far as recommending radical reform of provision on the Basque model.

Tension between Welsh for Adults as “leisure interest” on the one hand and “part of language policy” on the other is further evidenced in the recommendations of the 1994 review (Welsh Funding Councils 1994). The need for further consolidation was recognised in the recommendation that existing WFA providers should be configured into 8 regional consortia. Strategic development of the sector was to be the responsibility of the Welsh Language Board, whereas operational matters were placed in the Adult Education sector. The token recognition, through strategic alignment with the Welsh Language Board, of WFA as bearing some relationship to language planning, was belied by the reality of operational alignment with Further Education,

within which, given the priority need to up-skill young people (ibid.), Welsh for Adults may have been perceived as somewhat of a “Cinderella” service. Funding was allocated on a Further Education model; the funding weighting, which reflected the perceived importance of the subject area – linked to credits achieved - of only 1.2, as opposed to 1.5 for English Language and Literature, meant that delivery was only economically feasible with class numbers of 19-20, whereas 9-10 is the number considered optimal for successful language teaching (ibid.) An “alternative” report from a committee of practitioners in the WFA field (Welsh Joint Education Committee 1992), which Steve Morris (2000 b, 244) states “proposed a holistic strategy for advancing the sector, thereby placing it firmly in the wider ambit of “Reversing language shift”” was not adopted. Of the configuration which was adopted, Steve Morris (2000 a, 210) remarks: “A lack of clear Welsh Office and Welsh Assembly planning in the field of Welsh for Adults, and devolvement down through quangos such as the funding council and the Welsh Language Board of responsibility for this area, are further undermining the development of a comprehensive adult immersion programme in Wales, and its location with a coherent language planning programme for the country”.

The validity of Morris’s criticisms is seen in the mixed effectiveness of the 1994 reorganisation, as reflected both in the Welsh Language Board’s 1999 revised Welsh for Adults Strategy (Welsh Language Board 1999), and in the intensive evaluation carried out by the National Foundation for Educational Research in 2003. The Welsh Language Board identified a need for better funding, better training for WFA tutors, smaller classes, and co-ordination at national level. The NFER Review found the overall numbers of students to have increased, rising from 21,500 in 1998/9 to 25,324 in 2002/3 (National Foundation for Educational Research 2003, 14); however the significant falling-off in numbers between beginners’ and advanced levels meant that a large number of these learners are unlikely to achieve fluency. The number of hours typically undertaken still falls far short of the number thought, in the Basque country, to be required to master a language. Qualitative evidence involving extensive consultation with WFA practitioners was also considered. This showed separation between the strategic and operational spheres to be problematic; the consortia, due to lack of overall co-ordination, to overlap; and “unofficial” competition between providers to hinder, rather than facilitate co-operation. Overall, the sector is seen as lacking status, underfunded, and failing to accord staff expertise the professional

recognition it deserves. Strong support is expressed for the concept of a national central body or forum to co-ordinate developments across Wales (ibid. 25).

Importantly, the report makes a mention of the possible effect of the social situation of learners on learning outcomes:- “learning a language involves changes in social behaviour and is inherently different from learning skills in other subject areas. Although the status and profile of Welsh for Adults as an FE subject are important, opportunities for more informal learning and use of Welsh in the community are essential. The funding allocated to providers should include an element for liaison with bodies such as CYD and the Mentrau Iaith and the organising of extra-curricular activities” (ibid. 81).¹

The need for greater co-ordination highlighted by the NFER Report was recognised by the replacement of the 8 regional consortia, in 2006, by 6 Welsh for Adults Centres with a clear responsibility for planning provision in their areas; however overall co-ordination in the form of strategic oversight at national level was still lacking. A further step towards the alignment of WFA with language planning, rather than with FE, was taken with the publication in 2013 of a new report, “Codi Golygon/Raising our Sights” (Welsh Government 2013). The report begins by stating that “while there is general understanding of the importance of lifelong learning, much of this now occurs in the workplace or online...local community activities do not play as prominent a role as they did in the past” (p. 7). Rather than on learning Welsh as a leisure activity, emphasis is placed on the need to teach parents Welsh to enable them to transmit the language to their children, and to teach workers Welsh to ensure the provision of a service in Welsh – echoing the language revitalisation orientation of “Iaith Fyw, Iaith Byw”. It is noted that there is presently a lack of strategic partnerships between the Welsh for Adults Centres and both employers, and organisations, such as Ti a Fi and Twf, which provide support to parents. To encourage such strategic partnerships, there is a need for a national entity to provide strategic direction. It is also noted that though the number of learners, while having fallen since 2003, has remained fairly

¹ A word of explanation may be required at this point on the role of CYD, an organisation apparently now defunct at least at national level, which aimed to “offer social opportunity to bring Welsh learners and speakers together” (Wikipedia). Despite aspiring to “brand” itself as bringing learners and traditional speakers to socialise “*ar y cyd*” (“together”), it is perhaps significant that CYD was persistently labelled “*Cymdeithas y Dysgwyr*” (“The Welsh Learners’ Society”), and despite aiming to encourage “non-learners” to become involved, mainly attracted “learners”.

consistent for the last four or five years at around 18,000 annually, there is a dearth of younger people and male participants; the numbers who progress to the higher levels (with the caveat that the data available to measure this remain rather inadequate) although showing a recent increase, are still comparatively small; and the average 120-180 hours of instruction still falls considerably short of the 1500 hours thought necessary, in the Basque Country, to achieve fluency; the hope is expressed that the new national entity will be able to address these concerns.

Although its aspiration of aligning WFA with language planning imply a view of “learners” as forming part of the Welsh language community, some of the report’s statements on the need for a greater level of informal provision show evidence of the ambivalence which surrounds the social integration of “learners”. Despite the NFER review’s recommendation that the Welsh for Adults Centres liaise with CYD and Mentrau Iaith, the present report states of Mentrau Iaith:- “there is no clarity in the responsibility of Mentrau Iaith alongside the centres in terms of interaction in this area....in some cases, the Mentrau Iaith are uncertain what they should do – indeed, they are uncertain whether their remit covers learners. The Centres, on the other hand, say they have no funding to pay for joint activities”. (p. 42). The report also states that “the type of structure and activity fostered by an organisation like CYD needs to be considered”; but in the same sentence that “CYD funding was transferred to the Welsh for Adults Centres and conversations between Welsh speakers and learners continues to be organised through the centres” (ibid.)

Ambivalence is very evident in the paper produced by the “Dyfodol i’r Iaith” language revitalisation campaigning group for the attention of the Codi Golygon review body (Dyfodol i’r Iaith 2012). While agreeing that greater co-ordination is required and that the taught hours needs to increase, this paper places a very strong emphasis on the need to protect and revitalise Welsh, stating that priority should be given to “rhieni sydd am ddefnyddio’r Gymraeg yn y cartref a gweithwyr sy’n delio gyda’r cyhoedd” (“those who intend to use Welsh in the home and workers dealing with the public”) (p. 3). The comparatively small numbers of Welsh learners progressing to NVQ Level 4 is also emphasised; however the figures which are cited are those for 2008/9, rather than the most recent (see the table below), which in fact show an increase.

Table 2: Numbers of Welsh Learners 2007 – 12 ²

	Total	Entry Level (Mynediad)	NVQ Level 3 (Uwch)	NVQ Level 4 (Hyfedredd)
2007 - 8	17570	7745	1305	200
2008 - 9	18220	7975	1150	360
2009 - 10	17865	8675	1550	430
2010 - 11	18205	8420	1570	620
2011 - 12	18050	8010	1565	1050

Adapted from Codi Golygon/Raising Our Sights (Welsh Government 2012)

The introduction of the new national co-ordinating body, as recommended in Codi Golygon, has been followed by the publication of a further report and a new Welsh for Adults strategy (National Centre for Learning Welsh 2016). The strategy proposes measures, such as an increased number of weekly taught hours, and a new national curriculum conforming to European standards, to increase the number of learners achieving fluency, and reiterates the recommendations of previous reports for more e-learning and more social learning outside the classroom, but there is as yet no firm commitment to the 1500 hours of instruction thought to be necessary in the Basque country, and no detailed analysis of how the strategy is to be implemented.

In summary, successive reports on Welsh for Adults provision show evidence of the ambivalence with which the contribution of new speakers of Welsh to language revitalisation is regarded. This ambivalence has also been noted by Baker et al. (2011), in their summary, and language planning contextualisation, of Hunydd Andrews' study of adult learners of Welsh, reviewed in the next chapter. Despite declarations to the contrary, the continuing lack of adequate funding³ or of sufficient

² Although a more recent estimate of the overall number of learners (15,910 – a fall since 2012) is provided in the latest Welsh for Adults Strategy (National Centre for Learning Welsh 2016), the table represents, according to the Strategy, the most recent detailed breakdown available.

³ According to verbal information provided by practitioners in the WFA field, during the six years since the coming into being of the Canolfan Dysgu Cymraeg Genedlaethol (2016 – 2021), course provision budgets have remained static.

hours of instruction to ensure fluency show the “informal language policy” underlying the reports to involve a view of the typical “Welsh learner” as a retired middle class English lady whiling away leisure hours by learning Welsh, rather than as a person able to make a real contribution to revitalising the language. The crucial issue of how to help new speakers of Welsh to establish a meaningful identity within the Welsh language community is skated over rather than seriously addressed.

The Need for Re-Conceptualisation

To summarise the arguments which have been presented in this chapter, the position of individuals learning Welsh has been examined in the light of the social context within which the Welsh language is framed. This context includes epistemological assumptions underlying how membership of social groups, the language spoken by these groups, and the concept of “the nation”, may be linked; and also behind ways in which language revitalisation issues and policies are viewed. It has been suggested that collective and individual linguistic identities are inextricably linked. It has also been suggested that, in terms of all of the above, the Welsh context is extremely complex and contested, and that this complexity may impact extensively on how individuals, and particularly aspiring “new speakers” of Welsh, experience issues of linguistic identity.

The contested and problematic nature, at collective level, of the relationship between language, identity and nation, has led theorists such as May (2001, 308) to signal the need to re-think the way in which this relationship is currently construed:- “Why should the notion of a homogeneous national identity, represented by the language and culture of the dominant ethnies, invariably replace cultural and linguistic identities that differ from it?” (p. 307) and again (p. 308): “...if all identities are constructed, then this recognition applies as much to majoritarian forms of (national) identity as it does to minority identities....Thus, there is no reason why we cannot rethink nation-states, and the national identities therein, in more plural and inclusive ways”. This would also imply re-thinking the basis for some current language revitalisation policies.

In the Welsh context, re-thinking this relationship - defining what is meant by “a Welsh speaking future”, and involving a wider range of individuals in language revitalisation - may also, given the fragile state of the language, crucially affect whether there *is* any Welsh speaking future. Davidson and Piette (2000) point out the potential of “wide

bilingualism”, if adopted as a policy aspiration in Wales, to bridge existing cultural divides, foreseeing a future Wales where “more people will know some Welsh (rather than being fluent in Welsh and English and others in English only), and a bilingual society can become a reality, weaving both languages through cultural divides and in particular reinventing those symbols, as well as those geographical areas, which were seen and saw themselves, as either “Welsh” or “English”, as part of the process of developing a new culture within Wales”.

Despite the difficulties currently involved, the possibility that individuals may be able to negotiate new linguistic identities is, as discussed in this chapter, supported by sociological theories of individual and collective identity construction. However, is this possibility also supported by theories of second language acquisition? This will be discussed in the next chapter.

2. From “Second Language Learners” to “New Speakers”

Can “Welsh Learners” Become “Welsh Speakers”?

The previous chapter looked at the ambivalence of the position of adults learning Welsh as a second language. Commitment to learning Welsh is likely to be accompanied by a recognition of the fragility of the language, and of the consequent need for revitalisation. However, essentialist views of linguistic identity may make it difficult for learners to be recognised as legitimate “Welsh speakers”. The very fragility of the language may lead to the perception that an increase in the numbers of any individuals designated “non-Welsh speakers” constitutes a threat. Traditional theories of language revitalisation, in seeing contact between majority and minority language groups as inevitably leading to the demise of the minority language, may reinforce this view; which, as discussed in Chapter 1, is possibly particularly prevalent in the Welsh context, given the historically unequal power relationship between Wales and England; the perceived dominance of the English language; its gradual encroachment on Welsh; and the perception of “Welsh identity” solely in terms of binary opposition between the two languages,.

Given this, learners, even those who are not “English speakers”, may be seen, because they are not recognised as belonging to the minority language group, as aligned with the majority language group, and therefore as potentially undermining, rather than benefitting, the minority language. This lack of recognition of “new speakers” contribution to language revitalisation is perceptible in Welsh Government language policy, which, reflecting the contested ideological positions on the language inherent in Welsh society, does not always take account of individuals positioned across the linguistic divide – policy documents sometimes seem to assume that “English” individuals speak English, and “Welsh” individuals speak Welsh - and also in official uncertainty as to whether Welsh for Adults provision properly “belongs” to language policy and planning. Is it true, however, that individuals must always retain their “original” linguistic identity, and no other? Or can one become a “Welsh speaker” even though one is “not Welsh?” The last chapter established that recent sociological theories of identity view the negotiation of new linguistic identities as a possibility. This chapter will examine the question from another perspective, reviewing the processes which educationalists and sociolinguists view as being involved in learning a second

language. A “micro lens” will then be focussed on how these processes operate in the Welsh context, via a review of studies which have analysed how adults learn Welsh as a second language.

Second Language Learning Theory – Chomskyan Determinism

Second language acquisition is a field which has undergone a considerable epistemological shift in recent years. This shift parallels developments in learning theory in general, with a move from cognition-based perspectives locating learning “within” the individual, to theories which view the learner as a social being, and learning as created through interactions within the social world. This more recent view is aptly summarised in Lave and Wenger’s (1991, 11) comment on the “situated” nature of all learning: “It may appear obvious that human minds develop in social situations...but cognitive theories of knowledge representation and educational practice...have not been sufficiently responsive to (this)”. In relation to second language learning, Mitchell et al. (2012, 27) likewise remark that: “It is also necessary to view the second language learner as essentially a social being, taking part in structured social networks and social practices....after some decades when psycholinguistic and individualist perspectives on second language learners predominated, recent research is redressing the balance”.

Such a change in perspective is extremely important in terms of whether, in general, we view ourselves as able to change - to re-define ourselves and be re-defined, through interaction with the wider social world; or alternatively, as occupying a pre-determined position in an immutable “hierarchy of learning” on the basis of our innate cognitive abilities. It is a change which has extremely important implications for second language learning specifically, as cognition-based perspectives tend towards the deterministic view that second language learners will never attain the same level of competence as the “native speaker”.

The assumption that competence is pre-determined is associated with the Chomskian concept of “universal grammar” (Chomsky 1965, 14), which dominated language learning theory during the 1960s and 1970s, and viewed the essential determinant of linguistic ability as being our inner “competence” – the abstract representation of language knowledge (universal grammar) held inside our minds. Since second language learners set out with the parameter settings of their first language, it is

difficult, and according to some views impossible, for them to “re-set” the parameters in such a way as to attain the “ideal” underlying competence of the native speaker (Mitchell et al. op. cit., 56). This view effectively establishes a linguistic hierarchy on which learners will always occupy an inferior position.

The Possibility of Change; Individual Differences

Increasing levels of empirical research during the 1970s and 1980s, however (ibid. 46), led to the development of less deterministic perspectives on the nature both of language, and of language learning. Studies on the nature of language suggested that linguistic forms do not remain constant, but are subject to change, and that “native speaker” usage, far from conforming to an immutable and universal ideal, is subject to considerable variation (Larsen-Freeman, 2011, 52-3). At the same time, psychological research on how we learn emphasised the importance of individual differences, some of which, like age and gender, we cannot change, but some of which, such as attitude and motivation, we can (Skehan 1989). Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) implicate the negative effects of anxiety – fear of ridicule over incomplete mastery of the language – and Masgoret and Gardner (2003) the importance of motivation. Such views perhaps hold out a greater degree of hope for the second language learner, as attitudes can surely be modified, and motivation “worked up”. However they also imply that language learning is fundamentally an individual rather than a social activity.

Socio-psychological Perspectives

Once it has been established that attitudes and motivation can change, the possibility opens up that such changes may be bound up with the social context in which learning takes place, and therefore of a more socially orientated approach. A number of studies subsequently concerned themselves with whether social context or individual characteristics were more important for language learning. Masgoret and Gardner’s (2003) influential meta-analysis of the influence of both psychological and social factors on the learning of French in Canada, found that motivation, rather than the socio-cultural context, bore the highest correlation to achievement, and that integrative motivation (the desire to communicate with/openness to the new language community) demonstrated a higher correlation than instrumental motivation (for example, the need/desire to get a job).

One might ask, however, how easy it is to separate psychological attributes from the social context in which they manifest themselves – is there really an “inner self” as opposed to a “world outside”? Although it has been argued that self-confidence, for example, is an intrinsic characteristic of the language learner (Krashen 1985), it has also been argued that self-confidence arises from positive experiences in the context of the second language:- “Self-confidence...develops as a result of positive experiences in the context of the second language and serves to motivate individuals to learn the second language” (Gardner 1985, 54). The fundamental interdependence of “inner” and “outer” is illustrated by studies on anxiety, which the authors considered to be a prime example of a psychological state caused not only by individual propensity (nature), but by particular learning situations (nurture). Dornyei and Csizer’s study (2005) in Hungary, for example, found that the more frequent the contact with the target community, the more generally self-confident of their communication competence the students concerned were likely to be.

The implied inseparability of the learning process and the context in which it takes place marks a shift in perspective from the psychological to the social. The epistemological premises underlying this change are succinctly summarised by Peirce (1995, 11):- “artificial distinctions are drawn between the individual and the social, which lead to arbitrary mapping of particular factors on either the individual or the social, with little rigorous justification. In the field of SLA, theorists have not adequately addressed why it is that a learner may sometimes be motivated, extroverted, and confident, and sometimes unmotivated, extroverted, and anxious; why in one place, there may be social distance between a specific group of language learners and the target language learners and the target language community, whereas in another place the social distance may be minimal; why a learner can sometimes speak and other times remain silent”.

Subsequently, we see studies illustrating this shift in perspective; those influenced by social psychology, for example, typically examine how relationships between social groups might affect the process of second language learning. Tajfel’s (1974) and Giles’ (1977) theories on the relationship between social groups, the languages they speak, and social identity, also briefly discussed in Chapter 1, have been particularly influential in this respect. Individuals are viewed, according to this conceptual framework, as adjusting their speech to accommodate to others, either “converging”

to reduce difference, or “diverging” to accentuate it. In this way, “in-groups” viewing themselves as having a common cultural and/or ethnic identity might use language as a means of maintaining the integrity of their identity, and of excluding non-members of the group (the “out-group”). At the same time, members of groups perceived as less powerful might “converge” in the direction of those with more power. Giles et al. (1977, 330) outline the various strategies which can be used by the in-group to repel the linguistic threat posed by the out-group, as they “continually modify their speech with others to reduce or accentuate the linguistic (and hence social) differences between the depending on their perception of the interactional situation”. Studies of second language learning taking a group interaction perspective typically concentrate on such processes, which may well have negative implications for second language learners, as can be seen in the Giles et al. study (ibid.), where the mere presence of an “out-speaker” induced certain in-group members to emphasise their cultural identity by differentiating the content of their speech from what they said to out-group members.

Constructivist Perspectives; Sociocultural and Language Socialisation Theories

Although such studies signal a significant change in perspective, from language as a bounded, self-contained system, to language as creating meanings in the process of group interaction, the view that social groups “possess” inherent characteristics, including language, which cannot (or can only with difficulty) change, is still a fairly deterministic one. Social science has been described as a “situated practice” (Smith 1998, 12). If social theory itself is socially situated, perspectives such as the above have been viewed as rooted in the homogeneous and monolingual cultures of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (O’Rourke et al. 2015, 7). Newer epistemological orientations, from the 1960s onwards, view both “identity” and the relationship between the “individual” and the “outside world” (Cuff, 1998, 233) as being no longer fixed or unitary, but multiple and constantly under construction; in keeping with the tendency for cultures themselves to become more heterogeneous, concepts such as social identity, ethnicity, culture and language also become less immutable.

We therefore see a further development in how language learning is viewed; not only as a social phenomenon, but, in keeping with constructivist epistemologies, as a process where linguistic identities are constructed in the course of social interaction. Pavlenko, for example (2002, 279 – 80) holds up to scrutiny the monolingual and

monocultural bias underlying views which conceptualise the world as consisting of homogeneous and monolingual cultures, in-groups and out-groups; and individuals as located *in*, and moving *from*, one group to another. Such approaches “do not lend themselves readily to accounting for second language users who may be members of multiple communities, and do not reflect the complexity of the modern global and multilingual world, where more than a half of the inhabitants are not only bilingual or multilingual, but also members of multiple ethnic, social and cultural communities”.

Constructivist approaches to second language learning, although similar in sharing the view that social reality is constructed, differ from one another in some respects, chiefly as to whether they view language learning as a social learning process implicating the culture as a whole, or alternatively as a process involving the construction of individual identities; the former influenced by situated learning theory, and the latter by theories of social identity originating in the social sciences.

Sociocultural and language socialisation theories perhaps represent the most significant examples of the former. Sociocultural theories, strongly influenced by Vygotsky (1987), see learning as a process where we create, through face-to-face interaction with more experienced members of the social world of which we wish to become members, symbolic artefacts, including language, which, taken together, constitute culture. Albeit locating second language learning socially, studies taking this approach emphasise the mental mechanisms, rather than the elements of social interaction, involved in the learning process (Lantolf 2004). Language socialisation approaches, by contrast, concentrate on the interaction between the learner and more experienced members of the new social world, where, within a “community of practice” (Wenger 1998), “individuals not only internalise a particular body of knowledge but become culturally competent members of a particular community” (Bremer et al., 1996, 286). The community jointly constructs the social world through language as social practice.

Haneda (2006, 811) comments critically on the “apolitical” nature of the concept of community of practice, and of the social spaces it assumes to exist:- “no distinction is made between different types of participants except that between newcomers and old-timers, and the picture of apprenticeship offered is limited to that of newcomers’ centripetal movement toward becoming expert participants...the approach does not

offer any critical analysis of unequal participatory opportunities". The gradual and uncontested acquisition of community membership is viewed as inadequately describing the cut and thrust of the social world.

Symbolic Interactionist and Poststructuralist Perspectives

By contrast, approaches influenced by the social sciences, rather than by learning theory, depict a complex process of construction within a possibly contested social arena, rather than a learning process leading to community membership. The move within the social sciences from essentialist to constructivist theories of identity is described in detail in Chapter 1. Second language learning's "borrowing" from social identity theory is described by Block (2009, 44) as fairly eclectic:- "Different constructs appear in different combinations with different emphases in the work of different researchers" (ibid. 44). However, poststructuralism, with its emphasis on power imbalances and contestations, and on the way in which the construction of individual identities is informed by discourses generated at national level, (Cuff, 2006: 210), is viewed as perhaps the most important influence.

Other constructivist perspectives, for example symbolic interactionism, are nevertheless significant. Approaches to second language learning influenced by symbolic interactionism may place greater emphasis on the subjective self than those tending towards poststructuralism. Dunn (1997, 688) defines the difference as follows:- "Poststructuralism tends to "upwardly" reduce meaning and behaviour to the cultural effects of linguistic or "textual" practices....In contrast, Mead and his (symbolic interactionist) interpreters have located the problems of meaning and behaviour inside the concept of a social self, regarded as an agent of interpretation, definition and action". For poststructuralists, language (scientific discourse) precedes the self. While this gives poststructuralism a strong leverage on the social, cultural and political aspects of meaning, at the same time "a contrast of the two theories reveals important limitations in the poststructuralist perspective – namely, its inadequate view of social relations and its abolition of self". Second language learning theorists such as Norton (2000, 5) retain a symbolic interactionist view of the importance of subjectivity, stating that: "I use the term identity to reference how a person understands his or her relationship to the world"; but at the same time adopt a poststructuralist view both of the multiple sites across which identities are constructed, and of the power

contestations which may be involved, as evidenced in Norton's (2000) study of immigrant women in Canada, and the collection on language and gender edited by Pavlenko et al. (2001).

Other constructivist perspectives may concur with Bourdieu in placing greater emphasis than does poststructuralism on the role of enduring structures in identity construction. Joas and Knöbl (2009, 359) describe Bourdieu's retention of the notion of structure:- "the meaning and the social value of biographical events are not constituted on the basis of the subject, but on the basis of actors' "placements" and "displacements" within social space....Thus, rather than "subjects," people are actors in a field by which they are profoundly moulded". Block (op. cit. 24) point out that many second language theorists have also recognised the existence of real world structures:- "The broadly poststructuralist approach to identity which has been borrowed from the social sciences by applied linguists has been poststructuralist in its embrace of hybridity and third place, but it has also included and retained structure"

Negotiating Social and Linguistic Identity

Peirce's (1995, 12) delineation of a specific constructivist theoretical framework for second language acquisition illustrates many of the above principles. Peirce argues that "Second Language Acquisition theorists have not developed a comprehensive theory of social identity that integrates the language learner and the language learning context", and acknowledges her indebtedness to the social sciences in attempting to do so. Firstly, the negotiated character of social identity, and the inseparability of the concept from the notion of "subjectivity" is recognised. This re-conceptualisation better equips us to achieve an understanding of "the multiple nature of the subject; subjectivity as a site of struggle; and subjectivity as changing over time" (p. 15).

Secondly, the multiplicity of the sites at which identity is constructed is recognised:- "It is through language that a person negotiates a sense of self within and across different sites at different points in time" (p. 13). The view that identity is negotiated within multiple sites opens up for the researcher a much wider canvas than that of the traditional language learning classroom, that of the society as a whole.

Thirdly, the interaction between micro and macro dimensions in the process of identity construction implies that power relationships will inevitably come into play. This is

stated not hitherto to have been taken into account; not only have SLA theorists not developed a theory of social identity, but: “Furthermore, they have not questioned how relations of power in the social world affect social interaction between second language learners and target language speakers” (p. 12).

The bringing into play of national identities links research on second language learning with debates, examined in the previous chapter, on national and linguistic identity, and whether these are immutable and predetermined, or flexible and capable of being acquired. It has been suggested in Chapter 1 that more recent, constructivist perspectives take the latter view. Recent perspectives on second language learning take the view that new linguistic identities can also be acquired, although this process may be subject to ideological contestation and impeded by structural barriers. Second language learners can become “speakers” of the language, albeit with difficulty.

These new epistemologies require the re-framing of some traditional concepts. The view of the learner as conscious of, and interacting with, the social context within which his or her relationship to the speech community is defined, implies a much more complicated process than can be explained in terms of psychological concepts such as “motivation”:- “Such conceptions of motivation, which are dominant in the field of SLA, do not capture the complex relationship between relations of power, identity, and language learning....In my view, the conception of *investment* rather than motivation more accurately signals the socially and historically constructed relationship (of the learner) to the target language”. In defining “investment”, Peirce draws on Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital:- “I take the position that if learners invest in a second language, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital” (Peirce, 1995: 17).

Likewise, the concept of “competence” needs to be re-framed to take account not just of individual ability, but of the social context within which linguistic interchanges take place; to cite Peirce once again:- “I take the position that theories of communicative competence in the field of second language learning should extend beyond an understanding of the appropriate rules of use in a particular society, to include and understanding of the way rules of use are socially and historically constructed to support the interests of a dominant group within a given society. Drawing on Bourdieu

(1977), I argue...that the definition of competence should include an awareness of the right to speak...what Bourdieu (p. 75) calls “the power to impose reception””.

Empirical Examples of Identity Approaches to Second Language Learning

Some recent studies illustrate the wider canvas opened up to the researcher by these increasingly social views of the nature of second language learning.

As an example of the sociocultural approach, Duff's (2007) study of Korean students in Canada observes the workings of the “community of practice” with ethnically Asian local groups through which the students entered the target speech community.

Haneda (2006, 811) comments critically on the “apolitical” nature of the concept of community of practice, and of the social spaces it assumes to exist:- “no distinction is made between different types of participants except that between newcomers and old-timers.... ...the approach does not offer any critical analysis of unequal participatory opportunities”. From the 1990s onwards, we begin to see studies incorporating poststructuralist notions of identities negotiated over time, within social contexts where power relationships may be unequal; and of the reproduction of the power structures of the wider society in day-to-day social interaction. Morita (2004), for example, in a study examining how second language learners negotiated participation and membership in their Canadian classroom communities, showed how learners developed strategies to overcome negative perceptions of their competence which they feared might be held by other class members, actively negotiating less marginal positions than those to which they felt they had been “assigned”.

McKay and Wong's study of recent Chinese immigrants to the United States (1996) shows how the construction of individual identities incorporates discourses, for example “colonialist racialised” or “Chinese cultural nationalist discourses”, prevalent at national level, illustrating the interaction of micro and macro dimensions. The interweaving of individual and national identities is further explored in a compendium of studies edited by Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004), with contributions by Giampapa on the issues experienced by young Italians in Canada in relation to “being Italian”, and by Blackledge on the construction of identity by and within political discourse in multilingual Britain.

Negotiating New Linguistic Identities in Minority Language Contexts

Importantly, the view that second language learners can become part of the target speech community locates debates on second language learning within another series of theoretical discussions, also examined in the previous chapter, namely those on language revitalisation. If the decline of minority languages is due to a decline in the number of speakers, an increase in the number of speakers surely holds out promise in terms of potential revitalisation of the language. The recognition that a language learner may also be counted as a “speaker” has been marked by the coining of the term “new speakers” to replace the former “second language learners”. At the same time, it is recognised that the legitimacy of new speakers’ claim to membership of the speech community can be subject to contestation. Many of the empirical studies cited above focus on the struggles of minority language speakers to attain legitimacy in majority language contexts. However, establishing legitimacy may be equally difficult in a minority language context, given the existence of a perceived threat to the linguistic identities of “established speakers”. An increasing number of studies have therefore begun to examine the reverse situation, where individuals who may come from majority language groups attempt to become “new speakers” in a minority language context. Examples are Woolard (1985), Pujolar and Puigdevall (2015) in Catalonia; Jaffe in Corsica, Costa in Provence, O’Rourke and Ramallo in Galicia, O’Rourke and Walsh in Ireland (2015); Pentecouteau (2002) and Hornsby (2015 b) in Brittany, and McEwan-Fujita (2010) in Scotland. As discussed later in this chapter, It is notable that, until very recently, relatively few such studies had been carried out in Wales.

The increasing salience of the “new speaker” as a subject of study, in both majority and minority language contexts, has been accompanied, as discussed below, by increased interest in defining what is meant by “new speakerhood”.

From “Second Language Learners” to “New Speakers”

O’Rourke and Pujolar (2015, 145) trace the emergence of the “new speaker” concept to discussions among researchers working, from around 2007 onwards, with Europe’s lesser known languages. The inclusion of this hitherto unrecognised social group as “speakers”, rather than “learners”, of such languages began at that time to be recognised as increasing the potential for language revitalisation, as “learners” were

recognised for the first time as members of the speech community; however it was also acknowledged that bringing new members into the community, often from different ethnolinguistic groups than existing members, might entail “the consequent problem of social differentiation between first-and second-language speakers, and tensions over ownership and legitimate language rights”.

Such struggles over the legitimacy of “new speakers” are linked with the hierarchical categorisation of speakers based on “competence”, with only “native speakers” regarded as legitimate and authentic representatives of the speech community. The assumption that only one version of the language is “correct”, namely the version associated with “a particular community, within a particular territory, associated with an historical and an authentic past”, and that this community has the sole power to decide who to include or exclude, implies an essentialist view of linguistic identities which O’Rourke et al. (2015, 7) view as ideologically rooted in nineteenth century linguistic ethnonationalism, and which also resonates with the use of language to wield symbolic power as envisaged by Bourdieu (1991).

Within such territorially and culturally bounded communities, not only “outsiders”, but existing community members, may find themselves excluded on the basis of “competence to speak”. Dorian (1977) identifies “semi-speakers” of Scottish Gaelic, who speak some Gaelic, but are not regarded, and may not regard themselves, as fully competent. Grinevald and Bert (2011: 51) mention “ghost speakers”, who can speak the language, but choose not to, and therefore seem to have categorised themselves as non-speakers. Although attaining “speakerhood” may be problematic for individuals falling into these categories, as their relationship to the speech community may need to be re-defined, slightly different issues may face individuals identified as “new speakers”. Hornsby (2015 a, 108) identifies new speakers as standing out from “semi” or “ghost” speakers “in three distinct ways – transmission, attitude and origin....(the new speaker) has acquired the language in a formal setting; is positively disposed toward the language being learned; and might not originate from the ethnolinguistic group in question”.

Defining “The New Speaker”

Since new speakers, unlike the other categories mentioned, have not “lost” their relationship to the speech community, but never had one in the first place, the issue

is not how the relationship can be restored, but the process by which it comes to be defined. How does one cease being a “language learner” and become a “new speaker”? Does it involve becoming more competent, or simply being viewed differently? Jaffe (2015, 41) suggests that “a socially and communicatively consequential level of competence and practice in a minority language” is required. The inclusion of “competence” implies the existence of measurable criteria, but on the other hand, deciding whether the level of competence attained is “socially and communicatively consequential” is surely a matter of subjective judgement. Having established that competence is socially constructed, Jaffe goes on to discuss “what kinds, levels and “packages” of competence “count” as sufficient; who does the evaluating, and what social or institutional forms of authority back up these evaluations”. Does how the speaker self-identifies count, as well as how he or she is identified by members of the speech community? Is there any negotiation around these identifications? If “practice” also counts, what does this mean - does the language have to be spoken outside the language class, or will interaction within the language class suffice? Jaffe ultimately concludes that language class interactions do count, as .(they) “are not transition points on the way to “real” social interactions and contexts; they *are* “real” social interactions and contexts in and of themselves” (p. 42). A strong emphasis on self-identification is therefore placed on self-attribution as opposed to attribution by the language community.

This discussion highlights the extreme difficulty of differentiating in absolute terms between the category “language learner” and that of “new speaker”, and the fact that these categories are ultimately assigned on the basis of what can be negotiated in the course of social interaction. Such negotiations may involve conflict between self-identification and attribution by others. Despite the difficulty involved, however, becoming a new speaker is a socially possible process, situated within time and social space, and the steps, or trajectories, through which this “becoming” is achieved are capable of being mapped out.

New Speaker Trajectories – the Concept of “Muda”

Pujolar and Gonzalez (2013) describe how trajectories of this nature have begun to be observed in Catalonia, where in the past “Catalans have traditionally constructed language as the main emblem of identity embodied in its speakers...(and) ...speakers

have tended to use language according to the ethno-linguistic identities they attribute to interlocutors” (p. 138) Now “young Catalans increasingly rely on contextual factors to decide in which language to speak and...the attribution of group identities is losing relevance” (ibid.) This change to more fluid linguistic identities is seen as taking place at the point of social interaction; as individuals move through time and social space, they “enact significant changes in their linguistic repertoire”(p. 139). The authors use the Catalan word “muda” to describe the “specific biographical junctures” where such changes may transpire. “Muda” in Catalan refers to changes in appearance, be it colour or skin in animals, or, for people, when they adopt a more carefully monitored appearance” (p. 142). The concept is significantly different from that of “assimilation”, traditionally used to describe the crossing of linguistic boundaries, in that these boundaries no longer exist:- “...seen from the traditional ethnolinguistic perspective, adopting a language was constructed as a form of boundary crossing involving assimilation. But if we do not wish to make this analytical assumption, what we have is a change in language use in which the scope and the implications for a self are not predefined and more negotiable” (p. 143). A muda does not necessarily mean that an individual changes to using the target language on every occasion: “More often, a muda takes place in a very specific context and affects a limited number of relations; but it nevertheless entails an important change in qualitative terms.” (ibid.) The language class is mentioned as the most obvious example of a “muda”; additional “extra-curricular” mudes are stated to take place on entering primary school, high school or university; entering the labour market, creating a new family, and becoming a parent. The authors’ study in Catalonia uses life history accounts to map out the process by which mudes are created.

Walsh and O’Rourke (2014) apply the muda concept, which they define as “a critical juncture in the life cycle where a speaker changes linguistic practice in favour of the target language” (p. 68), to the Irish context, and identify in addition a “gaelscoil” muda, involving a move from an English medium primary school to an Irish speaking secondary school; a “Gaeltacht” muda involving time spent in designated areas (Gaeltacht) where only Irish is spoken; and a “retirement” muda, when release from the pressures of work provides increased opportunities to learn the language.

The Contribution of Symbolic Interactionist Perspectives and Poststructuralist – Summary

Symbolic interactionist and poststructuralist approaches to second language learning, in summary, enable us to observe in detail how second language learners attempt to negotiate new linguistic identities as “speakers” rather than as “learners”, across different social and temporal spaces; the different trajectories which may be involved, and the difficulties and barriers that may be faced. The recognition that learners may become “speakers” implies recognition of the legitimacy of their contribution to the revitalisation of threatened languages. However negotiation of legitimacy may be especially problematic in the context of threatened speech communities. Studies of “new speakers” have been carried out in various language revitalisation situations, but to a limited extent in the Welsh context.

Empirical Studies of Adults Learning Welsh

Having described the historical development of academic research on second language learning, particularly in a minority language context, this review will now consider empirical studies of second language learning in the specific context of Wales. The first important observation to make concerns the comparative paucity in number of such studies, especially as compared to the considerably larger number of studies involving “first language” Welsh speakers; Hodges, for instance (2009), in her study of the failure of young people educated through the medium of Welsh to transfer to actual use with friends and family or within the wider community, cites a large number of published studies, from 1978 onwards, on the reasons why parents choose Welsh medium education for their children. This dearth of “new speaker” studies is perhaps somewhat surprising given the comparative sophistication of language revitalisation efforts in Wales (see Chapter 1), but perhaps unsurprising given the contestations surrounding “Welsh identity” also described in Chapter 1. What research does exist has largely been carried out, with some exceptions, by researchers who either themselves have learned Welsh, or have been involved in Welsh for Adults instruction. Significant studies of adult new speakers of Welsh can almost be counted on the fingers of one hand.

The Importance of Research Orientation

The studies concerned vary considerably in terms of epistemological stance, theoretical perspective, and research setting. Epistemologically, the social world under investigation may be one capable of being understood only through the unique perspective of the participants as interpreted by the researcher (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995), or may alternatively be one which is objectively “real”, the research questions centring around how to achieve real world goals, and researcher positioning comparatively objective. Language learning may be viewed as determined by individual differences at one end of the scale or as constructed through social practice at the other. Perspectives may vary according to academic discipline, whether this happens to be sociology, sociolinguistics, or education. It may also be significant that the studies cover a 40-year time-span, during which the “macro” environment, and therefore experiences at “micro” level, might be expected to have considerably altered. These differences in epistemological or theoretical orientation, discipline and context inevitably affect the focus of the studies, and influence the extent to which learners may be portrayed as becoming “new speakers”. Given the importance of such differences in determining methodology and conclusions, they will be paid close attention in comparing and contrasting the studies. Since earlier studies were ethnographic in nature, and later studies more varied in approach, the analysis will at the same time follow roughly chronological lines.

The more varied approach taken by recent studies perhaps merits some comment, as it may seem somewhat at odds with Guba and Lincoln’s (2005) assumption of a paradigmatic progression from positivism, through post-positivism and critical theory, towards constructivism; and, given a presumed alignment of paradigm with method, through quantitative and mixed methods towards qualitative inquiry. Using this framework, the use of ethnographic methods by earlier studies and of more varied methods by later studies would seem to mark a puzzling retrogression from constructivism back to postpositivism. However, Tashakkori and Teddie (1998, 7 – 12) suggest a somewhat different framework, seeing an evolution through positivism (up to the end of World War 2), postpositivism (1950s to 1970s), and constructivism (1980s to 1990s), followed by a “pragmatic” approach viewing quantitative and qualitative perspectives as compatible, as “the world is complex and stratified and often difficult to understand” (Reichert and Rallis 1994, 89); and the method as

determined by the research question rather than by the paradigm. Using this framework, the more varied approaches of later studies are explicable in terms of differences in the questions asked – which are in turn influenced by differing theoretical and disciplinary perspectives, and the answers to which may require differing epistemological orientations. This implies that, in comparing and contrasting epistemologies, perspectives and contexts, the extent to which the research questions asked in the present study are answered will be at the forefront of analysis.

Early Ethnographic Studies; Bounded Identities

The first significant studies, carried out by Trosset (1986) and Bowie (1993), sociologists both working in North Wales, are epistemologically relatively “modern” in that they reject the “mental mechanisms” approach of earlier work in favour of one emphasising social interaction. Trosset states that “studies such as those presented in Bailey, Long and Peck (1983) and van Essen and Menting (1975)...are concerned with the explication of language as a mental structure...this approach is self-limiting, because it ignores the fact that language is above all an instrument of interpersonal interaction” (p. 165). Ethnography, involving “direct observation of and participation in the activities of a social group over an extended period of time” is stated to “make possible a more multifaceted understanding of a given aspect of cultural behaviour than can be obtained when that aspect is studied in isolation, either through interviews or through laboratory tests” (p. 166).

Although ethnographic, both studies exhibit differences as well as similarities in approach. In terms of similarities, both authors are themselves Welsh learners. According to the typology of “membership roles” which Adler and Adler (1987) use to differentiate between the varying relationships that the researcher may have with the social group studied, they are “complete members”, or “insiders”, fully immersed in the research setting and sharing commonality of experience with the participants. This stance, while affording “direct access” to the culture of the group, at the same time implies subjectivity and perhaps doubt as to whether the perceptions of one individual can accurately reflect those of an entire culture. Both authors adopt a symbolic interactionist perspective, albeit with slightly different emphases. Bowie’s chief interest, based on her own experience and that of close acquaintances, is in how individuals experience the use of language to maintain the symbolic boundary

between “Welsh” and “English” communities in North Wales: the experience described is of a collective nature, the identities under negotiation national identities. Learners are described as reaching towards a Welsh identity which cannot be achieved, as one must, in North Wales, be categorised as either “Welsh” or “English”, with nothing possible in between. The symbolic importance of language is seen as a symptom of the diminution of other aspects of Welsh national identity: “..when faced with (this) lack of recognition from without, the Welsh have turned to the creation and recreation of a Welsh people, using historical myths...and above all language, the medium through which all other facets of national identity are expressed. The English are an essential ingredient in Welsh identity, not in making the people what they are, but in providing a symbol of what they are not” (p. 191). The social “non space” occupied by learners of Welsh is a by-product of this collective power imbalance.

Trosset, whose conclusions take account of the perceptions of a wider range of individuals than those of Bowie, does not view the learner as forever condemned to occupy a social “non-space”, but, given the existence of two bounded language communities, as capable of negotiating a space somewhere on the boundary. The focus is therefore not so much on the socially conflicted nature of existence on the boundary, as on the steps by which a new space can be negotiated, on “the linguistic situation into which Welsh learners must move and the symbolic implications of their doing so, focusing largely on the perceptions of learners by native speakers, the responses of learners to these perceptions, and their resultant actions in their attempts to achieve an identity as Welsh speakers” (Trosset 1986, 167).

All learners are here described as undergoing a fairly similar trajectory and experiencing similar emotions – shame, embarrassment, fear of success. Participant experiences are heavily influenced by the contested social context within which the language is learned. Established speakers have a low expectation of learners’ potential ability to become speakers, and are all too ready to turn to English; hence the importance of learners taking charge of negotiations right at the start of the relationship. Perceptions of the national identity, both of learners and of the established speakers themselves, influence the negotiation of relationships, with different national groups reporting slightly different experiences, and the most complex negotiations taking place with non-Welsh-speaking Welsh individuals. In the process of identity negotiation, learners must make fundamental cultural adjustments

in order to achieve new and different linguistic identities. They must cross the boundary between one speech community and another; to be seen as “Welsh, they must stop being “English”, and speak Welsh with “first language” speakers only – those who converse with other learners, remain learners. Whether the identities eventually achieved are those of “full speakers” of the language is arguable; successful learners are accorded special significance because they have “chosen Welsh”. This means that they perceive themselves as constantly performing; they are constructed by the social world as much as constructing it.

Certain elements are absent from both accounts. Firstly, second and first language speakers are described as interacting within a linguistic context which does not include wider social structures, for example “official” policy initiatives to revitalise the language. Experiences are described in terms of direct interaction with members of the speech community; other ways in which linguistic interaction can take place – through contact with physical embodiments of language policy interventions such as Welsh language signs (the “linguistic landscape”), for example – do not feature. This may reflect the relatively small number of language policy initiatives undertaken at that time, which may in turn reflect the fairly low “official” value accorded to the language. Alternatively, the omission of any interactions other than these between actors may reflect the “insider” perspective of the researchers, who, claiming to “share cultural membership with the group under investigation” (Pelias 2011, 660), consequently focus on their own lived experience, and therefore on the micro rather than the macro dimension of the social world concerned. Secondly, the interactions observed are those involved in the process of learning Welsh, rather than in actively contributing to the reproduction of the language; the capacity in which participants’ experience is being investigated is not that of “new speakers of Welsh”, but of “Welsh learners”. Thirdly, the characteristics learners “bring with them”, in terms of geographical location, age, gender and ethnic background; the different life trajectories undergone, in terms of career, personal relationships, or parenthood; all of which might lead to different linguistic trajectories, are not examined in detail in either study.

Introducing the Possibility of Change

A third ethnographic study in North Wales, by Kathryn Jones (1993), adopts a different approach. Jones is not herself a Welsh learner, and therefore to some extent an

“outsider” rather than an “insider”. The process of learning Welsh is described not as directly experienced by the study participants, but as elicited by the researcher. As the researcher is not herself “inside” the world under investigation, she uses a variety of data collection methods to achieve an inside understanding; questionnaires, in-depth interviews, language diaries and recordings of interactions in various contexts. A very different perspective from previous studies emerges, both on the learners and on the social setting, influenced partly by researcher positioning, and partly by academic discipline, in this case sociolinguistics rather than sociology. For the first time, learners are described as active users of Welsh: - “...the in-migrant learners in this study were all involved, in different ways, in creating opportunities for themselves to use Welsh, either with other speakers of the language or by themselves....In this respect, they seem to be involved in using Welsh in ways which contribute to the maintenance and development of the language, which are ultimately part of the process of attempting to reverse language shift in Wales” (p. 651). This portrayal of learners as active users of the language effectively positions them as new speakers of Welsh. Detailed examination of learners’ language use reveals that individual experiences can vary considerably; learners are no longer one homogeneous group. Neither are their experiences described purely in terms of direct interaction with first language speakers; learners are described as watching Welsh language television programmes and reading Welsh magazines and books. Bilingual mail is received from official bodies such as telephone and electricity companies. Bilingual signage is available in libraries. As this account dates from roughly the same period than the previous two studies, it is possible that this change is due not so much to advances in language policy as to the different positioning of the researcher, who, as an “outsider”, is able to take a wider-lens view of participants’ experiences than that of the “insider”, factoring in macro as well as micro dimensions; and whose own professional involvement is presumably accompanied by a keen awareness of language policy interventions.

Individual Differences or Social Context?

In addition to its consideration of external structures, as mentioned above, the view taken by this study of both language production and learner positioning is more fluid than that of previous work; neither the dynamics of the language community nor the nature of learner trajectories are set in stone. Given a more fluid and multi-layered

social world, how the various dimensions of that world interact to bring about change needs to be explored. Individual differences and wider social context are both seen as being implicated. The dynamics of change are located within interaction between the attitudes and motivation of learners, their use of Welsh, and the social context of language learning and use. Integrative motivation - the desire to belong to the community – is seen to be associated with increased use of Welsh, and instrumental motivation - for example, the desire to get a job – with less frequent use. Hence “Chris and Linda valued Welsh in different ways and their language values were reflected in their reported uses of Welsh. Chris values Welsh as a means of integrating, and becoming accepted in his local, Welsh speaking community. Linda values Welsh as a qualification which will give her improved career opportunities, rather than as a means of integrating with other Welsh speakers” (p. 647). However, it is evident that Chris and Linda’s attitudes and motivation are substantially influenced by the social contexts in which they learn and use Welsh; Chris, who owns a smallholding in a rural area, uses Welsh extensively at work, sixty per cent of his customers and a large proportion of his fellow-farmers being Welsh speaking. Linda, by contrast, who works in a library, has found that only “the odd person who comes in ...speaks to you in Welsh” (p. 644).

Although account is taken of some dimensions of the social context, however, the full effect which contexts and constructs such as place of birth and residence, gender, race, class, ethnicity or sexual orientation, might have on participant experiences, has arguably not been explored, as the 14 participants were not selected on the basis of these characteristics, but because they all happened to come together to learn Welsh at one particular time and, importantly, in one particular location, which was again in North rather than Mid or South Wales. The study sample is therefore unlikely to represent the full range of individuals who might learn Welsh.

Also exploring the relative importance of learner attitudes and motivation, socio-demographic characteristics, and social context, and using a more representative sample, is the well-known 2002 study carried out by Newcombe (2002, 2007). This study encompasses South and Mid Wales, 175 questionnaires being distributed to Welsh for Adults classes in Cardiff, a further 69 at the 1998 and 1999 Eisteddfodau, and 19 at an intensive Summer School in Lampeter. In addition, 16 learners participated in semi-structured interviews, 10 in focus groups, and another 10 in a

journal study. Because the perspective of the study is educational, the purposive sample of interview participants was drawn up on the basis of characteristics which learning theory indicates might make a difference in terms of ability and motivation to learn - age, the extent to which Welsh features in the family background, and whether children in the family attend a Welsh medium school. The full range of contextual and demographic differences which might influence participant experiences is therefore not taken into account. The focus of the data analysis is similarly on individual learning experiences, with a strong emphasis on the socio-psychological barriers faced by learners.

A strong connection is seen between integrative motivation and increased use of the language. Specific motivations mentioned as being strongly associated with success are the desire to follow the media in Welsh and having children in Welsh medium education. Other motivations cited are “regaining a lost family language” and “identity issues” (all integrative). However, the limitations of the attitudinal approach are also recognised. Baker’s key work (1992, 88) on attitudes and language is cited to show that neither attitudes nor motivation may be particularly meaningful if considered in isolation:- “The two types of motivation (integrative and instrumental) are not mutually exclusive, can co-exist in one individual and change over time...There may be instrumental components alongside integrative motivations and there are often integrative elements to instrumental motivation” (p. 88).” These contradictions show the need to consider the context in which attitudes and motivation occur; as a result of this increased recognition of the importance of context “more recent developments are characterised by a move towards a more situated approach” (ibid.). Hence, as well as individual differences, the study identifies the social context of learning, and especially the tendency of established Welsh speakers to turn to English in conversation with learners, as an important factor impacting on success.

This study is of considerable importance, as the larger size of the sample in comparison to that of previous studies reveals the full extent of the barriers faced by learners of Welsh. The conclusion, that Welsh learners need to develop “learning strategies” to overcome these barriers, has been of considerable practical help to both learners and Welsh for Adults tutors. However, the educational focus of the study, with questionnaire and semi-structured interview methods used to identify barriers to

learning, makes for a less detailed sociological or sociolinguistic “thick description” of the social world under investigation than that of previous ethnographic studies.

From Individual Differences to Social Practice

The move towards a more varied approach is seen to continue, as Mann’s (2004) study based in North Wales uses a mixed methods approach to combine objective and subjective perspectives. Comprehensive socio-demographic information about the research participants is provided, and a survey carried out to enable variables such as level of Welsh language ability, length of residence in Wales, birthplace/place of upbringing, national identity, socio-economic status, age, marital status and gender, as well as attitudes and motivation, to be cross-tabulated in order to reveal which factors most significantly affect the learning and use of Welsh. This is intended to facilitate a “more quantitative analysis of...motivations, attitudes and language use” (p. 149) than that of previous studies. The survey results proved contradictory in some respects, highlighting the limitations of both “attitudinal” and quantitative approaches. Positive attitudes towards the language are not necessarily associated with greater use of Welsh. Attitudes and motivation are also shown to be inconsistent; although, in contrast to previous studies, a majority of participants in this study were motivated by the need to use Welsh at work, a high proportion of respondents (77.8%), when asked to respond to various attitudinal statements, agreed that “If you live in a Welsh speaking community it is only right to learn” and also that “I have a responsibility to support the community where I live” (both integrative).

This shows the need for qualitative as well as quantitative work in order to reveal the social mechanisms behind the figures – for example, high integrative motivation combined with low levels of use might well indicate that barriers of some kind have been encountered. The survey data is therefore complemented by 10 qualitative interviews which do indeed reveal that participants experience a number of “symbolic barriers in terms of the interactions between learners and first language Welsh speakers” (p. 224), though not necessarily how these barriers connect up with the conflicted views portrayed in the survey results.

As regards theoretical perspective, the symbolic barriers in question are viewed as capable of being gradually whittled away, as social reality is constantly being created and re-created at the point of social interaction. The present distinctly separate

“Welsh” and “English” language communities may gradually come closer together by means of mutual linguistic accommodation, where the rights of both majority and minority language speakers are recognised, at the level of both individual interaction and official language policy. The concept of “mutual accommodation” discussed here derives from the “in-group” and “out-group” framework of the socio-psychological school (Tajfel 1974, Giles 1977), as previously described in both this chapter and chapter one, where individuals converge towards a linguistic group with which they wish to identify, and diverge from groups with which they do not wish to identify. English speakers may accommodate Welsh speakers by learning Welsh – although this could also be achieved through a range of lesser measures, such as sending one’s children to Welsh medium schools, or simply agreeing with principles of cultural difference (Mann p. 263 -4). While acknowledging the possibility of the two language communities coming closer together, this viewpoint however still envisages both individual and collective linguistic identities as fundamentally separate – the individual who learns Welsh, rather than being a member of the Welsh language community, is still an “English” person making an accommodation.

Although not yet viewing learners as “new speakers”, this study marks a definitive move away from a view of learning as determined by individual characteristics. It points towards an understanding of language as social practice, and of wider social structures and categorisations being capable of influencing social practice over time. A similar view is taken by Williams and Morris, whose 2000 survey study of how Welsh is used in various contexts, including the family and workplace, though not specifically targeting individuals learning Welsh, does not exclude them. The introduction to the study states that we must “move away from the tendency to view action as conditioned by the centred human subject, and...consider the way in which social practice is located at the point where the human subject is constituted in and through discourse” (Glyn Williams and Morris 2000, 5).

The Effect of Research Method on Findings

A complete picture of exactly how “the human subject is constituted” is still not available. Firstly, the sample used in the Mann study is, like that of the Jones study, limited to individuals attending a given event (the Bangor University Summer School) in one particular place, at one particular time. It is noted that the participants are largely

female, middle aged, and middle class, from “English” backgrounds. Secondly, we lack a detailed account of the precise dynamics which have produced the results reported in the study. For example, the high level of instrumental motivation found may be either a typical feature of the “Welsh learning experience”, or alternatively due to the fact that a considerable number of participants in the Summer School, and in the study, worked at the Countryside Commission for Wales, and were obliged by their organisational language policy to learn Welsh.

How research methods can affect results is also illustrated by the recent study carried out by Andrews in 2011. This is the most comprehensive study to date in quantitative terms, comprising two surveys of learners enrolled in Welsh for Adults courses in North West Wales, the first in 2008 involving 1061 respondents (55.7% of the intake for that year), the second 479 (31.8% of the intake). As the questionnaire used was adapted from a course evaluation tool, many of the questions concern the effectiveness of the teaching methods used. Others, however, concern motivation to learn and use of Welsh. The most common motivator is “to help children with homework”, with “speaking with other members of the family” also highly rated; instrumental motivators such as speaking Welsh at work come fairly low down on the list. This contrasts with Mann’s finding that the need to use Welsh at work was the most frequent motivator. A similar pattern is reported for “use of Welsh”, which Andrews’ results show to occur most often with children, friends, and other family members, and least in “public” situations, for example in shops. Again, this contrasts with Mann’s finding that family use occurred least frequently.

The variations above could well be due to differences in the samples or the survey questions. On the other hand, it is also possible that changes in the social context between 2000 and 2011 have led to an increased desire on the part of non Welsh speaking parents to help their children become Welsh speakers - nearly 70% of participants in the Andrews study report having at least one Welsh speaking child within the family. This increased contribution to the reproduction of the language would strengthen the claim of learners of Welsh to be regarded as “new speakers”. Once again, the research method influences what the results do or do not tell us; because the Andrews study is purely survey-based, it does not provide details of exactly how the connection between language policy (the macro dimension) and the social actions and interactions taking place in the micro dimension, may work.

Whereas this, and other recent studies, hint that individuals learning Welsh have as yet achieved limited recognition as Welsh speakers, they do not, therefore, tell us how or why. Limited legitimacy is implied in the title of Andrews' study, namely "Llais y Dysgwr" (The Learner's Voice), which seems to indicate participants' continued categorisation as "learners" rather than "speakers". Roberts' 2009 sociolinguistic study of the attitudes of first language speakers in South East Wales towards second language speakers, using the "matched guise" technique (Lambert 2003), similarly records relatively negative perceptions. Davis et al. (2010), in their study of the attitudes of English in-migrants towards the language and bilingualism, make some mention of learners, highlighting that, despite overall positivity towards the language on the part of learners and non-learners alike, the rate of learning success still appears very low. More recently, Hornsby and Vigers' small scale study in West Wales (2018) show a perception, on the part of individuals learning Welsh, of limited acceptance by the Welsh language community. Other recent studies, in Cardiff and North East Wales respectively, of a very specific social group, immigrants from non-English backgrounds (Birmingham and Higham 2018, Rosiak 2018), although more positive regarding participants' potential to become "new speakers", still report some issues of legitimacy and integration. However, we still have only partial insight into the exact nature of the social processes currently implicated in this perception of illegitimacy and lack of recognition.

State of the Art and Limitations of Existing Studies

In summary, existing studies tell us a certain amount about the social processes involved in learning Welsh as a second language – but do they provide a full picture of these processes, taking account of recent developments in the theory of second language acquisition? And do they tell us the extent to which these processes result in legitimisation of learners as "new speakers of Welsh?"

Early accounts of learning Welsh "from the inside" are true to ethnographic principles in their rootedness in the experiences being described and analysed. However this very rootedness may imply limitations in terms of ability to reflect other perspectives and dimensions. Learners' experiences are viewed as being very similar. Successful learning experiences are described as infrequent and as involving difficult trajectories. A structural, or language policy dimension is absent. These conclusions could reflect

the realities of the contemporary social context; at the time when Trosset and Bowie wrote, pre political Devolution, relatively few individuals attempted to learn Welsh (Trosset op. cit., 169), appropriate language policy interventions may have been few in number, and in general the socio-political context may not have favoured successful learning. Alternatively, they may reflect the perspective of researchers viewing the phenomenon under investigation “from the inside” – a “micro” rather than a “macro” view.

Subsequent accounts take a more detached approach and describe more varied perspectives, with individual experiences of learning and using Welsh seen to differ. A wider range of dynamics therefore comes into play, implying greater possibilities for change. The inclusion of an additional dynamic, that of how Welsh is used, triggers an upwards gear-change in how learners are viewed - for the first time, they are seen to actively contribute to the reproduction of the language. The macro dimension, for example in the form of language policy, is seen to also influence interactions and perceptions at micro level.

Identifying “What Makes a Difference” – the Need to Consider Micro and Macro Dimensions

If change is possible, the associated question of “what makes a difference” points in the direction of previously discussed debates on the theory of second language learning, and more specifically on whether learning is an individual or a social phenomenon. Is success due to “attitudes” and “motivation” as intrinsic characteristics, or are “attitudes” and “motivation” states of mind arising in the course of particular social interactions?

Some recent studies (Newcombe, Mann and Andrews) attempt to measure against one another some of the dimensions which might make a difference, including participant characteristics, attitude, motivation and use, by using survey methods. These studies return contrasting results. Some find intrinsic motivation to be paramount, others instrumental. These differences could possibly be due to the different time periods or geographical contexts in which the research was carried out. However, they could also be due to sampling differences and variation in the survey questions, indicating the need for these methods to be complemented by qualitative work.

Although two of the studies using surveys (Mann and Newcombe) also make some use of semi-structured interviews, as does the Jones study, providing valuable additional insights, these may reflect a limited number of participant perspectives. Do younger people, from working class and non-English backgrounds, learn Welsh, and how do these different backgrounds affect their experience? Semi-structured interviews using an interview guide may also “not allow genuine access to the world views of members of a social setting” (Bryman 2012, 472). There is some indication that achieving “new speakerhood” is still rare in the Welsh context, but it is unclear why this should be so. A method is needed which, in investigating how and why, takes account of how micro and macro environments interrelate in the negotiation of Welsh speaking identities.

The need to take account of how micro and macro dimensions, individual and collective processes, inter-relate in the construction of second language identities is emphasised in recent theoretical work on second language learning. Heller (2008, 253) points out that the process of individual identity construction is inextricably linked to that of collective identities: “(bilingualism) has been centrally linked to the construction of discourses of State and Nation, and is therefore tied to the regulation of citizenship and related processes, notably colonialism, neo-colonialism, and migration, and of ethno-national identity, to education and other important agencies and sites – language training, the media and communications technologies, government bureaucracy, the workplace – to the role of the state in the organisation of economic activities...” (ibid.) Identities are negotiated not only at different sites and bringing into play different social constructs, but across different time periods: “A person negotiates a sense of self within and across different sites at different points in time” (Peirce 1995, 13).

Negotiating Linguistic Identities in Space and Time; the Need for Narrative Research

Given the involvement of these different processes and sites of construction, what research methods might be best placed to investigate how linguistic identities are negotiated? The narration of individual lives has been viewed as ideally placed to link individual to collective stories, micro to macro dimensions:- “...the close study of local practices ...opens up a window on wider social and ideological processes...specific processes of identification are embedded in wider relations of asymmetrical power and

in transnational contexts where different discourses about identity abound” (Martin-Jones et al. 2012, 63). The narrative is uniquely placed as a means of observing how personal, social and cultural identities are constructed within the wider social setting of multilingual or bilingual communities; and of mapping out how language ideologies and policies, social, family and workplace networks, and political constructions such as region or state, may affect experiences of learning and using the language.

The studies of individuals learning Welsh reviewed above afford many examples of instances where a narrative approach might provide additional detail of how individual and collective dimensions interact to fashion and explain participant perceptions. The Andrews study, for example, cites “wanting to speak to children” as an important reason for learning Welsh. A narrative approach would provide much greater contextual detail than currently available in Glyn Williams and Morris’s (op. cit.) brief account of how learners attempt to construct Welsh speaking identities within the family. Similarly, the Mann study found that many learners wanted to be able to use Welsh at work. Work is another obvious site of identity construction, and also, bearing in mind the link with economic and, by implication, social capital, of contestation; although work is mentioned briefly in the Jones study, and Williams and Morris’ study of Welsh in the workplace does not exclude learners, no existing study analyses learners’ workplace experiences in detail. Language policy initiatives represent an obvious example of the “discourses of State and Nation” mentioned by Heller. A narrative approach has the potential to describe in depth how individuals learning Welsh see themselves construed by current Welsh language policies.

Similarly, the narrative is viewed as capable of capturing experience through time in a way which surveys or semi-structured interviews do not. Bryman (2012, 582) summarises the deficiencies of conventional approaches:- “Most approaches to the collection and analysis of data neglect the fact that people perceive their lives in terms of continuity and process”. Miller (2000, 9) highlights the capacity of the narrative to capture the temporal element of human experience:- “In the process of self-narrating, research participants may construct identities which are multiple, changing, and at times conflicting” and “move in and out of narrative episodes in which they...consciously reflect(ed) on past, present and future selves and touch(ed) upon ambiguities”. Existing studies of adults learning Welsh do not record how Welsh

speaking identities develop through time after they have ceased being “learners”. The narrative has the potential to do so, as it is able to “reference the entire life experience of research participants” and show “how events unfold and interrelate in people’s lives” (Bryman, op. cit., 489).

The approach of tracing the evolution of new linguistic identities through different social spaces and time periods fits in well with the concept of “mudes”, defined as “critical juncture(s) in the life cycle where a speaker changes linguistic practice in favour of the target language” (Walsh and O’Rourke 2014, 67). It is at these junctures that significant construction of “meaningful selves, identities, and realities” (Chase 2011, 422) is most likely to occur. As discussed earlier, research has identified mudes likely to apply in Catalonia and Ireland. A narrative approach might potentially reveal which critical junctures apply in the context of Wales.

The question of legitimacy, of “what it means to be a competent person” Heller (2008, 153) is inevitably involved as new linguistic identities are negotiated. In the process of negotiating legitimacy as a Welsh speaker, individuals may find themselves categorised as “other”. The narrative has been viewed as a means for marginalised populations to find a voice without imposing the researcher’s agenda:- “The act of speaking to be heard references an “other” who needs to hear, to listen, to pay attention” (Chase op. cit., 428). As existing studies have focussed on the experience of the “typical (middle-aged, female, English speaking) learner”, the ways in which “other forms of social categorisation (race, gender, class, for example)” may impact on the process of identity construction has not yet been fully explored. A narrative approach may allow these “other voices” to be heard.

In summary, narrative research may have the potential to introduce a number of new dimensions to the research on Welsh language learning, catering for the embeddedness of individual experiences in wider social processes, introducing a temporal element which has hitherto been absent, and allowing different, and more contemporary, learners’ voices to be heard.

Language Diaries – the Life “As Lived” Rather Than “As Narrated”

Although the narrative interview perhaps provides a more multi-dimensional view of lived experience than other methods, it does not represent the life as lived, but the life as re-presented to the researcher. How the participant is perceived by the researcher, and vice versa, will inevitably exert influence on how the narrative is performed. Participant language diaries, as used by both Newcombe and Jones, may reduce the extent to which the presence of the researcher affects the process of narration, reflecting the narrative one constructs for oneself, rather than for the researcher. Jonsson (2012, 264) describes writing a language diary as a conversation with only oneself:- “an internal dialogue that takes place in the participant’s brain”. Language diaries are therefore well placed to complement narrative interviews by reflecting a different dimension of participants’ lived experience.

Conclusion

This chapter began by noting the ambivalence of the position of adults learning Welsh, and the questions which may arise around both their membership of the Welsh language community and their potential contribution to the revitalisation of the language. The move from essentialist to constructivist perspectives in the theory of second language learning implies that new linguistic identities can be negotiated, although this may be a complex, protracted and conflicted process involving continuing interactions between the individual and the collective, between micro and macro dimensions of the social world. The legitimacy of “new speaker” identities may be subject to contestation. Narrative research, complemented by the use of language diaries, has been identified as an appropriate method of investigating the trajectories undergone in negotiating “speakerhood”. Relatively few studies have been carried out into second language learning in the Welsh context, and none using a combination of the above methods. The samples involved and the range of social situations considered have been limited. These are gaps which the present study aims to fill. The next chapter will discuss in detail the theoretical perspective and epistemological orientation informing the study and determining the nature of the research methods.

3. Methods

From the Literature Review to the Research Questions

The introduction to the thesis traces the origins of my interest in the topic to my own experience of learning Welsh. Chapter One describes the complexity of the social context – contestations around individual and collective linguistic identities, the epistemological underpinnings of language revitalisation and how they are reflected in language policy and Welsh for Adults provision - within which the experience of learning Welsh is framed. The research themes for the study, as initially proposed, reflected my interest in tracing the connections between my personal experience and this wider social context:-

- 1) Second language learners' lived experiences of learning and using Welsh in North Wales.
- 2) First language Welsh speakers' perceptions of second language learners, as reflected in literature and media.
- 3) The implications for Welsh second language learning of the ideologies embedded in Welsh language policy and planning initiatives.
- 4) What implications can be drawn for our understanding of the relationship between State, Nation, Language and Citizenship in post-devolution Wales.

Richards (2005, 13) suggests that, in moving from the purpose of the research as initially envisaged to defining a research strategy, it is necessary to “consider where you will place your project, both geographically and socially”. The precise coverage of my study was at first difficult to define, as my knowledge of the scope and epistemological positioning of previous research into the acquisition of Welsh as a second language was at this stage incomplete, and the literature review, carried out from September 2013 onward in parallel to the initial planning of the study, was therefore an important step towards clarification. In terms of “domain of inquiry”, I discovered that the literature examining the relationship between language and socio-cultural identity spanned several academic disciplines; sociology, sociolinguistics and social psychology. Moving from this point to define the boundaries of my own study was initially problematic as I grappled with unfamiliar conceptual frameworks. As described in Chapter 2, I was however eventually able to detect, in the literature of

second language acquisition, a move from essentialist to constructivist epistemologies very similar to the epistemological shifts described in the sociological literature, as discussed in Chapter 1. Linguistic identities, like social identities in general, were no longer viewed as set and rigid, but as capable of being acquired. That new linguistic identities may be acquired implied in turn that individuals learning minority languages may contribute to language revitalisation by becoming “new speakers” of the language. A corresponding change in the focus of empirical studies was discernible, from the technical process of learning the language, to the social processes by means of which learners negotiate new linguistic identities, their potential role in revitalising threatened languages, and the barriers they may face along the way. The discovery of these epistemological similarities marked a crucial move forwards in terms of developing a theoretical underpinning for the study.

Again as discussed in Chapter 2, previous studies of learning Welsh as a second language appeared to be few in number, with even fewer studies taking a “new speaker” perspective, and the most recent study considering the lived experience of participants in any depth having taken place in 2004. As discussed in Chapter 1, the years since the formation of the National Assembly of Wales in 1999 has seen considerable growth in policy initiatives aimed at revitalising the Welsh language. All this opened up the opportunity for a new study focussing on how adults learning Welsh as a second language negotiate identities as “new speakers” of Welsh within the post-Devolution environment.

The research questions were re-drafted to read:-

- 1) How do second language Welsh speakers in North West Wales negotiate their social identity in the process of learning and using Welsh?
- 2) What are the implications for second language Welsh speakers of the ideologies embedded in Welsh language policy and planning initiatives?
- 3) What implications can be drawn for our understanding of the construction of national identity, and for the future of language policy and planning initiatives, in post-Devolution Wales?

Emphasis on the active negotiation of new linguistic identities has led to the restatement of the original “Second language speakers’ experiences of learning and

using Welsh” in the form:- “How do second language speakers negotiate social identity?” This emphasis on personal experience of negotiating identity close-up indicated one-to-one interviews of some depth, so the original intention to include the perspectives of first language speakers was abandoned as over-ambitious given the available timescale and resources, and the objective of exploring “First language Welsh speakers’ perceptions of second language learners, as reflected in literature and media” dropped. It may also be noted that at this stage, the term “new speakers of Welsh” appeared to be an unfamiliar concept in some academic contexts, and that I did not have sufficient confidence in the extent of its currency to include it in the research questions.

Locating the study epistemologically and theoretically was the first step towards deciding how these questions might be answered. Ontologically, a view of second language identities as socially constructed implies a broadly constructivist position; unlike objects in the physical world, social phenomena and their meaning are produced through social interaction and are in a constant state of revision (Bryman 2012, 18). Given that this ontological position sees meaning as the source of our knowledge of the social world, the epistemological position which corresponds to it is interpretivist, and method qualitative (Guba and Lincoln 2005, 168). In terms of theoretical perspective, symbolic interactionism (Mead 1934, Blumer 1969) is very much concerned with meanings as derived from social interaction. However, the interaction between micro and macro environments which can be seen to be the focus of several of the research questions is a prime concern of poststructuralism (Heller 2008), as are the power contestations viewed by many “new speaker” studies as accompanying the negotiation of second language identities (Block op. cit.) Poststructuralism, however, as discussed in Chapter 2, sees discourse, rather than the interaction of social actors, as the sole way we can know the social world, and is therefore perhaps less favourably placed than symbolic interactionism to take account of “non-linguistic reality” (Crotty 1998, 203). Symbolic interactionism, unlike poststructuralism, does not deny the existence of the subjective self or the structures of the social world, but still takes account of the interaction of the micro environment of day-to-day social practice with the macro environment of the cultural understandings which, as social actors, we constantly create (ibid., 71). In its emphasis on how subject positions are continuously negotiated, it can also take

account of power contestations. The theoretical perspective informing the study is therefore broadly symbolic interactionist in viewing meanings as being constructed by social actors in interaction rather than through discourse, but retains a “poststructuralist” interest in the micro and macro dimensions of the social world and in imbalances of power. This perspective influenced the choice of data collection method, the temporal scope of the study, and the nature of the sample.

The Data Collection Method

Since symbolic interactionist perspectives view the acquisition of new identities as a process of interactive negotiation, and poststructuralist perspectives as one involving the interaction of micro and macro environments within different social spaces and across time, I tentatively decided on biographical narrative interviews as the most appropriate method of data collection. The potential of the narrative to describe how identities are negotiated is highlighted by Block (op. cit., 13). How the narrative links individual to collective stories is, as discussed in Chapter 2, described by Martin-Jones et al. (2012, 63):- “the close study of local practices...opens up a window on wider social and ideological processes..” Temporality is also catered for, since “a person negotiates a sense of self within and across different sites at different points in time” (Peirce 1995, 13). The temporal dimension was dealt with in the present study by means of a decision to carry out not only initial interviews, but follow-up interviews six months later. The need to consider temporality affected the sampling strategy as well as the data collection method; that linguistic identities evolve through time also implies that this process continues after the initial period of learning the language through attending classes. No study of second language learners in the Welsh context had provided an account of the continuing process of negotiating one’s social space after the “official” learning process comes to an end. As fully described in the section on “The Sample”, this led to a decision to fill the gap by interviewing previous as well as current Welsh learners, particularly important in view of the research questions relating to post-Devolution changes in language policy. A further decision with regard to data collection was the precise form of biographical interview to be used; this is discussed later (see “Preparing for Fieldwork”).

The need to consider the different contexts in which identities are constructed led me to initially consider using focus groups and observation of classroom situations to

investigate how meanings are interactively constructed in group contexts, as well as in the context of individual subjectivities. Observation of interactions between individuals as well as within groups is also advocated by Block (op. cit., 92) as a way of “linking documented language use with informants’ sense of self”. However as my knowledge of the field deepened, the focus groups and classroom observation ideas receded. This was primarily because these methods focussed on how group, rather than individual identities were constructed; “Welsh learners” as a discrete social group had been considered by previous studies, whereas I viewed the potential contribution of this study to be its focus on individual rather than group identities. I became interested instead in using language diaries to complement the interviews, and thus to observe the evolution of individual subjectivities “in the round”, as narrated both to the researcher via the interviews, and, through the diaries, to oneself. (Martin-Jones et al. 2012). Individual observation was also rejected; since narrative and diary accounts record the life events which the participant views as most significant (Miller 2000), these methods seemed better suited than observation, which might well record a series of fairly random interactions, to mapping out the process of identity construction.

The Study Setting

Study setting, as the context in which “you are most likely to see whatever it is you are interested in” (Richards op. cit. 75) is of considerable importance in terms of enabling the researcher to observe the phenomenon under investigation. The literature review, this time through the sociological, rather than the sociolinguistics literature, was again useful in this respect. Geographical variation in the importance of the Welsh language as a marker of “Welsh identity”, as discussed in Chapter 1, together with the presumption that this may be a factor which affects new speaker trajectories, indicated that the choice of geographical location was an important one for the study. Including Mid and South, as well as North Wales, might have afforded an opportunity to observe whether trajectories varied according to the “Welshness” of the setting. However given that “the setting” is the context in which “you are most likely to see whatever it is you are interested in”, and that I was interested in interactions between new speakers and the Welsh language community, a greater number of which, given the numerical distribution of Welsh speakers recorded in the Census figures (Welsh Government 2011) could be presumed to occur in North Wales than in some other

areas, I decided that the “case” of North Wales was likely to provide sufficient contrasting contexts without resorting to comparison with other cases (Bryman 2012, 58). In addition the reflexive position of the researcher following a constructivist paradigm (Guba and Lincoln 2005) indicates that a degree of “embeddedness” in the study setting on the part of the researcher will enable him or her to better consider “how narratives work on the ground” (Gubrium and Holstein 2009, 144). Having spent twenty-five years in North Wales, I view myself as having developed a degree of such embeddedness; I have a reasonable sense, for example, of how “Welsh” most North Walian towns and villages are likely to be. However, I have no such sense in relation to mid or South Wales, which are for me, as for many North Walian, truly “another country”. The nature of the phenomenon, the research paradigm, and the available resources, all pointed me towards the choice of North Wales as the study setting. However my sense of “how Welsh” the setting is likely to be also indicated the existence of a point somewhere along the North Wales coast where the linguistic environment became markedly less Welsh. A local Welsh speaker I knew once identified this point as being located at Penmaenmawr. Taking into account the “catchment area” of the local Welsh for Adults provision, I took the liberty of placing it slightly further east, and finally decided on a study setting of “North West Wales as far as Colwyn Bay”, roughly corresponding to the area covered by Dwyfor, Arfon, Anglesey and Conwy West on the top left of the map below.

Figure 1: Map of the Study Area (Dwyfor, Arfon, Anglesey and Conwy West).



Source: Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board.

Ethical Issues

Social Research Association ethical guidelines emphasise the need for social researchers to “conduct their work responsibly and in the light of the moral and legal order of the society in which they practice” (Social Research Association 2009, 13). Protecting participants from undue harm is of prime importance (ibid. 14), and this is perhaps even more the case in the context of the biographical interview, given the focus on the minute details of participants’ lives (Wengraf 2001, 184). Prior to selecting and approaching the sample, ethical approval was sought from the College Research Committee during Summer 2014. As required by the University’s Research Ethics Policy (Bangor University, 2018), the ethics submission detailed the measures which would be taken to:-

- 1) fully inform participants about the purpose of the research
- 2) fully inform participants about what participation entails
- 3) fully inform participants about any risks involved
- 4) respect their confidentiality and anonymity
- 5) obtain their valid and informed consent
- 6) make any conflicts of interest or partiality explicit.

All the documents to be sent to the participants – the participant information form, separate consent forms to participate in and to record the interview, interview schedule and questionnaire to elicit demographic information – were included with the submission. The submission underlined the particular need, in the context of the biographical narrative interview, to provide detailed information on the nature of the interview in order to minimise any psychological risks, and to take account of the participant’s “ownership” of the data. Producing an unstructured narrative while the interviewer remains silent apart from “supportive noises” (Wengraf op. cit., 125) may be experienced as quite psychologically unnerving. This is particularly true in the context of telling one’s life story; although learning a language may not appear to be a particularly sensitive topic, the freedom to tell part of their life story may lead participants into unexpectedly private and emotionally fraught terrain. The need to protect participant anonymity in the context of the focus groups then envisaged as part of the project was also highlighted. The possible impact of my own learning of Welsh

on interaction with participants during the interviews was acknowledged, but not thought likely to cause any conflict of interest.

Measures to minimise risk to participants included the provision of detailed information on the nature of the interviews, couched in non-academic language, separate consent forms to participate in the interviews and to record, the establishment of ground rules for the proposed focus groups, and the provision of a Facebook support group for participants (although the Facebook group was not in the end implemented, as few participants turned out to have Facebook accounts). Ownership of the data was recognised by means of an undertaking to share the interview transcripts if required. Approval was granted subject to several minor amendments in the documentation, for example including the University logo on all the documents, and adding to the consent form a statement that non-participation or withdrawal would not result in any detriment to the participant's Welsh language studies.

The Sample

Ethical approval having been obtained, the process of identifying study participants could proceed. I commenced discussions with the Director and Tutor Organiser of the Canolfan Cymraeg i Oedolion in Bangor, as well as two other North Wales providers of Welsh courses for adults, on selecting the initial sample of participants for interview. Previous research on learning Welsh had generally used samples drawn from groups of current learners congregated together in particular places at particular times. The largely female, middle aged, middle class, and English speaking character of these samples has been noted in Chapter 2. Samples in qualitative research are generally viewed as consisting of "people who are relevant to the research question" (Bryman *op. cit.*,458).The study objective of identifying which factors might affect learning trajectories required a sample of greater socio-demographic diversity, including younger people, male participants, and a wider range of nationalities, ethnicities and social backgrounds. The inclusion of former as well as current learners responded to the need to consider the macro as well as the micro dimension and to take account of temporality. Participants who had learned Welsh at different times were included in order to encompass changes in political and educational regimes over the years. Previous learners who did not now use their Welsh extensively were envisaged as

being included along with those who did, to better examine why some trajectories had been more “successful” than others.

Studies such as those of Mann (2004) and Newcombe (2002), which had selected participants for interview from a wider, and, as noted above, relatively homogeneous survey pool, had done so on a theoretical basis, basing the criteria on factors, such as stage of learning, amount of time spent in Wales, and presence of Welsh speakers in the family background, thought to be important for success or otherwise in learning Welsh. The above factors were clearly potentially important in terms of the research objective of mapping trajectories from “learner” to “new speaker”, and were therefore included among the sampling criteria for the present study. Further theories, derived from previous research, appropriate to the study aims of examining the macro as well as the micro environment and of investigating how new speakerhood may be achieved, included differing levels of “Welshness” within the communities where participants lived (Kathryn Jones 1993); the desire to pass the language on to the next generation (Andrews 2011); and the “mudes” or “specific biographical junctures” where linguistic change may occur (Pujolar and Gonzalez 2013, Pujolar and Puigdevall 2015) . On this basis, the sample was designed to include participants representing different kinds of community within North West Wales; both with and without young children in school; and having currently or in the past experienced biographical junctures such as marriage, starting work or retirement.

Given the large amount of data likely to be generated by biographical narrative interviews, the consequently demanding nature of data analysis, and the resulting need to limit the interviews carried out to a manageable number, (Wengraf (op. cit., 148) suggests that a “negative trade-off” should be expected between the “intensity” of the interviewing method and the number of cases involved), these were demanding requirements. Although it was true that some participants might provide “extra value” by meeting more than one of the study criteria, the initial sample needed to be kept relatively low. Few studies using the biographical narrative method seemed to have involved more than around 20 interviews (Chamberlayne et al. eds., 2000). Account also needed to be taken of the possibility that the initial criteria might change in response to emergent theory (Wengraf op. cit., 96), resulting in a subsequent need to expand the initial sample. I set a tentative initial participant target of 10 current, and 10 “non current”, learners.

To recruit current learners meeting the sample criteria, I devised a questionnaire designed to elicit relevant demographic information, which I originally envisaged as being distributed and collected when completed by the Welsh for Adults Tutors. On the advice of the tutor organiser, who doubted whether tutors would have time to distribute and gather in the questionnaires during class time, I instead asked the tutors, during a departmental meeting which I attended and where I provided them with a verbal and written description of the project, to identify and obtain the contact details of interested learners. Eighty-one students who responded by providing their contact details were sent full project information and a copy of the questionnaire. Twenty-one students subsequently returned the questionnaire. Although more manageable than the original 80, this figure was still in excess of the 10 current learners I had envisaged, and also less diverse than I had hoped; older and female participants were still over-represented. I succeeded in whittling the number down to 11 on a purposive and theoretical basis; as well as participants at different stages of the learning process, living in different geographical areas, and having either Welsh speaking partners or young children at school, those underrepresented in previous research were prioritised, for example those who were male, or from younger age groups; those who identified themselves as Welsh but were not Welsh speaking, or who self-identified as either being of non-UK nationality or belonging to a minority ethnic group. One entire family comprising middle aged parents and a daughter in her early twenties were included as a possible illustration of the effect of generational differences on the process of becoming a speaker (Wengraf 2001, 104). Having made the initial selection, being conscious of the need, from the ethical point of view, to display respect for the remaining participants, I informed them that the project had elicited unexpected interest, and that I had filled my interview quota at present, but that I would keep them in reserve.

The 11 current learners finally selected were sent consent forms to participate in the research, with separate forms consenting to the interview being audio-recorded, and interview dates arranged. One prospective participant from a South American country dropped out at this stage, resulting in the sample including no-one of non-UK nationality or from a minority ethnic group. There was also a lack of representation from younger age groups, one prospective younger participant having dropped out on

discovering how long the interviews might turn out to be. It was hoped that these gaps would be filled as the study progressed.

Participants were asked whether they were willing to keep a language diary, and if so, whether they would rather write a free-form reflective diary recording their Welsh learning experience, or fill in a form recording how often, and with whom, they had spoken Welsh. Six participants expressed interest in the diary, five in the reflective diary but only one in the form diary. Since a single diary was clearly not a representative reflection of learners' use of Welsh, the data from the form diary was not used in the study, although the participant concerned did dutifully fill the forms in. Four reflective diaries were completed and collected on the occasion of the follow-up interviews six months after the initial ones.

Interviews with current learners were carried out, and work on the transcribing of the interviews begun, throughout the 2014 – 15 academic year. During the Summer of 2015, the transcription work continued, and the process of identifying participants not currently learning commenced. 2015 – 6 was devoted to interviewing this second cohort of participants, as well as to follow-up interviews of the initial participants, while transcription continued. A purposive sample of former learners was more difficult to acquire, given the lack of a suitable sampling frame from which to select. Under these circumstances, a “snowballing” technique may be used to locate hard-to-reach participants (Bryman op. cit., 184). As a former Welsh learner myself, I had a number of personal acquaintances who were themselves able to suggest further participants. Because their learning and use of Welsh had stabilised to a greater degree than was the case with those currently learning, this second set of participants were not asked to participate in follow-up interviews, or to keep diaries of their learning experience.

Gaps in the initial sample revealed themselves as interviewing and transcription progressed, as the narratives of English speaking retirees currently learning Welsh reflected remarkably similar themes. Although it was gratifying that themes were emerging, a more diverse range of informants was required to determine whether these themes were common to participants of all ages and nationalities. Attempts were made to recruit a more diverse sample of current learners by “snowball sampling” on the basis of suggestions by the initial participants. The snowball sampling exercise succeeded in recruiting a GP in her 30s and a participant of Danish nationality. It

proved difficult to arrange interview times with the GP, which, like the earlier failure to recruit younger participants, illustrated the barriers which might be encountered by people with work and parenting obligations not only to participating in research, but to attending Welsh classes. An effort was also made, in recruiting former learners, to find participants with the demographic characteristics lacking in the first sample. This second sample eventually included two Americans, one German, a Scot, and one male from a minority ethnic background, as well as a participant who worked in a café. Details of the full sample are available in Appendices 3 and 4.

Similarities were also evident in the themes emerging from interviews with former learners, as many of the participants initially recruited used Welsh quite extensively in their everyday lives, revealing a need to extend the sample to include individuals who had given up learning and/or did not use their Welsh a great deal. This proved more difficult than locating participants keen to put themselves forward, or put forward by others, as examples of successful learning. The high value accorded by the Welsh speaking community to individuals who raise the status of the language by learning Welsh is well documented (Trosset op. cit., 175); no-one who had acquired a reputation as a Welsh speaker was keen to mention negative experiences. One prospective participant reported to have rejected “Welshness” was initially located, then succumbed to long-term ill health. Another was eventually recruited with the help of one of the Welsh tutors. In addition, two current learners confessed to having given up Welsh classes during their six-month follow-up interviews.

Preparing for Fieldwork: the Interview Schedule

The interview situation inevitably involves both *interaction* between researcher and participant, and the respective *subjectivities* of both parties (Bornat 2008, 344). Since different theoretical orientations entail differing views of the roles in the research process of interaction and, particularly in the biographical interview, of subjectivity (ibid.), the philosophical underpinning of the research needs to be considered when constructing the interview schedule.

The importance of subjectivity in the context of the narrative is acknowledged by various research traditions. The act of narrating may be regarded as “an act of constitution of identity” (De Fina 2003, 16) which enables the subjective self to emerge. This view is categorised (ibid.) as involving a “psychological” theory of identity, and

many of its proponents (Bruner 1990, Polkinghorne 1991) identify as psychologists. An example of a study taking such a psychological perspective is Jones' and Rupp's account (2000, 277) of the conflicts experienced by an Indian mother due to her symbiotic relationship with her learning disabled son. However the emergent self as constituted in and by language can also be viewed as a social one; Schutz (1962, 59), whose ideas have exerted considerable influence on the Biographic Narrative Interpretive Method (BNIM) (Rosenthal 2004, Schütze 1992, Riemann 1988, Wengraf 2001) talks of the social reality to be interpreted by the social scientist as "the thought objects constructed by the common-sense thinking of men and women living their daily life within the social world". The BNIM concurs with this view in seeing the narrative interview as involving the construction of subjectivity, and thereby of the subject's social world. Wengraf, for example (2001, 69), states that the objective of the interview is "to allow fullest possible expression of the concerns, the systems of value and significance, the life-world, of the interviewee". This interpretation of the subjective self has clear implications for how the role of interaction is interpreted. The interview strategy, firstly, in order to allow the fullest possible expression of the participant's life-world, aims to "minimise the interviewer's concerns, systems of values and significance". A single question is asked to generate an uninterrupted narrative, after which "interventions by the interviewer are effectively limited to facilitative noises and non-verbal support" (ibid. 113). Verbal interaction between researcher and participant during the narration is minimal.

Other related paradigms inspired by Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis (Garfinkel 1967; Sacks 1992) see identity as emerging in and through not language, but social interaction: the emergence of identity is "a process in itself, constituted in "performance", negotiated and enacted, not internalised in any way, and with no substantial existence outside the local interactional context" (De Fina op. cit., 18). Social identities, and the social world, are constructed by means of a constant process of interaction between social actors, which may include narration, rather than primarily through narration itself. The view of identity as produced in interaction implies a rather different interpretation than that of the BNIM of how the narrative is elicited. Gubrium and Holstein (1994, 123) describe the narrative as produced by and in interaction between researcher and participant, with the interviewer engaging in prompting to "activate the respondent's stock of knowledge". This is a decidedly more interventionist

approach than that of the BNIM School. Critics of the BNIM School, for example Bornat (2008), view the BNIM method as excluding “the possibility of a responsive interaction with joint initiative taking on both sides”, using the example of how she used strategic interventions in an interview situation in order to draw out an account of social and political divisions in the cycling world, to illustrate “the dialogic possibilities of the interview” (pp. 348-9).

As regards the philosophical underpinning for my own methodological choices, I have already described my interest in second language identities as deriving from a view of identity as socially constructed, and my epistemological orientation as constructivist and interpretivist. Narrative methodology had been chosen as a means of observing the interaction between micro and macro dimensions as identities are constructed within different social and temporal spaces. The BNIM method was compatible with this approach in viewing identity as socially constructed, and in emphasising the involvement of both micro and macro dimensions in the process of construction (Rustin 2000, 47). The BNIM approach was also of special interest in terms of theories of how second language identities are constructed, in its emphasis on the emergence of “trajectories”, or crucial moments in the process of identity construction where a change of direction occurs, bringing to mind as it did the “mudes”, or critical junctures in the life course where linguistic identity changes. A decision was therefore made to elicit the data using an interview schedule which followed the model recommended by Wengraf (op. cit., 113), with a “generative question” to elicit an unstructured narrative, followed by questions arising from the narrative, then any queries suggested by the research questions and not addressed by the participant’s account.

It was true that the BNIM view of identity as accomplished in narration was somewhat different to that of identity as produced in interaction. Identity as constructed in interaction might entail the use of a slightly more interventionist interview technique than that employed by the BNIM, in order to elicit, for example, the various social contexts in which identity is constructed, including that of interaction between the participant and the researcher. Although it has been pointed out, for example by Bornat (op. cit.) that the BNIM does involve interaction in the form of the “structuring” applied by the researcher during data analysis, and that the “non-interventionist” phase of the BNIM interview is followed by a second and third phase, the third phase consisting of semi-structured questions, I was nevertheless aware of the

epistemologically different, and less reflexive position occupied by the researcher in this, than in other forms of biographical interview. I was also well aware of the challenge to the skill of the interviewer (Wengraf 2001, 127) involved in requesting participants to talk about life experiences in an unstructured way, having used the same method for my Masters' research on the career experiences of female academics; a typical reactions to the interview situation had been "What – you want me just to ramble..?!" The ethical challenges involved have already been mentioned. So, at this stage in the research process, although I had an outline research strategy, some questions regarding the nature of the interviews which I was about to undertake remained unanswered, and, in keeping with the phenomenological principle that real life experience precedes theory, I was prepared to alter the strategy in view of what happened during the interviews and the nature of the data.

Other aspects of preparation for fieldwork also raised questions of differing epistemologies. Constructivist interpretations viewing the interview as co-produced by the researcher and the participant would advocate the sharing of transcripts and possibly interviewee participation in interpreting the data (Abbas and Court 2013). Despite its emphasis on the subject, the BNIM views interpretation as resting solely with the researcher(s) (Bornat op. cit.). I felt that the decision on whether to share transcripts was therefore partly one of defining in greater detail the epistemological parameters of the study. However transcript sharing raises ethical as well as epistemological issues – although motivated by a desire to empower the participant, it may produce "not only empowerment and ownership but also surprise and embarrassment" (Forbat and Henderson 2005, 1118); during my Masters' research, e-mailing one participant a copy of her interview transcript had resulted in her declaring her intention to withdraw. In this instance I decided to treat the issue of transcript sharing as an ethical one only, offering participants the option to receive the transcripts, but pointing out that it was possible some people might feel upset on seeing what they had said. I set the epistemological issue of co-interpretation of the data aside for the moment, defining the purpose of sharing as finding out whether the transcripts were an accurate record of the interview, and eliciting additional comments to be added to the written account.

Into the Field

Interviews were carried out and transcribed, and participant diaries collected, between Autumn 2014 and Summer 2016. During the fieldwork period I kept a diary which recorded not only my thoughts on the themes emerging from the interviews, but my reflections on the fieldwork situation in terms of my relationship to the social situations observed. I eventually came to adopt the position of viewing these reflections not only as an aid to data analysis, but as data in themselves (Gubrium and Holstein 2009, 34). Issues arising during the fieldwork included the form of the interviews; the related question of the boundary between researcher and participants; the language in which interviews were carried out; the interview locations; and the transcription process.

Initially, I found eliciting the uninterrupted narrative challenging. I was prepared for feeling less than comfortable in the interview situation, and for participants asking me whether they were saying what I wanted to hear, and had rehearsed the coping strategies advised by Wengraf (op. cit.194), such as avoiding expressing emotional reactions to participants' statements, and always guiding them back to their own experiences; however in contrast to the BNIM view that putting one's own subjectivity "on hold" allows the participant's subjectivity to emerge, I experienced the boundaries between myself and the participants as becoming, in the course of the interview, somewhat blurred. As part of the single question designed to induce narrative (Wengraf 2001, 113), I had introduced myself as someone who had lived in Wales for a number of years and who had learned Welsh. Current learners wanted to know about my experience of learning Welsh, and previous learners to compare their experience of living in Wales and using their Welsh with mine. One participant asked me several times for the meaning of Welsh words, and several times I guided him back in the direction of his own experience. Finally he asked me a question, then said "but...I know...you're going to say you can't comment on that". He, as well as I, clearly felt uncomfortable during his uninterrupted narrative.

After attending a seminar given by Gerhard Riemann (Riemann 2015), who was slightly less prescriptive than Wengraf in his view of how much the interviewer was allowed to say, I felt more confident in showing participants I understood and appreciated what they said, yet still letting them take the narrative in their own direction. However the issue of the extent to which there should, or could, be a firm

boundary between researcher and participant remained. On re-reading the fieldwork diary, I am struck by the number of questions about the participant's experience which arose only in post-interview reflection. The "follow-up" interviews provided an opportunity to ask these questions to the current, but not the previous learners, for whom there was no follow-up. I wondered about the BNIM view of the interview as a monologue rather than a conversation. Were the interviews really allowing participants' inner worlds to unfold? The number of interesting comments which arose only in conversation after the recorder had been switched off sometimes seemed to indicate that the uninterrupted narrative had involved an element of performance for the recorder. When, later, I read the interview transcripts, I realised the full extent of the "blurring" of boundaries between interview and interviewee. The fieldwork period co-incided with the Scottish Independence Referendum, and at several points the participant and I are effectively co-constructing Welsh/Scottish national identity. At other points, we are co-constructing ambivalent experiences of the Welsh speaking community.

Rather than viewing the interview as a process which "minimizes the interviewer's concerns" in order to "allow the gestalt of the interviewee to become observable" (Wengraf *op. cit.*, 69) I was moving towards an alternative view of the interview situation as one in which researcher and participant constantly negotiate perceptions both of themselves and the other. This process of negotiation (as well as the crucial role of language as a marker of identity in North Wales) is illustrated by the issue of the language in which the interviews were carried out, whether Welsh or English. All the correspondence which I had sent had been bilingual. I asked the "past learners" if they wished to be interviewed in English or Welsh, even if they had replied in English. I also give this option to one "current learner" who had replied in Welsh. She asked if the interview really had to be in Welsh, and was relieved to hear that this was not the case, although apologetic that her Welsh was not yet good enough. However throughout the interview, although from the South of England and having lived in North Wales for only a short time, she spoke English in a strong North Walian accent. She was clearly very anxious to rapidly acquire a "Welsh speaking identity". Two participants stated that they wished to be interviewed in Welsh. This was in itself significant in terms of the extent to which they perceived themselves as "Welsh speakers". It also presented me with a challenge to my own view of myself as a Welsh

speaker; although I present myself in the Census returns as able to speak, understand, read and write Welsh, was I honestly able to reflect on the themes unfolding in the course of the interview as effectively in Welsh as I could in English? In one of the two interviews, the participant admitted that she could not always think of the correct Welsh word, and just used an English one instead, whereupon I relaxed and executed the interview reasonably effectively; however the other participant prided himself on his “unanglified” Welsh, and it is noticeable that I am much more reticent during this interview than in any of the others. So the interview accounts needed to be “framed” within the context of negotiation between researcher and participant, which in itself exemplified the extent to which social interactions in North Wales involve negotiations over language.

The epistemological question of the extent to which the interview is “co-constructed” in negotiation between researcher and participant raises the question of who “owns” the interview. This is an ethical as well as an epistemological issue, as was illustrated when, on being invited for her follow-up interview, one of the study participants stated that she wished to withdraw, embarrassed at the personal nature of some of the information she had revealed. The ethical basis of the absolute right to withdraw is perhaps more obvious if the contribution to the research consists of the participant’s own biography. Withdrawal of the data at later stages of the research is a hazard common to any research method requiring the use of inductive or abductive reasoning (Charmaz 2006), as the data may well by then have contributed to emergent theory; but the limited number of cases involved means that it is perhaps particularly problematic in the case of in-depth interviewing. Ethical approval for the study had been granted on the understanding of a right to withdraw without giving a reason. However, as the reason stated had been concern for anonymity, I felt justified in pointing out that all the study data would be presented in anonymised form, and in offering to give the participant the option of vetoing any sections of the finished study involving “her” data. Her decision to withdraw however remained unchanged. I decided that ethical considerations meant destroying the data as requested, but I also made an operational decision regarding the extent of co-production in viewing the themes I had identified in the data as not “belonging” to any particular participant, and therefore as eligible to contribute to emerging theory.

It became clear that as well as being “situated” in the framework of negotiation between researcher and participant, accounts were also situated within the location where the interview took place. Participants had been given the option of being interviewed in their own homes or on university or public library premises. Several participants opted to be interviewed in their own homes. It was noticeable that these participants spoke more freely of their family backgrounds than those interviewed in university or library premises. My post-interview reflections as recorded in the fieldwork diary included numerous observations on the material environment in and around the homes I visited. It gradually became evident that people’s surroundings, as well as what they said, were a valuable source of data. A number of participants resided with English speaking partners in large houses within coastal villages where there were substantial expatriate communities. The linguistic landscapes (Gorter et al. 2012) in such villages was dominated by signs in English, including one in which a church advertised itself as offering English speaking services. The accompanying narratives all mentioned the relative invisibility of the Welsh speaking community, and a degree of Welsh/English conflict. A participant about to marry a Welsh speaker lived in a similar village but in a much smaller house, and her narrative reflected a greater degree of integration into the local community, with visits to local public houses where conversations took place in both Welsh and English. One interview took place in a remote seventeenth century farmhouse on the Llŷn Peninsula currently in the process of renovation. The owner spoke in the interview of feeling responsible for retaining the “Welshness” of the property, and of the mixed linguistic identities of the various properties along the single track road down which the farmhouse lay. What was emerging was an impression of identity as contextually situated rather than of subjectivity constructed solely through the act of narration.

Transcribing the Interviews

The issues involved in transcribing the interviews underlined the fact that the transcribed data, as well as the interview situation, was the product of social construction. Elliott (2005, 51) states that “the transcription represents the participant’s account only as interpreted by the transcriber”. That I transcribed the interviews myself was an advantage inasmuch as I had also been the interviewer, and was therefore in a position to both use interpretive insights from the interview situation in the course of transcription, and to continue the process of interpretation as I transcribed the data.

These advantages needed to be balanced against recognition of the subjectivity involved in interpretation. The two interviews which had been carried out in Welsh posed problems in terms of transcription. Paying to have the two interviews transcribed by a first language Welsh speaker was the only practical option in view of the time it would take me to do the job, but might not be ideal in terms of either accurately representing the nuances of what was said, or linking up the transcribed data with my experience of the interview. However it did contribute an unexpected piece of extra data, as the transcriber, a sociolinguist who told me he had a non-Welsh-speaking girlfriend, offered, on delivering the completed transcripts, the comment that he felt one of the informants had provided a much more “honest” account than the other of the conflicts involved in becoming a “Welsh speaker”.

As regards the transcription convention to be employed, Elliott (*ibid.*) remarks that “decisions about how transcription is carried out are intimately concerned with the kind of analysis that is intended”. Methods of analysis concentrating on form require more detailed forms of transcription; methods focussed on content may remove repetitions, false starts, and “ums” or “ers” in order to make the material easier to read. As I envisaged an analytical method taking account of form to some extent, but stopping short of the concentration on linguistic forms alone characteristic of sociolinguistic studies, as discussed in the following section, I decided to record what was said as accurately as possible, without removing false starts or pauses, but without recording the minute detail of how long the pauses were, or exactly what kind of “umms” were uttered.

Choosing the Data Analysis Method

A variety of methods are available to analyse biographical data. Elliott (*ibid.* 38) categorises these in terms of what aspect of the text is analysed – content or form. The Chicago School, as exemplified by Shaw (1930, 1966) is cited as focussing on content; Labov and Waletzky (1967) and later Riessman (1993) as the primary influences on methods concentrating on form; and the BNIM (Chamberlayne 2000, Wengraf 2001) as aiming to analyse both form and content. These categorisations are, however, fairly fluid. Methods focussing on “genre”, for example, “coming out”, or “sexual recovery” stories (Plummer 1995); on biographical patterns of ascent, decline and stability (Gergen and Gergen 1992, Lieblich 1998); or on the system of belief

within which the individual interprets his or her life (Linde 1993) are categorised as being orientated towards form. However, some of these methods, for example those described by Gergen and Gergen, which focus on biographical forms or structures, appear somewhat different from, and more content-based than, those which, like that of Labov and Waletzky, concentrate on textual forms.

In view of this fluidity, it is perhaps more useful to consider the underlying epistemological reasons for emphasising form, on the one hand, or content on the other. Qualitative methods underpinned by naturalism seek “rich descriptions of people and interaction as they exist and unfold in their native habitats” (Gubrium and Holstein 1997, 6). This implies a continuity between the individual and the social world and its content. In order to depict the individual within the wider social world, analysis may aim at tracing relationships between the narrative and wider social phenomena by establishing analytical categories “across” different biographical accounts – typically by means of grounded theory or thematic analysis; hence an emphasis on content. This approach has been criticised for undermining the holistic integrity of the narrative (Riessman 1993) and ignoring the unique “voice” of the participant.

Constructivist approaches, by contrast, see the narrative as the process by which we construct our social worlds, identifying a corresponding need to examine this process, and the narrative, holistically, and consequently emphasise form. The structure of the narrative is seen as embodying the local production of generic social constructs such as gender or ethnicity (Riessman 1993), or in some cases the cultural “templates” shared by particular communities (De Fina *op. cit.*, 22). The emphasis on discursive forms as the focus of analysis has led to the extensive use of this method in sociolinguistic research (*ibid.*). Such form-based analytical methods have been criticised as concentrating on the “how” of the narrative is produced to the detriment of the “what” - the social world to which the narrative refers; as Elliott (*op. cit.*, 46) points out:- “a great deal of the material in interviews has a story-like form but does not strictly consist of a series of event clauses”.

Some constructivist approaches do, however, take account of what is constructed, as well as how this happens, seeing the social world as constructed by the subject, but within a temporal and historical context. The Biographical Narrative Interpretive Method, for instance, sees the narrative as a process in which individual subjects,

influenced by the macro temporal, social and historical contexts in which their lives are embedded, devise ways of dealing with specific life situations. The latent dynamics at work (Chamberlayne et al. 2000, 324), courses of action adopted and trajectories traversed, are mapped out by comparing the “told story” with the “lived life”, or factual biography (Wengraf 2001). Textual structures are analysed and processual models such as “biographical action schemes” and “trajectories of suffering” identified. As the process of analysis concerns both what is constructed and how, it encompasses both content and form. It also encompasses both micro and macro dimensions, which are embodied in all participant accounts (Wengraf 2000, 141). Since each account contains the general within the particular, and forms an integral whole in itself, categorisation across accounts is not a feature of the method.

Also taking account of both the “what” and the “how”, and encompassing both the content and form of the narrative, is narrative ethnography (Gubrium and Holstein 1997, 2009). If some constructivist orientations see the social world as constructed by and within the narrative, the narrative itself is here seen as an interactive process embedded within the various social contexts implicated in production. It is therefore necessary to consider not only the internal form of the narrative, but the multiplicity of settings in which the production of identity takes place; in addition to the “discursive contours” of the story, analysis needs to take account of the wider social world into which it is tied, scrutinising “circumstances, their actors, and actions in the process of formulating and communicating accounts”. (Gubrium and Holstein 2009, 21). An “analytical bracketing” technique is used to separate the analysis of the “how” of production from that of “what” is produced (ibid. 28). The tying of the narrative into a multiplicity of social contexts enables accounts to be compared with one another as well as examined holistically, and a larger number of cases to be taken into account than when using other biographical methods. Since “circumstances” include jobs, close relationships, local cultures and organisational settings, similarities and differences in all of which are traceable across narrative accounts, grounded theory as well as textual analysis is now once again possible.

In choosing between these methods of analysis, the epistemological underpinning of the study, the phenomenon under investigation, and the nature of the data generated, were all considered. The constructivist epistemological orientation ruled out grounded theory or thematic analysis, given the emphasis these methods placed on content

alone. Given the study aim of investigating the social processes involved in negotiating speakerhood, rather than the linguistic forms used by new speakers, methods of analysis concentrating only on form were also discounted, which left a “short list” of the Biographic Narrative Interpretivist Method, or Narrative Ethnography.

In choosing between the BNIM and Narrative Ethnography, it was important to consider the nature of the phenomenon under investigation. On the side of the BNIM were the similarities which could be seen between the linguistic concept of “mudes”, or “critical junctures” leading to linguistic identity change (Pujolar op. cit.), and the BNIM concept of “trajectories”. However, a closer examination of the “trajectory” concept revealed a number of salient differences. Riemann and Schütze (1991, 339) describe the trajectories envisaged as responses to “social processes of being driven and losing control over one’s life circumstances” accomplished through internal biographical work. Apitzsch and Inowlocki (2001, 55) suggest that this interest in “experiences during times of social transformation and in moments and times of crisis” may have its origins in the upheaval experienced by many sociologists of German nationality during the National Socialist era. However the psychological response of individuals to “disorderly social processes” and the uncovering of “latent levels of emotional meaning” (Chamberlayne and Spano 2000, 324) seems rather different to the interactive process whereby membership of linguistic communities is negotiated. Although the “new speaker” environment has been regarded as “conflictive rather than harmonious” (Block op.cit., 27), negotiating membership of new speech communities does not necessarily involve suffering or collective social breakdown, but the creation and enactment of social relationships, and therefore of a social order of some kind.

In addition to the above, one may view negotiating linguistic identities as involving the production of “socially constructed, self-conscious, ongoing narratives” (Block op. cit., 27) rather than of latent meanings as envisaged by the BNIM. The different social contexts in which negotiation takes place are of as much interest as the subjectivities involved, and subject positioning in the process of negotiation of more interest than the “exploration of subjective meanings” (ibid.). Bornat (op. cit., 352) says of the “latent meanings” approach that while “To look and listen for silences, experiences or relationships which are unspoken or unexpressed is acknowledged as appropriate and rewarding, but to go beyond this and to seek out subconscious motivations, or ways of thinking, is perhaps to be guilty of over-interpretation”, and asks “How far is it ethical

to subject another person's life to interpretation if the process and outcome are likely to be unrecognisable to them?" (ibid., 353).

An interactionist as opposed to a more subjectivist approach was also in keeping with the nature of the data; extensive sections of the interview transcripts described social interactions in various contexts such as family, work and community. Yes, biographical structurings were detectable, but were more reminiscent of the "stages in the process of socialisation" described by Pentecouteau (2002, 96) as being undergone within various social contexts by new speakers of Breton, than of the psychological trajectories envisaged by Wengraf. Similarities and differences in these biographical patternings were also discernible across narratives. Narrative ethnography, which takes account of the multiplicity of contexts within which the narrative is embedded, and of similarities and differences across cases, therefore seemed, in this instance, a more appropriate method of analysis than the BNIM, which sees comparison across cases as undermining the integrity of individual narratives. The fact that several participants had contributed language diaries, as well as narratives, was an additional argument for using a method which emphasised the different contexts in which identities may be produced.

Analysing the "What" and the "How"

As discussed above, narrative ethnography allows us both to examine both "how" identities are constructed within individual narratives and, by means of comparing differences and similarities across accounts, to establish "what" is happening. The adoption of the principle of comparison makes for compatibility with approaches, such as grounded theory, which construct conceptual patterns by allocating each conceptual variation a code, or "summative ...essence-capturing attribute" (Saldana 2009, 3), and using these codes to sort, synthesise and summarise the data. However, consideration needed to be given to whether this approach was compatible with the constructivist paradigm informing the research, as treating the data in this way might be viewed as involving an "objectivising" assumption "that a neutral observer discovers data in a unitary external world...data are "there" rather than constructed" (Charmaz 2006, 365-6.) By contrast to such versions of grounded theory, however, constructivist grounded theory aims to construct the social actions implicit in the data, rather than to uncover pre-existing themes or topics:- "using gerunds (-ing words)

enables grounded theorists to make individual or collective action and process visible and tangible” (ibid., 367). Researcher and participants effectively co-construct the social process implicit in the data:- “the initial grounded theory coding with gerunds is a heuristic device to bring the researcher in the data, interact with it, and study each fragment of it” (ibid., 368). As this approach was extremely compatible with the constructivist paradigm, the study data was coded, with the aid of the NVivo qualitative data analysis software, with a view to constructing both the ways in which participants negotiated Welsh speaking identities, and which identities were negotiated.

The different social contexts - jobs, close relationships, local cultures and organisational settings – in which Gubrium and Holstein (2009) view the construction of identities as taking place provided a ready-made method for comparison across different accounts, as it was noted that participants fell into distinct groups in terms of the amount of “coverage” given to these contexts, enabling transcripts to be sorted into corresponding groups for the purpose of initial comparison. For example, participants who came from Welsh speaking families, but who had themselves lost the language, invariably made extensive mention of their parents, so the relevant sections of their interview transcripts were considered together to compare how identities were constructed in the context of close relationships. A clear difference was discerned between participants who saw their parents as embodying an idealised Welsh speaking identity, and those whose parents embodied an identity regarded with ambivalence. To illustrate the constructivist principle informing the analysis, the words used in the narratives were not compared in order to identify themes of “idealised identity” or “ambivalence over identity” which were “already there”. Rather, once “what” was similar and different had been identified, the way the respective narratives were put together internally was examined to establish “how” identities were constructed. For example, the “ambivalent” participant juxtaposed brief references to his Welsh speaking mother with much longer descriptions of the English speaking career which had formed the basis for most of his adult life. By contrast, the “idealising” participant moved from descriptions of how she herself was now establishing Welsh speaking connections, to how her own mother was currently doing the same, to nostalgic descriptions of childhood with her Welsh speaking grandparents. Both participants were actively engaging in a process of “aligning” current with previous linguistic identities. “Process coding” (Saldana 2009, 77) was used to encapsulate these active

social processes, while “descriptive codes” (ibid., 70) were attached to contexts within which negotiation took place, participant characteristics, and concepts implicated in the negotiation process, to enable variations to be mapped out. In addition to grouping similar narratives together, each narrative was also examined individually to establish how participants sought to construct connections between the different contexts of social interaction. For example, participants might seek to align perceptions carried over from their former lives with the new social environment, and to adjust close relationships with parents, partners or children in line with these “revisions”.

The contextual emphasis of narrative ethnography, and the importance it accords to situated interaction within “myriad layers of social context” (Gubrium and Holstein 2009, 24), however, while compatible with the first cycle coding carried out in constructivist grounded theory, may not be quite as compatible with second cycle coding, which aims at moving from “the diversity of the data...to more general, higher-level, and more abstract constructs” (Richards and Morse 2007, 157). This emphasis on generalisation and on constructing the “basic social process” occurring in the data has been acknowledged as problematic, given the complexity of postmodern social contexts, by Clarke (2003, 558) who suggests “supplementing the traditional grounded theory root metaphor of social process and action with an ecological root metaphor of social worlds and arenas and negotiations”. Similarly Gerhardt (1994, 93) suggests that, subsequently to first cycle coding, “a leap is made when the researcher strives to discover...basic social processes”, whereupon “grounded theory loses touch with the comprehensive meaning diversity of the cases material which it originally collects”. The full trajectories undergone by the participants in this study have therefore been encapsulated in a more context-specific and multidimensional way, fully discussed and described in Chapter 7, than is usual in grounded theory studies.

Conclusion

This chapter has described the methodological decisions taken, in the course of planning and executing the study, in order to arrive at results which would answer the research questions. The chapters which follow will describe the study results, and the final chapter assess the extent to which the initial questions have been answered and draw out the implications of the research for language policy in Wales.

4. Getting Started.

Presenting the Results

Chapter organisation should arguably reflect the nature of the phenomenon under investigation, which is in this case the process by which, through interaction, participants progress, or not, towards speakerhood. Narrative ethnography views social interaction as embedded in different social contexts, including the “going concerns” of close relationships, local cultures, jobs, organisations, and status, and the relationship between researcher and participant. At the same time, the process is rooted in, and moves forward through, chronological time. As data analysis has focussed on both social spaces and on temporality, a choice has had to be made, in terms of displaying the results, between focussing in turn either on the different social contexts, or alternatively on the various chronological stages, of participants’ experiences.

In the “real” social world, these two dimensions are encountered contemporaneously; the different contexts in which our lives are embedded are all experienced simultaneously within the temporal “moment”. Past and future identities are linked as, once internalised, our experience feeds into our future engagement with, and experience of, the social world. When we describe our experience, we do not talk of the different components separately, but tell how they all came together in the moment to move us forward. In this sense, our experience of social life is not a series of disconnected events, but has a “plot”; we “relate events to each other by linking a prior choice or happening to a subsequent event” (Polkinghorne 1995, 7). Otherwise expressed, narratives of social life follow the rules of storytelling; we relate *how* things happened only as an adjunct to the primary purpose of recounting *what* happened. When my father told me the story of how he escaped from Singapore in 1942, he did not tell me separately how he felt throughout the experience; then about all the different people he met along the way; then about the different places he found himself in; then what happened. He told me about feelings, people and places in parallel to relating what happened. The chapter organisation of the thesis, rather than following the different contexts of interaction, will attempt to remain true to narrative reality by following the different stages involved in achieving speakerhood, while at the same time describing the various contexts in which this occurred. The technique of thus

temporarily separating out contexts which are actually constituent parts of an integrated whole is known as “analytical bracketing” (Gubrium and Holstein 2009).

Exactly what stages are involved in the journey towards speakerhood? We cannot know with precision prior to analysing the data, but we do know that there will be three of them, as every story has a beginning, a middle and an end. One of these will obviously consist of starting out. As to what happens in the middle, we might consider the ingredients necessary ingredients for a “plot”. Richardson (2005, 167) offers the following definition:- “a teleological sequence of events linked by some principle of causation; that is, the events are bound together in a trajectory that typically leads to some form of resolution or convergence”. This implies movement in an upward or downward direction (trajectory), and conflicting factors influencing both the direction of movement and the outcome (resolution). That participant narratives are indeed linked in this way is suggested by the “trajectory of suffering” of formal structural biographical analysis (Riemann and Schütze 1991); and Denzin’s (1989, 15) “epiphanies”, or turning point moments in individual lives. Based on this model, the plot of the typical “Welsh learning narrative” will consist of life events influencing, in various ways, the direction and outcome of the trajectory involved in becoming a new speaker of Welsh; the middle stage of the journey will involve turning points, and the end stage the achievement, or otherwise, of speakerhood. The three results chapters are therefore entitled respectively “Getting Started”, “Turning Points”, and “Achieving Speakerhood?” This chapter organisation is perhaps as close as it is possible to get to identifying collective “cases” while retaining the holistic quality of lived experience, but still does not quite convey how different dimensions of experience interact in individual lives.

Setting the Scene

If later parts of the narrative relate how the plot evolves, the beginning must set the scene for what comes later. Gubrium and Holstein’s model of narrative analysis emphasises the importance of taking account of both “what” is related, and “how”. In terms of “what” elements of the scene will be set, it makes sense that these will include an outline of the plot and an introduction to the main “players”, principal and supporting characters, involved in the drama; it is also likely there will be background information regarding any previous “off-stage” action which explains how these characters

currently relate to one another (Goffman 1971). Labov and Waletzky (1967) have constructed a well-known and often-adopted structural model of “how” the narrative unfolds. The narrative inevitably begins with a statement (the “abstract”) summarising what the story is about; next comes the “orientation” which orients the listener in respect to person, place time and behavioural situation; then the complicating action, or basic events round which the story revolves, followed by the resolution, or final outcome, and coda (the bridge between the story world and the present). “What” (and who) is mentioned at the beginning of the narrative - and also in what order events and characters are introduced, as well as the light in which they are presented (“how”), will together constitute the plot of the story. The opening statements of participants’ narratives conformed to the above principles in mentioning what triggered the intention to learn Welsh, what supporting characters were involved, and what other factors were important in terms of understanding the “behavioural situation”.

Constructing the Life Course

To consider first the immediate trigger for learning Welsh, it can be seen that this was, in every case, connected in some way with a change in the direction of the individual’s life course, whether this involved moving to North Wales, getting a job, parenthood, or retirement. This brings to mind the concept of “muda” as “a critical juncture in the life cycle where a speaker changes linguistic practice in favour of the target language” (Walsh and O’Rourke 2014, 67), as discussed in Chapter 2.

Since the concept of “mudes” originated in the context of sociolinguistic research, it may be necessary to re-frame it in sociological terms. Many life course changes will lead to a substantial alteration in the areas of social practice, or “going concerns”, in which the individual is involved. A move to Wales may mean quite a substantial cultural shift. Getting a job will mean adapting to a new organisational environment and establishing new social networks. Parenthood may occasion involvement in new social networks, and possibly adjustments in working patterns. All these undertakings may require the negotiation of identity within new arenas, or “fields” in the Bourdieusian sense, and where this takes place in a new language community, negotiation within the language field is likely to assume key importance. So, in sociological terms, “mudes” are associated with changes in social practice in general, and linguistic practice in particular, which may potentially lead to identity change.

Changes in the direction of the life course do not take place accidentally; alterations in social practice may require a prior change in how one wishes one's social identity to evolve. Prus (1996, 151) takes the view that social individuals are constantly engaged in purposive "identity work". While influenced by perspectives acquired during earlier formative stages of development, evolving identities "are...also influenced by the ongoing shifts in perspectives that people normally undergo over time and across situations. In contrast to the more generalised quality of perspectives, identities have a more immediate and personalised "you and I" focus". Changes in life course direction are therefore the building blocks for consciously and deliberately initiated projects (Gubrium and Holstein 1994). In the case of these narratives, different participants perceived themselves as involved in very different kinds of "life project", which might be viewed in the same light as the "biographical action schemes" of the formal structural school of biographical analysis (Riemann and Schütze 1991). These "life projects" formed a major and essential part of the "plot" of participants' Welsh learning stories, and are always mentioned in the "opening statement" of the narrative. For some participants, learning Welsh involved a deliberate attempt to construct a new identity. This group could be regarded as engaging in "elective belonging" initiatives (Pahl 2005, Savage 2008). "Elective belonging" meant, on the one hand, attempting to either recover a lost Welsh speaking identity, frequently upon retirement (Malcolm, David, Melanie, Alice), or to construct an imagined Welsh speaking identity (Steve, Ulrike, Kevin). For these participants, the language was the primary symbolic focus of the desired identity. On the other hand, the language might not originally have been the primary aim of the project, which consisted of attempting to construct a symbolic Wales as the location for an alternative lifestyle (Benson and Osbaldiston 2016, 407); either the lifestyle depicted in the TV series "The Good Life" (Margot, Reggie) or, in the case of retirees, an indefinitely extended walking holiday in the Welsh mountains (Jane, Colin, Prue, Phyllis). Learning Welsh became part of the project for strategic reasons.

A second group, who could be called the "incidental identity" group, had not specifically chosen to come to Wales, but had found themselves there because of either work or study (Alan, Sandra, Fiona, Pete, Olivia), a family move (Stella, Carys, Tracy, Karen, Kay) or for some other reason (Gilly). These participants had not chosen to embark upon the acquisition of Welsh speaking identities, and might well have not have formed

any prior concept of Welsh speaking Wales. The amount they were prepared to invest in learning the language had to be worked out in the course of putting other building blocks of identity, such as marriage, getting a job, or parenthood, into place.

Some overlap can be detected between these groups; for example, one participant who came to Wales to get a job (Sandra) also had Welsh ancestry, and regarded the move to Wales, at least in part, as an opportunity to regain a lost Welsh speaking identity. However in general, different life course stages meant not only engaging in new and different social practices, but deliberately engaging in a particular kind of project, the nature of which may have affected both the perspective from which participants viewed the Welsh learning experience, and their consequent actions.

Prior Dispositions

In addition to the identity projects in which participants saw themselves as currently engaged, the “plot” might also be influenced by “the earlier perspectives one has on the world” (Prus op. cit., 151). Interaction between these “prior dispositions” and the avowed reason for learning gave rise to much of the complicating action described by participants. The view that the construction of current identities has earlier foundations, dubbed “early understandings” by Prus (ibid.), also resonates with the Bourdieusian concept of “habitus” (Maton op. cit.). So essential are these “prior dispositions” to the plot of the narrative that it is with statements summarising them, rather than with the immediate reason for learning Welsh, that narratives most often begin.

Constructing National Identity

It is with a statement concerning their perception of national identity that the largest number of participants (n=14), particularly those who were either born, or had lived for most of their lives, in the United Kingdom, begin their narratives. National identity can be viewed as a component of the social reality “out there” available to be internalised by individuals as they construct their own local realities. The way generally available resources are interpreted locally is described by Gubrium and Holstein (1997, 169):- “Cultural knowledge is always local knowledge, mobilised in the here and now, for the practical purposes in hand”. Externally available cultural resources “internalised”, as described, during early socialisation, will be constantly re-interpreted as a response to current realities. The fact that statements about national identity constitute the opening paragraphs of most of the narratives indicates its importance to

participants as an available cultural resource; it is the cultural “building block” which it is most important for them to deploy in constructing their new local realities. The view of national identity as having been acquired early on - a habitus-like “complex of common or similar beliefs or opinions internalised in the course of socialisation” (Wodak et al. 1999, 28) but also as continually locally constructed, can be clearly seen in its physical embodiment, within the narratives, in participants’ family members. When the opening statement mentions national identity, it also mentions mothers, fathers and grandparents. These close relatives take their place thereby as members of the “supporting cast” of the drama.

Statements frequently define English and Welsh identity as different from one another, with “Welshness” less highly valued. Olivia: “I think it is relevant to my journey in learning Welsh that I come from Shropshire, literally a couple of miles from the border...I’ve been aware of Wales as Wales, and Welsh as Welsh, from an early age...although...it’s not very...it’s a very English attitude to Wales, that you get on the Borders”. The Welsh language is sometimes implicated in the inferior value of “Welshness”; Jane says: “curiously my parents packed me off to boarding school in Rhyl, Bodelwyddan Castle actually...and I was completely unaware of it, I’d sort of heard *Iechyd Da*, and everyone laughed and giggled ...it was as though we were a little island...” One opening statement, from Stella, brackets the Welsh language along with regional versions of English as less highly valued than “standard English”: her father, who lived in Bristol and had a strong Northern English accent, learned Welsh as a protest against being constantly mistaken for a Welshman. “Englishness” is therefore more highly valued than “Welshness”, but some forms of English are more highly valued than others - and language is key in allocating value. The complexity of how nationality is defined within the United Kingdom was also described by a Scottish participant, Fiona: “I was born and raised in the Orkney Islands to English parents, and despite the fact that I was born there, I never felt Orcadian, and I was never made to feel Orcadian, I was always made to feel English”. Like Stella’s father, Fiona found herself in the ambivalent situation of being categorised by others differently to how she categorised herself. The resulting feeling of not quite belonging to either one community or the other was reflected in the way her Welsh learning trajectory subsequently developed.

“Englishness” and “Welshness” often related to one another not in an overtly negative way, but in terms of Wales providing English people with an opportunity for leisure activities. This prior disposition towards Wales, often acquired through childhood experience, could become in adulthood the focus of a common “Elective Identity” plot, fully described in a later section. Colin says “My story probably starts, in connection with Wales, as a young teenager, very active, in North Wales, cycling, walking...the experience of a very English person, which is what I am...” For Karen and her family, the Welsh language was:- “a little bit of a party piece, listening to the people who owned the farm, you know, we would be dead sort of chuffed, but fascinated, if we heard one or two words of Welsh, you know, so, oooh! That’s different...”

The Welsh language is effectively represented here as a “tourist attraction”. Tourism has been viewed as involving “the commodification of place as spectacle”; “tourists not only travel to consume, but what they consume is in many respects the destination itself...In this context, place is arguably bound up with the construction of image and symbolism round that place rather than any localised meanings inherent in the place itself” (Meethan et al. 2006, xiv). In terms of what being a “tourist” implies for the relationship one will be able to establish with the social world in question, symbolic interactionist theory (Unruh 1979, 118) has posited the existence of four fundamental orientations: that of “stranger”, “tourist”, “regular”, and “insider”. “Tourists” are curious about the new social world, but are committed to it only insofar as it remains entertaining. Whether participants beginning their relationship with Wales and Welsh as “tourists” would succeed in establishing themselves as Welsh speakers remained to be seen.

Although some of the participants who talked of national identity had in a sense positioned themselves as being English and “not Welsh”, they were far from being “little Englanders”. Not all of them were born in the UK; most had at some stage travelled to Europe. Exposure to wider social worlds and prior experience of learning other languages may well have distinguished these individuals from incomers who decided not to learn Welsh. Davis et al. (2017, 61), in a study of European Union citizens, found gaining access to other languages to be linked to “an enlarged sense of identity”. However, although the social worlds which these participants had constructed did, in a certain sense, transcend the national boundaries of the United Kingdom, within this mental map, the different nations within the UK occupied different

spaces, and were perceived differently from one another. The frame of reference wherein, prior to deciding to learn Welsh, they had constructed the relationship between Wales, the rest of the United Kingdom, and the world outside the UK, might subsequently have to undergo considerable reconfiguration in terms of where Wales and Welsh fitted in, as participants encountered Wales and the Welsh language as a lived reality.

“Lost Welsh Identity” Plots

For the participants discussed above, their prior disposition towards Wales and Welshness influenced the nature of, and might later impact on the development of, their Welsh learning project. For other participants, their prior relationship with Wales and Welshness did not only influence their Welsh learning experience, but was the immediate trigger for it. For four participants (Malcolm, David, Melanie and Alice), learning Welsh constituted, either wholly or in part, an attempt to recover a lost Welsh identity. They experienced themselves as a “lost generation”, echoing Hodges’ (2012, 13) findings with parents in the Rhymni Valley, Caerffili. All four begin their narratives with an account of how the language was lost. Whereas the narratives of other participants, after briefly framing the initial orientation towards the language learning project, progressed fairly rapidly to describe the experience of learning Welsh, these four narratives spend a considerable amount of time describing the loss and the journey towards getting it back, the amount of time devoted to this increasing in proportion to the immediacy of the loss. Malcolm and David, who both had one Welsh and one English speaking parent, spend more time talking about the loss than either Melanie or Alice, whose families had lost their Welsh a generation previously.

To consider the “immediate loss” participants first: Malcolm was born in Liverpool with one Welsh and one English speaking parent, and was brought up “through English”. During school holidays, he stayed with Welsh speaking relatives, and came to understand a fair amount of Welsh without speaking it. He associated Wales and Welsh with “quality”; being modest, hard-working, and valuing education. Later in life, he managed to get a promoted post in Wales, and was convinced that, through attending Welsh classes and practising with his Welsh speaking wife, he would succeed in learning Welsh. However, although the classes were experienced as very helpful, lack of time and his wife’s non co-operation meant that he could not, in reality,

get properly started until he retired. Malcolm's frustration is reflected in the structure of the narrative, where steps forward constantly intersect with steps back:-

“and we came away on the Friday, and I found that ..I was actually thinking in Welsh.... I thought I'd got this made, because my wife, Welsh speaking...it lasted about 4 days, because she started to pick me up on pronunciation....what do you want to learn Welsh for, it's a dead language?”

David was born and brought up in Wales, with a Welsh speaking mother and an English speaking father. When his teachers discovered his mother was Welsh speaking, he was transferred to a Welsh stream in school, where he was teased mercilessly about his poor Welsh. As a result he turned against Welsh, an attitude in which he was encouraged by the anti-Welsh prejudice of the time. He describes how at one time “lots of the children would be born at the Countess of Chester Hospital, or Glan Clwyd, and when I started (as a teacher), mid-80s or thereabout, there was a great deal of stigma if the children were classed as Welsh.” A tentative attempt, at one stage, to learn Welsh was undermined by poor classes and the ambivalent attitude of his wife, who was English, towards the project. Only now that social attitudes have changed has his own attitude softened, leading him to learn Welsh as an early retirement project: “I think it was a gradual sort of softening in my attitude and at the same time there was an increased use of Welsh as well, a distinct change....”

These two trajectories illustrate two diametrically different experiences of losing, and moving towards regaining, the language. In both cases, early experiences of social interaction influenced the value attached to the Welsh and English languages respectively. In one case (Malcolm, who had never lived in the “real” Wales, and had an idealised view of Wales and Welshness) high value was attributed to Welsh; learning Welsh was impeded by the external circumstances of the participant's life, and only became possible once these changed. In the other (David, whose experience of living in the real Wales had led to a need to see himself as English rather than Welsh speaking) a low value was attached to Welsh; learning only became possible once the participant's value system altered.

To consider next the participants whose loss was not quite so immediate: Alice was brought up in South Wales, in an English speaking household; although her mother “didn't speak Welsh, she was sort of saying a few odd Welsh words there, and , oh,

you mustn't say that in school...." Alice's move back to Wales in early retirement effectively becomes an attempt to make up for lost time, both for herself and her family, and do her bit to save the language:

"and one of my concerns was, oh gosh, I remember North Wales, and I remember Criccieth, sort of how strong the language was - but you actually realise how much the Welsh language has deteriorated from what I remember as a child, and my one priority I had from the start, and my husband was the same, was that we wanted to learn Welsh as quickly as possible".

Melanie's mother grew up in Mid Wales, but was prevented from learning Welsh: "Her parents were of the generation when it was no longer acceptable to speak Welsh – the only people who spoke Welsh were the poor farmers, and they didn't want to be counted as poor farmers". These two stories provide two opposing accounts of the historical loss of the language and the effect of this through the generations. In the first case, a negative attitude towards Welsh is displayed by Alice's *mother*; in the second case, it is Melanie's mother's *parents* of whom the negativity is reported. The subsequent relationship of the two families with the language developed in very different ways, and these differing dynamics impacted profoundly on the participants' relationships with their families in the course of learning Welsh.

The history of how the language had been lost, in all these cases, extensively influenced the kind of project in which the participants concerned regarded themselves as being involved, and later, might also exert a considerable influence on how the plot unfolded.

"Elective Identity" Plots

Other narrative plots centred on "elective identity" projects. Participants involved in this type of project had come with the intention of either pursuing a desired lifestyle on retirement, living the "good life", or engaging in another kind of identity project. Those pursuing a desired lifestyle on retirement had often, as discussed in the previous section, stated a prior orientation to Wales originating in childhood holidays and involving "commodification of place as spectacle". "Lifestyle migration" has been viewed as a phenomenon reflecting the relative economic privilege of individuals in the developed world, and their consequent ability to make reflexive lifestyle choices

rather than slotting in to pre-defined social structures (Benson and Osbaldiston 2016). Individuals inhabiting the globalised social world are effectively able to construct their own personalised “communities of the mind” (Pahl 2005). In attaching themselves to a new community, incomers deploy (or “consume”) physical and social spaces as symbolic markers of their evolving identities (Trentmann 2006).

The narratives of participants who had come to Wales to retire often reflect a “consumerist” view of their retirement projects. Prue begins her narrative with: “Husband and self worked for major company in the North, didn’t want to live there when we retired, had looked in Northumbria, other places in England, Scotland, but hadn’t ever found the right combination of sea, mountains, things to do, places to walk, somewhere you could go for furniture, clothes, etc...” Colin’s wife had Welsh family origins, so his “consumerist” orientation is melded with references to a different agenda: “nice area, nice people, beautiful place...we had a number of holidays at a place called Fairbourne...full of people from Birmingham, retirees from Birmingham...and eventually I married, and Melanie has got a Welsh family background...and...I guess that I’m a bit of an English lad, but I’ll go wherever there’s access, nowadays it’s access to the Internet, but then it was more about where I go and what I do...but she’s from a Welsh family, so there was a lot of Welsh going on in the family...” Although part of Melanie’s project is about regaining a lost Welsh identity, she also has a “lifestyle migration” agenda: “we used to come to Wales for holidays, we were looking at getting early retirement, we would have liked a sea view, but there was no way we were ever going to afford it..” Benson (2011, 68), discussing British lifestyle migrants to France, describes learning the local language as a key strategy adopted in the attempt of incomers to “localise” themselves, and it was with this end in view that British retirees moving to Wales generally decided to learn Welsh.

If some participants were engaged in elective belonging projects which appeared to have consumerist overtones, others were engaged in anti-consumerist, alternative lifestyle projects. Hetherington (1998,2) distinguishes between the “playful and style conscious arena of identity performance” associated with the postmodern, consumerist world, and the performance of “expressive identity” associated with anti-consumerist, post-material lifestyles. Where consumerism puts the material world and “given” identities to new uses, anti-consumerism rejects them: “Identities defined in terms of citizenship, political rights and obligations, workplace employment,

institutionalised religion, and other forms of codified logic of belonging and community are challenged by this expressive resistance” (ibid. 68). Reggie and Margot are both engaged in alternative identity projects involving smallholdings in North Wales. Margot describes rejecting conventional pathways – spending time working abroad, dropping out of university, becoming interested in environmental issues and self-sufficiency. Whereas the language, for “retirement project” participants, represents a way of realising elective lifestyles which fall fairly squarely within recognised normative boundaries, for these participants it has meant acquiring completely new identities, the extent of the change being illustrated by Margot’s choosing to be interviewed in Welsh.

Another participant, Steve, originally from the United States, states that he is different from most other interviewees because, unlike them, he did not come to Wales and then decide to learn Welsh, but came to Wales because of the language, having acquired an interest in Celtic languages and literature while at university. This had been accompanied by a similar interest in, and learning of, native American languages. Like Margot and Reggie, since coming to Wales, Steve has undergone a thoroughgoing identity change, also choosing to be interviewed in Welsh. The adoption, particularly by an individual belonging to a powerful national and linguistic group, of a minority linguistic identity, resonates with Hetherington’s suggestion (ibid.,71) that “expressive identities” are associated with the wish to identify with the “marginalised Other”:- “One becomes authentic, has an identity which is real and valuable, by identifying with that (or who) which is marginalised within society”.

One could also choose to learn Welsh because one perceived oneself as already having a “marginalised identity”. Kevin, whose birth mother was Nigerian but who was adopted in infancy by a white family in Warrington, was first introduced to Welsh when he accompanied a female friend to Rhuthin in North Wales to visit her Welsh speaking grandmother. He was suddenly transported into a fantasy world:- “I was quite young, you know, I was mesmerised! ...45 minutes in the car...and suddenly, I sat in Nain Rhuthin’s front room, in a tiny little cottage in the centre of Rhuthin, and she and Nain Rhuthin are speaking in Welsh; and I was totally, totally transfixed by it”. Kevin, who had never felt he fitted in with his white schoolmates in Warrington, was able to embark, through starting to learn Welsh, on acquiring an alternative identity which made him feel very special, especially when:- “...she (Nain Rhuthin) showed me this little picture....it’s only a tiny little picture...and it was one of these little pictures you

would get if you attended Sunday school, and...it was a picture of Jesus with...em...a little boy, and this little boy was...he was black...of colour; and she got this out one day, and she said something, of the implication that she'd been waiting for me to turn up”.

The success or otherwise of “elective belonging” projects might hinge on the extent to which participants were subsequently able to convert their imagined identities into lived realities. Savage et al. (2005, 81) argue, using a Bourdieusian framework, that the ability of incomers to “electively belong” to areas does not occur automatically, but is accomplished by means of their effecting “habitus change” within a sufficient number of relevant fields. Similarly, Benson and Osbaldiston (2016, 485) comment that “within the destination...imaginings are put to the test, with lived experience challenging these assumptions of community and locality”.

“Incidental” Plots

Participants who had not specifically chosen to come to Wales, but had found themselves there because of work, study, a family move, or for some other reason, might not be initially aware of the importance of the language; the decision to learn was made in the context of putting other building blocks of identity, such as marriage, getting a job, or parenthood, into place, as was the amount they were prepared to invest. For Stella and Carys, who had moved to Wales on marrying into Welsh families, learning Welsh, in order to communicate with their husbands and in-laws in their own language, was taken for granted almost as a pre-condition for the marriage, and began right away. For these participants, their initial awareness of the importance of the language, and the level of their investment in learning it, was very high. The plots of their narratives were likely to centre on how the all-important task of acquiring a Welsh speaking identity, and other social processes featuring in their previous and current lives, played off against one another.

For others, initial awareness of the language was low, and the decision to learn might be delayed for some time. Alan and Pete did not decide to learn Welsh until they became parents. Alan had come to North Wales as a student and stayed: “Welsh issues never really featured in my decision to come, and I guess ...always you kind of notice it’s a bilingual area....but...none of that motivated me to learn Welsh...it was the kids really...” Although his wife and mother-in-law were both Welsh speakers, Pete

says “it wasn’t until my son was born that I thought I should probably do something about it”. Fiona, Tracy and Karen made the decision when they realised they would need Welsh to get the job they wanted. For Fiona, this happened soon after she arrived, but for Tracy it happened considerably later, and for Karen only after she had lived in Wales for some years. Tracy says that “we decided we would stay in Wales in 1998...but I still didn’t learn Welsh, because a lot of my friends who I made were not Welsh speaking, and told me it wasn’t really essential – and I believed them!” Although Karen had been exposed to some very old-fashioned Welsh classes in school, when she first arrived as a teenager, and had absorbed a little over the years, she did not regard herself, and was not regarded, as a Welsh speaker: “so I left school, worked in the local area, married a first language Welsh man, but did no formal learning of Welsh...except...it was that saturation thing...I didn’t speak any Welsh, I didn’t use it, but I understood quite a lot...but it’s like you carry this big sign on your head saying, English..”

Learning Welsh some time after one arrived might require a considerable amount of adjustment to one’s existing social relationships. Decisions had to be made regarding whether, and if so how, to establish Welsh speaking relationships with people to whom one had previously related in English – this is an important part of the plot in Alan’s, Tracy’s and Karen’s narratives.

Learning Welsh before one had established English speaking relationships meant that one did not have to make these adjustments, and could in fact be a key way of integrating into the community. Kay, for example, started to learn when she and her husband moved to a more Welsh speaking area than where they had lived previously: “when I moved here I didn’t know anybody, you know, and I started trying to make connections within the community...and one of these was the Welsh language play group...so it was a way for me to connect with the area, and to make friends...”

Close Relationships – Parents, Partners, Children

The plot of the narratives was enacted not only by the participants themselves, but by a “supporting cast” of individuals with whom they had close relationships – mothers, fathers, grandparents, partners, children. Where these individuals had played an important supporting role right from the start of the project, they are always mentioned in the “orientation” statement. Parents, particularly for participants who perceived

themselves as having lost their Welsh identity, acted as important “embodiments” of orientations towards the language, whether positive or, in some cases, negative - the perceived “Welshness” of parents sometimes led to an unwanted “Welsh identity” being attributed to children, for example when David was placed in a Welsh speaking stream at school because his mother was a Welsh speaker. Grandparents, who were more likely than parents to have directly experienced the suppression of the language, were also influential in passing on positive or negative orientations towards Welsh. “Welshness” was sometimes passed down even though Welsh speaking ancestors were no longer alive; although Sandra’s family moved away from Wales, “...we had one of the big Welsh family bibles with the family tree in it, and all of those things.”

Partners could play an important role in both setting the scene for the Welsh learning project and influencing the extent of its later success, or otherwise. Three participants, Carys, Stella and Malcolm, either currently had, or had in the past had, Welsh speaking partners. For Carys and Stella, acquiring a Welsh speaking partner had been the reason for their coming to Wales and learning Welsh. The decision to learn Welsh, and to make one’s partner’s language the one in which the couple would interact, meant granting one’s partner, and one’s partner’s family, a great deal of control over the relationship. Carys’s partner had introduced himself to her by remarking on her Welsh name. When she started “dipping in” to a textbook for Welsh learners, he discovered that his grandfather had written the book, of which she was later given a signed copy. By the following Summer, it had been decided that they would marry and “that I would move to Wales”. Of her partner’s family, she says “my whole reason for wanting to learn from the beginning, was that I wanted to be able to understand what they were saying; I didn’t want them to have to change their language for me”. It is clear that Carys sees her partner and his family as having a considerable amount of power in this situation; they are the source of one of the resources available to her to learn Welsh, “their” language is the source of her name; it is decided that she will move to Wales rather than that her partner should move to the United States. Similarly, Stella says that “...in 2006 I met my partner, and...born and bred Anglesey; so I knew I’d have to move, he wouldn’t move; and I moved up November 2008, and January 2009 I started learning Welsh”. Establishing a workable relationship with their partners, and, importantly, with their partners’ families, may well depend for Carys and Stella on how successfully they are able to learn Welsh. At the same time, if they succeed, having a

Welsh speaking partner may well provide them with a “passport” to integrating with the wider Welsh speaking community, so any initial loss of control experienced may well prove worthwhile.

The power of Welsh speaking partners and their relatives over the relationship can be clearly seen when they decide not to co-operate in the Welsh learning project, as had happened in Malcolm’s case: “...she was a natural Welsh speaker, but wouldn’t use it...it’s a dead language...” Stella’s experienced the non-co-operation of her partner’s sister: “his sister....when I asked her to, her reaction was, oh no, I’ll speak to you in English...”

English speaking partners were also important in both setting the scene for the project, and influencing its ultimate success. It has been suggested (Gubrium and Holstein 2009) that partnerships constitute a social unit, the “nomos”, which is somehow greater than the individual partners of which it is composed. Participants who came to Wales as part of a couple invariably talked in their opening statements about the decision as one which “we” had made. Apart from Jane and her partner (who was deaf) they all initially talked about learning Welsh as a joint undertaking. The power of the couple as a social unit could be clearly seen in the case of Alice and her partner, who walked around the village socialising in Welsh - talking Welsh as a couple seemed to give both partners extra social “nous” , and the learning project extra impetus.

However in some cases, divergences in learning trajectories soon emerged. These were generally caused by differences in participants’ previous occupational and educational cultures, together with gender-related divergences in their experience of the social world. Given the power of the nomos, the extent to which such external social constructions could be overcome, as will be seen in the next chapter, exercised considerable influence over these participants’ experiences of learning and using Welsh.

The arrival of children inevitably made the family a more complex social unit than it had previously been, and also, importantly, connected the micro level of the family with the macro level of the nation and its future. As previously mentioned, two participants (Pete and Alan) started learning Welsh when they became parents. Pete had become aware of the importance of the language through work, when his administrative assistant went on a Welsh course; in addition, his wife was a Welsh

speaker, and her mother a Welsh speaker who had started out as a learner:- “but it wasn’t until my son was born that I thought I should probably do something about it myself”. His motivation arose partly from an assumption that his wife and her mother would want the child to be brought up through Welsh. If Welsh was to become the language of the household, to maintain his current level of influence in the home, Pete clearly had to learn. However when his son started school (at the time, this was in South Wales), the school was “not as Welsh as we thought”, and “I maybe took a bit of a lull”. When, later, the family moved to North Wales, where primary schools operated entirely through the medium of Welsh, “our world tipped upside down”; the ongoing question of how “Welsh” the family should be required relationships between family members, the social world, and the language, to be constantly re-defined, a process which, as Pete’s narrative later revealed, was not without difficulty.

Alan had come to Wales as a student then stayed, married, and settled in a very Welsh speaking area of North Wales. Neither he nor his wife had thought of learning Welsh prior to becoming parents:- “..I thought it was great that we had a bilingual university, but...none of that motivated me to learn Welsh...it was the kids, really...we want our kids to be fluent Welsh speakers, because if they work, and things like that, they need to be able to speak Welsh...and if they become fluent in two languages when they’re young, it might help them to be fluent in three languages when they’re old”. In this case, the primary impetus to learn was the “big story” of how the children would, in future, slot into “the nation”, rather than the balance of power at micro level.

In both these cases, decisions, with import at both micro and macro levels, had to be made about language, and these decisions would influence whether children would later view themselves as Welsh or English speaking, or both; how they would, in consequence, view their parents; and how the family, as a whole, would come to view itself in terms of what kind of linguistic unit it was.

Whether they are with parents, partners or children, the importance of close relationships in connecting the individual up with the collective past, present and future can here be clearly seen.

Constructing the “Local Culture”

Participants’ orientation towards the Welsh learning project, their prior dispositions towards Wales, and the people with whom they had close relationships, all affected what happened when they attempted to locate themselves vis à vis the Welsh speaking community; the interaction between the two gave rise to much of the “complicating action” described in the narratives. Locating oneself in the new environment involved reinterpreting existing cultural resources in order to construct new cultural realities. Gubrium and Holstein (2009, 139) describe how culture is constructed locally “in public places”. This could be interpreted in two ways; firstly, physical locations – houses, landscapes, towns, villages - may acquire symbolic meaning. Secondly, as discussed in a previous section, individuals who congregate within particular social locations create cultures locally through social interaction – talking, negotiating, arguing. Both processes will commonly involve the local re-interpretation of national cultural resources, as was very evident in participants’ narratives.

Incomers to North Wales became aware very early on that they were entering a Welsh speaking social space. This discovery was particularly marked, and particularly significant, in the case of retirement “lifestyle migrants”; finding that the language was a key symbolic marker of belonging was key to the decision of these “elective belongers” to learn Welsh. As mentioned earlier Benson (2011, 68) describes a similar situation in relation to British migrants to France, who learn the language in an attempt to “localise” themselves. The discovery is evident in Melanie’s case: “unbeknown to us, it’s a very, very strong Welsh speaking area...and we thought, right, well, if we want to fit in we need to learn the language...” and Prue’s: “the three years that we’d been down here, we were very well aware that Welsh is a living language, we’d heard people using it in the supermarkets, we’d heard kids talking with each other, and we both decided that as soon as we got down here, we’d start learning Welsh” and Jane’s : “I mean obviously one is surrounded by Welsh”.

Road signs in Welsh constituted a significant material embodiment of the “Welshness” of the environment. Prue mentions that she’s “picked up a vocabulary from road signs and bits and pieces, none of which, looking back, were pronounced right, but that’s neither here nor there”. Fiona, on the way down to Wales from Scotland in the car with

her husband:- "...I was aware of the Welsh language when I moved down, but I wasn't aware of how widely spoken it was...so when you're driving down and you see all the road signs, and they look so long, and you have no idea how to pronounce them...I kind of got quite excited, because I quite like languages, I did French at school...and I started learning Spanish in a kibbutz in Israel..."

Participants keen to localise themselves may sometimes have been unaware that the houses they bought assumed considerable symbolic importance in denoting the boundaries between Welsh and English speaking social spaces (Cohen 1985). Several retirees, in particular, had bought large houses, financially out of the reach of many local people, either on Anglesey or Pen Llŷn, in areas inhabited largely by incomers. This meant their not only having little opportunity to talk to Welsh speaking neighbours, but being categorised as "English incomers". Although Prue and her husband had bought a relatively modest dwelling in a village on the North Wales coast, with a fairly even mixture of Welsh and English speaking inhabitants, they had initially bought it as a holiday home: "So we bought an end terrace house in September 2005, and for the next three years we used it at Christmas, and we used it at Easter, and we came down every other weekend and got to know the place..." Although buying a holiday home in North Wales did not have any symbolic significance for Prue and her husband, it did for anyone familiar with the history of Welsh language activism and the burning of English-owned holiday homes during the late 1970s; "holiday homer" was possibly a category viewed even more negatively than "English incomer".

Participants who lived in terraced housing potentially had greater opportunities than those living in detached houses to socialise with Welsh speaking neighbours. However terraces tended to be symbolically constructed as either "English speaking" or "Welsh speaking". Tracy said of her terrace: "there's 8 houses in my terrace, and everybody but the people at Number 1 are English speaking...everybody else is Welsh speaking, and they're all one big family, they're all related, and they all speak Welsh with one another, and nobody speaks Welsh to me, apart from my next door neighbour, she always speaks Welsh to me..." Fiona: "I was living in a little row of terraced houses outside the village, and none of my neighbours spoke Welsh..."

If it was not always easy to symbolically construct the private space of one's individual home as denoting "Welshness", difficulties also arose in more public spaces. In the

village, it could be difficult to “read” social and linguistic signals. Some participants felt that, as incomers, they were subject to a kind of “social invisibility”: Prue: “In the shops....I’m just a village resident, not got any paper orders or anything like that with any of them, so I’m just an anonymous resident...” implying that she had not got to know people well enough to strike up Welsh speaking relationships with them. Sandra, in the same village, had got to know shop staff, but not which of them spoke Welsh: “...I will speak to the staff, and the staff know you, but I don’t know who speaks Welsh in the shop...” Incomers feel that they are not being seen, while Welsh speakers seem reluctant to let themselves be seen.

However, if it is sometimes unclear how to “read” existing social spaces, it may be possible to construct one’s own. Colin deliberately cultivates a Welsh speaking relationship with tradespeople: “I’ve got a number of people in shops who are my Welsh teachers...Gai grate code tan, os gwelwch yn dda!” (“*Can I have a crate of firewood, please?*”) He and Melanie, whose farmhouse is outside the village, construct “a nice community along this road”, but because some members of this community are not Welsh, its language is generally English. Alice and her husband construct their own miniature Welsh speaking community by walking around the village and talking Welsh with whomever they may meet.

Linguistic boundaries, if sometimes invisible, are on other occasions made visible in a way participants find uncomfortable, for example on occasions, such as concerts, when large numbers of Welsh and English speaking people congregate together in one place, linguistic boundaries are made visible in a way participants find uncomfortable. Prue: “...we went to a concert in Bethesda, and I was very well aware in the audience, because we were sitting in the balcony, that you could tell who was Welsh and who wasn’t, because some of them were smiling and laughing and some weren’t, including us, because we didn’t have enough Welsh...so I think at that point I was aware there was learning Welsh, and there’s understanding spoken local Welsh as well!” Stella: “I went to the Copper Fest they have at Amlwch....they’d got someone famous to come... and nobody stopped talking the whole time he was playing; and at the end he said, thank you very much, don’t worry, the next group is Welsh...”

“Welshness” was sometimes performed not through daily contact with Welsh speaking localities, but intermittently, or even in locations outside Wales. After becoming

acquainted with Welsh though Nain Rhuthin, Kevin got a job in Bolton, where he continued to learn by going to a Welsh speaking chapel in Didsbury. One day, on a whim, he took the train along the North Wales Coast to Bangor, where, walking around the town, he was able to physically locate his embryonic Welsh speaking identity: "You could sit on a bench in the High Street in Bangor, and every second or third group of people walking past, would be communicating to each other in Welsh...so this was how a relationship with Wales, and Bangor, started.." Every weekend he took the train to Bangor, walked around the town talking to people, and became a Welsh speaker for the day, then went back to Bolton.

In these scenarios, we can see how both permanent symbolic boundaries in the form of bricks and mortar, and ad hoc symbolic boundaries constructed on public occasions, contributed to the complexity of constructing Welsh speaking identities. These divisions within the community made daily interactions in Welsh difficult to accomplish. However, difficulties notwithstanding, ad hoc Welsh speaking interactions often could be, and were, accomplished.

Negotiating Personal Relationships

As well as being constructed in physical spaces, culture was constructed in social interaction. When participants attempted to interact in Welsh, what happened was affected by how they viewed themselves, how they were viewed by others, or sometimes how they thought they were viewed by others. Participants might find it difficult to speak Welsh at all because they were afraid either that they would not be understood, or that they would not understand the response, in which case the presumption that interaction would not be possible meant that it was not, in fact, possible. Alternatively, they could be afraid of the effect speaking incorrect Welsh might have on how they were viewed. Melanie describes how silly she felt when she asked a neighbour "Pwy dach chi?" (*"Who are you?"*) instead of "Sut dach chi?" (*"How are you?"*) Fear of looking silly caused her to "get stuck" in her view of herself as a deficient Welsh speaker, a theme, frequently re-iterated in her language diary, which eventually caused her to avoid Welsh speaking interactions. This fear was particularly acute in public places; Jane says she feels vulnerable speaking in local shops, and Carys describes feeling very nervous when she had to order a meal in a restaurant in

front of her husband's entire family. These difficulties arise as a result of how participants view themselves, or how they think they are viewed by others.

Other participants describe the difficulty of obtaining the opportunity to speak Welsh. This could be either because there are non-Welsh speaking people present, or because Welsh people decline to respond in Welsh, having constructed the speaker as "English", either when their accents have given them away, or even before they had opened their mouths. Karen says she has sometimes felt as if she was wearing a big badge on her forehead, saying "English". These difficulties arise because of the way participants are viewed by others; they are categorised in a way they do not desire, and which they cannot control. The issue of control also arises in relation to how Welsh speakers may try to help – for example, by firing questions at learners rather than simply slowing down; and of how they respond when asked "what is the Welsh word for..." , namely by saying that they do not know.

Learners adopt various strategies to reassert control. Prue wears a badge on her coat stating how she wishes to be categorised - "Dwi'n dysgu Cymraeg" ("*I am learning Welsh*"). Malcolm opts to categorise himself as speaking poor Welsh rather than have others categorise him as doing so, telling a story about amusing mistakes he has made. Similarly, when communication becomes difficult, Colin defuses any awkwardness by "having a laugh" along with the Welsh speaker. He avoids being categorised as a "poor learner" by pre-deciding the level of proficiency he aspires to achieve, namely the same level as he has achieved in French, which he admits is not particularly high. Tracy has adopted the same strategy; although her aspirations are higher than Colin's, she has decided she will never be completely fluent, but that "it's OK to do a bit of both sometimes, doing as much Welsh as I can, and doing what I can't in English, then going back to the Welsh." Perceptions of national identity frequently seemed to be implicated in social interactions between learners and first language Welsh speakers. Starting to learn Welsh required participants to think about how to position themselves *via-à-vis* both the Welsh language community and their own language group; as described in the next chapter, initial perceptions of national identity might have to change if participants were to be categorised in a more favourable way.

As well as thinking about how to present themselves, learners also thought about what first language speakers might think of them. They could see that they might present a challenge: "...they use a lot of English words, and...then suddenly to be challenged by somebody from Burnley, what's the word for this, what's the word for that..." It was acknowledged that being quizzed about vocabulary, particularly given the historical loss of the language, may lead first language speakers to feel "objectified". Welsh speakers effectively felt "incomers" were attempting to exercise control over "their" language. David says: "I think, because they've been undermined in terms of their Welsh, they tell me what they think they should tell me..." When Malcolm asks his hairdresser when to use the formal "you" (*Chi*), rather than the informal *Ti*, she replies: "You should know, you're learning grammar; I just know it...I don't know why, don't put me on the spot!". This perceived "objectification" may sometimes explain reluctance to engage in Welsh; when Melanie makes a botch up of ordering teas and coffees at a local takeaway and, next time she visits, asks the waitress whether she can try ordering in Welsh again, she is coldly told "No".

Learners could also be challenging in other ways. Welsh speakers who, like Olivia's workmates, had been accustomed to having classroom discussions about their non-Welsh speaking colleagues as if they were not there, had to change their behaviour once Olivia started learning; definitions of who belonged to the language group, and of whose comments and presence had to be taken into consideration, had to be reformulated.

If the Welsh language community had an ambivalent view of learners, the same sometimes applied to how learners viewed first language Welsh speakers. Reggie comments on the exclusivity of his Welsh speaking work colleagues: "...you go to a meeting, and whether I'm speaking English or Chinese, I perhaps can't get my point across, but the fact that I'm speaking Welsh means it doesn't matter what I'm saying, as long as I'm speaking Welsh...". Olivia finds herself acting as an intermediary between first language speakers who spoke "posh Welsh" and those who did not: "I did manage to be accepted, because I wasn't a very good speaker at all, and the professionals I worked with turned to English with me, but the community groups, they would admit to me that they couldn't read Welsh, and ask me to read it for them, but they wouldn't admit it to my posh Welsh colleagues..."

In summary, social interactions between learners and first language speakers were complex, might involve tussles for power and control, and were impacted both by prior constructions of national and linguistic identity, and by sensitivities arising from the historical context within which the interactions concerned were situated.

Getting Started in the Welsh Class

Getting started in establishing an identity within a new language community, as has been seen, involved the redefinition of individuals' previous life trajectories. Effectively, it disrupted the way participants measured "social time" (Zerubavel 2004). Those who had previously regarded their lives as describing an upward-directed trajectory sometimes found themselves having to reconceptualise. Fiona and Tracy, who had previously envisaged ascending career paths, realised that they would not get the job they wanted without learning Welsh; in Bourdieusian terminology, negotiations in an unanticipated field were required in order to attain momentum, or even a level position, in existing fields of activity. Participants who started learning when they became parents were uncomfortably conscious of a "role reversal" where they saw their children as potentially able to acquire Welsh more easily than themselves - Alan, who started learning at the same time as his daughter, finds that: "now she's much better than me"; for Pete, this situation was exacerbated by an additional role reversal when his family moved to North Wales, and he found himself required to be a stay-at-home dad. Participants like Steve and Ulrike, by contrast, whose life trajectory was very firmly positioned within the language field, experienced the move to Wales as advantageous rather than detrimental.

Welsh classes, in this context, represented the opportunity to "make up" for lost social time. However they also related to time in other ways: they represented the loss of time which could have been spent on career-directed activities; and also, it was notable that the timescale within which instructors envisaged the language as being acquired, with a logical and sequential progression through beginning, intermediate and advanced stages was somewhat at variance with the discontinuous nature of participants' "real-life time". The former type of progression has been compared to the successive musical notes that compose *legato*, the latter to the successive notes that form *staccato* phrases (Zerubavel 2004, 35).

In terms of “making up for lost time”, the “intensive” mode of instruction, where learners attend classes full-time over a number of weeks, often on a residential basis, might be selected when learning quickly was viewed as important due to the perceived urgency of fitting Welsh into one’s life, for example to keep a life trajectory on course (Steve); to repair a life trajectory (Tracy); to fit rapidly into the Welsh speaking community (Carys, who wanted to repeat her wedding vows in Welsh): or to regain a lost Welsh identity as soon as possible (Melanie, Colin, Alice). Intensive methods provided an opportunity to learn in a supportive community where social practice was conducted entirely in Welsh, thus increasing the potential for learning to be facilitated through social interaction (Wenger 1998). The intensive nature of the learning experience, although providing “more exposure to the target language and...a wider variety of interpersonal communication and activities”, has also been viewed as potentially challenging for both participants and tutors (Collins 1999, 55). Several participants reported clashes with tutors during the week-long Ysgol Haf. Tensions could be exacerbated due to the necessity of “doubling up” classes because of low registration numbers. Both North American participants, Carys and Steve, experienced the twelve-week intensive summer school as stressful due to their own unfamiliarity with “Welshness”, as compared to other participants with Welsh speaking backgrounds. In this sense, intensive courses were a microcosm of factors external to the classroom as well as a self-enclosed, supportive community of practice. In general, however, participants reported receiving a tremendous boost after attending residential intensive courses. For David this was “a powerful learning experience in terms of levering my Welsh up from the plateau I’d arrived at”; after a week, Malcolm left Nant Gwrtheyrn Welsh Language and Heritage Centre in Gwynedd “actually thinking in Welsh”.

In terms of loss of time, some participants had little difficulty accommodating Welsh lessons into their life trajectory. For Reggie and Margot, whose “leading the good life” projects ruled out upward-directed trajectories, fitting in Welsh lessons was not viewed as problematic. Reggie accepted a lesser role at work in order to attend Welsh classes, and Margot describes fitting Welsh in with her work on the smallholding, reciting Welsh phrases aloud as she milked the cows. Most retirees did not experience fitting in Welsh classes as impeding the velocity of their life trajectories; in fact retirees in pursuit of a

lost Welsh identity saw the Welsh learning project as completing a circle rather than in terms of upward progression.

Others found lessons extremely difficult to fit in, either because of work (Sandra, who could not attend classes when doing her GP training, and Tracy, who had to do shift work in the library where she worked), or because of child care commitments: Pete, when he became a stay-at-home dad, found that “I was having to take him to nursery, and things like that...so I couldn’t really fit into any of these routines and disciplines, even though I would have liked to...” Some participants took some time to commit to the idea of living in Wales rather than where they had lived before – Jane could not attend classes because for a few years she found herself “coming and going” between Wales and Spain, and Tracy because she returned several times to Australia.

In terms of “learning versus life time”, Although instructors regarded the courses provided, including both intensive and distributed instruction modes, where classes were attended once or twice a week over an extended time period, as fitting together to provide a structured progression through the various stages of learning, from beginning to advanced, in reality learning did not proceed according to this idealised timescale. Many participants had “dipped in” to a number of different courses wherever and whenever they could fit them in. A number of participants had done the beginners’ course several times. Several reported “false starts” in terms of having initially chosen courses, available in their local village, whose quality was not particularly good. Several had also sampled both of the most widely available methods of instruction, the Wlpan method originating in Bangor University, and the Suggestopedia method introduced by Ioan Talfryn (Talfryn 2001). The idea of seamless progression was seemingly not in accord with other timescales operating in participants’ lives.

The lack of congruence between envisaged learning progression and “real life time” underlines that learning Welsh was, like all learning, not just about mastering grammatical systems and vocabulary, but was impacted by the social context within which learning took place (Wenger op. cit.). In the case of adults learning Welsh as a second language, this context has been seen to be an extremely complex one. Contexts might include prior dispositions acquired during earlier socialisation, identities acquired in later life, and relationships and social categorisations originating

outside the classroom. All these might play out in relationships between tutors and students, and between classmates, inside the classroom.

Firstly, in terms of prior dispositions acquired during earlier socialisation, as mentioned earlier, previous experience of learning languages might possibly be an advantage. It appeared that this was particularly the case if it had not been in the UK; Ulrike: “Because I was altogether with people from the British/English educational background, I found it really easy as compared to them...also I had two other foreign languages already, so this was my fourth”. The disposition towards learning instilled during previous experiences might also be counter-productive. Sandra, who had learned French through traditional methods focussing on writing and grammar, found the Wlpan method’s focus on oral skills difficult: “if you hear it spoken, I like to see it written down, so I can relate these two things together”. Karen reports that in one class she had attended “there was this older guy who’d had a very sort of formal grammar school education, and he was having trouble grasping the *Roedd wedi*...and he suddenly went, you’re on about the pluperfect, aren’t you - I know now...”. Fiona, on the other hand, who had learned Spanish by talking to South American Jews in a kibbutz, found that the Wlpan class situation “was more like how I like learning, how I learned Spanish, and less like how I learned French...so less formal...so I really enjoyed that...”

Although their experiences of language learning had given participants insight into what learning involved, and which methods worked for them, the advantages were perhaps not as extensive in this context as those reported by Davis et al. (op. cit.) in a pan-European context. Other languages as construed within the formal UK education system can be seen to be imagined constructions, component parts of a hierarchical system of qualifications leading to a professional career, unconnected with the negotiation of a relationship with a “real” language group: in Bourdieusian terms, the education field could be said to conflict with the language learning field. Again in Bourdieusian terms, the value of a formal British education was, in the context of learning another language, comparatively low.

Prior dispositions towards language learning might also bring into play “categorisation schemes” mapping out how different languages were deemed to relate to one another. Jane says “I’ve found myself constantly comparing it to Spanish, and I find, actually,

that it doesn't relate in any way...I did some French, I've done some Italian, it...it's out there on its own...it's so back to front, putting the adjective after the noun...I had difficulty putting the words into a structure..." Stella: "You know you look at Bodelwyddan on paper, you go into a panic because there are all these "y"s and "w"s....the main thing I think would have helped me right at the beginning is more emphasis on the alphabet...it should have been emphasised more that Welsh has seven vowels..." This may reflect not so much the realities of the Welsh language - in fact the rules of Welsh spelling and alphabetisation are considerably more logical than those of English, and languages other than Welsh, for example German, order grammatical components within the sentence in different ways - as the fact that participants felt Welsh did not belong within their existing "language categorisation" framework. The classification of languages into "families" - Romance, Germanic, Celtic - based on grammatical patterns, has been viewed as embodying hegemonic power imbalances in its over-inclusion of majority languages and under-inclusion of minority languages; for example many African languages have been dismissed as mere "dialects" (Makoni and Pennycook 2007). If these participants' early experiences had awakened in them an awareness of other cultures, that awareness seemed to encompass an "imagined community" including majority, and excluding minority languages. The value attached to previous language learning did not, therefore, appear to be as high for majority language speakers learning a minority language as it might be for learners of majority European languages.

In both of these illustrations of the importance of prior dispositions towards language learning, a link can be seen between language and power. The ways written language is linked to power have been described, for example by Calvet (1998, 164): "...it works on two levels, the level of denotation on the one hand, and the level of connotation on the other...this alphabet or that system connotes the past which is identified with or rejected". Welsh, in this sense, was excluded and illegitimised by being literally "written out" of existing frameworks. In the context of majority language speakers learning a minority language, this devaluation was reversed, with a lesser value than might have been expected attached to familiarity with majority languages such as French, German or Spanish.

Given the implication of power relationships in educational and linguistic systems, it is perhaps significant that Ioan Talfryn's rationale for the Suggestopedia method of

instruction links students who have previously had negative experiences of language learning within the British educational system and non-Welsh-speaking Welsh learners who feel alienated from their own linguistic heritage: “Many students come in to a language learning situation in Britain not believing that they can learn another language. The reason for this can be social (i.e. multilingualism is not considered normal in Britain as it is in other parts of the world) or personal (i.e. they had a bad experience with learning languages at school)” and then “If you are taught at an English medium school in Wales then you’re a product of a deranged experiment...a London establishment had developed a belief that the Welsh language was a kind of social disease...you leave school with a handful of phrases, a kind of tourist Welsh, which leaves you feeling like an outsider in your own country” (Welsh Not n.d.). One of the study participants, Colin, whose background was in mathematics and statistics and who had self-confessedly low linguistic skills, felt he benefitted from the Suggestopedia method’s emphasis on sensory experience, and on combining words with music and pictures in order to reverse previous negative learning experiences.

Secondly, identities acquired in later life, as well as prior dispositions, could be both advantageous and disadvantageous. Participants who had previously had professional careers, perhaps having been teachers themselves, might find it difficult to become students. Some participants reacted by identifying with the tutors; retirees, particularly, sometimes seemed to be re-creating careers they had lost: Stella remarks that: “you can’t make it too much like school, you’ll lose too many”. David offered a detailed critique of his tutors’ teaching techniques. Jane, who had taught English in Spain, says learning Welsh has made her more aware of the problems people have learning English. The insight into one’s own learning process gained from having previously been a teacher could on occasion be useful, however; as well as critiquing his tutors, David undertook an in-depth and productive analysis of his own learning trajectory.

Learning could also be impacted by personal relationships outside the classroom. Students whose partners started learning with them might lose motivation if their partners dropped out. The refusal of Welsh speaking partners to speak Welsh with learners could be similarly demotivating. Such factors could cause the time “made up” even during intensive courses to be lost once learners left the classroom, as illustrated by Malcolm’s experience: “we came away on the Friday...I was actually thinking in

Welsh, and the last thing they said to us was, when you go back home try to keep it up...it lasted about four days...you could just die...what do you want to learn Welsh for, it's a dead language?"

Inside the classroom, the way relationships between classmates and between students and tutors evolved, as well as what students "brought with them", affected learning. Like prior dispositions and acquired identities, classroom relationships were influenced not only by social practice at micro level, but by processes and categorisations operating at macro level. How classroom relationships evolved, and how prior dispositions and acquired identities continued to influence students' learning experience, will be discussed in subsequent chapters.

Conclusion

In conclusion, participants had different agendas depending on the nature of the "life projects" they were involved in; they envisaged differing relationships with the Welsh language community. They brought with them different prior dispositions which influenced their current social practice. Getting started in establishing Welsh speaking identities involved manoeuvring to locate themselves within Welsh speaking social spaces; the "terms of engagement" of relationships with Welsh speakers had to be negotiated, and physical locations acquired symbolic significance in terms of their "Englishness" or "Welshness". As these interactions took place, relationships with close family members, who might act as embodiments of the identities participants brought with them, and were key to how Welsh speaking identities evolved, might have to undergo adjustments. These social processes, around which the "complicating action" of participants' narratives centred, were as relevant to learning Welsh as mastering grammatical patterns and vocabulary in the Welsh class, and operated within the Welsh class as in all other areas of social practice. As participants continued to interact with the Welsh speaking social world, they became involved with a wider range of "going concerns"; they progressed through a variety of Welsh classes, engaged in Welsh speaking social activities, became involved in Welsh speaking organisations, and took jobs where they were required to speak Welsh. For different participants, different "going concerns" assumed differing levels of importance, and became the focus for "turning points" in the journey towards speakerhood.

5. Turning Points –Self and Others

1) From “Getting Started” to Starting to Change

How Identities Change

At the end of the last chapter, participants had all “got started” on their Welsh learning careers. The chapter aimed to establish the points from which they started, and to sketch out which routes they might take. The framework within which this happened – the influence of prior dispositions and of orientations towards the project, and the different “going concerns” in which participants were involved – has been established. This chapter aims to portray the dynamic process by means of which, within this framework, careers progressed or otherwise, and participants’ perceptions of identity changed.

The dynamics of how social identities change have been described in various ways. In sociolinguistics, the concept of “muda” describes a juncture in the life course where linguistic practice may change (Pujolar and Puigdevall 2015), but little detail is provided as to how this change may occur. In sociology, Bourdieu (1993, 189) defines the concept of “trajectory” as the series of successive positions individuals occupy in one or a number of different fields, these changes in position being influenced by habitus and by the pursuit of capital. Although trajectories are viewed as being underpinned by decisions made by the individual, little detail is provided of how the individual might experience the process involved. Symbolic interactionist perspectives, by contrast, aim to describe how the individual experiences the social world; the complex interaction between “external” and “internal” by means of which he or she, through reflexivity, attributes meaning to social interaction, and thereby creates his or her social self (Mead 1934). This process is embedded in time; the moments when the internal and external come together in a reflexive awareness that one stage in the evolution of identity has been completed and another is on its way to being accomplished, are temporal moments.

The Concept of “Turning Point Moments”.

The concept of identity change as underpinned by moments of reflexive awareness has been adopted in different forms and used in different ways by, for example, Riemann and Schütze (1991), Pentecoteau (2002), and Denzin (1989).

Variations in how these different authors envisage this concept centre both on the nature of the external events concerned and the intensity with which they are experienced by the individual. Riemann et al. (op. cit., 337) writing of moments when the individual’s sense of identity changes, and Pentecoteau (2002), writing specifically of changes in linguistic identity, both view such experiences to be intense, and occasioned by events of a drastic nature; Riemann et al. write of the “trajectory of suffering”, and Pentecoteau of “*chocs biographiques*” (“biographical shocks”). Denzin’s (1989, 18) concept of “epiphanies” is more nuanced than either of these conceptual frameworks. An “epiphany” can be a single life-changing event (a “major epiphany”), but could on the other hand consist of a series of events which have built up over time (a “cumulative epiphany”), or even of the sudden awareness of the existence of hitherto unconscious tensions or problems (a “minor or illuminative epiphany”). “Relived epiphanies” occur when an individual relives, or goes through again and again, a major turning point moment in his or her life. The introduction of the concept of the “illuminative epiphany” caters for the possibility that perceptions of self may evolve and develop without a sudden and drastic alteration in external circumstances; identity change may involve the internal recognition of events which have unfolded gradually over time. Rather than a concept applying only to extreme situations, the moment of reflexive awareness becomes a conceptual tool enabling us to understand how identities, in any social setting, evolve through time. It is in this sense that the term “turning points” is used in the present context. Participants in the present study did not experience revelatory epiphanies or undergo dramatic trajectories of suffering; the changes they underwent were much more subtle. However, participants did experience “turning point moments” when identity had shifted slightly.

Turning Points and Narrative Plots

In the present study, “turning point” moments can be seen to be interwoven into the twists and turns of narrative plots. It was established in the last chapter that the “plot”

of any narrative involves a trajectory in a particular direction. The kind of “life project” in which participants viewed themselves as engaging, the prior dispositions which they brought to the project, and their relationships with close family members and other social individuals, were all implicated in the “complicating action” which influenced the direction of trajectory. These factors interacted, and sometimes conflicted, in complex ways, influencing both how participants saw themselves, and how they viewed themselves as being seen by others. Perceptions at local level were affected by the cultural dynamics operating at national level. Changes in one area of experience could influence what happened in other areas, but the result was rarely a major shift in identity of a straightforward, linear nature. Lives might change in some dimensions but not others. Forward progress in some areas could be accompanied by regression in another, and how participants perceived themselves could differ from how they were perceived. Some trajectories stalled, caught up in these internal conflicts.

This complexity is reflected in the structure of the narratives, which typically describe not rapid movement forward, but slow and uneven development, as the many different dimensions of participants’ experience merge, diverge and intersect. This chapter aims not to delineate in detail the twists and turns of each individual narrative, but to record the dynamics of how participants with particular predispositions, or engaged in particular life projects, engaged with the various “going concerns” in the context of which identities were negotiated. As they constructed their local realities within these various contexts, participants drew upon and reinterpreted established, generally available cultural patterns and categories (Gubrium and Holstein 1997, 169) – “big stories” were incorporated into “little stories”, which in turn fed back into the big stories.

The contexts within which this process occurred differed depending on participants’ life circumstances. However, a constant thread running through all narratives was how participants attempted to weave the “big stories” of national, or linguistic identity, or both, into current local reality. Consciousness of having entered a different national and linguistic environment was one of the first perceptions participants recorded on arriving in North Wales, and reconciling this new environment with “prior dispositions” acquired early in life, such as national identity, was one of their first tasks. A second crucial task was defining or re-defining relationships with relatives close to the individual - parents, partners and children; this process of adjustment is described next. Thirdly, processes and structures encountered within the wider North Walian

social world – educational systems, local communities, organisations and working environments – were available to be used as interpretive resources. The order in which identity construction occurred – beginning with individual self-perceptions, then working outwards to encompass, first social actors close to the individual, then more peripheral dimensions – forms the basis for the structure of this and the next chapter. Chapter 7 will assess whether it is possible to construct a typology of the differing relationships to the Welsh language community, and extent to which participants can be regarded as having become “new speakers of Welsh”, resulting from the dynamic process outlined in Chapters 5 and 6.

2) Re-imagining National Identity

Positioning Oneself and Being Positioned

Perceptions of national identity acquired during early socialisation were seen in the last chapter to be one of the primary cultural “building blocks” used by participants to construct their current social realities, as reflected in the frequency with which such perceptions are mentioned in the opening passages of narratives. Such “early understandings” (Prus op. cit.), resonate with the Bourdieusian concept of “habitus”. However, whereas Gubrium and Holstein (2000) view “cultural resources” as enabling the individual to construct a local version of social reality, the extent to which habitus can transform itself is debateable. As discussed in Chapter One, although habitus is stated to be “transposable”, it is also “durable” (Bourdieu 1990, 53); its embodiment in the form of particular ways of thinking, speaking and acting may make change difficult. In the context of the present research, participants recounted how they brought cultural resources, including their perceptions of national identity, with them into the new environment; the extent to which they were able to adapt these resources to the new environment appeared, however, to be variable – sometimes “early understandings” seemed, as Bourdieu suggests, to persist, or to be modified in unhelpful ways.

The first step in the process of adaptation might be the realisation that one was now in a different national space, with language the key to access. Gilly remarks that: “...when I got here, it sort of seemed really odd, everyone’s so bilingual, and Welsh is the first language...I had no idea how common a language it was for this little part of Britain...it seemed like I was an outsider, and everyone was a little sort of in-group”. There could subsequently be a realisation that there was no harmonious transition to

this “new” social space from the “old” one, but rather that a definite boundary existed, and that it was important to position oneself on the correct side of the divide. The language was seen as key to such positioning. This concurs with the experiences of participants in Hornsby and Vigers’ research (2018, 423), who found that “local communities appear(ed) to construct identity as an essentialist binary – either “Welsh” or “not Welsh” – and link ethnicity with language in a non-negotiable way”.

Experiences differed depending on participants’ agendas in coming to Wales. Language was viewed as particularly important, in terms of localising oneself, by English speaking retirees with a lifestyle migration agenda. However, such participants often lived in communities with large populations of other English speaking retirees, where they were particularly conscious of a Welsh-English divide. This meant a kind of “Catch 22” whereby consciousness of their “Englishness” made it difficult for them to use the language to progress beyond the boundary; they could not move beyond being perceived as an “English person attempting to speak Welsh”, their accents acting as “durable dispositions” in the Bourdieusian sense (*ibid.*); Malcolm remarks that:- “I think I’m recognised as a Welsh person, although not a Welsh speaking person...some people say, oh, I still hear the Scouse accent!”. Again, this concurs with Hornsby and Vigers’ participants’ experiences (*ibid.*, p. 424) of being positioned as “deficient users of the language...on the grounds of known ethnicity or...accent, register, etc”. “Consciousness of English that one was perceived as English by Welsh speaking people, and of the low value Welsh speaking people attached to the “English” label. In this case, ways of feeling and thinking might have changed, but ways of acting had not, and these visible markers of “Englishness” limited the extent to which emergent Welsh speaking identities were recognised.

Participants might react to these boundary issues by attempting to re-position themselves in relation to other English speaking people. They saw themselves being attacked for learning: “Why do you want to learn Welsh? Wouldn’t you be better learning French or German?” A possible reaction was to ally oneself with the Welsh as against the English language community by disassociating oneself from compatriots’ attitudes and behaviour, particularly as performed in public situations such as concerts: Alice says “There’s a concert on Sunday here, it’s quite funny, the English people go there, they moan about it, they say it’s too much in Welsh, and we actually love it...” When she and her husband visit local cafés, they are careful to

speak only Welsh with one another to avoid being identified as “tourists”. Jane, who says that she has “found other English people very dismissive of the whole set-up”, is also anxious to define herself as different from her compatriots; she emphasises the difference between how she feels and how she is labelled, pointing out how much she appreciates “the importance of the language and the beauty of Welsh”.

Alternatively, participants might experience confusion and dislocation, not knowing where to position themselves:- “not just learning the differences of a new place....(but) learning that you are “different”; you are living in a society that you do not “feel entirely inside” (Noble 2013, 349). Phyllis does not wish to see herself as an English expatriate, but is unsure whether she is accepted by local Welsh speakers. Stella, who also lives in an area with a large expatriate community, is very conscious of the “Englishness” of both herself and others in the local area, and of the consequent difficulty of positioning herself socially. Whereas she is annoyed by her compatriots’ mispronunciation of Welsh place names:- “where I live there’s lots of Mancunians, you know, that have been there 30-40 years, and still say Laneecarmed, Ros ee Bolee, and you think, oh for goodness’ sake!”, she also finds the Welsh language alien, which causes her to struggle in the Welsh class:- “So it is difficult....Welsh is a guttural language, which is very hard for English people to speak”. ...” The “alienness” of the language also applies to the culture:- “...the Welsh...it’s very much on what other people think of you...the Welsh seem to be sociable with people who speak Welsh...” Stella’s desire to be on the correct side of the boundary conflicts with the persistence of her pre-dispositions towards “Englishness”. Unsure of where to position herself, she has chosen to be an intermediary, someone who, in the community shop where she works, knows just enough Welsh to explain to visitors how to pronounce Welsh place names.

In other cases, participants might view themselves as being on the correct side of the boundary while still feeling “English”. This was achieved by defining oneself in terms which made sense both to English compatriots and local Welsh speakers, and by displaying appropriate symbolic markers of identity to make one’s position clear. Colin, who lives as a retiree, along with Melanie, in a strongly Welsh area, uses not language, (he acknowledges that his linguistic ability is low), but markers of national identity reminiscent of the “routine symbols” mentioned by Billig (1995), to signal that his identity is in some ways “Welsh”. He tells his mates:- “So actually, I’m Welsh, I’ve

got a Welsh number-plate”, and “I’ve lived in Wales three years, I can play for the Welsh team, Welsh rugby”. By defining the limits of his “localisation” in this way, Colin avoids any potential culture conflict; he is happy to be seen as a linguistic “tourist” (Unruh 1979):- “I wish to be able to speak Welsh as well as I can French, and my French is awful, but I can pick the phone up and order a hotel room”, while still feeling himself to be “an English lad” and “of English heritage”. Seeing oneself as a “tourist” in this sense, without a permanent attachment to Welsh national space, might in the long run result in a decision to give up learning Welsh. Ginny, after discovering that Wales was “different” from the rest of Britain, and tentatively attaching herself to the new space, partly through starting to learn the language, eventually decided that her future lay not in Wales, but with her American boyfriend, and abandoned her Welsh lessons.

Participants with different initial agendas did not experience these boundary issues to the same extent. Participants from “minority” social groups or engaged in anti-consumerist, alternative lifestyle projects (Hetherington 1998) might have moved beyond conventional categorisations of identity. Kevin, whose birth mother was from Uganda, was, as a member of a minority ethnic group, conscious of the deceptive nature of conventional categorisations such as nationality:- “I tend to say I’m part Welsh, but I do embrace the label British, though there’s so much more going on in the labels for myself...”. As a result, he viewed “Welshness” as only one of many possible alternative identities to be assumed if one wished – he has also “flirted” with Spanish:- “I mean, I’m constantly changing my own self...I’m everyman...I love being everyman!” Rather than being dismayed by the “clunkiness” of Welsh, he sees it as attractive, exotic:- “I love its clunkiness...it never modernised itself, and if you look at the way the language is constructed you can see it’s from a time when English was spoken in a different way as well...” Here, psychological flexibility is used to avoid categorisation in the same way some participants in Hornsby and Vigers’ research (op.cit., 423) used physical distancing:- “it was only when circumstances removed her from her local milieu...that she was able to feel empowered as a “legitimate speaker” of Welsh!”.

Acquiring Cultural and Social Capital

In these accounts of how perceptions of national identity either changed, or to some extent stayed the same, we can also see the influence of the differential value attached to different national “labels” in different contexts. Hage (2003, 53), using a Bourdieusian framework, emphasises the importance of “having your accumulated national capital recognised as legitimately national by the dominant cultural grouping within the field”. In a North Walian context, and particularly in areas with large retirement communities, the value of “English” national identity seemed particularly low, and participants particularly eager to change position. Variations in how different national groups experience learning Welsh have been noted in previous research (Trosset 1986). Some participants, however, found that their “nationality labels” were valued more highly in the Welsh context than they had been “at home”. Fiona, a Scottish participant, had originally come to Wales because of her husband’s job, and had not been particularly anxious to localise herself, deciding to learn Welsh only when she found out she needed to in order to get a job. Once she started learning, however, she discovered that the language offered a way of trading the label of “growing up with English parents in Orkney” for a much more attractive one:-

“...sometimes I think people are that bit nicer because...oh, Fiona, she’s Scottish, she’s come here, and she’s learning Welsh...not, oh, there’s Fiona, her parents are English, she was born and raised in Orkney, but she was always called English...now she’s moved here, she’s Scottish and she’s learning Welsh, isn’t that great?”

The interconnectedness of different forms of capital (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 99) meant that lack of national capital impacted on the acquisition of social capital. Jane’s perception of a “Welsh English divide” made her feel “vulnerable” when talking Welsh in local shops; Stella also struggled to socialise locally in Welsh. Limited opportunities for socialisation made it more difficult in turn for Jane and Stella to acquire linguistic capital by learning the language. Prue, by contrast, who lived in an area with a much smaller retiree population, has encountered the Welsh-English divide only in the media:- “every now and again, you come across a comment in a paper or a radio interview..”. She remained positively orientated towards her local community, and eager to form Welsh speaking connections there. Fiona explicitly links the higher

value accorded to her nationality in this new environment with successful socialisation in Welsh:-

“...being at this wedding, and everybody speaking Welsh, I really enjoyed it...everybody has been really nice, and sometimes I think people are that bit nicer because...oh, Fiona, she’s Scottish, she’s come here, and she’s learning Welsh...”

Conclusion

Alterations in early understandings of national identity can be seen to be key in changing participants’ positionality, and therefore their linguistic trajectories. Differences in whether, and if so how, these perceptions changed were linked to the nature of the communities into which participants were attempting to integrate, the project on which they viewed themselves as being engaged, and the positions they assumed to ensure the success of the project. Participants with “lifestyle migration” agendas might have to choose between disassociating themselves from their compatriots, being uncomfortably positioned between two language communities, or adopting the position of “tourist”. Flexibility in positioning oneself, rather than either adhering to “old” positions or submitting to positions imposed by others, appeared to be advantageous. Also affecting the ease with which perceptions changed was how participants’ particular “nationality labels” were valued in the North Walian context. Participants with “low value labels” found themselves being positioned unfavourably, but at the same time had a certain amount of flexibility in terms of how they positioned themselves in response. In all these respects, some participants experienced more difficulty than others in reconciling “old” with “new” representations of self, and “self for oneself” with “self for others”. Adjusting one’s position to maximum advantage was a crucial determinant of success in acquiring social capital within the Welsh language community.

3) Regaining Lost Welsh Identities?

While some other participants sought to imagine a “Welsh speaking identity”, non-Welsh-speaking Welsh participants might seek to reconcile an imagined, historically lost Welsh speaking identity, with a present day identity. Participants might value the lost Welsh speaking identity highly but view it as distant and unobtainable. Malcolm, for example, values highly the ideal “Welshness” from which adult life had distanced

him, but is frustrated by his real-life experience of learning the language; he struggles both with grammar and forming Welsh speaking connections, and expresses resentment towards non-Welsh individuals who have successfully learned:- “I found this when I first came, a lot of the people who were pushing the Welsh language at me, were English speakers that had learned Welsh...but what they lose out on, they lose out on culture, they lose out on quality...” Despite valuing a Welsh speaking identity, he finds it difficult to acquire one, and consequently experiences himself as a “victim both of the collective shame of linguistic and by extension, cultural loss, and of native speakers’ ridicule” (Jaffe 2015, 37).

Alternatively, the prospect of acquiring a Welsh speaking identity might be regarded with ambivalence. In contrast to Malcolm, David had come to adopt a negative view of Welsh and “Welshness”. His journey away from Welsh and towards English, prompted by bullying at school, had been a willing rather than an unwilling one. He had now partially reversed this negative view because, at national level, “at a certain point, attitudes towards Welsh changed”. However, he was still conflicted between the “moving forward” he had experienced in his English speaking adult career and his current “journey back” to the “Welshness” he had left behind. This conflict is reflected in the structure of his narrative:- “graduated, went for a job, and was offered the post; no intention of taking it, I was just going for an interview! – and then stayed for 27 years. *Now, back to the Welsh...*” David’s experience of returning to Welsh as a form of regression means he has no aspirations to form connections with first language Welsh speakers in the area: - “the Panad a Sgwrs sessions...it’s...one or two people who’ve got nothing better to do with their Saturday mornings, they’re Welsh speakers from the area, they’re not learners, and they’re not particularly helpful...” He aspires instead to a voluntary role in developing Welsh as a second language, which he hopes might assume develop into a second career:- “...these centres (Canolfannau Cymraeg)...there might be a role there in the future...” and thereby enable him to re-integrate his Welsh and English speaking identities. David can probably successfully acquire a Welsh speaking identity, but is unsure whether he actually wants one.

Ambivalence might not be experienced by oneself, but rather by one’s family; this was Alice’s experience, as her decision to learn Welsh had apparently uncovered painful parts of the family history of which she had previously been unaware:-

“...my mother starts telling me little stories that I was unaware of, well, she had actually tried to learn Welsh, and given up... ..but also, I hadn't known that my grandmother, when she was a child, was someone who was stuck in a corner, and told off in the class for speaking Welsh...so it made me realise where my mother was coming from, that real fear factor of speaking Welsh ...”

Other families, perhaps because the loss was further back in the past, had not adopted the negative view of Welsh which resulted from internalising the shame of language loss, but viewed it as a symbol of permanence and stability. Melanie says:-

“I would say, when I'm in England, that I'm Welsh, just ignore my father's side of me...we always went for holidays to my grandparents in Mid-Wales, we moved around a lot when I was a child, so for me, that was the static, the constant....I almost felt, every time I went on holiday, that I was going home...”

All four narratives reflect the difficulty, given historical sociolinguistic disruption (ibid. 33) of re-interpreting past “Welsh identities” to align with present-day social realities. Either the individual, or the family, or both, struggle to locate the turning point where “Welshness” is both valued, and can be successfully acquired. For Malcolm and David, who remembered Welsh speaking childhoods, this struggle was largely about themselves as individuals; for Melanie and Alice, who did not, it was about their whole families. All these participants experienced particularly sharp internal conflicts over linguistic identity, and, if they failed to acquire an authentic Welsh speaking identity which they felt should be theirs by right, particularly strong feelings of shame and frustration.

4) Past Identities - Parents

Parents were particularly important in establishing attachments to a new linguistic community, as they were seen as embodying the “habitus” or “collective history” of the national group to which they belonged (Jenkins 1992, 80).

Parents and grandparents were seen as embodying the lost “Welsh speaking identities” of Malcolm, David, Melanie and Alice, were mentioned in the opening passages of all their narratives, and continued to feature, either positively or negatively, in how the dynamics of these participants' relationship with the language

subsequently played out. For Malcolm, regaining the desired Welsh speaking identity is closely associated, in his narrative, with familial reconnections:-

“As soon as I’d started, without having the pressure of life – I can remember I’d only done the first four units – I phoned this cousin of mine – because he was the same as myself, we feel we were Welsh – it was just something was unlocked in my brain, and a lot of the things I’d learned listening as a child, they all came back...”

Similarly, Melanie’s mother is a positive influence on her learning of Welsh, having in fact started to do the same herself, and even provides a “safe space” within which Melanie can practice her Welsh and make mistakes:- “...she’s started e-mailing me in Welsh...it’s good for me, it’s non-judgmental”.

For David, family connections are not so positive; detailed descriptions of the learning strategies which have enabled him to progress rapidly through his Welsh classes outweigh his rather brief references to the Welsh speaking mother who had inadvertently caused his alienation from the language:-

“.....what else is there in terms of my use of the language....as I say my mother is Welsh first language...so I go to see her 2 or 3 times a week, quite often straight from a class...so lately...*I don’t know if you’re familiar with the Dadagramadeg course (there follows a long description of the Dadagramadeg course)*”.

Alice’s mother is also a source of ambivalence towards the language, although this only serves to increase Alice’s determination to learn.

If Welsh speaking parents served as markers of Welsh identity for non-Welsh-speaking Welsh participants, for participants in pursuit of elective Welsh identities, English speaking parents might come to represent a sometimes problematic link with the “old” identity. Reggie, who felt he had succeeded in becoming a Welsh speaker by refusing to speak English with anyone he knew spoke any degree of Welsh, made a point of assertively performing his chosen identity to his original family:-

“I was going down and staying with members of the family, with my two children, and I suppose I adopted, again, a bit of an aggressive, assertive

attitude, in terms of speaking Welsh with them....and I'm still suffering the consequences, after 20 years, that I did aggravate certain people..."

Steve, who has succeeded in acquiring a Welsh speaking identity to the extent of now living a large part of his life through Welsh, nevertheless admits that remaining family ties could occasion a future return to the United States:-

"Dw i wrth fy modd lle ydw i. Ond dach chi'n gwybod, gawn ni weld. Mae'r plant yn tyfu i fyny, mae'r rhieni yn heneiddio, felly dw i byth yn gallu dweud be sydd yn mynd i ddigwydd..." (I'm very happy where I am. But you know, we'll have to see. The children are growing up, my parents are getting older, so you never know what might happen...")

One could live a large part of one's life – work, family, community activities – through Welsh, yet still retain an inextricable link, through one's original family, to the world which one had left behind.

5) Present Identities - Partners

If parents represented links with the collective past, partners provided individuals with an embodied link to the social present; the embodied nature, and therefore the strength, of this link meant that in negotiating a relationship to the new language community, it was crucial to negotiate or re-negotiate the linguistic relationship one had with one's partner. "Becoming a couple" is identified as one of six main life stages at which, in Catalonia, mudes or transformations of linguistic practice may take place (Pujolar and Gonzales 2013). The narrative interviews used in the present research fleshed out the specific way in which, for this group of participants, such changes occurred. This chapter describes the experience of participants who were, at the time of the interviews, undergoing the process of change; the experience of participants who had undergone the major part of their linguistic transformations some time ago is discussed in a subsequent chapter. The transformations involved were not straightforward, but rather a complex process of negotiation implicating both micro and macro dimensions, as "couples cannot escape the relationship their languages, cultures and national communities at large find themselves in". " (Piller 2001, 209).

Welsh Speaking Partners

As Piller (ibid.) mentions gender as one of the factors affecting negotiation, it may be appropriate to note that most of the participants who described relationships with Welsh speaking partners, and who viewed being able to speak Welsh with their partners as an important reason for learning, were female. As the relative distribution of power between partners has been seen as one of the factors influencing bilingual couples' choice of language (Baker and Sienkewicz 2000), the choice of Welsh as the language which the couple would speak therefore raises issues of gender and power – did female participants feel obliged to learn “his” language? However, in addition to issues of gender and power, it is important to note, in the North Walian context, issues of language and power which affected participants of both genders. The expectation laid on newcomers to learn Welsh in order to integrate is referred to by Hornsby and Vigers (2018, 422) as “an ideological position shared by most of the Welsh-speaking community” in strongly Welsh speaking areas; both male and female participants therefore referred to “learning Welsh to fit in”.

In terms of learning Welsh as a means of integration, Welsh speaking partners were seen as giving participants a strategic advantage, both in learning, and in relating to the Welsh speaking community. A Welsh speaking partner's support could, first of all, be crucial in encouraging an individual to learn, as is demonstrated by Malcolm's experience. The positive effect of re-connecting with members of his original family was negated by lack of support from his Welsh speaking first wife, whose unsupportive attitude he mentions several times:- “She was a natural Welsh speaker, but wouldn't use it...it's a dead language”...“Some people can't understand why you're doing it. My first wife, she couldn't understand – she said, it's a dead language...” By contrast, Ulrike's developing Welsh speaking relationship with her future husband contributes directly to her rapid progress in learning the language; although she and her partner initially spoke English together, as time went on “...he threw in more and more Welsh words when he was speaking to me”. Speaking Welsh with a partner, as with a parent, could provide a “safe space” in which to make mistakes. Contact with “authentic” speech also provided an opportunity to encounter vocabulary one was unlikely to come across in the Welsh class, for example “*chwil cachu gaib*”, which translates roughly as “shit drunk”.

Secondly, perhaps more crucially, speaking Welsh with a partner could symbolise acquiring an element of one's partner's cultural identity, and hence appropriate cultural capital, as can be seen when Ulrike brackets together achieving recognition by the University Welsh for Adults Department with changing from an English to a Welsh speaking relationship with her husband:-

“...they said, well, we'll put you in the most advanced class. I was much more advanced than I thought.....and from that day on I spoke Welsh to him, and we didn't change back to English, because it gave me such a boost of confidence...”

Following this change, Ulrike regards herself as having crossed a boundary, and achieved an “authentic” Welsh speaking identity; she finds that:- “...emotionally, I'm more Welsh....I find it easier to talk about things that affect me emotionally in Welsh than English”.

Thirdly, a Welsh speaking partner could, by acting as “gatekeeper” to the Welsh speaking community, facilitate the acquisition of social as well as cultural capital. Ulrike explicitly describes how the social capital acquired through her relationship with her partner has enabled her to make significant inroads into Welsh speaking social space:- “he nudged people and said, you should speak Welsh with her...I heard him say that a few times...”. From the vantage point of the home shared with her partner, she progresses towards full cultural integration:- “...my first interaction outside the home was buying stamps in the local post office”, and eventually feels more comfortable in North Wales than she had in Germany:- “I got off the train after being away for a year, and I think, I'm home...and that was a feeling I'd never had in the town in Germany where I'd been for 6 years”. Similarly, Carys is able to integrate into a world where, in the Welsh speaking professional posts she acquires, many of her work colleagues are well acquainted with her husband's family. Likewise, Stella says of her partner:- “...obviously I'm sort of on his coat-tails, really...”. and Phyllis, who had become fluent in Danish while living in Denmark with her Danish husband, finds integration into Wales much more difficult without a Welsh speaking partner. Occasionally, access to Welsh social networks was afforded via a partner who was not Welsh speaking but who was sufficiently embedded in Welsh culture to be an “honorary member” of such networks, for example Olivia got to know a number of

Welsh friends because her husband was an academic with links to a University Welsh Department.

These accounts indicate an initial intention to adopt, as a couple, a more or less monolingual Welsh identity, speaking only Welsh with one another, and having one's joint "Welshness" recognised by Welsh speaking friends and relatives. Participants might perceive pressure to conform to this ideal as emanating from families with strongly Welsh cultural identities; Carys said that although she sometimes spoke English with her husband, she would never dream of speaking anything but Welsh with his parents. Where the decision to learn Welsh had been prompted by the acquisition of a Welsh speaking partner, rather than the partner having been acquired following a decision to learn Welsh, this pressure was particularly strong. Partners might not, in this case, represent a strategic advantage; rather, learning Welsh was essential in order to successfully embed oneself in the "national space" of one's partner and his or her relatives. In this case, conflict between "old" and "new" identities, and a feeling of loss of control over one's life, might result. Carys describes having such an experience:-

"I had bought my own place, I had money, and, you know, my own car, I had a proper job, everything was all set up...so I was very independent, and I went from that to living with his family...so it was a very big change, it was like going completely backward, you know".

She is extremely conscious not only of the importance of the language to her husband's family: "...his family's been really involved in the struggles for the language", but also of her perception of her husband's family's cultural identity as very different from her own:- "Americans...everybody's very huggy, sort of thing...they used to literally feel like, oh my God!"

However, a decision to "invest" heavily in acquiring the new linguistic identity (Peirce 1995), could yield advantages as well as disadvantages. Carys says that now she feels "...like I can blend in sometimes, if I want to, and I don't have to be seen as the American, but I still feel like the American..."; she has achieved a plural linguistic identity enabling her to *feel* American, while being *seen* as Welsh; conserving linguistic "authenticity" by continuing to speak English on occasion with her husband,- "I think that the more in-depth kind of relationship you have with somebody, the harder that

makes it to speak Welsh all the time, because I suppose it's because English is still my first language..", while communicating in Welsh within the wider community and with her husband's parents. In Bourdieusian terms, the cultural capital she has acquired has proved sufficient to "buy back" the right to her own cultural identity.

Had speakers like Carys and Ulrike, who had achieved a high degree of integration into the Welsh speaking community reached a position free from linguistic pressures? It appeared speakers who had achieved a high degree of integration, partly on the basis of their partners, could also still encounter "issues over community integration" (Hornsby and Vigers op. cit., 428) in the way they found themselves being positioned by some Welsh speakers. For example, when Ulrike's husband died, she found that she was not recognised in her own right, but only because of her husband:- "My husband died three years ago...I think perhaps it's more difficult since then, because people have asked me, are you going back to Germany now? And I found that quite hurtful, because I thought, well, am I only allowed to be here because of him...?" Although Ulrike certainly appears to have been granted membership of the language community only second hand via her husband, it is difficult to decide whether this is on the basis of gender – because he is a man – or alternatively of his superior "speaker status"; he is a "full speaker" rather than a "new speaker" of Welsh, and it is possibly on this basis that Ulrike has therefore been awarded the "honorary Welsh" status mentioned by Bowie (1993, 180), rather than being granted full speakerhood.

English Speaking Partners

Whereas having a Welsh speaking partner increased opportunities for integration, having an English speaking partner entailed the danger of belonging to a social unit, or *nomos*, which constructed itself, and was constructed, as English speaking. Gubrium and Holstein (2009, 130) describe the *nomos* as an "entity that occupies a distinct space, separate from the biographies and identities of individual partners", and which constructs a social world as "we" rather than two separate "I's". It was therefore very important, both for the maintenance of the *nomos* and for success in learning Welsh, for partners to align position in relation to the language. Alignment could be either away from English and towards Welsh, or back towards English and away from Welsh. Where one partner had decided not to learn, or expressed anti-Welsh

sentiments, the other partner might try to persuade them to change position; Jane, Tracy and Kevin all engaged in such initiatives - Jane says:-

“...my partner goes around saying, oh well, it's only since Jane's been saying this, that and the next thing that I've become more aware...he has changed his attitude considerably, because I've been pushing this business about the importance of the language...” ;

Alternatively, participants might let their partner's position influence them into drifting back towards English; David, whose partner refused to learn because she had experienced discrimination at work on the basis of language, rather than trying to move his partner towards the Welsh language, is instead moved further away from a language from which he had already become alienated.

When partners did learn Welsh together, this might either strengthen or dilute the learning experience. Strengthening occurred when the *nomos* stood “over and above the individuals who make it up “(ibid.); for example Alice and her partner, by constructing themselves as a Welsh speaking social unit in walking round the village speaking Welsh to each other, create more social opportunities than would have been available to them individually, and signal their difference from English tourists by deliberately speaking Welsh in local cafés.

However, where partners were divided, for example on the basis of gendered social positions, or of differing educational or occupational cultures, learning experiences could be diluted. Critics (Wiley 1985) have questioned whether the *nomos* is always as powerful a construct as has sometimes been suggested, pointing out that contemporary marital partnerships may well be intersected by numerous other social constructions. Sometimes participants found ways of dealing with these external barriers. Colin had self-confessedly low linguistic abilities but was very confident in initiating conversations with friends and neighbours in Welsh; Melanie, his partner, found it easier to master grammar and vocabulary but was not as conversationally confident as Colin. Colin and Melanie let their different learning styles complement one another; Melanie helped Colin with his vocabulary, and he helped her to socialise with the neighbours; in this way, the couple really did operate as a more effective social unit than either partner on his or her own.

Sometimes, however, external social constructions outweighed the power of partnership. This could occur on the basis of gender. Prue and her husband, for example, having progressed through all their Welsh classes together, had now found themselves diverging over involvement in Welsh speaking social activities, with Prue's husband more reluctant to engage than Prue herself. This division had arisen largely because of differences in how men and women are positioned socially, as Prue's husband's reluctance to engage was due partly to the gendered construction of Welsh speaking social activities - there appeared to be a particular lack of formal Welsh speaking social activities suitable for men:- "I mean Merched y Wawr are great, but there doesn't seem to be anything equivalent for my husband.." The resulting divergence had slowed down Prue's learning trajectory; she mentions her husband's lack of engagement several times in conjunction with her own difficulties in locating Welsh speaking activities. Differences in educational or occupational cultures could also be implicated. For example, Fiona's husband, unlike Fiona herself, worked in an environment which was almost completely English speaking, so made very slow progress with his Welsh. Fiona's husband eventually gave up learning Welsh, which undermined Fiona's own motivation to learn, and reduced the number of contexts in which she was able to use her Welsh, as the language which she, her husband and children spoke at home would now always be English.

Conclusion

Partners were a key source of cultural and social capital in negotiating an identity within, or in relation to, the new community. Negotiating a "joint identity" was, however, a complex process where what happened at micro level was underpinned by contradictory and conflicting macro level constructs relating to language, or gender, or both. Having a Welsh speaking partner brought conditional legitimacy and recognition, but this could be at the expense of the authenticity of one's "own" identity. Having an English speaking partner entailed the danger of being identified as "English", and might involve conflict between existing identity within the couple and emergent identity as a Welsh speaker.

6) Children – Focal Point for Parental and Family Linguistic Identities

Given the emphasis placed by traditional theories of language revitalisation on intergenerational transmission (Fishman 1991), the language parents speak with their

children assumes importance not only for parents' linguistic identity, but for the linguistic identity of the family as a whole, and the future fate of the language. The family has therefore been seen as making a vital contribution to the continued use of the threatened language, and thus to the goals of "official" language policy (Spolsky 2012). Having children has also been identified as a "muda", or "critical juncture where a speaker changes linguistic practice in favour of the target language" (Walsh and O'Rourke 2014, 67). However, in new speaker families, deciding what language family members spoke with one another was not straightforward; families needed to negotiate their own "family language policy" (King 2008), striking a balance between parents' and children's respective linguistic identities, and linguistic ideologies originating in the social world outside the family, to arrive at a linguistic identity for the family as a whole.

Personal or Collective Linguistic Identity?

An important aspect of "family language policy" concerned the extent to which the children would become "Welsh speaking". Parents might view this as important either because of concern for the collective future of the language, or for personal reasons. Participants aiming to regain Welsh speaking identities might see children as completing the task of repairing the sociolinguistic rupture caused by the loss of the language; children were learning the language "for" their parents. Alice, for example, says of her daughter:- "I can imagine her wanting to keep hold of the language...she plays rugby for a Welsh team...she's come to Cardiff University to do her Masters...and now and again, I get little text messages in Welsh..." Thus, on a collective as well as a personal level, Alice valued her children learning Welsh, as it meant the language having a possible future.

Other participants, while recognising the key role of children in conserving the language, might experience a conflict between this collective aim and their personal identities, feeling that the need to preserve the language was nudging them towards monolingualism, and away from the bilingualism they had hitherto practised within the family. Carys, for example, says:-

"..when we took our child to the States last time, she came back speaking pretty much just English...she's picked up that we speak English with each

other, so that probably, if we want Welsh to really be *the* language, we need to speak a lot more Welsh with each other...”

This need to speak Welsh at all times was experienced as conflicting with the need for Carys to speak to her child in an “authentic” manner:- “...if somebody passes away, or something, and trying to explain to her something really complicated, or in depth, that’s when I think things go harder...” Similar tensions are mentioned by O’Rourke and Nandi (2019, 7) as occurring in Galicia, where parents experienced a conflict between recognising the value of plural identities and escaping the dominance of the majority language. Such conflicts may be experienced more intensely by women, as “mother tongue” ideologies can position the mother as bearing the main responsibility for intergenerational transmission. Statements such as “the wife’s pivotal role in home communications (means that) she may use her own mother tongue more often with the children” (Castonguay 1982, 265) show how ideologies of monolingualism may intersect with constructions of gender.

In contrast to the commitment of the parents mentioned above to personal and collective “Welshness”, some participants had decided to learn Welsh only to help their children as they went through Welsh medium education, without having any personal commitment to the future of Welsh or to seeing themselves as “Welsh speakers”. These participants might eventually experience high levels of conflict between their own investment in the language and their desire to help their children; between personal and collective linguistic identities – to the extent of withdrawing their investment altogether. Such conflicts are evident as parents attempt to define the “family linguistic identity”; are the children going to stay in Wales and “be Welsh”, or move elsewhere? Alan argues:- “if they’re going to stay here...if they’re going to work...they need to be able to speak Welsh, because Welsh is such a big part of here, of living in North Wales...” but also:- “...if they become fluent in two languages when they’re young, it might help them to be fluent in three languages when they’re old; if they go off and learn a European language, they can use it in lots of parts of the world”. This questioning of the family’s linguistic identity centres on calculations of the amount of economic and cultural capital attached to Welsh – does the language have only local, or global value? Assumption of a global rather than purely local value is used as an argument for a bilingual, rather than a monolingual Welsh, family linguistic identity.

The increasing “Welshness” of the family environment as children “stormed ahead in school” (Pete), and became more proficient in Welsh than a parent, might cause the legitimacy of the linguistic identity of the “new speaker” parent to be called into question. Children, perhaps influenced by ideologies encountered at school, could act as the catalyst for such conflicts; it has been noted that children in bilingual and multilingual families can be “active participants in socialising their parents to particular language practices” (Fogle and King 2013). This process can be seen in action when Pete’s son, who has clearly acquired more linguistic capital than Pete has, starts to make fun of his Welsh:- “the gap between him speaking and me speaking was getting further and further apart, to the point where I was reading him some story, and he would laugh, or he’d not, like, laugh, but he’d take the piss...”

Pete’s perceived lack of linguistic capital has led him to question his own legitimacy as a Welsh speaker, and consequently whether he is willing to invest any further not only in the language, but in “Welshness”:-

“I don’t have any confidence in the slightest about opening my gob to say the words now, because I don’t know whether it’s going to be right or wrong....I did start to question then, where is this massive compelling event, or reason, for me to embed myself in the Welsh culture...”

A turning point has been reached, leading to disengagement from learning Welsh in favour of a project, his business, which will yield better returns:- “My business, then, became more demanding on my time....I’m learning Welsh, I’m building a business in Wales, but we’re doing more exporting out of Wales, so I think I’m better off learning Chinese...” The low amount of capital he has accumulated leads him to “opt out” of the local Welsh value system, and buy in to different, more global values.

Pete recognises that opting out will cause a degree of conflict in the family, and a loss for himself. As Pete’s wife is Margot’s daughter, and Margot had been instrumental in persuading Pete to start learning Welsh, by rejecting the Welsh value system Pete is diverging from a strongly pro-Welsh “family language policy”; and while he and his son speak English, his wife and his son continue to speak Welsh. Again, it is the child who “acts out” this conflict, using his father’s lack of Welsh to play Pete and his wife off against one another:-

“..because, you know, she will discipline him in Welsh, and then afterwards I’ve got to say, what did you just agree with him, like, there’s no telly till Saturday...and then he’ll say, like, oh, yeah, watch the telly, dad, yeah, no worries...and then she says, I said there’s no telly... sorry, sorry, I didn’t know...”

The School as Agent of Monolingualism

External influences, primarily the school environment, increased the “Welshness” of Pete’s family linguistic identity, and indirectly nudged Pete towards giving up his learning of Welsh and investing instead in other projects. Alternatively, the “Welshness” of the school environment might nudge parents towards experiencing themselves as defective, both as parents and Welsh speakers. Now that her daughter has entered secondary school, Fiona realises that the school, and to a large extent the social world her daughter will enter once she graduates, is a Welsh speaking social space, and suffers a crisis of confidence in the level of Welsh she has learned, which she feels is inadequate to help her daughter:-

“I mean...everything’s coming home...it’s really hit me...she writes everything in her homework book in Welsh, and she’ll show it to me, and I look at the words for ages, and she wants an instant answer, and I can’t give it...and I’m not used to not being able to help my children...”

Schools have been viewed as one of the principal external influences on language use within the family (Spolsky op. cit., 6). In the language revitalisation context, the situation generally envisaged is one where the school is seen as undermining the minority language spoken by immigrant families:- “state-controlled education commonly sets up a conflict between heritage languages and the national standard language” (ibid.). In this case, we see a reversal of this situation, in which the prioritisation of the minority language, with the school experienced as a monolingual Welsh environment, may disadvantage English speaking parents. Alan felt his children’s school sometimes forgot that not all parents, or children, spoke Welsh:-

“There’s an expectation that everyone can speak Welsh in the school, either the parents can, or all the kids can...it was hard when we first started, and we

went to the initial talks for parents, because we weren't Welsh speakers, trying to get our heads round stuff..."

The monolingual ideology practised by the school did not always appear to take account of the realities of bilingual family life. High value was attached to Welsh, low value to English; and importantly, consideration was not always given to how English speaking parents might contribute to supporting their children's Welsh medium education. Alan, again, says that:-

"they're a very proud Welsh speaking school, but at the same time, I think sometimes bilingualism gets forgotten over the Welsh....I get where it comes from, but at the same time I think you could be proud to be more bilingual, as opposed to being proud to be able to speak Welsh...."

Fiona experienced her inability to support her daughter as being due to her own deficiencies as a Welsh speaker. It was true that parents might not have invested all that they could have done in learning Welsh, the extent of their investment being influenced partly by their reason for coming to Wales – Fiona was an "incidental identity" participant, who had come to Wales not through choice, but because of her husband's job, and for whom learning Welsh had been juggled with other priorities such as work and child care. However, lack of investment in learning Welsh on the part of the linguistic individual was possibly paralleled, and even reinforced, by the limited investment made by "official" language policies in enabling working women with children to learn Welsh:- "... when I came back to work, it was fitting in my work, and picking her up from nursery...and then I probably lapsed again at the second child...". The way individuals positioned themselves and the way they were positioned by society both contributed towards this unsatisfactory "stop-and-start" model of learning Welsh.

Children as Linguistic Agents

Parents' linguistic conflicts, as can be seen above, centred round whether to prioritise personal linguistic identity or the collective linguistic identity of the family, and therefore the collective future of the language, with children often positioned at the focal point of such conflicts. As can also be seen from Pete's experience, children were not just passive recipients of their parents' actions, but agents in their own right, making their

own language choices (Fogle and King, *op. cit.*). Although Pete's experience showed how children could reflect ideologies prevalent in wider society which delegitimised "new speakers" of Welsh, children's language use often reflected the realities of bilingualism, in opposition to parental attempts to pursue family language policies which were more strongly Welsh. In Margot's family, Margot herself originally spoke English with her older children, then, once she had learned Welsh, decided to speak Welsh with the children born from then on; shortly after this, she changed to Welsh with the older children also, while her husband continued to speak to all the children in English. When they reached their teens, the older children went through a phase of "rebellious" strongly against Welsh. Reggie's second wife had brought up her children in English; Reggie decided that he would speak to the whole family – his wife, her children, and his own children - in Welsh. However, although Reggie addressed them in Welsh, his wife's children continued to answer him in English. Olivia's older daughter, despite having a Welsh medium education and hearing a fair amount of Welsh within the family, decided her identity was "English", moved to England, and traded her Welsh given name for one which was more "English". O'Rourke (2019, 10) describes similar instances in Galicia, where parents' attempts to establish "safe linguistic spaces" for their children were sometimes resisted or ignored.

Conclusion

New speakers of Welsh experienced a considerable degree of conflict between the demands of collective and of personal linguistic identities in deciding how much to invest in speaking Welsh with their children. In some cases these pressures caused participants to give up learning. One of the factors underlying this conflict was pressure to ensure intergenerational transmission of the language; Census statistics have shown that, despite a small recent increase, families where only one parent speaks Welsh are still associated with a low level of intergenerational transmission (Kathryn Jones and Morris 2007). Jones and Morris point out that the statistical evidence does not explain why this should be; their own ethnographic research identifies a number of likely factors such as the time the Welsh speaking parent spends alone with the child, the language parents speak to one another, parents' attitude to the language, the influence of other relatives and of the school. Work has been carried out, principally by the "Twr" project, and its successor, "Cymraeg i Blant", to support families to speak Welsh with their children (Edwards and Newcombe 2005). However such work does

not perhaps take account of the extra internal and external pressures to which new speakers of Welsh are subject; for their need for support with their own Welsh language learning, and perhaps also with the challenges presented by their own children. The implications of this for language policy are more fully discussed in the concluding chapter of the thesis.

7) Overview

This study confirms the findings of other studies carried out in similar contexts (Hornsby and Vigers op. cit.) in showing the challenges faced by newcomers to the language in establishing their legitimacy within a strongly Welsh environment. This chapter has dealt with the challenges involved in arriving at a new definition of self and defining relationships with significant others. Rather than identical experiences of delegitimisation, the study reveals trajectories which varied considerably.

Trajectories were influenced by the life projects in which participants were engaged and by the cultural capital they either brought with them or were able to acquire. In arriving at a re-definition of self, flexibility was supremely important; alternative lifestyle participants were adept at achieving the required re-definition. Re-defining oneself also required a re-valuation of one's existing identity. Entering a new "national space" required participants to evaluate their "national capital"; low national capital involved greater difficulty in positioning oneself. Participants recovering lost Welsh identities needed to re-adjust the value they attached to the language and to re-assess how they themselves were valued.

Relationships with the Welsh language community were defined partly through one's relationships with significant others; the relationship negotiated was crucial for the direction and extent of one's linguistic trajectory. Extensive negotiations with parents and other members of one's original family, especially if these family members attributed a negative value to Welsh, might be required to align oneself with the language community. Negotiating a Welsh language relationship with a partner and their family could significantly enhance both linguistic and social capital, but participants who acquired partners in the course of learning Welsh were more favourably positioned than those who learned Welsh to accommodate previously acquired partners, and who had to work to convince partners' families of their linguistic value. Power differentials based on gender, as well as language, may have featured

in such negotiations. Negotiations between English speaking partners concerned how, as a couple, to relate to the Welsh speaking community and to one another.

Defining a Welsh language relationship with one's children meant defining the extent to which one was willing to align one's personal linguistic identity with the collective linguistic identity of the community. Negotiating a family language policy could involve contestations around the value which should be attached to Welsh and English respectively, and the linguistic capital attributed to different family members, sufficiently intense to cause some participants to give up learning Welsh. "Incidental identity" participants, other aspects of whose lives had often been prioritised over learning Welsh, might regret the lack of Welsh speaking linguistic capital to pass on to their children; women especially might experience guilt due to their assumed responsibility for intergenerational transmission. Participants recovering lost Welsh identities, by contrast, saw their children as regaining linguistic capital they themselves lacked.

The varying ways in which participants' self-perceptions and close relationships affected identity construction is also evident in the relationships they negotiated with the wider Welsh speaking community, which will be examined in the next chapter.

6. Turning Points – the Wider Community

Whereas close personal relationships were key in arriving at new perceptions of self, interactions with individuals in the social world outside the circle of close relationships were key to embedding oneself in wider society. The process of negotiating such relationships took place in the Welsh class, within local communities, and in the workplace.

1) In the Welsh Class – Acquiring Knowledge and Negotiating Identity

The Welsh class was an obvious starting point for establishing Welsh speaking relationships. However, although the function of the class in terms of providing “legitimate knowledge” of the language (Jenkins 1992, 85) was clear, its function in terms of preparing individuals for the “real” Welsh speaking social world was less clearly defined. The classroom has sometimes been regarded as a “safe space” which protects learners from negative evaluation (Creese and Martin 2003, 2). It has also been regarded as a microcosm of the social world outside:- “the educational context only reproduces...the social polarities outside the classroom” (Hornsby and Vigers 2018, 423). In participants’ accounts of their classroom experiences, it is clear that they have brought into the room with them not only the “social polarities outside”, but understandings acquired during their own early socialisation. At the same time, relationships formed within the classroom are seen to feed into present and future interactions in the social world outside. In this sense, the classroom acts as a “half-way house” between past and future identities. The extent to which the class does, indeed, provide learners with legitimate knowledge, is subject to the interplay between these different social processes.

Outside Influences

The interplay between participants’ predispositions and social constructions brought in from outside the classroom affected how successful participants were in becoming “Welsh speakers”. Predisposition towards learning languages did not always predict success. As noted in the last chapter, this may have been partly due to the lesser value than expected attached to prior learning of majority languages in the context of learning a minority language such as Welsh. However, what happened outside the class was also significant. Jane and Fiona had both previously learned Spanish, but both encountered barriers which prevented their putting this “starting up capital” to

work; Jane, as mentioned earlier, found it difficult to acquire sufficient social capital to network with Welsh speakers locally, and the circumstances of Fiona's life as a working mother caused her to prioritise job and family over learning Welsh. By contrast, although Reggie had been unsuccessful at learning languages in school, his determination to compete with his colleagues enabled him to learn Welsh to a high enough standard to use the language regularly at work. In addition, the timescales of participants' wider social lives, as noted in Chapter Four, sometimes conflicted with the timescales on which classes were run.

Classroom Dynamics

Outside influences were subject to re-definition and re-negotiation within the internal dynamics of the classroom. In the classroom, participants, unlike the Corsican learners described by Jaffe, constantly assessed how the new social practice of learning and using Welsh related to past and imagined future identities. Questions they implicitly asked themselves were:- "How is this language different from other languages I have learned before?" "How is this language different from my "own" language?" "Given the different forms the Welsh language seems to take, which Welsh is the "real" Welsh?" "What kind of language community can I build inside and outside of the classroom?" "How does the Welsh language fit into my life trajectory?" More experienced speakers, who had finished with Welsh classes, might ask themselves:- "Now that I have learned, how does the Welsh speaking person I have become relate to the person I was before?"

"How is this language different from others I have learned" was a question asked in the early stages of learning. As discussed in Chapter Four, participants who had learned other languages by more traditional methods might realise that Welsh did not fit into the familiar UK framework where learning a language was a way of gaining educational prestige rather than of relating to a language community. This realisation often co-incided with a perception that Welsh was different from – typically, more "guttural" than - English; learning Welsh therefore entailed reversing participants' previous linguistic value systems. Stella, Jane and Prue all experienced difficulty in this respect. Participants like Steve, who had come to this project from a background in medieval Celtic languages and literature in the United States, were by contrast able to seamlessly transfer prior competences to this new project.

The question “Which Welsh is the real Welsh?” was asked in the early to intermediate stages of learning, as participants found that forms of the language they had learned from their last tutor were not necessarily universal. The “safe haven” of the classroom was gradually being replaced by an ambivalent and inconsistent reality. This affected participants’ perception both of the Welsh language, and of their own relationship with the Welsh language community. Participants seeking to regain lost Welsh identities seemed to be particularly affected by the lack of a standard form of the language; for them, the question “Which Welsh is the real Welsh?” may have been associated with the related question “What is Welshness?” Malcolm queried Welsh grammatical forms and the differences between North and South Walian forms of the language. Alice challenged her tutor when “we were told to say yes and no differently in Dolgellau from what they say in Porthmadog.” At the same time as underlining the evasiveness of “Welshness”, lack of understanding of local forms of the language underlined participants’ lack of a local identity, as described by Hornsby and Vigers (op. cit., 422):- “Although the use of local linguistic forms can confer speaker legitimacy...the fact of being an incomer...can undermine this status. The standardised forms of the classroom, however fluently used, do not link the speaker with a locality and thus a local identity”.

Whereas narratives focussed initially on aligning what happened in the class with what participants brought with them both from their former lives and from the world outside, the emphasis then shifted to relationships within the classroom. The question “What kind of classroom language community can I build” was clearly important given that the classroom community, in the early stages of learning, might be the main form of social practice conducted through Welsh. Participants’ prior learning experiences, their anticipated life trajectories, and categorisations operating at macro level inside and outside the classroom, were all implicated in how it was answered. Some younger participants who had come to Wales to get a job or raise a family experienced the classroom as a supportive community. Kay saw the Welsh class as a way of connecting socially with other young mothers, not necessarily always through the medium of Welsh. Carys, another younger participant, adopts a different orientation, talking of her classroom experience in terms of making international contacts, and of what her tutors, who had since become personal friends, must have thought of her early attempts at the language. Such networks not only enabled participants to

accumulate social and cultural capital, but generated symbolic support for the Welsh language across national borders (Coupland et al., 2006). Some older participants also spoke of communities of practice involving tutors and selected fellow students. Reggie, who started learning to compete with work colleagues, had formed a small support community of other ambitious learners and supportive managers. Alice talks of being inspired by a series of different tutors, and also of international contacts. Ulrike indicates that some of her tutors have now become personal friends. Jane describes feeling honoured when a group of advanced learners invite her to join their Welsh conversation group.

Some of these descriptions may reflect the desire of participants with professional backgrounds to relate to individuals with similar backgrounds to themselves. Alan mentions that both his tutors, like himself, engage in outdoor pursuits like running, walking and cycling. However, one can also see an aspiration to move beyond the category of “student” by aligning oneself with individuals occupying positions in the Welsh speaking social world. These forms of alignment, providing a head-start in forming Welsh speaking relationships, were more likely to be feasible for participants whose life circumstances enabled them to incorporate tutors and friends of tutors into their social life outside the classroom, which was generally not the case for participants who had retired.

One can also see a desire, through aligning oneself with tutors and selected students only, to move beyond the categorisations of “Welsh” or “English” which could affect the dynamics of the Welsh class. Some students found themselves caught up in such dynamics. Students could view tutors as unable to help them because of their Welsh cultural and linguistic background, expressing a preference for tutors from English speaking backgrounds who had learned Welsh, as “they know the holes you can fall into”. Melanie says of her tutor that “she’s Welsh, and we’re all from English backgrounds - she doesn’t always get what we’re asking her”, citing confusion between the English letter “e” and the Welsh “i” (*i-dot*) as an example. Stella had walked out of a class in the Summer School when a tutor laughed at a mistake she had made. Students could turn the class from a Welsh speaking space to an English one; Stella talks of how, when she expressed a wish to do the exam at the end of her course, “one woman actually told me I’d ruined the class because I’d altered the

emphasis, and they were just coming for social reasons”, and of “the bombastic woman who takes over the class , and usually takes over the class in English”.

The initial emphasis of narratives also shifted to focus on the way in which participants viewed Welsh fitting into their life trajectory. The answer to the question “How does Welsh fit into my life trajectory?” might depend on the amount individuals were willing to invest in learning the language. Participants typically weighed up the time and effort spent on the classes against the other timescales and value systems operating in their lives. Although difficulties within the classroom might affect what happened “outside”, it was this calculation, rather than the quality either of social interaction within the classes, or of participants’ learning of Welsh, which exerted the strongest influence on whether they continued or gave up learning. Reggie was willing to make a significant investment in order to compete with work colleagues, and Steve and Margot in order to acquire their desired identities. All “lost Welsh identity” participants, participants with Welsh speaking partners, and most retirees, committed themselves wholeheartedly to attending every single Welsh class. Colin, however, decided he was content to invest just enough to be a “linguistic tourist”, and to spend the time instead on renovating his house. “Incidental identity” participants had to fit the classes in with other life priorities. Gilly, Colin’s daughter, decided she was just “passing through” and would eventually go back to her boyfriend in America. Fiona, Sandra and Tracy juggled the classes around families or jobs. Pete opted for global rather than local values, and devoted his time to his business in preference to learning Welsh.

Entering the “Real Welsh Speaking World”

As participants progressed through all the available classes, fitting the language into their life trajectories became, rather than a distant aim, a task to be accomplished in the present; individuals now had to position themselves in relation to the “real” Welsh speaking world. Retirees like Prue and Phyllis found this adjustment extremely difficult. Participants with Welsh speaking partners, who spoke Welsh at work, or who had children in school, were better placed, but still experienced some contestations. Participants who had acquired a reasonable amount of Welsh found that, to secure a position in the Welsh speaking world equivalent to the one they had occupied in the “old” world, cultural competences other than language might be needed. Knowledge of Welsh culture was seen as key to operating effectively in many Welsh social

contexts, and as especially difficult to acquire given the habitus as “the outcome of collective history” (Jenkins 1992, 80). A deficit in this kind of cultural knowledge meant that Fiona, who had a background in bookselling, was unable to transfer her professional knowledge to the Welsh context- “Just the heritage...knowing the history of where you are, the literary culture where you are, knowing your folklore...it’s all part of where you are, isn’t it, and for somewhere like here its particularly strong...”

Some ways of acquiring such knowledge were available. The most advanced Welsh for Adults course, the Meistroli, had a cultural and historical component, which Prue said she found more interesting and relevant to living a life through Welsh than the language component of the class. By teaching in a Welsh medium school, Carys had acquired “a primary education through the medium of Welsh”. Margot, after progressing through all her Welsh classes, had completed an external degree in Welsh Studies at a Mid-Walian University. After completing classes, Prue had attended evening classes in Welsh literature and culture; however, it is unclear whether the knowledge she has acquired fits within a Welsh speaking framework, as the books she has read are all in English, her interest in “the Welsh history for the Tudor period” is still grounded in “English” chronology, and the “Welsh” castles in which she is also interested were all built by English occupying forces. Overall, it was considered difficult, even by participants who had achieved a high level of cultural knowledge, to acquire the same degree of cultural capital as individuals who had been brought up and educated in Welsh; as Steve says:-

“Dwi’m yn credu bod chi’n gallu newid...Hynny yw, ges i fy ngeni a magu yn America. O’n i yna am dros ugain mlynedd ar ddechrau fy mywyd ..dw i’n meddwl bod hynny’n reit bwysig o ran ffurfio pwy ydach chi. Dw i ‘m yn credu bod hi’n bosib newid hynny...” (*“I don’t think you can change...That is, I was born and brought up in America. I was there for twenty years early in life, and I think that’s very important for forming your sense of who you are. I don’t think you can change that”*).

Given the perceived difficulty of functioning at the same level in the new social world as they had in the old one, participants who were committed to living their future lives through Welsh might seek to attain a legitimate position by becoming a Welsh for Adults Tutor. In this position, they were ideally placed to function as intermediaries

between “Welsh speakers” and “learners”. After completing her external degree in Welsh studies, Margot worked as a language planning official and a Welsh for Adults Tutor. As a tutor, she had had to decide how to position herself in relation to the students she taught; she felt being a past student gave her the advantage of having a foot in both camps. She describes how, whereas as a language planning official she had taken a militant stance against English “colonisation”, in the classes she took a different view, in opposition to a co-tutor who was a member of Cymdeithas yr Iaith, with fairly extremist views:- “*..dwi’n cofio yn y dosbarthiadau, o’n i ar ochr y dysgwyr...o’n i’n gweld fy hun fel un ohonyn nhw* (“I remember in the classes, I was on the side of the learners...I saw myself more as one of them...”)

Conclusion

The “starting positions” noted in Chapter Four can be seen here to change, and trajectories to move in particular directions, under the influence not only of what participants brought with them, but of what happened to them outside the classes, and, importantly, of what happened inside the classroom. Participants who were able to align “outside” and “inside”, and to use relationships negotiated in the classroom as a bridge to the social world outside, were likely to experience more successful trajectories to “speakerhood”.

2) Constructing the Local Culture – Geographical and Social Spaces

New social realities or “local cultures” (Gubrium and Holstein 2009, 139) were also constructed in physical and social locations within the wider Welsh speaking world. Chapter Four described how participants had initially become aware of the symbolic boundaries between “Welsh” and “English” spaces, and made efforts to create spaces where they interacted in Welsh. As participants continued to locate themselves, engaging in a greater variety of interactions in a larger number of social locations – informal and formal organisational, as well as workplace settings - the opportunities for integrating into “Welsh speaking space” in theory increased. Hornsby and Vigers (op. cit. 420) remark that living in areas where Welsh still retains a historic presence as a community language means that “in theory, new speakers of Welsh (can) use the language relatively frequently within a community setting.” However, in practice “issues over community integration” were encountered. The present study identified the complexity which can surround such issues, with the extent of integration varying

considerably between participants and between contexts. Participants positioned themselves in different ways in response to the ways they found themselves being positioned.

Separate Spaces

In some contexts, a pattern of more or less completely separate “Welsh” and “English” spaces was evident, with little interaction between Welsh and English social groups. This was principally the case for retirees living in areas with large English retirement communities. Admittedly retirees may risk occupying a marginal position in any community - Jane says “because my age group...I’m not sure what opportunities there actually are for getting involved” - but in this case, other factors also appeared to be at work, with “Welsh” and “English” spaces largely constructed as separate.

This applied to both organisational and physical configurations. In organisational terms, Jane describes community activities as being patronised mainly by English speaking people:- “The café, they’ve been trying to make it into a community centre, and when they had a big coffee morning for Macmillan last year, a lot of people who I know who are Welsh, did not go...it seems a bit sad”, bringing to mind the picture painted by Cloke (1997, 150) of the commodification of rural Wales by “incomers” perceived to “exploit the country and take over rural affairs”, and hence encountering barriers to participation in the social life of the area. The organisational divide is paralleled by a physical divide, which some participants specifically linked to the appropriation of space by English speakers. Alice, for example, says:-

“You’re actually aware that there’s the English part and the Welsh part...you’ve got the English people, who try to be the lords and ladies of the manor...the big houses are the English part...and the “Friends of the Village”, it’s very much, things are done through the medium of English rather than the medium of Welsh...I think they’ve only got one Welsh speaker on the committee..”

She later explicitly connects the local appropriation of space with power imbalances at national, UK level:-

“We went to the estate agent’s...and we asked, can we have details of Welsh property in Cymraeg? And she said, all our information is in English...she only

found one property, which was a tiny cottage, and she said, the large properties are sold to an English market, so a lot of estate agent stuff is in English”.

The view of a power balance on the basis of nationality is echoed by Pete:- “..It’s wealth migration, isn’t it, into Anglesey, you know there’s 20 millionaires on Anglesey...go to the farmers’ auction in Gaerwen on Saturday, and you won’t hear one person speak English, but then go to the Oyster Catcher restaurant just further up the coastline, and...” and Olivia:- “Wales has been affected, economically particularly, by the drain of resources, of money, out of Wales...you can see it more easily if you sit on Anglesey, and look at what’s going on there...you can see that drain across the bridge...”

Participants had to decide how to position themselves given this situation. To avoid “being positioned” as incomers, some, for example Alice and her husband, decided to draw back from formal social activities in their villages. Instead, it was sometimes possible to negotiate one’s own informal Welsh speaking spaces, through public encounters in garages, local shops, the swimming pool, the doctor’s or dentist’s office, or with workmen renovating one’s home. Although these interactions contributed to creating a Welsh speaking local culture, chance encounters in public spaces tended to be of a “one-off” nature; it could be difficult for relationships to develop and move on. No participant, other than those who had married into Welsh speaking families, described relationships which involved socialising at home, in Welsh, with Welsh speaking friends or neighbours. It could also be difficult for negative experiences to be overwritten; it took Melanie a considerable amount of time to regain confidence after embarrassing Welsh speaking encounters in a coffee shop and with a neighbouring farmer. This disadvantaged participants who found public interactions difficult; male participants or couples typically found it easier to talk to workmen, garage mechanics or shop assistants than did women on their own. An additional, and very serious, disadvantage of such informal encounters was that the presence of non-Welsh-speaking English people might make it difficult for Welsh speaking interactions to occur at all.

Sharing Informal Spaces

In other contexts, a degree of social interaction did take place, but with certain limitations. An overt social divide might not be experienced, but it could nevertheless

be difficult to identify social activities which could be undertaken through the medium of Welsh. This was the case for Prue, who, having completed all the available Welsh for Adults courses, sought out organisations which offered informal Welsh language social activities. Living along the North Wales coast not far from Bangor, in an area with fewer retirees than the areas where Jane or Alice lived, she found that although Welsh speaking organisations did exist, they did not advertise themselves, making it difficult for new members to join:-

“I mean, we go to a camera club, a history society, a bird group, but they all speak English...so where do I go? The Cymdeithas Edward Llwyd does reports on the meeting, and they say what’s going to be on in the next meeting, but they don’t say where it is, or when it is...presumably, if you’re a member, you don’t need to know!”

Although “Panad a Sgwrs” sessions were available, and in theory aimed to unite learners and first language speakers, she experienced these events as being patronised mainly by learners, and found it difficult to form real relationships with people who had come together only to speak Welsh.

When Welsh speaking organisations were available, acceptance was experienced as being conditional, rather than unconditional and wholehearted:- “Some were – I got the impression – looking at me and thinking, who’s she?” A degree of acceptance was experienced only after an incident where:-

“They had a magician who was very good, and he picked on me to do something stupid. I had to hold an egg whisk to my forehead and go “Eeee”, to transfer the cards across from one envelope to another, and he made me do it three times...and I noticed a change of attitude after that – I’d obviously done something stupid, and had done it quite happily, and I got the impression after that, that they accepted me a little more”.

A more equal balance of power between Welsh and English speaking communities appears to create opportunities for interaction; however increased interaction is accompanied by contestation. Acceptance is conditional on being identified as “other” – part of the group, but not quite a member in the same sense as others in the group are members. Although Prue recognised that she was, in a way, being positioned as

an outsider, she accepted the situation, on the basis that she was recognised as being at least partly “on the inside”.

Participating in Public Life

Some younger participants described becoming involved, not only in informal social activities, but in organisations contributing to the public life of the community. Putting oneself in public view in this way could mean exposing oneself to a good deal of criticism of one’s competence as a Welsh speaker. Fiona, for example, describes being too nervous to use her Welsh in the voluntary work she did for her local playgroup, due to the public scrutiny she experienced:-

“..it was going to fold, and there was no-one to take it over, and it’s meant to be a Welsh language playgroup, and then the two people that actually came forward to keep it going are non-Welsh-speakers, or Welsh learners, and then they don’t get involved so much, they don’t help set up, and they’ll sit within their little groups, and then they might kind of snidely say to each other, oh well, it used to be more Welsh here, they’re not even doing the story in Welsh now...and you think then, why don’t you do it? You’re sitting there...why don’t you get a book and read to the group...?!”

Fiona was also a member of the community council in her area, where she did speak Welsh, but was as a result exposed to scrutiny:-

“...all the meetings are conducted through the medium of Welsh...over the years they’ve got used to you having a certain level in conversational Welsh, but when it comes to meetings, it can be quite a different language that’s spoken, so they have a translator...and a guy in the meeting...we’d been talking about how much money we had, and he had said, well, if you lot went to your Welsh classes, we wouldn’t have to pay for a translator...which I found really offensive, and which I found that some people in the meeting didn’t acknowledge as being offensive..”

Participation in Welsh speaking public life thus occasioned a certain amount of contestation. This appears to be of a different nature to that encountered in areas with a high number of English retirees. In such communities, “Welsh” and “English” communities rarely interacted other than in superficial social contexts, so any conflict

was covert rather than overt. There was no influx of English incomers in Fiona's area, and therefore no separate "Welsh" and "English" communities; however the resulting increase in interaction was accompanied by an increase in overt, rather than covert, contestation. Civic participation, as a "higher stake" activity than informal social involvement, seemed particularly subject to such conflicts. In addition, the area was exposed to a high level of social stress, as Welsh speaking people who had lived in the same area, and even the same houses, for generations, saw new people, both Welsh and English speaking, moving into a new housing estate, at the same time as many local facilities shut down. In a situation where it is facing considerable social change, the community may need a narrative to create memory, meaning and identity among members (Rappaport 1998), and the chosen narrative in this case was one of language. Under these circumstances, new speakers of Welsh might find themselves playing the role of "outsiders as scapegoats".

Being positioned as an outsider in such an overt way challenged aspirations to be recognised as a Welsh speaker. In a situation where the available choices were abandoning one's aspirations altogether, challenging the rejection experienced, or carrying on but positioning oneself at a greater distance than previously, Fiona chose the last option. Having initially felt more accepted in Wales than in Scotland, she says she now again feels like an outsider, but also that her previous experience of being positioned "outside" has enabled her to face the present situation with greater resilience:- "...having been born and raised where I was, and actually having felt like an outsider, puts me in a better position, because it gives you a more kind of worldly...attitude".

Constructing "Welshness".

The variable extent to which participants had been able to integrate appears to relate partly to the balance of power between "Welsh" and "English" communities. Integration was particularly difficult where affluent English speaking retirees were seen as appropriating Welsh speaking space. Parts of North West Wales host communities where English speakers have embraced "alternative" values which involve rejecting "Englishness" in favour of "Welshness". This was the case in areas like Bethesda, where a higher level of integration into the local community than achieved elsewhere was described. This concurs with the picture depicted by Davis et al. (2010) of an area

where English in-migration has been lower, and more Welsh is spoken, than in other parts of North West Wales. Participants experienced the “Welshness” of Bethesda as advantageous in terms of becoming a “Welsh speaker”; Alan describes most local organisations, both formal and informal - the local history society, the community council and the school - as being Welsh speaking, and having children in the local school as having greatly increased his opportunities to speak Welsh.

At the same time, participants constructed the “Welshness” of Bethesda in a way which corresponded to their own value systems. “Welshness” is described in a way which resonates with Emmett’s (1964) description of “Welsh” values as focussing on community and language, as opposed to “English” values, which prioritise wealth, prestige and consumption. Ulrike describes the community as being inclusive:-

“It’s very mixed, and it’s cosmopolitan, we’ve got people from France, Germany, we used to have Canadian, and I’ve got an American neighbour, and there’s a family, they are brilliant, the man is Israeli, the woman is brought up in Britain, but has got German and Danish in her family, and so the children speak German, English, Welsh, Hebrew.”

Similarly, Alan refers to the local culture as “quarry culture”, an image deriving from the Penrhyn Quarry strike at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century, and implying values of equality and working class solidarity. Welsh speakers are seen, while valuing their own language, to also accommodate diversity:- “There’s a phenomenal community spirit in the village...it’s really interesting...the shop owners are English...and I think it’s interesting that they are not Welsh speakers, but they’ve made a huge success of the shop, and they’re a massive part of village life...” This inclusivity is opposed to an “Englishness” which derides and devalues Welsh.

Such constructions of “Welshness” appealed to participants like Margot, Steve, Reggie and Kevin, who aimed to acquire alternative, less conventional identities, and construct themselves as “other” in relation to establishment “Englishness”. Ulrike feels that learning Welsh, despite the diverse nature of the community, plays to these values, differentiating between incomers who view Wales as a consumer product, and those who do not:- “...I’m not saying people are not accepting their English speaking neighbours, because they are...there’s a very friendly community up there in Bethesda” ; however, “...I am as foreign as the others...the fact that I speak their

language doesn't make me less foreign, but at least I think it might show that I want to be a part of it, and not just live there because it's beautiful..”

The construction of “Welshness” as “other” could be achieved, in Bethesda and elsewhere, through the public performance of Welsh rock or folk music, or poetry. Olivia, Steve and Carys had all performed in Welsh folk or rock groups. Kevin, who belonged to a minority ethnic group, was able to align himself with the Welsh audience at an Eisteddfod by very conspicuously displaying his “otherness”:-

“ I got up on stage with my Doc Martins steel-tipped boots, ripped jeans, and a black leather jacket, and I had a black goatee beard as well, and earrings in...so I remember I kind of clomped on...and the round of applause I got afterwards was quite...I was quite shocked...because, you know, I do look of colour, I couldn't really pass as being white at all...so people probably thought to themselves, oh, what have we got here!”

However, rather than reflecting the reality of how the Welsh speaking community views itself and others, such imaginings of Welshness have been viewed, for example by Bowie (1993, 168) as being “to a large extent the product of the friendly, if naïve, concern of the English learner”. Kay describes a slightly less inclusive reality in the Bethesda community council of which she is a member:-

“...if there was correspondence, whether it was from a company advertising something, or from a member of the community who wanted to discuss something about a footpath, or a building application, if it came in English language only, they would refuse to read it.”

Kay made herself very unpopular on the council by raising an objection to this practice, because, as she pointed out, it discriminated against uneducated Welsh speaking as well as against English speaking people:-

“...and I think the shame of it was, that there was no tolerance of people who weren't able to write...I mean, I could understand that if it was an organisation, you think, well, fair enough...but when it was an individual, and sometimes you would know that they'd be speaking Welsh down the shop, but they wouldn't be able to write a letter in Welsh...”

By continuing to challenge the Council's position, rather than accepting it, Kay eventually succeeded in bringing about a change of policy.

Another participant encountering a situation where Welsh speakers, as well as new speakers, experienced delegitimisation, was Olivia, who, some years previously, after completing an elementary Welsh course, had been appointed as a Community Development Officer in a very deprived Welsh speaking area. In this environment, she found her lack of formal grammatical Welsh to be an advantage:-

“...I very quickly realised that some of these people couldn't read; they'd often say, I've lost my spectacles, can you read that for me? Now, they would admit to me they couldn't read Welsh, but they wouldn't admit it to my posh Welsh colleagues...I would say, I don't speak very good Welsh, but I want you to speak Welsh to me, and help me; but they would also admit to me, I don't read Welsh...so it did help some barriers come down...”

In both situations, rather than Welsh and “Welsh values” being associated with inclusivity and the absence of hierarchy, some versions of Welsh are seen as less prestigious than others (Selleck 2018), and less educated Welsh speakers, as well as new speakers of Welsh, are positioned “on the margins”. New speakers might respond to such situations by choosing to position themselves outside the language community, as Fiona did; however, finding themselves on the margins might also put new speakers in an ideal position to act as a catalyst for change (Kay), or as a mediator (Olivia).

Conclusion

Rather than a universal lack of integration, we can see degrees of integration which vary according to setting, participants' agenda in coming to Wales, and the positions they were able to negotiate. Retirees living in popular retirement areas described two separate communities with very little integration. In areas without large numbers of retirees, where the power balance had been to some extent re-configured in favour of Welsh, greater integration was accompanied by greater contestation and “delegitimisation”. Similar delegitimisation might be experienced by traditional Welsh speakers who did not speak “posh Welsh”. Participants might respond to such situations by accepting a lesser value than other Welsh speakers, or alternatively by

either withdrawing altogether, or distancing themselves to some extent. Some participants, however, were able to attain more favourable positions either by mounting successful challenges, or by using the fact of having a “foot in both camps” to occupy a mediating role. Participants who openly embraced “Welsh values” while rejecting “English values”, were able to participate in an imagined Welshness – however this “Welshness” may not have been identical to that imagined by “traditional” Welsh speakers.

3) Constructing Workplace Cultures

Macro and Micro Contexts of Workplace Language Use

Linguistic interactions in the workplace are arguably subject to a greater degree of regulation than those within the wider community. Certainly they take place within a complex set of structural frameworks: Gunnarson (2013) identifies four overarching structures; technical-economical, legal-political, sociocultural, and linguistic. In addition, workplaces operate at different levels – local branch, national organisation, and perhaps international corporation - which intersect with these overarching dimensions.

The complexity of these structural frameworks means that a common theme running through research on language in the workplace is divergence between formal language policies and informal language practices. Kingsley’s (2009) research on multilingual banks in Luxembourg cites Spolsky’s (2004) distinction between policies which are “explicit” (overt and planned) and those which are “implicit” (covert and unplanned), and Shohamy’s 3-stage model consisting of “Ideology” (the principles underlying language policy), “Mechanisms” (managerial decisions by which the principles are implemented) and “Practice” (what actually happens).

Many studies of language in the workplace examine how formal and informal language policies impact on immigrants who speak a minority language. The valorisation of “global” languages such as English at the expense of the minority language can mean that immigrants are confined to low-paid, entry level jobs, while educated majority language speakers monopolise high level posts (Roberts 2010). Of the few studies of language in the Welsh workplace, some (e.g. Glyn Williams and Morris 2000) identify this linguistic inequality as applying to Wales, with English speakers occupying most managerial posts, and Welsh speakers lower level posts, although this has been

questioned by other studies (Giggs and Pattie 1992). In such situations, the dominance of the majority language is often enshrined within the “official” corporate language policy, but this dominance can be mitigated by informal negotiations carried out through social practice.

Very rarely have workplace language studies investigated the situation of individuals who have a majority language as their “first” language, and who enter, with the intention of working through the minority language, workplaces where language policies have aimed at putting the minority language on an equal footing with the majority language. How such individuals experienced the interplay of power between the majority and minority language, and the interaction between formal and informal language policies, is one of the foci of the present study.

New Speakers’ Welsh Workplace Experiences - Investments and Rewards

Participants who used Welsh in the workplace gained the opportunity to use the language to a greater extent than others; like starting a new family, work constituted a significant “muda”, or “critical juncture where a speaker changes linguistic practice in favour of the target language” (Walsh and O’Rourke 2014, 67). However, as with using Welsh within the family, using Welsh in the workplace was associated with a high level of language-related anxiety (Tenzer et al. 2014) and contestation. Contestation may have been due to the link, in the workplace context, between the language and economic capital, as the obligation laid on public sector bodies to adopt Welsh language policies meant that both initial appointment to posts and promotions might depend on Welsh language ability. Making a contribution to the process of production meant a higher level of integration into the language community, but admission to this higher level was associated with issues of legitimacy – what level of Welsh language “competence” qualified new speakers to occupy posts which could have been filled by “first language Welsh speakers”? In this context, “official” language policies defining new speakers of Welsh as competent could conflict with “unofficial” policies questioning this.

Some participants brought to the workplace cultural capital which was recognised and valued within the Welsh speaking community. Participants who worked through the medium of Welsh had different types of investment and identity agendas. Some participants were interested in effecting a changeover to a Welsh rather than English

speaking identity, or in adding a Welsh speaking identity to the range they felt were available to them, and were able to use initial and acquired cultural and linguistic capital to this end. As well as fluency in Welsh, Steve used his academic background in Celtic languages and literature, Ulrike her expertise in translation, Carys and Olivia the cultural capital derived through family connections, Margot and Kevin their eclectic knowledge of different cultures. For these participants, work represented a way of “becoming more Welsh”.

Other participants did not work in order to learn more Welsh, but learned more Welsh in order to work. These participants might not have recognisable cultural or linguistic capital to invest. Reggie, for example, had come to Wales in pursuit of an alternative identity – the “good life” - but not one as a Welsh speaker. He still had to work to fund his smallholding, and learned Welsh to compete with his workplace colleagues:- “..it was a competitive thing...I thought, if they can speak Welsh, I should be able to speak Welsh”. Reggie has compensated for his lack of prior linguistic capital – he had not shone in the modern language class at school – by making a very high investment in his learning of Welsh, insisting on speaking Welsh with all his colleagues and family members, even those who are unwilling. However, he is emphatic that he regards the language as a source of “profit” rather than “pride” (Heller and Duchene 2012), and that he feels even more “English” since coming to Wales “...in fact I would say I’m more English in some respects now, because it’s a typical English attitude...you know, we’re all part of Britain...Wales, it’s a bit like going to Yorkshire, or somewhere, it’s another part of Britain, isn’t it, or England, possibly..” Fiona, Ruth and Kay all decided to learn on finding they needed to speak Welsh to get the job they wanted. These participants encountered a greater number of challenges to their legitimacy than those with larger amounts of “starting up capital” to invest. Official language policies deemed them all as competent to operate through the medium of Welsh, but unofficial language policies sometimes seemed to view them as undermining the “Welshness” and increasing the “Englishness” of their workplaces.

Experiences of Illegitimacy and Exclusion

Both “traditional” and “new” speakers of Welsh are seen in participant narratives to experience marginalisation in workplace contexts. Technical-economic pressures for English to be the language of business and public life (Gunnarson op. cit.) have been

viewed as leading to the exclusion of the private sector from the Welsh Language Act of 1993, and its consequent failure to guarantee Welsh speakers an absolute right to a service in Welsh; this has been seen as undermining the effectiveness of the Act in maintaining Welsh language and culture in the workplace (Williams 2000 b). Private sector workplaces with no language policy are seen, in the narratives, to operate largely through English, and to have workforces which include few Welsh speakers. Welsh speaking customers could therefore experience the Welsh language, and thus themselves as Welsh speakers, as being excluded from the public arena. Kevin tells how, in the café where he worked as a barista, "...we used to have a gentleman who would refuse to speak English, and of course most of the staff are students at the university, so they don't speak Welsh...I notice he hasn't been coming in recently". Similarly, in the bank where he also worked, "we had a lad on relief, who's from Chester, and he didn't speak any Welsh, and he was serving a gentleman, and the gentleman refused to be served by him.."

In public sector organisations, official language policies specified an obligation for Welsh and English to be treated on an equal basis. This meant that Welsh speakers should, in theory, no longer have had to experience exclusion. Exclusions were, however, experienced by new speakers working through the medium of Welsh. Workplace experiences typically involved uncertainty as to one's legitimacy as a speaker: doubt regarding what standard of Welsh was expected, who set the standards, and whether the same standards were applied to new speakers as to other Welsh speakers. New speakers had been appointed on the condition that they would be able to provide a service in the Welsh language. Despite this, it proved surprisingly difficult, in workplace interactions, to get customers to assert their right to be addressed in Welsh. This may have been due to an expectation on the part of Welsh speakers, due to the "normalisation" of English, that, contrary to formal language policy, public transactions should be carried out in the majority language. However, it was often interpreted by new speakers as being due to their being categorised as linguistically deficient on the basis of nationality or ethnicity. Tracy, who held a "Welsh essential" post in a university library, remarks that:- "sometimes I'll find that I'll be speaking Welsh to a student, and they'll speak Welsh to me, and then all of a sudden they'll switch to English, and I'm like, what did I say, I know I made a mistake, but I don't know what it was...!", adding that "maybe it's just weird speaking Welsh to an

Australian...which it kind of is!" and Kevin that "...everybody who would hear any Welsh come out of my mouth, and then look at me visually....it make them look twice....you know, working in the café, I think sometimes for some people, it's...wow! This guy speaks Welsh..." Such perceived "informal language policies" were experienced by new speakers as contravening, albeit in a minor way, formal language policies which deemed them to be competent in Welsh.

Sometimes, however, perceived lack of recognition as a "speaker" in situations where there was an obligation to speak, could raise the spectre, albeit a distant rather than an real and immediate one, of withdrawal of the right to work. For example, Malcolm, who prior to retirement had been employed as a manager at the DVLA, recounted how, at one time, in response to complaints from Welsh speakers that they had failed their test because "they didn't feel comfortable with the language that the test was conducted in", driving instructors who spoke no Welsh had been trained to conduct a driving test in Welsh from a set script. However a further policy change followed:- "Then the policy was to try to get more informal in conducting the driving test...instead of reading from the script you had to start putting your personality in, so then they'd fail again, and they'd say again "I didn't feel comfortable with the way that was handled". Malcolm felt the goalposts set by "official" language policies had been "unofficially" moved for "political" reasons:- "I thought, no, this is just too political...they wanted a driving test in Welsh, we did that; then they wanted to have a Welsh speaker doing it, not a Welsh learner...we tried to get that; then they wanted a fluent Welsh speaker, and...it just sort of killed it".

Similarly, Karen, who had technically fulfilled all the requirements for her "Welsh essential" post, felt that the students who used the service "unofficially" applied different, more stringent, standards than did the appointment panel. Although a colleague also assured her that she was competent to address students in Welsh:- "...your Welsh is good enough...you should be running it"; "I did try running it a couple of times, and I really disliked doing it...this one girl sat there with her arms crossed, sort of going ssss, and rolling her eyes up; and I'm thinking, oh, this is awful, I shouldn't be doing this, I can't cope with it...." When her line manager asked HR for "support" with the Welsh language sessions, the response was "...if the job demands she should speak Welsh, she should speak Welsh." Although this possibly meant "we can't afford to pay for an additional member of staff", Karen interpreted it as, firstly, a threat to her

employment:- “I thought, I don’t want to lose my job, I’ve got to do it”; and secondly, as showing a lack of understanding of the support needs of new speakers in the workplace:- “I think sometimes they don’t quite understand the difficulties you face”, which she thought they could have done had they recognised that “traditional” Welsh speakers might face the same difficulties:- “...people who are naturally Welsh speaking often prefer to speak in Welsh, but they prefer to read and write in English..”

Welsh speaking people might also experience difficulties and ambivalence, in workplace contexts, with formal English and formal Welsh; such instances are described by several participants. Different positions were adopted in response to such situations. Participants saw themselves as, variously, contributing to these difficulties through their inability to handle every kind of transaction in Welsh; experiencing workplace transactions with people whose Welsh was comparatively unrefined as a release from the pressure to speak correct Welsh; and empathising with Welsh speaking people unable to speak “posh Welsh”, as well as acting as mediators between these individuals and educated Welsh speakers. Sandra adopted the first of these positions: as a GP, she was aware that “...you don’t have anywhere near the vocab to do full consultations in Welsh...” and concerned that as a result patients might not understand the information they were given:-

“...it never really occurs to you that this elderly person who’s lived in a farm in the hills for 80 years, probably hasn’t had a lot of contact with the English speaking community at large; and it never really occurs to you to think, maybe they don’t understand what I’m explaining to them...”

In addition to the pressure of patients’ possible inability to understand technical English, and her own inability to communicate in technical Welsh, she was aware that her professional socialisation might make it difficult for her to engage, in Welsh, in the simple, non-technical interactions patients and their relatives often needed:-

“...once her daughter was there, and the patient was upstairs; so I said, Hello, how are you, in Welsh, and that was it, the daughter was off...and we got all the way to the top of the stairs before she paused for breath, and I said, Sorry, can we switch to English?”

...recalling Duff’s (2000) study of migrant workers in Canada, who found that

“the more formal and technically specific focus in the English language training programme did not prepare the trainees for the emotional labour of communicating with residents with a wider range of English language competence, and often with...abilities impaired by the aging process” (Roberts op. cit., 215).

By contrast, Kay adopted the second position: as a learning disabilities nurse, she recognised that “all our service users have a learning disability, and if they’ve been brought up first language Welsh, then often they can understand better in Welsh...” but found this to be advantageous for herself as well as her clients, as she did not have to produce a version of Welsh which was refined and grammatically correct: “...it’s not just verbal language, it’s gestures and symbols and pictures, and backed up with the verbal communication, which would be in Welsh...*dan ni’n codi, dan ni’n golchi, dan ni’n cael brechwast...*(we get up, we wash, we have breakfast)..” Olivia, in her community development post in a deprived area, adopted a mediator position, finding that her clients were more comfortable speaking Welsh with her, although “I wasn’t a very good speaker at all, and the professionals I worked with tended to turn to English with me”, than with her “posh Welsh colleagues”.

Overall, we can see here, rather than a simple bipartite linguistic model with “Welsh speakers” on the one hand and “English speakers” on the other, uncertainly, on the part of both Welsh and English speakers, over how these terms should be interpreted in practice, who, in particular situations, was or was not qualified to be a “speaker”; and confusion and anxiety over competence and entitlement.

Acquiring the “Right to Speak”

Despite these difficulties, strategies were available to enable new and traditional speakers to communicate in Welsh. Participants might adopt courses of action which enabled them to “become known” as Welsh speaking. In the café, Kevin listened to customers talking amongst themselves to decide whether they were Welsh or English speaking, then addressed Welsh speakers in Welsh. Equally, customers might feel confident to address him in Welsh because they had heard him speaking Welsh to other customers. This strategy might have worked in a context where customers queued at a counter, and the transactions involved were relatively simple, but perhaps not in a university library, where customers approached staff individually for help with

complex issues. Tracy eventually learned to establish her Welsh speaking credentials by initiating transactions in Welsh rather than English:- “When I go to the desk now to serve somebody, I’ll just say, “*Ti’n iawn?*” (“Are you OK?”) ...I start in Welsh now, which is a big thing, I think...” She had also succeeded, by persisting in speaking Welsh with them, in changing from English to Welsh with some members of teaching staff, and feels she is now at “... a transitional phase of switching over to Welsh with people...it just takes a long time”.

The difficulty of obtaining recognition as being Welsh speaking could lead new speakers to believe that they should express everything in Welsh, even if this impeded Welsh speaking communication. Previous research has shown this, encouraged by the underlying ethos of the Welsh class, to be a common belief on the part of new speakers of Welsh (Kathryn Jones 1993). Tracy had originally thought that “...if I can’t speak everything in Welsh, I shouldn’t try”. Research on multilingual workplaces has found, however, that “code switching”, where individuals switch between languages, although sometimes causing mistrust and conflict, can also speed up communication and ensure greater mutual understanding of tasks and situations (Tenzer et al., op. cit). In the Welsh context, it also entailed the risk of causing the conversation to revert to English. Several participants had adopted code switching despite this risk. Following the example of one of a colleague who dipped out of Welsh and English, Tracy decided that:-

“..because she’s just as comfortable in either (language), I think working with her has really helped me to see that it’s OK to do a bit of both sometimes, and I’m much more comfortable doing as much Welsh as I can, and doing what I can’t do in English, and then going back to the Welsh”.

Kevin also felt “hybridity” helped in situations where it was essential to ensure mutual understanding:-

“I mean, you know, there are certain times when things are technical....I mean, yes, I suppose in the café it’s not the same, but certainly in banking, because of language issues....the implications could be, you know, a lot deeper than giving somebody a latte instead of a cappuccino...you just change it for them!”

As a result he might, in these situations, change from Welsh to English:- “because the conversation may get technical, you know, because you’re talking about large amounts of money, or whatever, I may drop into English, just to confirm that I’ve heard that correctly, then back to Welsh again”.

Code switching could be advantageous for Welsh as well as English speakers, although this was not necessarily something which was openly acknowledged. Reggie describes a complex mixture of “official” and “unofficial” language policies as existing in his workplace. There was an official expectation that non-Welsh-speakers would attend Welsh courses, presumably in order to emerge as Welsh speakers:- “I think the culture in Arfon, and in lots of places, is that people who can’t speak Welsh go on Welsh courses”. However, this transformation did not necessarily happen; unofficially, Welsh speaking colleagues were happier if non-Welsh speakers continued to speak English:-

“..but they still don’t speak Welsh, you know, and there’s quite a big investment...and I think the majority of colleagues are comfortable with that...where they’re uncomfortable is somebody like me who, you know, can communicate in English, but speaks Welsh to them....they’re happy to communicate in English...”

The unease of Welsh speaking colleagues was interpreted as occurring partly because Welsh course graduates who insisted on speaking Welsh at all times exposed the disparity between the official policy that Welsh was the main language of the workplace, and the reality that a great deal of switching into English took place:-

“..you know, town and country planning, they’ve learned planning through the medium of English, you know, they use a lot of English words, as Welsh people do...and then suddenly to be challenged by somebody who’s come from Burnley, what’s the word for this, what’s the word for that...”

Again, the bipartite model of “Welsh” on the one hand and “English” on the other, was belied by a much more complex linguistic reality.

Talking to Colleagues - Organisational Hierarchies

Participants commonly described speaking more Welsh with service users than with colleagues, with whom they were not required to speak Welsh. The informal language of the workplace varied depending on factors such as the organisational culture and the number of Welsh as opposed to English speakers, both of which were influenced by whether or not the organisation had a language policy, and if so what kind of policy it was.

Organisations based locally, like the County Council, are described as having the strongest language policies and a strongly Welsh speaking culture, with all high level posts occupied by Welsh speakers, and Welsh as the informal language of the workplace. Reggie says of the Council that:-

“I think it’s viewed by people outside as a Welsh bastion where English speakers aren’t really accepted properly...which is probably true, because they don’t get the promotions, they’re not part of the senior leadership team...I can remember a time when the senior leadership team was much more English, but now it’s become a lot more Welsh..”

Private sector, UK or internationally based companies, like the bank and the café, had no language policy and employed large numbers of English speakers at all levels; the informal language of the workplace was generally speaking English. Some organisations, like the university and the health service, had both local and national dimensions, and as a result the language policy applied to higher graded, “key” staff, but not to lower graded, locally recruited staff. In the health service, participants described most doctors, recruited at UK level, as speaking English, and most nurses and receptionists, recruited locally, as speaking Welsh. In the university, professional staff spoke English and clerical staff Welsh, except in the Welsh for Adults Centre and one academic department which had, in former times been a local College of Education. This pattern, which corresponds to the description given by Glyn Williams and Morris (2000, 133) of a power balance in favour of English, meant that new speakers’ experience of informal use of Welsh in these organisations varied according to where within the organisation they were located. For example, Fiona’s workplace use of Welsh decreased considerably when she was transferred from her original post in the university Welsh for Adults Centre to another unit where most of the professional

staff were English speaking. Tracy describes her post in another, very Welsh speaking, university department as “a godsend...it’s brought on my Welsh so much”.

However, even in strongly Welsh speaking environments, the conflation of organisational hierarchies with linguistic divides sometimes limited ability to develop Welsh language relationships. Although Tracy had been able to establish a Welsh speaking relationship with her immediate colleagues, it had been more difficult with those “further up” in the organisation, such as lecturers and her supervisor; and those more organisationally distant, such as the vending machine attendant or the IT technician. Being positioned in an English speaking staff group in a tightly structured organisation might considerably restrict opportunities to negotiate Welsh speaking relationship with colleagues. Sandra found that her relatively elevated position in the medical hierarchy, coupled with a fairly rigid divide between different groups of staff, limited the amount of Welsh she was able to speak. She found nurses to be largely Welsh speaking, her fellow doctors not, at least in the workplace – any socialising with Welsh speaking doctor friends occurred outside work. Although the nurses spoke Welsh to one another, she did not speak Welsh with them; however she was able to take advantage of the service-oriented role of the Welsh speaking receptionists to use them to practice her Welsh. In this sense, she used organisational power relationships to her advantage.

Welsh speaking groups had the power to decide the amount of recognition to give to English speakers learning Welsh. At the swimming pool where Karen had formerly worked as a lifeguard, “pool-side” staff were generally not Welsh speakers, while “non-pool-side-staff” were. This was attributed to the fact that, at that time, very few local people could swim. In the staff room, separate Welsh and English speaking social groups formed on the basis of this occupational and linguistic divide. The Welsh speaking group included Karen, though not as a Welsh speaker, by relaying their Welsh conversations (which Karen actually understood) to her in English. In the staff room of the Welsh speaking school where Olivia worked prior to obtaining her community development post, she was recognised as a Welsh speaker, not so much in order to be included in Welsh conversations, as to warn the group not to gossip openly about English speaking colleagues in her presence.

How organisational and linguistic hierarchies intersected in informal social interaction, as well as the “top down” influence of language policy, can be seen here to exercise a powerful influence on the negotiation of Welsh language relationships.

Conclusion

It was evident from these experiences that working through the medium of Welsh, like having a Welsh speaking partner, provided participants with the opportunity to interact in Welsh over extended periods of time, and therefore to build up Welsh speaking relationships, to an extent which was unavailable to other participants. However, some individuals had been able to build up more extensive relationships than others. Participants with less “starting up” capital had to work harder and devise more strategies to achieve recognition.

Admittedly the experiences these participants recounted were perhaps less stressful than those of individuals from minority linguistic or cultural groups learning a majority language, for whom being ascribed the status of “immigrant” can mean a substantial loss of social and economic capital (Block 2009). The fact that, in this case, individuals from a majority linguistic group were learning a minority language, might have been presumed to give the present participants a certain “power advantage”. However, differences in organisational language policies and cultures meant that the balance of power within organisations between the “majority” language, English, and the “minority” language, Welsh, was in fact quite varied. This meant that the balance of power in individual negotiations was also variable and complex; and the divergence between formal and informal language policy meant that the “real” language policy was often unclear. The result of all this was not so much unmitigated illegitimacy as negotiated legitimacy. The fact that no firm definition of speakerhood existed, and that traditional Welsh speakers were also ambivalent over standards, meant that individuals could and did negotiate their own levels of speakerhood, although they sometimes doubted whether what they had achieved was sufficient and adequate.

Linguistic diversity in the workplace has been identified as a managerial challenge (Tenzer et al., op. cit). Welsh in the workplace is one of the priority areas for Welsh language policy (Welsh Government 2012); the public sector organisations where two of the participants worked granted time off work to learn Welsh, and also ran mentoring programmes for employees who were learning. However, existing provision was not

seen as effectively addressing the support needs of new speakers. Welsh classes had not prepared participants like Karen for the sociocultural aspects of using Welsh in the workplace, for the “gap between formal training and informal socialisation” (Roberts *op. cit.*). To this unpreparedness was added a lack of managerial appreciation of “the real difficulties you face”. Managerial structures and official mentoring schemes, as integral parts of the existing organisational context, could be seen as part of the problem rather than the solution:- “they’re basically a waste of time...the people haven’t got the skills, and there’s not the incentive...”

One method identified as offering the possibility of overcoming such difficulties is “metacommunication”, or “communication about the communication processes between people with different mother tongues and the problems they are facing” (*ibid.* 529). However, open communication of this nature was not a feature of any of the workplaces in the study – if anything, the “language issue” was a taboo subject – and Welsh classes taught learners to speak the language but were silent on how to get themselves recognised as “speakers”. Similarly, as more fully discussed in the concluding chapter, official reports on encouraging the use of Welsh in the workplace have relatively little to say about the specific difficulties which may be faced by new speakers. The implications of these findings for language policy are also discussed in the concluding chapter.

4) Overview: Trajectories – Variations and Intersections

The extent to which participants were able to develop Welsh speaking identities within wider social worlds varied according to context, initial positioning, and the positions which they were able to negotiate. The Welsh class served as a “half way house” to the real Welsh speaking world. Rather than simply being a protected “safe space” (Jaffe *op. cit.*), it provided participants with a location where they could rehearse their eventual identity positions. It was this ongoing assessment of developing identities, rather than the amount of Welsh learned, which chiefly influenced whether participants continued learning or gave up, and whether they were able to use what they had learned to establish identities in the world outside.

Real world contexts varied in their levels of “Welshness”. Rather than the uniform “Welsh heartland” sometimes portrayed (Hornsby and Vigers *op. cit.*), the picture which emerges here is of a power balance between Welsh and English differing from

one locality to another. Areas with large numbers of retirees had low levels of Welshness, and hence a balance of power in favour of English, leading to low levels of interaction between Welsh and English speaking communities. Areas with more equal power balances had higher levels of integration, but interaction between Welsh and English speakers might be accompanied by greater contestation. Participants' agenda in coming to Wales had an impact, with "alternative identity" participants and those with high levels of initial cultural capital achieving higher levels of integration with less contestation. Contestation also varied according to the type of social participation in which new speakers sought to engage; increased levels were associated with "high stake" activities such as participation in public life and working through the medium of Welsh. Workplace contexts were particularly complex due to the impact on social interaction of language policies, both official and unofficial, and of managerial structures.

Participants who did experience situations of conflict had choices as to how to position themselves. Rather than withdrawing or distancing themselves, participants could challenge or act as mediators, and by doing so contribute to changing the composition of the linguistic landscape. In the workplace, it was possible to negotiate the complexities of organisational hierarchies and official and unofficial language policies to attain varying levels of recognition as a "Welsh speaker", and sometimes to mediate on behalf of traditional Welsh speakers struggling with "posh Welsh".

The variability of the linguistic landscape in North West Wales can be seen to be paralleled by variability in the emerging linguistic landscapes of individual lives. Given this variability, in what sense can any, or all, of the participants be said to have become "new speakers" of Welsh? Is it possible to establish a model, or typology, of "new speakerhood"? The next chapter will attempt to answer this question.

7. Achieving Speakerhood?

Introduction

The last two chapters mapped out the processes through which participants negotiated Welsh speaking identities; the present chapter will assess the extent to which these processes of re-definition, which have been labelled “turning points”, can be said to have produced “new speakers of Welsh”. This will involve considering the “endpoints” at which participants have currently arrived – the emphasis on “currently” being important as, given the dynamic nature of social life, our social experiences never truly end, but rather evolve to take a different form. It will also involve thinking about how these endpoints, as well as the starting points and turning points which preceded them, fit into the conceptual framework of “speakerhood”. Before considering the endpoints, a discussion of this conceptual framework may be needed – what do we mean when we say a speaker has been “produced”, and indeed what is the purpose of defining speakerhood at all? By saying “a new speaker has been produced”, are we describing how the category of “speaker” is defined by social actors within a specific cultural context, or how speakers define themselves, or is “speakerhood” a researcher-generated category? And in defining – that is, in establishing criteria for the attainment or non-attainment of speakerhood - are we helping to enable individuals to become speakers, or setting up categorical boundaries which it will be difficult to cross? These difficulties have been encountered and discussed in the course of previous attempts to define the “new speaker”. Such attempts (Jaffe 2015, O’Rourke et al. 2015, Walsh 2015) will be described and assessed, the purpose of arriving at a definition discussed, and a typology of “new speakers” of Welsh proposed which it is hoped fulfils that purpose and is in conformance with the epistemological perspective of the present study.

Existing definitions and models of “New Speakerhood”

The process of definition, or social categorisation, although viewed as fundamental to our ability to know the social world (Jenkins 2000), may also be seen as involving tensions between self- and other-categorisation, and between “put crudely, self-determination (and) domination” (p.10). Writings on new speakers of minority languages have hence tended to shy away from categorisations, on the basis that

some language revitalisation agendas, informed by an essentialist model of the “ideal speaker”, have categorised speakers as more or less “legitimate” depending on the extent of their conformity to the supposed ideal. O’Rourke et al. (op. cit. 10) cite labels such as “new speaker”, “native speaker”, “semi-speaker”, and so on, as constituting “a set of clinical categorisations which oppose tainted, corrupted, or otherwise pathological language practices to more “correct” linguistic models”. By contrast, “the new speaker concept introduces a dissonance in this paradigm...(and) modes of language and speakerhood which are not dependent on alignment with existing speaker models but which give “new speakers” recognition as linguistic models in and of themselves” (ibid). This criticism of traditional linguistic categorisations is accompanied by a reluctance, on the part of the researcher, to construct any categorical boundaries, and to “a growing consensus that the “new speaker” concept needed to be framed as a social category which would be subject to social negotiation and variation, and delineated largely by “new speakers” themselves” (ibid. 6). Researcher accounts of becoming a “new speaker” have accordingly tended to focus on process rather than outcome, closely following how new linguistic identities are negotiated within specific social contexts.

A slightly more pro-categorisation stance is taken by Jaffe (2015) who, while recognising that the “new speaker” concept is a categorisation devised and operationalised by social actors, rather than an essentialist attribute condemning the individual to be in perpetual deficit, considers the criteria attached, in specific social contexts, to being a new speaker, to throw light on the ways in which the minority language community conceptualise and perform “speakerhood”, thus enabling language planners to “imagine new communities of practice of the minority language” (p. 23). Categorisation becomes a tool for change rather than for unhelpful “pigeonholing”. Some degree of preliminary categorisation is also necessary in order to determine which individuals should be the subject of study. Following this reasoning, Jaffe views new speakers as being differentiated from other speakers by:-

- 1) Age of acquisition
- 2) Sequence and manner of acquisition
- 3) Type and level of linguistic and metalinguistic competence
- 4) Frequency and type of use
- 5) Self-identification

6) Social attribution

This list aims not to lay down criteria by means of which attainment or non-attainment of speakerhood can be measured, but to define the areas of social practice within which membership of language communities is negotiated, and which are therefore worthy of investigation with a view to change; for example, rather than setting measures of competence, the task of the researcher is “to identify what kinds, levels, and “packages” of competence count as sufficient; who does the evaluating, and what social or institutional forms of authority back up those evaluations” (p. 25). The focus changes from labelling the linguistic individual to identifying what might be needed to turn a disabling into an enabling sociolinguistic context. At the same time, as her empirical case studies of a small sample of individuals learning Corsican makes clear, Jaffe is also interested in how her participants tackle disabling environments, and what enables them to transform themselves into new speakers; they have the ability to act as “sociolinguistic shifters”, and to actively engage in redefining traditional categorisations. Definition can therefore be helpful if it aims not to label or categorise, but to map out the conditions under which, in given sociolinguistic contexts, a desirable change is possible; to delineate a dynamic model of how self-and other-definitions can be aligned to generate a new social category. It follows that the more detailed a “road map” of such change that can be produced, the better. Empirical studies of interaction in real-world social contexts have an obvious role in generating appropriate models.

Existing empirical studies have generally not aimed to produce not so much a definitive “road map”, but rather “snapshots” of encounters between new speakers and the target language community which illustrate how micro and macro dimensions interact. This may be because sociolinguistic studies have focussed on the detail of linguistic interaction in specific situations rather than tracing developments over time. Exceptions include Norton’s longitudinal case studies (2000) of female immigrants to Canada which, as Block (2009, 92) points out, “provide the reader with a clear picture of how language and other subject positions develop over time and how identity is a complex site of struggle”. However the sample of five women with fairly similar backgrounds is perhaps too small to form the basis for a definitive road map; moreover, Norton identifies her perspective as being that of “critical research” (Norton *op. cit.* 38), with a greater emphasis on critical incidents exemplifying the nature of the struggle than on the systematic mapping of changing subject positions.

By contrast Pentecouteau (2002), a sociologist writing from a symbolic interactionist perspective, does map out in considerable detail the changes in perception of self and in relationships with the social world undergone by individuals learning Breton. Three main stages of identity change are identified: “un devenir initié” (awakening to the possibility of achieving a Breton speaking identity), “un devenir confirmé” (validating the embryonic new identity through meeting others on the same journey) and finally “un devenir abouti” (achieving a fully Breton speaking identity, where a large portion of the individual’s social life is conducted through Breton). It is possible to “get stuck” at various stages in this process; for example, if validation does not take place by meeting sympathetic others, the trajectory towards full Breton speakerhood may stall.

This description of progression towards speakerhood is helpful, but its linear nature, with only three recognised end points, may leave us wondering whether it caters for all the varied forms of experience which may occur in the empirical social world. For example, one may wonder how, if only three identity positions exist, the experience of individuals who may not fully align with one or other of the positions described can be categorised? Bourdieu’s concept of “social space” as capable of being configured in an infinite number of ways in tandem with interaction within specific social contexts may help here. Bourdieusian social space has been defined as “the set of all possible (social) positions that are available for occupation at any given time or place” (Hardy 2012, 229). It is acknowledged that the actual position occupied by the social individual may differ from the “legitimate” positions available:- “there is a distinction to be made between the set of recognised positions and the positions which are occupied” (ibid. 230). This description opens up the possibility of defining a range of positions which may fall “in between” the beginning, mid and end point of any social trajectory. In addition, Bourdieu’s description of identity as negotiated in different “fields” also opens up the possibility of trajectories being multi-dimensional rather than following a linear progression towards a single finishing point. In summary, it is possible to visualise a more flexible and multi-dimensional model of how new linguistic identities are negotiated, one which is capable of describing the essentially diverse and non-linear nature of progress through the various dimensions in which negotiation occurs.

Prior to discussing the possible characteristics of such a model, it is perhaps appropriate to describe the “endpoints” of the trajectories undergone by study participants, with a view to demonstrating the diversity of positions which participants

ended up occupying. This diversity is illustrated by the way in which participants talk of “where they are now at” in terms of their current relationship to the Welsh language community. The following section will summarise these diverse “endpoints”. Prior to arriving there, participants had occupied diverse starting points and traversed diverse turning points. Finding a categorisation or typology capable of mapping progress through all these different dimensions – a “road map” of becoming a new speaker of Welsh in North West Wales – will be a key task for the study.

The “Endpoints” of Participant Trajectories

Participant accounts of “endpoints” fall noticeably into different groups depending on the way in which the relationship to the Welsh language community is perceived. In Bourdieusian terms, different positions in social space are being described. Firstly, participants who had lived in Wales for some time, and felt themselves to have achieved a high level of integration and acceptance, talked extensively of the capital they saw themselves as having accumulated. This could have originated prior to, and been added to since, coming to Wales, by means of an appropriate, non-UK, education (Steve and Ulrike); been acquired since coming to Wales, through high achievement in Welsh classes (Carys and Margot), or the occupation of professional positions executed through the medium of Welsh (all four). As a result of this accumulation of capital, a high proportion of these participants’ social life was carried out through Welsh, and participants felt themselves to be “inside” the Welsh language community. Margot says:- *“Dwi’n meddwl mae na ryw bwynt pan ti’n deall sut maen nhw (y Cymri Cymraeg) yn teimlo...tan iti gyrraedd y pwynt yna, ti ddim rili yn meddwl am sut maen nhw’n teimlo am yr iaith...”* (“I think there’s a point where you understand how Welsh speakers feel...until you reach that point, you don’t really think about how they feel about the language”). Ulrike feels that “Emotionally, I feel I’m more Welsh...I find it easier to talk about things that affect me emotionally in Welsh”. However these participants still, to some extent, faced outwards as well as inwards; both Steve and Carys acknowledged the future possibility of returning to the United States.

A second group of participants, who had also typically lived in Wales for some time, appeared to straddle both language communities. Their accounts flitted back and forth between descriptions of “Welsh” and “English” social spaces. “You establish a

relationship in either Welsh or English ...if it was just me and a Welsh language speaker, it may be that our language would then turn to Welsh” (Karen). They were sometimes, but not always, recognised as Welsh speakers:- “My neighbours that side...I’ve never spoken anything but Welsh with them...the other side has a tendency to speak in English” (Olivia). Feelings about both language communities might be ambivalent: - ““We could be part of the Welsh language community...but (to do that) we might have to become part of something we didn’t want to be part of” (David); “I’ve got less respect for people who don’t speak Welsh”, but “I would say I’m more English, in some respects now, than I was before I came” (Reggie). This could be an uncomfortable position:- “I sit on the fence..and sitting the fence can be uncomfortable” (Kay); and one could find oneself being “caught out”:- “He hadn’t known till then I spoke Welsh....my cover was blown!” (Kay again). On the other hand, one also had the freedom to play whichever “hand” was more advantageous:- “I describe myself as Welsh when I’m travelling, partly to disassociate myself from being English, and the way English people are seen abroad” (Karen); “I’m everyman, and I love being everyman; we were always meant to continue mixing” (Kevin).

A third group presented themselves as being in the process of “staking a claim” to Welshness as an ideal space to which they aspired, but which they had not yet reached. Claim-staking sometimes involved reclaiming a lost Welsh heritage, as in Malcolm’s vision of Welsh speaking “quality”, and sometimes imagining Welshness from scratch:- “ ...all the connotations that come with Welsh...it’s a language of poetry...I don’t think English comes with that heavy cultural burden” (Tracy). The language community was viewed as a territory visible but not yet accessible “I feel I have an affinity with them and I’m just on the edge, listening to what they’ve got to say...I can talk, I can use it, but...I’m not sure I will ever be a part of that...” (Tracy again). Some accounts describe the opening out of Welsh speaking space and reclaiming of Welsh speaking identities (Alice); others the repetition of hesitant linguistic encounters, with the imagined space always viewed from afar (Melanie). This contrast is particularly salient in the language diaries both Alice and Melanie completed, where Alice describes an ever-greater number of successful Welsh speaking encounters, and Melanie returns again and again to confidence-daunting experiences. Responses to perceived difficulties differed; some had realised there were limits to the claim they could stake:- “I guess that’s a bit like, you know, you could

live here for however long...unless your family stretched back for hundreds of years, generations, you're never going to be truly Welsh...I'm a learner, I'm not fluent" (Alan), but were happy to settle with what they had "I'd like to get through (the courses), and get as fluent as I can be, recognise that you're never going to be completely fluent, but I guess by the end of it all, I should be proficient". Others still hoped for more "I would like to be able to have informal chats with my friends in Welsh...she says, your texts are really good, why aren't we speaking Welsh...?" (Sandra). "I think I'm in a transitional phase...I think it is getting more Welsh....but it takes time." (Tracy).

A fourth group of participants appeared to have relinquished their claim and recognised that they would always remain "outside". Accounts typically described an initial advance "I thought...I've got to do something about this, I can't just keep riding along with just the Pub Welsh"; followed by a retreat "when it gets to a certain point...I did start to question"; and a subsequent re-definition of the social space in which they now found themselves. Retreats could be occasioned by overt rejections either by Welsh speakers (Fiona and Pete) or by English speakers (Stella). Repositioning varied from continuing to be aware of the possibility of Welsh speaking space but embracing an "outsider" position (Fiona – "actually having felt like an outsider puts me in a better position"); occupying a position "on the margins" (Stella – "I try to explain to the visitors how to pronounce "Cemaes"..you know, so I try and help a little bit"); or a wholesale move back into non Welsh speaking space (Pete – "I'm sort of in the space of, I'm living in Wales, I'm building a business in Wales, but we're doing more exporting out of Wales, so I think I'm better of learning Chinese"..).

For a fifth group, Welsh speaking space was not yet clearly imagined. Participants who had recently retired to Wales, for example, (Jane, Phyllis and Prue) sometimes talked about the spaces they had left behind in their "other life", and sometimes imagined Wales and other popular retirement destinations as a universal "retirement space" where they could embed themselves at will:- "We...had looked in Northumbria, other places in England, Scotland, but hadn't ever found the right combination of sea, mountains, things to do, places to walk..." (Prue). This imagined space was gradually replaced by a fuzzier, less clearly visualised one to which one might not have the legitimate right one had envisaged, and the realisation that they were positioned awkwardly between two very different language communities, with limited leverage to help them navigate a secure foothold on "Welshness":- "The bits that I've made

connection with, I think they're accepting me...but I think there's a lot more out there, but it's how the hell you find them!" (Prue again). "I don't know how I'll get to know people...it isn't like Denmark, I don't know how to get in..." (Phyllis).

Similar to the group described above in not yet clearly imagining Welsh speaking space was a sixth group who, unlike the fifth, did not portray themselves as seeking a secure foothold, but as exploring, assessing the landscape, and then possibly moving on. Colin, a retiree, throughout his account, refers to his relationship with Wales as that of a "tourist":- "I've set myself a target, and my target, that I wish to be able to speak Welsh as well as I can French, and my French is awful, but I can pick up the phone and order a hotel room". His relationship with the locality is seen as limited in scope "our community is the road (where we live)" and transient – that of someone "driving through":- "everybody waves at me, they all know me, I've got a big blue truck, so everybody knows me driving through". Language and community are constructed through road signs:- "I love driving so I know the road signs ...ysbyty, I know hospital" and via brief interchanges which he acknowledged will not be converted into more significant, permanent relationships:- "I say good morning to him, and hello, and we discuss the weather briefly, and that becomes the end of my limit...that's probably the level, but whether I choose to take it further, I don't know yet..." Ginny, a younger participant also involved in a marginal way, is "bunking with my mum and dad", and just beginning to construct how Wales relates to the life she has led till then:- "It was a huge shock to my system...I just came here...there was just mountains and sheep, and it was, like, what am I going to do here?" She has now realised that Wales is not part of England:- "I didn't realise how much of its own culture it had" but acknowledges that her relationship with the culture may be transitory:- "I think I'll stay here a lot longer than I thought, but not permanently" and her relationship with the language that of a tourist:- "I'd probably like to be as good as I am at French...I'd say Bonjour, Ça va, a table for two please..."

These different real-life accounts illustrate the widely differing ways in which participants constructed "where they were at" in relation to Welsh speaking social space. They had not simply "arrived or not" – they occupied a variety of qualitatively different positions.

Towards a Typology of “The New Speaker of Welsh”

The need for categorisation as a means of describing empirical experience of the social world has been discussed earlier in this chapter. The practicalities of how to construct a categorisation appropriate to the aims of the present study will now be considered. Categorisation - the need to dovetail the existentially experienced meanings constructed by participants, as they explore their social worlds, into a conceptual framework consistent with existing knowledge, has been viewed as an essential task of the social sciences. As McKinney (1969, 2) states:- “The distinction...between conceptualisation by actors in the social process...and social scientists observing and exploring the social process...is the basis for...distinction between the people’s *existential* types and the social scientist’s *constructed* types”. In order to make the multiplicity and day-to-variation of lived experience intelligible and explicable, existentially experienced “first order constructs” (existential types) must be reduced through conceptualisation, so as to form scientifically recognised “second order constructs” (constructed types). This is achieved through the construction of conceptual categorisations or typologies:- “The construction of classes, categories or types is a necessary aspect of the process of inquiry by means of which we reduce the complex to the simple, the unique to the general, and the occurrent to the recurrent” (ibid. 3). Since concept formation always takes place within a specific epistemological framework, the type of typology constructed will inevitably be influenced by the epistemological orientation of the researcher. The symbolic interactionist perspective of the present study has involved establishing how identities are negotiated interactively in the context of different “going concerns” (Gubrium and Holstein 2009). As previously discussed, a typology is therefore required which is capable of describing interactions within multiple dimensions, differentiating trajectories from one another, and delineating the arc of individual trajectories through time. Since reflexivity is an essential feature of such a perspective, the typology also needs to be capable of describing the intersubjective construction of social reality by the research participants and the researcher.

Weber’s “ideal types” (Weber 1949), although much criticised by more recent theorists, offer features – often the very features highlighted by critics – which go some way towards meeting these criteria. In essence, the method described by Weber aims to abstract, from specific empirical contexts, the meanings attached to the phenomena

in question, both by the human subjects experiencing them and (importantly) by the researcher. Criticisms centre on the presumption that, in grounding the subjective interpretations of social actors in the objective structural forms encountered within given social contexts, and in privileging the “ideal” constructed by the researcher over participant interpretations, Weber has mixed interpretivist and positivist epistemologies, and has alternatively neglected “meaning” in favour of empirical reality, or ignored empirical reality in favour of an abstract ideal (Cebik 1971, Sewart 1978).

However, defenders of Weber (Hekman 1983) attribute such criticisms to a misunderstanding of Weber’s true intentions, possibly originating in the differing descriptions provided in different parts of Weber’s work (Burger 1976, 120). Weber does not, according to his defenders, see social structures as objects external to the actor’s consciousness, but as the result of actions arising from the meanings attached to social experience, and therefore as “extensions of consciousness” (Hekman op. cit. 130). Against criticisms that researcher-constructed ideal types privilege the perceptions of the researcher over social actors’ own perceptions of empirical reality, it is countered that, first of all, it is in fact the aim of research to “re-frame” the perceptions of social actors using researcher-generated concepts (Aronovitch 2012); and secondly, that Weber’s methodology includes a provision for checking the ideal types against empirical reality - failure of any of the devised types to reflect empirical reality must result from a failure to consider a sufficient number of cases and/or social contexts (Hekman op. cit.)

Indeed, the fact that ideal types are generated by painstakingly reconstructing the different situations in which social actors might find themselves, and what, in these situations, they might do (Burger op. cit., 161), thus embedding the outcomes of research in the associated case material, is seen as giving Weberian methodology an advantage over methods such as grounded theory. Of the latter, Gerhardt (1994, 93) states:- “individual case material is used only as illustrative evidence documenting various types of the Basic Social Processes...In this way, grounded theory loses touch with the comprehensive range of meaning diversity of the case material which it originally collects, and on which it presumably bases its generalisations.” Ideal types, by contrast, afford a powerful insight, not provided by other methods, into how social interaction is rooted in the various dimensions and contexts in which it occurs.

In the context of the present research, the fact that Weber knits together empirical historical contexts and researcher-constructed meanings establishes a clear synergy between ideal types and the intersubjective construction of meaning characteristic of symbolic interactionist methodologies. In enabling “a chaos of infinitely differentiated and highly contradictory complexes of ideas and feelings” to be simplified by “applying a purely analytical construct created by ourselves” (Weber op. cit. 96), the method allows both researcher and participant perspectives to be catered for. A synergy can also be seen between the grounding of the ideal types in empirical historical contexts and the complex contextual construction of identities characteristic of narrative ethnography. The following typology, which aims to describe the trajectories to “speakerhood” of the study participants, has therefore been constructed using Weber’s Ideal Types as a model.

Table 3: A Typology of New Speakers of Welsh in North West Wales

"Going Concern"	Type					
Life Course Orientation	Insiders	Fence Sitters	Claim Stakers	Claim Relinquishers	Squatters	Campers
	<p>Flexible view of social identity and willingness to adopt "alternative identities"</p> <p>Either:</p> <p><i>Welsh speaking identity is alternative identity of choice, or</i></p> <p><i>Interest in alternative identity in general and eventual adoption of Welsh speaking identity, or</i></p> <p><i>No original desire for alternative identity but flexible view of social identity</i></p>	<p>Flexible view of social identity and willingness to adopt "alternative identities"</p> <p>Welsh speaking identity available but not necessarily major focus for foreseeable future</p> <p>May experiment with different identities</p> <p>May juggle how different attainable identities fit into present life</p>	<p><i>Desire to regain "lost Welsh identity", or</i></p> <p><i>No specific choice to come to Wales, but current ability/choice to imagine a future Welsh speaking identity</i></p> <p>Efforts to incorporate imagined identity in future life</p> <p>Uncertainly whether this can be achieved</p>	<p>No specific choice to come to Wales</p> <p>Past attempts to imagine a Welsh speaking identity</p> <p>Inability to clearly imagine what a Welsh speaking identity might entail in context of current life</p> <p>Little current effort to make further investment</p>	<p>Retirees</p> <p>Perception of free choice as to direction of future life course</p> <p>Welsh speaking highly valued as a means of growing "roots" in chosen new community, as foundation for future life course</p> <p>Perceived "resistance" to this aim on the part of the Welsh speaking community may present difficulties in terms of reconciling imagined and actual future identities</p>	<p>Either retirees or no specific choice to come to Wales.</p> <p>Either :</p> <p><i>Welsh speaking identity no longer valued as most important means of growing roots in new community, or</i></p> <p><i>Future life course envisaged as unfolding outside Wales</i></p>

Life Course Orientation (Contd.)	Insiders	Fence Sitters	Claim Stakers	Claim Relinquishers	Squatters	Campers
	View of speaking Welsh as a major focus for their foreseeable future identities				Continued commitment despite perceived resistance	
Cultural/Linguistic Capital	<p>High level of linguistic/cultural capital</p> <p>May be acquired through prior education (in a non-UK educational context) or by excelling in Welsh language courses</p> <p>May also be acquired via a Welsh speaking partner or partner's family</p> <p>On the basis of initial capital, have been able to acquire further cultural by working in a professional capacity through the medium of Welsh</p> <p>Attach very high value to Welsh speaking identity and this view seems to be shared by Welsh speaking community</p>	<p>Social/cultural capital acquired through familiarity with the Welsh context via contact over time, sometimes combined with family ties</p> <p>May work through the medium of Welsh but not always in a professional capacity</p> <p>Ambivalent about the value attached to Welsh speaking identity - other, e.g. English speaking identities, equally valued.</p> <p>Unsure about the value attached to their Welsh speaking identity by the Welsh speaking community</p>	<p>No initial extensive levels of linguistic capital acquired through education; educated in a UK educational context.</p> <p>Cultural capital may be viewed as having been acquired by virtue of Welsh ancestry</p> <p>Either limited time period spend in Wales or limited contact so far with Welsh speaking community; limited opportunity to acquire social/cultural capital through interaction</p> <p>Tentatively involved in community/workplace Welsh speaking activities with a view to acquiring more cultural/linguistic capital, to which high value is attached</p>	<p>No initial extensive levels of linguistic capital acquired through education; educated in a UK educational context.</p> <p>Cultural capital may be viewed as having been acquired via nationality (non-English) or family associations, rather than through Welsh ancestry</p> <p>Contact with Welsh speaking community for long enough to try to acquire more cultural/linguistic capital through community and/or workplace interaction</p> <p>Perception of failure to acquire further cultural capital through contact and lack of confidence in acquiring it in future</p>	<p>Little linguistic capital through education, or cultural capital through family ties or nationality</p> <p>Little familiarity or contact with Welsh speaking community as yet</p> <p>Eager to acquire more capital and hopeful of doing so, but not sure how this can be achieved</p> <p>Unsure how to transpose linguistic capital achieved in Welsh classes to community context</p>	<p>Little linguistic capital through education, or cultural capital through family ties or nationality</p> <p>Little familiarity or contact with Welsh speaking community as yet</p> <p>Existing contact has not resulted in conviction of the value of acquiring more capital</p> <p>See future as either outside Wales, or in Wales without speaking a great deal of Welsh</p>

Cultural/ Linguistic Capital (Contd.)	Insiders	Fence Sitters	Claim Stakers	Claim Relinquishers	Squatters	Campers
			<p>Committed to Welsh classes as a way to acquire more linguistic capital</p> <p>Hopeful of achieving more Welsh speaking connections</p>	<p>lack of confidence as regards acquiring it in future</p>		
Self/Other Identity	<p>Recognised as being "the same as us" by Welsh speakers - "can blend in"</p> <p>Most Welsh speakers speak Welsh back</p> <p>A large part of social life - close relationships, work, social participation - is in Welsh</p> <p>Working through Welsh is viewed in terms of commitment to the language</p>	<p>Perception of being known as English speaking in some contexts and Welsh speaking in other contexts built up through the years</p> <p>Welsh speaking people may still sometimes respond in English</p> <p>Some rejections experienced and overcome</p> <p>May insist on presenting as being Welsh speaking to English speaking friends and family, and while abroad</p>	<p>Perception of present non-recognition as being Welsh speaking</p> <p>Struggle to get people to speak Welsh back</p> <p>Significant Welsh speaking connections not yet established, current work to establish more</p> <p>Struggle to overcome rejections</p> <p>Hope of acquiring future recognition</p>	<p>Perception of present non-recognition as being Welsh speaking</p> <p>Struggle to get people to speak Welsh back</p> <p>Significant Welsh speaking connections not established despite extensive contact</p> <p>Perception of being "sandwiched" between Welsh and English speaking communities</p>	<p>Perception of present non-recognition as being Welsh speaking</p> <p>Struggle to get people to speak Welsh back</p> <p>Limited contact with Welsh speaking people outside the classroom</p> <p>Attempts to "disassociate" from English speaking compatriots</p> <p>Desire to become Welsh speakers but doubt regarding likelihood of success</p>	<p>Perception of present non-recognition as being Welsh speaking</p> <p>Struggle to get people to speak Welsh back</p> <p>Little contact with Welsh speaking people outside the classroom</p> <p>Lack of commitment to further recognition as being Welsh speaking has resulted in a decision not to progress further, although conflict between communities may not have been experienced</p>

Self/Other Identit (Contd.)	Insiders	Fence Sitters	Claim Stakers	Claim Relinquishers	Squatters	Campers
	<p>The concept of Welsh citizenship is viewed with favour</p> <p>Acceptance may be conditional on close family relationships with Welsh speakers</p> <p>Possible perception of being defined by successful learning of Welsh and nothing else</p> <p>Perception of having learned the culture as well as the language, but of also belonging to the "original culture" learned early on in life</p>	<p>Welsh may be used in the workplace, and an understanding reached with colleagues regarding the extent of this, but from necessity rather than commitment to language</p> <p>"Cosmopolitan" view of national identity - flexible, not vitally important</p> <p>Simultaneously sympathetic and ambivalent towards both Welsh and "own" culture</p>	<p>Empathy with "Welsh speakers as oppressed" but from the outside – frustration with own "outsider" position</p> <p>Welsh may be used at work through necessity, the extent of this still being negotiated</p>	<p>Experiences of rejection may have resulted in "outsider" position</p> <p>Welsh may be used at work but this may be perceived as stressful</p> <p>Possible decision to live in Wales without speaking Welsh</p> <p>Possible wish to present as "slightly more Welsh" than compatriots</p>		<p>Feeling that being able to say "bore da" is sufficient to establish position</p> <p>Possible decision to leave Wales to live elsewhere</p>

Close Relationships (Contd.)	Insiders	Fence Sitters	Claim Stakers	Claim Relinquishers	Squatters	Campers
	<p>A high proportion of close family relationships are conducted through Welsh</p> <p>Viewed as "Welsh speaking" by family and friends of family, however this may be conditional on remaining the partner of the Welsh speaker</p> <p>Important for children to be Welsh speaking through hearing Welsh spoken at home</p> <p>Some English may be spoken with partner and children ("hybridity")</p> <p>Cultural ties to original, non-Welsh family remain</p>	<p>Could speak Welsh with Welsh speaking members of close family but may choose not to</p> <p>May insist on presenting as being Welsh speaking to English speaking friends and family, and while abroad</p> <p>Welsh speaking family and friends don't see "being a Welsh speaker" as crucially important</p> <p>Important for children to be able to speak Welsh, but not necessarily to be viewed as "Welsh speaking" - they'll learn from friends and at school, not vitally important to speak Welsh at home</p>	<p>May have past family connections with Wales, and want to get past identity back</p> <p>Would like a stronger Welsh speaking family identity</p> <p>If there are children, would like them to hear some Welsh spoken at home</p> <p>Would like Welsh to be the language spoken with partner</p> <p>Partner may not share this commitment</p>	<p>May be Welsh family connections but on "other side" of family</p> <p>Possible attempted persuasion by partner to speak more Welsh at home</p> <p>May want children to hear Welsh spoken at home but not feel that this is achievable</p> <p>Not confident that a stronger Welsh speaking family identity is achievable</p> <p>May give up learning Welsh after a certain point</p>	<p>No meaningful Welsh speaking family connections</p> <p>Desire to lean Welsh, but no aspirations to speak Welsh at home</p>	<p>No meaningful Welsh speaking family connections</p> <p>No aspirations to speak Welsh at home</p> <p>Any aspirations to learn more Welsh abandoned</p>

Community Participation	Insiders	Fence Sitters	Claim Stakers	Claim Relinquishers	Squatters	Campers
	<p>High level of Welsh spoken in local area</p> <p>Welsh spoken as default language with everyone in area known to be Welsh speaking</p> <p>High level of involvement in Welsh medium community activities: contribution sought out and valued by Welsh speakers</p> <p>Current professional post where work is carried out through the medium of Welsh: contribution sought out and valued by Welsh speakers</p>	<p>May live in area/neighbourhood with high levels of Welsh speaking, but may also live in "mixed" areas</p> <p>Likely to have lived in/had contact with area for some time</p> <p>Welsh spoken with individuals with whom Welsh speaking community connections have been formed</p> <p>Involved in varying number of Welsh medium community activities - may be ambivalence regarding involvement on both sides</p> <p>May work through the medium of Welsh, but not always in a professional capacity - may be a degree of ambivalence regarding involvement on both sides</p>	<p>Local area may have high levels of spoken Welsh, but may also be "mixed"</p> <p>Likely not to have lived in/had contact with area for long</p> <p>Attempts to speak Welsh with individuals with whom community contacts have been formed, but these contacts may not be extensive - English is the default language</p> <p>Currently working towards a larger number of community contacts</p> <p>Less likely to work through the medium of Welsh - if this is the case, ambivalence on both sides is likely</p>	<p>May live in area/neighbourhood with high levels of Welsh speaking, but may also live in "mixed" areas</p> <p>Likely to have lived in/had contact with area for some time</p> <p>Welsh spoken with individuals with whom community contacts have been formed, but these contacts may not be extensive - English is the default language</p> <p>Attempts to establish community contacts have been generally unsuccessful</p> <p>May have worked through the medium of Welsh in the past, but feel ambivalent about experience</p>	<p>Likely to live in an area with a high number of English speaking retirees and a high level of Welsh/English conflict</p> <p>Not likely to have lived in/had contact with area for long</p> <p>No extensive Welsh speaking community connections outside classroom - English is default language in community context</p> <p>Attempts to establish community connections have been unsuccessful so far</p> <p>Hopeful of establishing connections in future but unsure of success</p>	<p>Likely to live in an area with a high number of English speaking retirees and a high level of Welsh/English conflict</p> <p>Not likely to have lived in/had contact with area for long</p> <p>May have established very limited Welsh speaking connections</p> <p>Decision that existing connections are sufficient</p> <p>No aspirations to make further contact with Welsh speaking community</p>

Commentary on the Typology

The reasons for basing the typology on Weber's theory of ideal types have already been explained. Prior to explaining the detail of the typology, a discussion is perhaps required of the implications of Weber's ideas for the functions the typology performs, how it has been constructed, and the extent to which the categories generated can be regarded as valid. First of all, what does the typology aim to do; describe social phenomena, or explain what causes them? - namely, is it "descriptive" or "explanatory"? (Collier et al., 2008). Descriptive typologies aim to provide a more detailed account of a wide overarching concept by breaking it down into narrower categories (see an illustration from the field of commercialisation management below). Such typologies have in common that they focus on the meanings attached to experiences of social phenomena, either as directly experienced by the participants or as extrapolated by the researcher.

Explanatory typologies, by contrast, seek to establish causative connections between discrete sets of social phenomena, and therefore focus on interpretations pre-generated by the researcher independently of the meanings attached to any social situation. The focus on causal connections, rather than on the extraction of subjectively experienced meanings, makes for a fundamental epistemological difference between explanatory and descriptive typologies.

To turn to the present typology of "New Speakerhood in North West Wales", and how it fits into the categorisation above, it appears at first glance to conform to the descriptive rather than the explanatory model. The cells describe six different speaker types and provide a breakdown of their associated characteristics. However, Weber's view of social reality means that the epistemological underpinning is here slightly different from that of other descriptive typologies; although the typology describes, it also, in a sense, explains. Weberian theory involves "*the uncovering of causal properties*", even though these "causal properties" are linked to the meanings subjectively experienced by social actors. Weberian causation occurs when individuals act in particular ways as a result of the cultural meanings they attach to their experiences; the ideal types aim to encapsulate how actions arise from meanings by reconstructing what the social actor would do if acting under "pure" cultural influences rather than that of other, confounding factors:- "a course of action as it

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would take place if only one or a few clearly specified considerations.... governed an actor's conduct" (Burger op. cit. 125). The cell contents of the typology, as well as describing different speaker positions, therefore serve to explain how they have arisen, for example by detailing the circumstances which may surround a choice not to speak Welsh despite an ability to do so.

Secondly, Weber's view of the social world has implications for the way the ideal types are derived. The researcher will need to examine how participants may act, and what stances they may adopt, in specific social situations, if acting under the influence of particular "cultural realities". Individual experiences are therefore firmly rooted in the social context. This means that cell content is likely to be more detailed than is the case with some other typologies. The embedding of particular cases in wider social situations has been viewed as making the Weberian method particularly appropriate for analysing biographical data. Gerhardt (op. cit.) suggests that ideal types methodology enables the researcher to link current to previous and ensuing events in the individual's life, and the individual's life to wider cultural phenomena varying through time. In the present case, linkages are not made between different stages in the individual's life course, but between the individual and the different contexts in which identity is negotiated.

In the present case, the cell content has been derived by identifying those aspects of participants' experiences which seem especially significant in terms of the kind of Welsh language relationship negotiated. The typology describes the various ways in which participants acted, and the various stances they adopted, in matters relating to Welsh speakerhood, while disregarding other potentially confounding elements of experience. The result is a cluster of stances and actions which, in each of the dimensions in which identity was negotiated, constitutes the essence of a particular kind of relationship to the Welsh language community, at a particular point in time. As social contexts and perceptions change, individuals may, at future points in time, move from one category to another; for example, Fence Sitters who do not use their Welsh may fall back to become Claim Relinquishers. In this sense, the typology not only describes where participants are and where they have been, but explains how they got there and predicts where they might go in future.

Thirdly, the epistemological underpinnings of Weber's ideal types have implications for the validity of the typology. Validity is an issue for qualitative research in general. If the social world is knowable only through our perception of it, knowledge cannot be validated by ensuring it conforms to the rules of the natural world. It has been suggested that the established criteria for the trustworthiness of quantitative data – internal and external validity, generalisability, reliability and objectivity – should, in qualitative research, be replaced by the alternative criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Guba 1981, 80). These criteria emphasise verifying that the perceptions of the researcher are in tune with other possible interpretations of the social phenomenon in question, principally those of the research participants.

At first glance, in view of the above criteria, the validity of ideal types might seem problematic given that they are derived from the perceptions of the researcher alone: In Aronovitch's words (2012, 357) :- "...if ideal types are offered as one-sided constructs for explanation, how exactly do they connect with reality and especially with the subjective understanding of agents that is a keystone of Weberian theory?". The process of generating the Weberian typology does, however, have the potential to fulfil Guba's criteria. "Credibility" can, according to Guba, come from prolonged engagement at a site to overcome any distortion due to unfamiliarity; "transferability" from collecting "thick" descriptive data which will permit comparison of the context in question to other possible contexts; "dependability" from establishing an "audit trail" of the data collection, analysis and interpretation processes; and "confirmability" from practising reflexivity, and documenting that one has done so. The detailed grounding of Weberian typologies in the social context does involve prolonged engagement with the social situation; the generation of thick descriptions of the various contexts involved; and detailed documentation of the basis on which interpretations have been made.

The same detailed grounding has underpinned the construction of the typologies generated in the present study. The density of the biographical data has enabled the researcher to identify and distinguish between different permutations of experience, providing a template which can be compared with experiences in other contexts. The researcher has engaged in extensive contact with the context as experienced by participants, carrying out, transcribing and analysing two intensive interviews, some in

participants' own homes, spaced six months apart to allow for changes over time. At the second interview, participants were shown the transcript of the initial interview, asked for their comments, and invited to talk about any changes which had since taken place. The actions and stances identified, and the names given to each speaker type, have been generated using participants' own descriptions, as provided in the interview transcripts, combined with the researcher's reflexive notes on each interview.

Explanation of the Typology

As a result of this process, six distinct "speaker types" have been identified – "Insiders", "Fence Sitters", "Claim Stakers", "Claim Relinquishers", "Squatters" and "Campers". They are differentiated from one another by having come from different starting points, having subsequently negotiated different relationships in all major life dimensions, and having currently reached different "endpoints". It should be noted that, in terms of endpoints, insiders have the closest, and campers the least close relationship, to the Welsh language community. The amount of initial cultural capital and the nature of life course orientation are major "starting point" variables influencing subsequent interactions and thereby outcomes. This is evident when the trajectories of the two most "successful" speaker types, insiders and fence sitters, are compared. Both are seen to have similar orientations, viewing new or alternative social identities as desirable and achievable. However, whereas "insiders" had settled on "Welsh speaking identity" as being the major focus of their lives for the foreseeable future, for "Fence sitters", it was merely one of a number of possible identities which could be chosen. Insiders had started out with a higher level of cultural capital than fence sitters, chosen to invest this capital, and attained a close "inside" relationship with the Welsh language community. They lived in strongly Welsh speaking areas, occupied professional posts carried out through the medium of Welsh, and carried out most of their family and social lives through the medium of Welsh, viewing themselves, and being viewed, as closely aligned with the language community. The price for this was that acceptance was conditional on continuing to "be seen" as Welsh speaking; participants struggled to define themselves rather than be defined. Fence sitters had not invested so heavily, and typically had a "foot in both camps". They viewed themselves, and were viewed, as sometimes Welsh speaking and sometimes English speaking. This gave them autonomy to retain a degree of ambivalence towards both

language communities, and to play whichever card proved more advantageous. They might live in strongly Welsh speaking areas but also in “mixed” areas; they might also occupy professional posts in which they spoke Welsh, but out of necessity rather than through commitment to the language.

“Claim stakers” were less rooted in the Welsh language community than either insiders or fence sitters; typically, they had either not yet spent an extensive amount of time in Wales, or, if they had, had not engaged in extensive interactions with the Welsh language community. In terms of orientation, they might feel themselves to have a prior claim to Welsh speakerhood by virtue of Welsh ancestry, or might simply have found themselves in Wales with no background whatsoever. They had little cultural capital acquired through education, although participants seeking to regain lost Welsh identities viewed themselves as having a certain amount of capital by virtue of Welsh ancestry. What these apparently disparate groups had in common was that they had reached the point of being able to imagine and aspire to a Welsh speaking identity which might in future be achieved. They did not necessarily aspire to become “insiders”, but rather to attain a meaningful relationship of some kind to the language community. This might be to regain lost “Welshness”, to establish themselves in their community or at work, or to secure the future of their children. All were either currently attending Welsh classes, which they regarded as a supportive environment, or experiencing a workplace environment which was strongly Welsh. All were eager to establish community connections and recognition of their ability to speak Welsh. These efforts were sometimes rejected, which was particularly galling for participants with Welsh ancestry; however hope of attaining future recognition was retained even in the face of such rejections.

“Claim relinquishers”, by contrast, although similar to claim stakers in having little cultural capital acquired through education, had typically spent a longer amount of time in Wales, and experienced more extensive interactions with the Welsh language community, than had claim stakers. In the course of seeking community connections, they had encountered a series of rejections, sometimes within the wider community, sometimes within the family. Those who had experienced rejection in a community context were not able to draw on the support of Welsh speaking family or friends. They either no longer attended Welsh classes, and were not able to draw on support there,

or had experienced the Welsh classes themselves as insufficiently supportive. No-one in this group laid claims to Welsh ancestry, which may have factored in individuals' relative lack of persistence in pursuit of Welsh speakerhood. Ultimately, this group did not feel that any advantage which they might gain from persisting was worth the effort it would take. Unlike claim stakers, they had not persisted in their efforts to acquire recognition, and could no longer clearly imagine what a Welsh speaking identity might entail. English had remained their default language for day-to-day communication with family and friends and within the community.

Whereas both claim stakers and claim relinquishers had reached the point of imagining a possible future Welsh speaking identity, neither "squatters" or "campers" had yet done so. Neither group possessed a great deal of prior cultural capital; many were English retirees, and lived in areas with large retirement populations. Squatters saw themselves as free to acquire any identity they chose, and the language as key to acquiring their identity of choice, but did not find their view of Welsh speaking identity as easily acquirable to be shared by the Welsh speaking population. Their imagining of a new identity was not paralleled by an accurate imagining of the Welsh speaking community, the latter being severely restricted by their location within expatriate communities from whom they struggled to disassociate themselves; they had as yet established few Welsh speaking social connections outside the classroom. The relationship of this group with the language community was of a rather tenuous and marginal nature. Even more tenuous was the relationship of "campers", who did not view themselves as ever establishing a permanent relationship with the language community. They viewed the few words of Welsh they had acquired much in the same light as tourists might view souvenirs; as evidence of an interesting but inherently temporary experience rather than of a permanent attachment. Campers had concluded that being able to say "Bore Da" was sufficient, were likely to discontinue their Welsh courses, and might ultimately decide to leave Wales.

Although these six types are, at first glance, distinguishable by their relative closeness to the language community, the six positions are, in fact, much more qualitatively complex than simply "close" or "not so close". This complexity is expressed in the names given to the types. These names express, first of all, the security and permanence of the attachment achieved. Insiders and fence sitters are clearly more

firmly embedded in Welsh speaking social space than claim stakers, claim relinquishers, squatters or campers. Security and permanence may be said to depend on both the legitimacy with which speakers are regarded by the language community, and the nature of the relationship which has been sought. Ambivalence may exist with regard to both. This ambivalence is implied, once again, in the names; fence sitters can hardly be said to occupy a comfortable position, and claim stakers, squatters and campers are commonly regarded as vaguely deviant – making claims to which they may not have a right, living on the margins of respectable society, not quite paying their way. Individuals who occupy these positions may not have achieved a secure and permanent relationship to the community because they are not willing to make a serious commitment to “Welshness”. However, it could also be said that individuals have come to occupy these positions due to a lack of capital – you live in someone else’s house or in a tent not from choice, but because you do not have enough money to buy your own home. Analysing these complexities may help to identify what factors have been most important in terms of the relationship currently negotiated and the terrain traversed in the course of negotiation. It is the interplay between the individual’s orientation towards learning Welsh and the amount of initial or acquired capital possessed which seem, in the final analysis, to exert the most important influence. It is in the context of this interplay that interactions with friends and close family, in the Welsh class, the community and the workplace, are played out.

In terms of what could make a difference to outcomes, it could be argued that squatters and campers are perhaps unlikely, given present social conditions, to make substantial progress towards a meaningful relationship with the Welsh language community. At the other end of the scale, insiders would possibly achieve their inside position without specifically targeted support. Fence sitters are unlikely to become insiders, largely because they do not want to. This leaves two groups in the middle whose position seems somewhat ambivalent and unresolved. If claim stakers are staking a claim to a relationship with the language community, to what position do they move if, and when, their claim is recognised? They are unlikely to become insiders; it seems the best position they can achieve is that of fence sitter. On the other hand, if their claim remains unresolved for a substantial period of time, they may become claim relinquishers. Claim relinquishers might have moved on to other social activities, but

participants in this position seemed nevertheless to experience feelings of regret and lack of resolution, and might with assistance reassert their claim. These are perhaps the two groups which would derive most benefit from a level of support and recognition not currently available. This will be discussed more comprehensively in the next chapter.

8. New Speakers and the Welsh Speaking Future

Introduction

Chapter One began by asking a question about the author's own experience of learning Welsh – why learners might experience encouragement to learn on the one hand, but difficulty in being recognised as a Welsh speaker on the other. Some reasons for this may be seen in the links which have been seen between language and the collective identity of the nation, and the fact that, in the Welsh context, the relationship between language, identity and nation may be particularly contested and problematic. Some theories of minority language revitalisation may also view individuals who are not “native speakers” as a threat to the language. Both these factors may affect individual experiences of learning Welsh. Chapter Two established that recent, constructivist theories of second language learning views the acquisition of new linguistic identities as possible, although, given the persistence of the link between language and collective identity, likely to be subject to contestation. This possibility gives rise to the concept of the “new speaker” of a minority language. Few recent studies have investigated the extent to which it is possible to negotiate an identity as a “new speaker of Welsh”, and this is what the present study, in the context of North West Wales, has attempted to do. In view of the potential of the narrative to map out how identities are negotiated within different life dimensions, the study has taken a biographical narrative approach.

If, as implied by the “New speaker” concept, individuals learning Welsh are able to become legitimate members of the language community, they may arguably have the potential to swell the number of “Welsh speakers” and thus contribute to the revitalisation of the language. It was suggested in Chapter One that if individuals who learn Welsh are to achieve this degree of recognition, in terms both of their micro level experiences of learning and using the language, and of how they are positioned vis-à-vis Welsh language policy, a re-thinking of the relationship between language and national identity, and of some of the assumptions underlying language policy, may be required. This chapter will discuss what light the study findings throw on how language policy currently affects new speakers of Welsh, and on the validity of this suggestion.

Summary of Study Findings

The conclusion reached in the study has been that, for this particular group of participants, in this particular context, new identity positions were more negotiable than reported by ethnographic studies of the early 1990s, though the positions attained were variable, and barriers were still seen to exist. “Prior dispositions” acquired during early socialisation, such as education or perceptions of national identity, as well as different life course orientations - some involving a higher level of personal “investedness” in the language than others - and sometimes social locations such as ethnicity or gender, were seen to influence the direction and extent of participant trajectories. Participants starting out with higher levels of cultural capital were able to acquire greater amounts of social capital. The power balance between languages in the areas where participants lived also affected experiences, with individuals living in areas with large numbers of English retirees experiencing particular difficulty. Perceptions of national identity on the part of traditional Welsh speakers, as well as participants’ own perceptions, therefore exerted an effect on social interaction. “Higher stake” Welsh speaking activities, such as using Welsh within the family or workplace, or civic participation, afforded the opportunity for closer involvement, but at the same time occasioned greater contestation. Close relationships constituted resources which could either facilitate or impede negotiation. The positions finally attained – Insiders, Fence Sitters, Claim Stakers, Claim Relinquishers, Squatters, and Campers - varied in terms not so much of linguistic competence, but of the extent to which individuals saw themselves, and were seen, as being included in the language community; the perceived “legitimacy” of the relationship; and its permanence. Some speakers occupied social spaces which were more extensive and more highly valued than others, and which stretched out further into social time. “Insiders”, at one end of the spectrum, had a higher value and a more permanent stake in the Welsh language community than “Campers” at the other. Closeness or distance reflected the way participants had been positioned, but at the same time how they had positioned themselves.

New Speaker Positions and Language Revitalisation Policy – Can They Be Aligned?

It appears, then, that all the participants had negotiated positions of some nature in relation to the Welsh language community. This may to some extent reflect the success of Welsh language policy post-Devolution, as the increased public presence of the language, and a consequent evening-out of the balance of power in favour of Welsh, has entailed the provision, for both new and traditional speakers, of a greater number of contexts in which Welsh is and can be used.

However, this did not necessarily mean that participants' role as "speakers" was recognised as contributing to the continuation of the language. The challenges they had encountered to their legitimate membership of the language community indicated that their presence was not always clearly recognised nor their role clearly defined. The existence of speaker categories such as Claim Stakers and Claim Relinquishers indicates that some participants felt that their right to belong and contribute to the language community was greater than the recognition they received. It could be argued that, indeed, the very fact that participants did occupy a position in relation to the language community, seeing themselves in relation to it and being seen by it, places them within the orbit of the Welsh speaking interactions which should be the concern of language policy.

In terms of what kind of relationship to the language community confers the "right to speak" (Bourdieu 1991), some of the negotiated positions, as stated above, were closer and more permanent than others. To some extent, this may have been because some participants were viewed as more "competent" speakers than others; but competence, and therefore recognition of the "right to speak", is difficult to disentangle from the amount of cultural and social capital accrued by particular individuals. It was also undeniable that some participants had made a decision not to make a major investment in the language; however, this type of decision was also difficult to disentangle from the way participants saw themselves as perceived by traditional speakers. Moreover, even participants who were unlikely to achieve an "insider" position, or to be able to engage in complex Welsh language interactions, engaged in day-to-day interactions in shops or at bus-stops, thus contributing to the visibility and

audibility of Welsh, and often influencing their children to make a commitment to the language.

It is argued here that language policy should recognise and support the different types of interaction in which new speakers of Welsh are likely to engage, while at the same time aiming to increase the opportunities for, and quality of, interaction, moving from short interchanges at the bus-stop to more meaningful long-term involvement. In summary, more social spaces, as defined in the paragraph which follows, need to be created, in a variety of dimensions, for new speakers.

Social space may be seen as involving differential power relationships in the Bourdieusian sense:- “an ensemble of invisible relations... defined by their proximity to, neighbourhood with, and distance from each other, and also by their relative position, above or below or yet in between..” (Bourdieu 1989, 16). In this sense, creating social space for new speakers might mean re-balancing unfavourable power relations, perhaps by allocating conceptual spaces which did not previously exist. Social ecology models, as exemplified by that of Bronfenbrenner (1977), see social space in terms of the distance between the individual and the wider society, with circles gravitating outwards from the individual through the interpersonal, the organisational, the community, and finally the public sphere. Social interactions within the “private” (micro) spheres closer to the individual may be seen as qualitatively different from the impersonal interactions characteristic of the more distant, “public” (macro) spheres. Relph (2008, 57) sees “community” as located within the middle reaches, where the “I” and the “we” come together. Such models therefore take greater account than the Bourdieusian model of the differing relationship between “self” and “other” involved in interactions within the various spheres or dimensions, and therefore of the quality of individual experience.

Both of the above models are detectable in the concept of “breathing spaces” used by Fishman (1991) to refer to social domains in which minority languages do not need to compete with the majority language, and adopted in the new speakers field, for example by O’Rourke (2019), to refer to spaces within which new speakers can likewise escape relations of dominance by finding “alternative spaces where they could use Galician without having to justify such use or feel out of place” (p. 108).

Whereas Bourdieusian differential power relationships are detectable here, so too is the quality of the relationship between self and other; “breathing spaces” sound quite similar to the “safe spaces” in which, according to Eliasoph (2013, 146):- “participants could...create a shared sense of who to be together...this is different from “finding yourself” all by yourself...in a safe space, participants find what they share with others”.

Both models may be helpful in positioning new speakers in relation to Welsh language policy. In order to embark on this exercise, it is necessary to assume that the language space may be jointly occupied by new and traditional speakers of Welsh. Fishman suggests that creating “breathing spaces” means avoiding relations of dominance by clearing a separate space for the minority language, which implies revitalising traditional minority language communities. However, constructivist theories of language contact and acquisition, backed up by recent research on bilingualism, suggest that it is possible for the language space to be shared. As the question of sharing or not links up, or not, to the issues of language and identity, and of the epistemological basis of language policy, which are key to this thesis, it is discussed more fully in the conclusion later in this chapter. Using the Bourdieusian model of social space involving relative power and distance, factoring in new speakers would mean allocating appropriate amounts of conceptual and interactive space relative to that occupied by traditional speakers. This would mean increasing opportunities for Welsh speaking interaction in all dimensions of interaction. Social ecological models imply that attention should also be paid to the quality of the space. It has been seen that the Welsh speaking interactions of some new speaker categories are likely to be of a fairly superficial nature and confined to the public sphere. Spaces for more lasting and less superficial interactions need to be created, the area of “community” where the “I” and “we” come together made larger, and “breathing spaces” freed up.

In more specific terms, in the national dimension, creating a social space for new speakers could mean clearing a conceptual space where, within official language policy at national or regional level, the social category of “new speaker” is defined and account taken of new speaker needs. Such conceptual spaces need to be carried through into all dimensions of interaction; conceptual and interactive spaces for new speakers should be ensured, both the space and quality of interaction increased, and

different levels of linguistic interaction appropriately supported. Both new and traditional speakers would benefit by the provision of more social spaces in which the minority language can be used; and also, especially in rural areas, of more spaces where social interaction can take place, and community built. More “breathing spaces” need to be created where, through peer support and mentoring, experiences can be shared with others who have travelled the same road. As traditional speakers may also have experienced difficulties and conflicts around the language, “breathing spaces” may also be required where these can be shared – and a joint “breathing space” where both groups acquire an appreciation of one another’s difficulties could also be envisaged. Whereas the need for non Welsh speakers to acquire a “critical linguistic awareness” of the power imbalance in favour of the majority language has been rightly pointed out (Eaves 2015), there may also be a need for traditional Welsh speakers to acquire awareness of the challenges faced by new speakers. The discussion which follows considers how these aims might be achieved.

Policy Implications: Spaces for both traditional Welsh speakers and New Speakers

In discussing the implications of the research for language policy and planning, “language policy” has been taken to mean both “official” policy statements and the “real”, or “de facto” language policy encountered by participants in the course of day-to-day social interaction. These different levels of policy definition and implementation are recognised by most major theorists. Spolsky (2004, 5) identifies three separate components of language policy; the “specific efforts to modify or influence that practice by any kind of language intervention, planning or management” which are usually thought of as constituting language policy; language beliefs or ideologies; and, at the level of day-to-day social interaction, language practices. Official policies may not always concur with ideologies or practices, though the latter may exert a bottom-up influence on official policies, while at the same time being influenced by them. Shohamy (2006) similarly views language practices at local level as constituting the real, or “de facto” language policy, which is often covert rather than overt in character, and which may differ from the “official” policy delineated at national level. At the same time, given these bottom-up as well as top-down influences on policy, there may be potential to align top and bottom by building in meso and micro, as well as macro level

interventions. Baldauf (2006) envisages an ecological model where micro, meso and macro levels all influence one another, and sees the devolving of planning decisions to local level accompanying political devolution as an opportunity for bottom-up rather than top-down planning, minimising scenarios where macro level policies fail due to a lack of corresponding meso and micro level interventions. The difficulties faced by study participants throw light on how not only official, macro or micro level, but also “de facto” language policies affected new speakers, pointing the way towards possible change.

Difficulties were experienced, and policies operated, in various dimensions. In defining these dimensions, sociolinguistic theory thinks in terms of linguistic “domains”. (Spolsky 2012, 4), takes the view that “each domain within a sociolinguistic ecology has its own variety of language policy, and each influences and is influenced by all the other domains”. A wide range of “domains” is listed “ranging from the supra-national organisation through the state and regional or local governments (polities) to the army, business, work, media, education, religion and the family”. Whereas the concept of “domain” brings to mind stable and immobile territories with set boundaries, this study has viewed linguistic identity as an interactive process of negotiation undertaken, sometimes face-to-face and sometimes via social media, in various dimensions - the Welsh for Adults class, close relationships, community and workplace. Though these dimensions largely coincide with Spolsky’s domains, the discussion which follows, given the interactive emphasis of the study, concentrates on how, in all these different dimensions, participants encountered, and reacted to, both official and unofficial policies. Following the principle of creating more social space for new speakers of Welsh, any changes indicated might well be planned at local level with the participation of both new and traditional speakers.

The National Dimension

The national dimension is considered first, as this is the level at which macro level language policy is defined, and macro policies are embedded in all other levels of social interaction. Equally, perceptions of national identity embedded in unofficial, “bottom up” language policies can also exert a significant influence on official language policy. (Shohamy 2006, 26).

In terms of what the study revealed about the unofficial, de facto, national language policy, constructions of national identity were seen to have shifted to some extent in the years since Devolution. Ethnographic research in the 1980s and 1990s (Trosset 1986, Bowie 1993) saw the national social space in North West Wales as marked by contestation between “English” and “Welsh” language groups, with very little interchange between the two, and the balance of power very much in favour of English. The present research reveals both a higher level of mingling and interchange, as many more people had not only decided to learn Welsh, but also used their Welsh in family, community and workplace settings, and a more varied power balance. As suggested earlier, this could very well reflect the success of language policy interventions post-Devolution. Secondly, however, participant experiences showed that de facto language policies did not always factor in new speakers of Welsh to constructions of Welsh speaking national identity. A perception still existed that one needed to “be Welsh” in order to speak Welsh.

Regarding how new speakers are viewed by official language policy, this has, as discussed in Chapter One, sometimes been with ambivalence; a case is made in that chapter for a conceptual re-evaluation, at macro level, of what is meant by the term “Welsh speaker”. The most recent Welsh Government strategy for the Welsh language, “Cymraeg 2050: Miliwn o Siaradwyr” (Welsh Government 2017 a) appears to mark a step forward in this respect. Although language transmission in the home and increased use of Welsh by young people are still rightly viewed as being important, the existence and potential contribution of “new speakers” is acknowledged (p.17), and reference made to the new speakers literature. Given a two-way relationship between official and unofficial language policies, positive statements of this nature have the potential to alter unofficial, de facto language policies, but at the same time, as noted above, macro level policies can also be frustrated both by de facto policies, and a lack of meso and micro level interventions. The challenges which may consequently be faced, in all areas of social interaction, by new speakers of Welsh, are discussed in the sections which follow. Re-defining the relationship between nation, identity and language has been viewed, in this thesis, as a key conceptual foundation of the process of factoring a greater number of individuals into language revitalisation initiatives, and is discussed further in the conclusion to this chapter; such

conceptual revision at macro level potentially feeds through into all other levels and dimensions.

Welsh For Adults Provision

Welsh for Adults policy and provision is clearly of key importance to this discussion, given that it is the only area with a specific remit to consider the needs of new speakers of Welsh.

Before proceeding to discuss what the present study tells us about participant experiences of Welsh for Adults provision, it should perhaps be pointed out that the study did not engage in a detailed evaluation of the quality of Welsh for Adult instruction, student learning or the student experience, but rather investigated how a small sample of participants negotiated Welsh speaking identities; it is that perspective which informs the discussion which follows. A key finding was the potential of the wider social context in which classroom learning was framed to affect outcomes. This worked in several ways. Firstly, the contexts of participants' individual lives exercised a considerable influence on learning. Secondly, the classroom was not a hermetically sealed environment isolated from the social world outside, but was preparing participants to lead parts of their future lives through the medium of Welsh: this constituted an important but unacknowledged contextual framework. Thirdly, the wider cultural context involved when students who often spoke a majority language attempted to learn a minority language, also impacted on what happened in the classroom.

In terms of how language policy affected study participants, Welsh for Adults, as discussed in Chapter One, has not always been seen as an integral component of language policy and planning, but rather as existing in order to cater for “leisure interests”, reflecting the relative invisibility of new speakers where Welsh Government language policy is concerned. The creation of a new National Centre for Learning Welsh with a remit to co-ordinate provision nationally may mark a step forward in terms of the official status of the sector. The Centre has recently published a new Welsh for Adults strategy (National Centre for Learning Welsh 2016), the potential of which to remedy some of the issues highlighted both by the Centre's own report and by the findings of the present study, are discussed in this section. Issues highlighted by the

report are that, despite some progress, the number of taught hours provided to learners still fall short of those thought to be necessary to achieve fluency; the number of students progressing to higher level courses is still comparatively small; women considerably outnumber men (68% to 31.2%), and the largest cohort of students (3985) still fall into the 60 and over age group. Although adults age 30-39 are reasonably well represented (3800), the number of younger adults, age 20 -29, is relatively small (2610). These figures reflect the persistence, to some extent, of the perception of Welsh for Adults as the preserve of retired, middle class English ladies.

Remedies proposed in the strategy, as discussed in Chapter One, are an increased number of taught hours (though not yet the 1500 annual hours mandatory in the Basque country); a standard national curriculum in concordance with European standards; and increased provision of flexible learning platforms; and more social learning outside the classroom. How effective might these measures be in addressing issues revealed in the present study? Firstly, the study found that a number of participants did not benefit from Welsh speaking networks outside the classroom, and that for some students (though none of the study participants), learning Welsh was still a “leisure interest”, and the Welsh class an opportunity to socialise in English. The strategy recommendation to increase the number of taught hours has the potential to improve the learning experience by increasing the amount of intra-classroom “Welsh speaking space”, as does the introduction of a standard national curriculum. Secondly, students learning Welsh are lifelong learners, and participants often experienced a conflict between “classroom time” and the different timescales which applied to their lives outside the classroom. The development of more flexible learning platforms, again as recommended in the strategy, for example through online and blended learning, might potentially help to resolve such conflicts.

However, several study findings identified areas which the strategy had either not addressed, or addressed incompletely. Extensive detail emerged of the specific barriers faced by new speakers of Welsh in community settings. A key finding was that needs for support in developing Welsh speaking interactions outside the classroom may vary in tandem with the “speaker position” which is likely to be attained. At the “high achiever”, “insider” end of the scale, despite a high level of informal recognition by the Welsh speaking community, once all available Welsh courses had been

completed, no clear formal pathway was available for further developments, or for a formally recognised role in the Welsh speaking world. Margot had to complete a distance learning course in order to obtain a degree through the medium of Welsh. Her experience indicates a need for clearer routes to be developed and publicised, and for more peer and mentoring support.

A “middle group”, who were unlikely to become high achievers, but on the other hand might potentially attain a meaningful position vis-à-vis the language community, often consisted of younger people who had come to Wales not through a pronounced cultural interest in all things Welsh, or to retire, but for reasons connected with family or work. Many spheres of these participants’ lives therefore potentially included opportunities to interact in Welsh at more than a superficial, impersonal level. Though staking a strong claim to membership of the language community, they did not, however, have the high levels of personal investedness and involvement which came with Welsh speaking family or cultural connections, and were unlikely to have the support of extensive Welsh speaking social networks. These were the participants who might work through the medium of Welsh, not in order to improve their Welsh, but because they had to; who were committed enough to learning Welsh to worry about helping their children with their homework, but not particularly confident that they could do so; and who might engage in civic participation through Welsh, but feel unsupported in doing so. It was this group for whom targeted interventions, such as providing both spaces for increased community interaction in Welsh, and also “breathing spaces” in the form of educational and peer support, perhaps had the potential to make the greatest difference. Although increasing the amount of “social learning” outside the classroom, as recommended in the strategy, and indeed in many previous reports, does indeed have the potential to help with these issues, successive studies of adult learners of Welsh nevertheless indicate their persistence, perhaps because little detail is available of the micro dimensions where interventions may be required. Study findings again revealed extensive detail of the community areas where support might be most needed, and suggestions as to how, and by whom, such support might be provided, are proposed in the sections which follow.

Also revealed in the study was the extent to which wider contestations around the language could encroach into the classroom. Firstly, Welsh as “a difficult language”

could be perceived as embodied in the group of people who spoke the language. Students who had been educated within the UK educational system often had a low awareness of the characteristics of languages which were different from English, and sometimes said they felt more comfortable with English speaking tutors who had learned Welsh. This is a little acknowledged, and obviously a very sensitive issue - Smith (2000, 94) notes that “second language learning has not directed much attention to the role that culture plays in the dynamics of classroom interaction” - and is not addressed in the WFA strategy. Further research is further merited here; however one suggestion is the provision of a “breathing space” in the form of a mentoring system which partnered students with members of their “own” language group who had been successful in learning and using Welsh. Mentoring systems have been successful in other contexts where cultural differences between students and teachers are perceived to exist (Holt and Lopez 2014), and might have the additional advantage of providing legitimate roles for new speakers of Welsh.

Secondly, in contrast to the Welsh classes which were used to socialise in English, some classes attended by participants promoted a monolingual ideology, deriving from a view that any use of English would detract from students’ ability to use Welsh, and perhaps influenced by the view of the minority language as threatened by the majority language at collective level. Some students felt that strictures against ever using English impeded their ability to communicate spontaneously in “real” social interactions, and a contrary pedagogical view exists that mixing languages – a further instance of providing a “breathing space” for new speakers - may be permissible and even advisable under some circumstances. This is further discussed in the chapter conclusion.

Family and School

The family is recognised as an important site of language transmission, and in some strands of sociolinguistic theory as the prime site of language transmission, which means that it has attracted a number of policy interventions at both macro level, being one of the prime areas of intervention identified in recent language policy documents, and also at micro level, as evidenced by projects such as “Twf”, as discussed below.

The family was experienced by new speakers in the study as an arena in which they could potentially contribute to revitalising the language, not only as speakers themselves, but as the parents of future speakers. It was also an arena in which contestation was sometimes experienced between a desire to make this contribution by speaking Welsh at home, and communicating authentically by retaining one's previous linguistic identity; and between the language policy of the family and that of the school.

To what extent did language policy interventions address these issues? One of the most significant actors at micro level has been the organisation "Twf" and its successor "Cymraeg i Blant", both with an explicit remit to support bilingualism within the family. The specific aims envisaged are, according to the evaluation carried out by Irvine et al. in 2008, to "increase the number of bilingual families who transmit the Welsh language to their children... highlight the value of the Welsh language and bilingualism to parents...and to encourage families to raise their children to be bilingual. Twf emphasises the importance of developing bilingualism from an early age and of using Welsh in the home. Twf's primary audience are mixed language families, where only one parent is Welsh speaking" (Irvine et al. 2008, 3).

These stated aims may not, however, have all been relevant to new speaker parents. Firstly, particular assumptions about linguistic identity may perhaps be detected in the decision to target mixed "Welsh/English" families, which are defined as families where "either the mother or father speaks Welsh very or fairly well" (p. 13). It is implied that "Welsh/Welsh" families, where mother and father speak Welsh very or fairly well, will be well equipped to transmit the language to their children, and that "English/English" families, where neither the mother nor father speaks Welsh very or fairly well, have no potential role in language transmission. Viewing these assumptions from the perspective of the participants in the present study, Carys, who was likely to assess herself as speaking Welsh very or fairly well, but who struggled over what language to speak with her children, would not have received support from Twf. Fiona, who was likely to assess herself as not speaking Welsh very or fairly well, but who desperately wanted to improve, would similarly not have qualified. Such categorisations seem to involve judgements about the value of families' respective linguistic credentials, and also to assume that these credentials are fixed and cannot change. Davies (2005, 12-

14) critiques Twf's prioritisation of mixed language families, pointing out that "isolating, or concentrating solely on mixed language families is both impossible and no doubt undesirable"; that families where both partners are "Welsh speakers" may be equally "at risk"; that "English/English" families may well have the potential to learn Welsh; and advises Twf to "ditch a targeted approach in favour of a more blanket method of work".

Next, progressing to the difficulties which Twf states need to be addressed; some of these, such as lack of commitment to the language, were not applicable to any of the study participants, all of whom were very well aware of the importance of speaking Welsh within the family. Others - lack of confidence and/or fluency, the language profile of the family as a whole, and the absence of a Welsh speaking network – do, at first glance, resonate with those identified by participants in the present study. However, a closer look at the interventions designed to address these difficulties shows that some of them do not address the specific issues faced by new speakers. Those participants who qualified for Twf help would possibly have benefitted from the "family and friends workshops" held to convince family members outside the nuclear family of the value of speaking Welsh with children. However, other areas of activity were not quite so relevant. Whereas Twf's principal input is described as occurring during the early childhood years, it was not at this point that new speaker parents required support. Kay, who did not view her Welsh as particularly good, was nevertheless confident in her ability to read children's books to her son and daughter. It was when children started school, and found that their Welsh had become superior to that of their parents; and later, during the secondary school years, when they needed an increasing amount of help with their homework, that the need arose.

The difficulties encountered at these stages were of three main varieties: communication with the school, insufficient mastery of Welsh, and linguistic conflict between parents and children. Addressing the difficulties above would require co-working with schools and with Welsh for Adults respectively. However, although Twf is described as working together with other early years agencies and professionals such as Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin, Health Visitors and Welsh for Adults, no remit is mentioned for co-working with schools in order to help parents help their children, or to resolve parent/child linguistic conflict. Although the need to work more closely with

Welsh for Adults is flagged up, this is with the aim of providing simple vocabulary for English/English parents to pass on to their children at a young age, rather than more advanced vocabulary in order to help with homework. Some individual schools in Gwynedd have addressed such issues; for example, Ysgol Gynradd Talysarn has developed “sessions with a Welsh language officer from Gwynedd authority (which are) successful in building parents’ confidence to speak Welsh with their children”, and this is cited by Estyn (n.d.) as an example of good practice which has been shared with several other schools; but no systematic analysis of new parent needs and subsequent policy development, either by or in conjunction with schools or Welsh for Adults, appears to have been carried out. For Fiona, discussing her difficulties and learning new Welsh vocabulary along with other new speaker parents, and perhaps with other traditional Welsh speaking parents, might have created more space for Welsh speaking social interaction at a community, rather than at a superficial, impersonal level, and provided a much-needed breathing space.

Other areas of need of particular relevance to new speaker parents, for example increasing the support available in the wider community through community development or helping parents to build up Welsh speaking networks, are acknowledged as being outwith the remit of Twf, or indeed any other agency. Research by Morris (1989) suggests the need for a such network building, the social networks of incomers to North Wales consisting largely of English rather than Welsh speakers; and, as noted earlier, facilitating the formation of Welsh speaking relationships outside the classroom is one of the aims of the most recent Welsh for Adults Strategy. Once again, new speakers constitute a category for whom not only does conceptual space need to be created, but corresponding meso and micro level interventions designed.

Public and Virtual Spaces

The extent to which a language is visible and audible in public spaces – the “linguistic landscape” - can constitute significant indicators of its centrality or marginality in society, and therefore of how acceptable it is to use it within the public space (Shohamy op. cit., 110). The provision of visual cues, such as road signs, shop signs, or posters, in the minority language, and of public spaces where the language can be spoken freely, are therefore regarded as policy interventions important for language

revitalisation. Study findings threw light on new speakers' specific experiences of the linguistic landscape, and how, at both macro and micro level, it contributed to or impeded identity construction. At macro level, major or significant public sites of identity construction, such as Arts Centres, were encountered; at micro level, informal day to day sites of construction such as shopping. Organised social activities, which have been viewed in terms of the construction of civic identity rather than of the visual construction of linguistic identity, are discussed in the following, rather than in this section.

In terms of visual cues, "top down" language policy interventions, for example via the re-population of public spaces in North West Wales by Welsh as opposed to the former English, have arguably done much to create "breathing spaces" within which Welsh is not crowded out by English to the same extent as formerly. Such measures were appreciated by new speakers as an important linguistic signal encouraging them to use the language; several study participants mentioned the presence of road signs, shop signs, and posters in Welsh. However, the exemption of the private sector from the obligation to establish a Welsh language presence meant extensive gaps, and changes of ownership could mean a change back to English overnight. Addressing this may require support and education as well as changes in legislation.

In addition to these ubiquitous visual cues, a number of public buildings in the local area provided spaces for Welsh speaking interaction. The Arts and Leisure Centres in both Bangor and Caernarfon projected a strong bilingual identity, with many Welsh speaking events, Welsh speaking staff, and all publicity material available bilingually. In Galicia, new speakers are described by O'Rourke (2019, 108) as being the main patrons of the Centro Social, a space "not established with the specific function of promoting the Galician language...however the pamphlets, information leaflets and posters...were exclusively through the medium of Galician", thus enabling them to "explicitly (seek) out alternative spaces where they felt they could use Galician without having to justify such use or without feeling out of place". However, an important difference between the Galician and the North Walian context was that in Galicia, new speakers constituted the primary group attempting to revitalise the language; whereas in North West Wales, this role, as far as language planning was concerned, was largely filled by traditional speakers. As a result, despite the more significant presence

of Welsh in North Walian public spaces than of Galician in Galicia, new speakers did not appear to be sure which Welsh speaking spaces were intended for them, as none of the study participants reported attending Welsh speaking events in either of the Arts Centres. This may indicate a lack of Welsh speaking social networks – participants may possibly have been reluctant to attend Welsh speaking events unaccompanied – but equally, uncertainty as to whether the label “Welsh speaking” applied to new speakers of Welsh.

As a remedy to this difficulty, Canolfannau Cymraeg (Welsh Language Centres) have been advocated as a way of making Welsh more visible and audible within the community (James 2018), while at the same time providing a Welsh speaking space which includes all speakers, including new speakers (Gruffudd and Morris 2011). A Canolfan Gymraeg, “Pobdy” (Menter Iaith Bangor n.d.) has existed in Bangor since 2016. Given the importance of such centres in effecting the “symbolic construction of the public space” (Shohamy and Ghazaleth-Mahajneh 2012, 89), questions have been raised as to what they symbolise – what is meant by “Welsh speaking presence”? Who “owns” the language and is included in Welsh speaking space, and are “breathing spaces” for traditional speakers reconcilable with breathing spaces for new speakers? The concept of the Canolfan has been associated with the learning of Welsh, for example in Gruffudd et als’ report (op. cit). which advocates their establishment “as a means of increasing learners’ contact and integration with the Welsh language in areas where Welsh is not the main language of the community”. James (op. cit.) expresses concern over the invention of a manufactured Welsh identity in the form of the centres, which are viewed as reflecting a corporate Welsh brand, as opposed to the bottom up language policy coming from the “real” Welsh speaking community. It is suggested that “gallai canolfan fod yn niweddiol mewn ardal lle mae dwysedd uchel o siaradwyr Cymraeg a lle y mae eisoes ddigwyddiadau a gweithgareddau Cymraeg niferus” (“a centre can be damaging in an area where there is a high density of Welsh speakers and a number of existing Welsh speaking events and activities”). Whereas the promotion of existing Welsh speaking activities is obviously extremely important, an alternative view may however be taken that it is also important to foster activities which contribute to the construction of new forms of Welsh speaking identity.

At micro, as opposed to macro level, sufficient visual cues were not always available to guarantee that Welsh could be used in informal public interaction. This has been identified as a difficulty which faced traditional Welsh speakers, for example in research by Hodges and Prys (2019); in informal micro interactions like shopping “despite the perception that English was the main language of interaction in shops, it was noted that a number of shop employees could speak Welsh” (p. 216). Wider use of “working Welsh badges” is advocated as a way of providing a visible Welsh speaking “label”. It is noted here that the “Map of Places to Speak Welsh” listed in *Parallel.Cymru* (n.d.), a new bilingual online magazine provided by the National Centre for learning Welsh, though aimed at learners, may be useful in this respect for both traditional and new speakers.

New speakers of Welsh faced additional difficulties to those experienced by traditional speakers, however; whereas local Welsh speaking people often knew who else in the locality spoke Welsh, incomers, who lacked local networks, did not. This difficulty was particularly salient for study participants who had not achieved a close connection with the language community. Prue experienced the Welsh speaking community as being “invisible”. Where visual signs that Welsh was spoken were provided, new speakers were sometimes not sure that they were included in these public expressions of Welsh speaking identity. Prue did walk through her village with a “Dwi’n siarad Cymraeg” badge, but was still addressed in English. Traditional speakers still had apparent difficulty with the conceptual category “new speaker of Welsh”. In such social situations, where not everyone is “known”, there is a need to indicate what kind of interaction is appropriate:- “embodied encounters between people co-present in a given site are still mediated...by some-bodies’ expectation of other-bodies” (Iveson 2007, 33). To make themselves known, new speakers may need badges, or other forms of visual identification, which indicate that the bearer wishes to communicate in Welsh, but that interactions may be slower than usual, and that the interlocutor should be patient.

Welsh speaking interactions were also impeded by the lack of public spaces where people could meet. Many villages now lacked “good places for interaction” (Community Tool Box n.d.) such as the pub, the café, the park, the village green, or even the village shop. Interaction at the level of the community, which (Relph op. cit.,

57) “lies between the scales of the individual and the mass” was lacking. This, again, was particularly important for participants who had not achieved close connections with the language community. Some participants, for example Sandra, only encountered local people when walking her dog. Planning for the language cannot here be separated from planning for vibrant and healthy communities.

In the absence of Welsh speaking public spaces, virtual spaces, in the form of social media, have been viewed as offering an opportunity to develop “breathing spaces” for the language (Delyth Morris et al. 2012). Some participants in the present study experienced virtual communication as also providing a “breathing space” for new speakers; for example Sandra, who found “real” social interaction difficult, discovered that her texts were very well received by her Welsh speaking friends. In the virtual space, embodied clues to her “English” identity, such as accent and hesitant or incorrect use of the language, were not so obvious, especially given the comparative acceptability of informal or technically incorrect linguistic forms on the Internet. As also suggested by Ann Jones (2015), it is conceivable that the Rhithfro, or “cyber-Welsh language heartland” envisaged by Morris et al. (*ibid.*, p. 16) as a way of “providing first languages Welsh speakers with space to use their language” might perhaps include a space for new speakers.

The Civic Sphere

Participation in what has, in this section, been dubbed “the civic sphere”, has been viewed as an important indicator of community belonging (Putman 2000). The term is not specifically mentioned by Spolsky (2012) as a linguistic “domain”, but has been used here in a way roughly equivalent to the social sciences concept of “civil society”, referring to social interactions which contribute to “a civic culture by which we mean the practice of engaging in and commitment to the value of public life” (Day 2006, 3). These have been taken to include interactions in the context of community councils, voluntary organisations, sports clubs and art societies, and societies operating through the medium of Welsh, all of which were mentioned by study participants.

Participation in formal or informal organisations operating through Welsh was seen as an important vehicle for inclusion in the language community, at perhaps a higher level than that of purely informal social interaction, and formal participation, for example

through membership of community councils, was especially highly valued. It was also, in theory, a more accessible form of participation than informal interaction, as there was an assumption that the organisations concerned would publicly advertise their presence. However, de facto language policies created various difficulties for new speakers wishing to take part in such activities.

One difficulty encountered was the bi-partite division on the basis of language to which organisations in Wales have been viewed as subject (Mann 2004). Day (2006, 644) points out that organisations with “higher level” purposes have sometimes been seen as largely “British”, “because the early and complete union of Wales with England meant that civil society in Wales developed in the context of Britishness”. However, the largely unacknowledged parallel existence is also highlighted of “an effective civil society with strong ethnic (Welsh language) and religious (Nonconformist) foundations...including national museum, library and university, and distinctive social organisations for women and youth” (“Merched y Wawr” being a well-known example of a “distinctive social organisation for women”) (ibid.) Mann et al. (2011) concur with this view.

For new speakers of Welsh, this bipartite organisation was seen to persist. Two study participants were members of Community Councils, which were, in Gwynedd and Ynys Môn, seen as formal organisations with a strongly “Welsh” identity. Although participation was regarded as highly desirable, conflict could be experienced between the presence of new speakers on the council, and the council’s rôle as a “breathing space” in which Welsh only was spoken. For example, Fiona faced resentment when her Community Council had to pay for the services of a translator because she and another member did not always understand formal Welsh. Welsh only formal organisations have been urged by the Welsh Government (2014 b) to become more bilingual, for example by producing bilingual websites, which in turn has been viewed as a potential intrusion of the majority language into minority language breathing space. However, new speaker council members did not necessarily require the council to become a fully bilingual space; what they wanted was a primarily Welsh speaking space within which there was space for them. Ways could potentially have been found of enabling them to participate short of translation, for example through “sustainable translanguaging”, namely alternating languages without actually translating (Cenoz

and Gorter 2017), mentoring, targeted instruction in formal Welsh, or an agreement that the Council would use less formal language (“Cymraeg Glir”). Appropriate spaces might thereby be allocated to both traditional and new Welsh speakers.

Voluntary organisations, by contrast, sometimes had a conspicuously “British” identity, which caused difficulty for new speakers who wished to volunteer through the medium of Welsh. Welsh Language Commission sponsored research carried out by Prys et al. (2014) found that voluntary organisations were not always aware of the need to provide a Welsh medium service, and did not always consider how to attract Welsh speaking volunteers, let alone new speaker volunteers. One of the study participants, Prue, had encountered this problem. In addition to considering how to attract Welsh speakers, voluntary organisations perhaps need to address the support needs of new speakers who may wish to offer their services.

Participants who wished to participate in leisure-orientated, rather than formal voluntary activities, sometimes experienced the strongly Welsh identity of organisations operating through Welsh as unintentionally excluding new speakers. Prue had experienced difficulty in finding leisure-orientated Welsh speaking organisations, other than *Merched y Wawr*, in which she could participate. “*Panad a Sgwrs*” sessions where “learners” and “Welsh speakers” could get together tended only to attract “learners”, and social occasions convened only in order to speak Welsh did not make for the formation of meaningful relationships. This finding is echoed by Hodges and Prys (op. cit., 218), where “Welsh learners voiced frustration about the lack of informal opportunities within the community to practice their Welsh language skills beyond activities specifically designed for learners”.

Study findings revealed some possible reasons for this situation. Prue reported that she had heard of the existence of some Welsh speaking organisations, but had experienced difficulty finding out where and when they were meeting. Although some organisations, such as the *Cymdeithas Edward Llwyd* (n.d.), have a website where “coming events” are advertised, this is not always the case, and of course it is necessary to know the name of an organisation before accessing its website. The research by Prys et al. mentioned above found that there was “a tendency for Welsh speaking volunteers to volunteer through informal networks, such as through following

family traditions, friends or with the chapel". This, while not necessarily intending to exclude, may mean that Welsh speaking organisations are known only to those who either already are, or who know, existing members. Collaboration between the Welsh for Adults sector and Welsh speaking organisations might be carried out with a view to "mapping" such information and making it publicly available, and to investigating the needs, such as, perhaps, informal mentoring, of new speakers who do succeed in joining.

Workplace Policies

Given the amount of time spent at work, increasing opportunities for learners to use Welsh in the workplace is clearly an important means of facilitating "speakerhood". The availability of Welsh language services to customers and clients also makes an important contribution to normalising the language. Despite this, Gruffydd (2018, 23) notes that the 1996 Welsh Language Board guidance document (Welsh Language Board 1996), in highlighting the considerable investment in time and money required to produce results, appears less than supportive of workplace Welsh. Welsh Government research (Welsh Government 2014 a) shows a general lack of commitment on the part of many employers. The importance recently accorded to workplace Welsh by "Iaith Fyw Iaith Byw" and again by "Miliwn o Siaradwyr" and "Codi Golygon", has resulted in the publication of a dedicated strategy ("Cynllun Cymraeg Gwaith") for developing workplace Welsh courses (National Centre for Learning Welsh 2017), emphasising individual support for employers, the tailoring of provision to individual workplaces, and the availability of more intensive courses.

The ambivalence noted above may be attributable to the disparity, previously discussed, between "official" and "unofficial" language policies, the existence of which, within the workplace, is evidenced by a number of examples from the present study. The workplace offered new speakers considerable opportunities to use their Welsh, but at the same time, possibly due to the involvement of economic capital, workplace experiences tended to be marked by contestation. Formal language policies which viewed learners as competent to work through the medium of Welsh often contrasted with informal policies which suggested the opposite. This caused a lack of confidence which was not, however, unique to learners – traditional Welsh speakers could also experience themselves, particularly in formal settings like the school or local authority,

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as excluded from an elite able to speak and write formal Welsh. Workplace linguistic boundaries meant that colleagues often had difficulty speaking Welsh with workmates who were perceived as “learners”, even if the “learner” was fluent; official mentoring schemes were sometimes not viewed as helpful, as mentors might also have difficulty crossing the boundary.

This policy gap is reflected in the somewhat ambivalent way new speakers of Welsh in the workplace are viewed by official language policy documents. While the stated *laith Fyw* aim of providing “more opportunities for those *who can speak Welsh* to use the language at work” (p. 37) seems to prioritise traditional speakers while ignoring new speakers, other passages do recognise the need to “Promote the recognition of Welsh as a skill in the workplace and develop opportunities for people to learn Welsh in the workplace through the Welsh for Adults Courses” (p. 39). “*Miliwn o Siaradwyr*” makes explicit reference to the presence of new speakers in the Welsh speaking workplace, though none to their specific needs.

Participant experience of the “formal/informal gap” is also corroborated by the longitudinal evaluation of Welsh in the Workplace provision in North West Wales carried out by Gruffydd (2018), which points out, citing Baldauf (2006) and other authors, that macro level language policies often fail due to insufficient intervention at micro level. Whereas official policies aimed at equipping learners with the kind of Welsh needed in the workplace, “*Gwelwyd patrwm cyffredin o ddiffyg cymhwyso’r dysgu i’r gweithle a oedd yn awgrymu nad oedd gweithleoedd yn disgwyl i’w staff roi’r sgiliau a ddysgwyd ar waith*” (“A common pattern was seen of failing to adapt the teaching for the workplace, which suggested that workplaces did not expect their staff to use their skills in practice”) (p. 295). Unofficial policies, then, entailed no expectation that new speakers would actually use their Welsh within the workplace.

Remedies proposed by the Gruffydd study, reflecting the recommendations of the “*Cynllun Cymraeg Gwaith*”, are tailoring workplace Welsh courses to workplace needs; bringing about greater interaction between learners and fluent speakers; training staff fluent in Welsh to support learners, and ensuring each student is provided with a mentor (p. 305). While total agreement is expressed here with these proposals, the findings of the present study suggest that more specific interventions may be needed

to accommodate new speakers within the language space, for example by creating a shared workplace space within which de facto language policies can be negotiated. This might involve open discussion (“metacommunication”) on workplace language issues, with new and traditional speakers sharing any problems experienced, increasing each other’s awareness of the respective difficulties faced, jointly working out strategies for speaking more Welsh, and deciding on the extent to which code switching is acceptable when either group lacks adequate Welsh vocabulary to express complex ideas. As regards mentoring support, although “sociolinguistic mentors” have been acknowledged as important sources of encouragement (McEwan-Fujita 2010, 54), participant experiences of workplace mentor programmes was not always positive, as traditional speakers sometimes lacked insight into the barriers faced by new speakers. Again, a need for awareness training for mentors is indicated, but in addition, opening up “shared language space” could involve increased use of new speakers themselves, as well as traditional speakers, as workplace mentors.

Conclusion

The analysis above has discussed the detail of how Welsh language policies could be re-thought to include new speakers of Welsh. The need for this is based on the finding that study participants had, in fact, negotiated positions vis-à-vis the language community, but that these positions had not always been recognised and legitimised. This lack of legitimation could be linked to an assumption that an intrinsic link exists between “being Welsh” and being able to speak Welsh; that “Welsh speaker” can only mean “native speaker”; that creating “breathing spaces” for traditional Welsh speakers must imply the exclusion of “non-native-speakers” from the language community; and that “non-native-speakers” have no contribution to make to language revitalisation. Participant experiences show that such perceptions, and the consequent lack of language policy provision for new speakers, contributed, in a self-perpetuating cycle, to the difficulty of negotiating satisfactory speaker positions, and need to be re-thought. In this concluding section, the need for reconceptualization identified in Chapter One will be revisited in the light of the study findings.

As discussed in Chapter One, the “old” structures of national states and communities within which identities were traditionally framed, are currently viewed as having been

largely superseded (Giddens 1990), and identities perceived as constructed by and within social practice. Assumptions of an automatic concordance between language, nation and state thereby break down; the “national language” is merely one which has been legitimated by the State (May 2012, 159). Both individual and collective linguistic identities can therefore shift and change. As stated, again by May (2001, 307), this increased fluidity of identity means that “there is no reason why we cannot re-think nation-states, and the national identities within, in plural and more inclusive ways”. The negotiation of Welsh speaking identities by participants in the study involved establishing a relationship to the language community in many dimensions and at many levels, but being able to say, at the end of the day, “I am a Welsh speaker” did not mean the same as saying “I am Welsh”. Whereas all participants aspired in some way towards being recognised in the first sense, only those of Welsh heritage (and not all of those) thought of themselves as “being Welsh”. Attachment to the language community and contribution to the revitalisation of the language are both seen to be possible without ethnic belonging.

Secondly, the view has been taken here that including new speakers in the language community does not present a threat to the language. A contrary view has sometimes been taken, that the need to create “breathing spaces” for Welsh precludes including “learners” in the language revitalisation agenda, as they represent a threat to the linguistic purity of Welsh. The assumption that they were somehow “illegitimate” worried learners, and, as discussed in the section on Welsh for Adults provision, a strict monolingual ideology was pursued in some Welsh classes. Similarly, O’Rourke (2019, 102) describes new speakers in Galicia as “purposely distancing themselves from language mixing and aligning themselves with monolingual ideologies” through concern for maintaining breathing spaces for Galician. Such strict monolingualism tended to inhibit participants like Tracy, who only felt free to speak once she was able to throw in English words when she could not remember the Welsh. However, the extent to which strict monolingualism needs to be pursued is debateable. Strictures against mixing languages sometimes involve biologically-based assumptions that languages are housed in separate cognitive domains; by contrast, Garcia and Otheguy (2019, 10) suggest that “Educators who enact a translanguaging pedagogy recognise that named languages are important socio-political categorisations; but they also

understand that these named language do not correspond to a psycholinguistic reality of dual linguistic systems”.

Given this, deciding whether to engage in monolingual language practices, or “hybrid” language practices on the other, may primarily involve the weighing up of socio-political power relationships. Participants’ experiences showed that the power balance between English and Welsh had evened out considerably since earlier studies. This is corroborated by recent sociolinguistic research (Deuchar and Davies 2009) which suggests that the recent socio-political climate has favoured the revitalisation of Welsh, and that whereas code-switching is frequently used by young Welsh bilinguals, there is no cause for pessimism about the future of the language. Setting limits to hybridity through “sustainable translanguaging” (Cenoz and Gorter op. cit.), rather than complete separation of the majority and minority languages, may offer a possible way forward in terms of mixing languages while at the same time maintaining breathing spaces for Welsh.

In policy terms, such recognition means extending, rather than changing, existing Welsh Government initiatives. The need to create “breathing spaces” has meant that language revitalisation policies in Wales have prioritised building up Welsh speaking communities “from within”. Language loss has indeed undermined pride in the language (Hodges 2012), and there is indeed a need to address “community fragmentation and individual anomie” (Williams 2000 b, 29). Socio-economic deprivation has led many young Welsh speakers to leave Wales (Hywel Jones 2010); communities do need to be re-built, and economic resources invested. However, recognising all this does not preclude including new speakers of Welsh as capable of contributing to language revitalisation. As discussed above, it is argued here that new speakers of Welsh not only are not a threat to the language, but are able to make a valid contribution to its revitalisation. New speakers of Welsh who participated in the present study often engaged in social interactions, such as bringing up children bilingually, civic participation, and working through the medium of Welsh, which might have been thought to merit a significant space within the language community. There is a case for according these contributions commensurate recognition at both official or unofficial, macro and micro, language policy level.

The hypothetical outcome of the changes outlined above, crucially important in terms of achieving the goal of a million Welsh speakers by 2050, can be summarised by citing Davidson and Piette's (2000) vision of a bilingual Wales, quoted at the end of Chapter One; a Wales where "a bilingual society can become a reality, weaving both languages together through cultural divides and in particular reinventing those symbols, as well as those geographical areas, which were seen and saw themselves, as either "Welsh" or "English", as part of the process of developing a new culture within Wales". It may be that this is beginning to happen, as it appears we have moved beyond the situation reported by Trosset (1986, 171) in the mid-1980s, where no social category, and therefore no name, existed for individuals who were not Welsh but learned the language. A name, "new speakers of Welsh", now exists and is used in the most recent language planning strategy. It is recognised that linguistic categorisations, if viewed as part of the Bourdieusian habitus, may take some time to change, as such change involves constant interaction between micro and macro levels, and macro level constructions and day-to-day social practice may not always align. However, if linguistic contestations are viewed in terms of macro level power struggles between language groups, the levelling out of the power balance between English and Welsh post-Devolution holds out the prospect of a future Wales where "...through recognising the rights of both minority and majority language speakers...the equally authentic claims of both groups...can be met" (Mann 2004, 264).

Evaluation and Future Directions

Finally, it is time to evaluate what the thesis has achieved, and what still remains to be done. The unique contribution of the thesis has been via the use of biographical narrative and Weberian typology to provide a detailed map, combining methods and perspectives from sociology and sociolinguistics, of how individual and collective dimensions interlinked in the process of new speaker identity construction in a particular social context. This grounding in the social context is at once a strength and a limitation. It has provided a multi-dimensional view of social interaction unlikely to be attained using other qualitative methods, but, bearing in mind the linguistic variability of Wales, the findings may not be generalisable beyond the context concerned. They may, however, provide a basis of comparison for future studies in other contexts.

As with all qualitative work, the perspectives reflected are those of the individuals selected as part of a fairly small sample, and although an effort was made to select participants occupying a variety of social locations, as with all samples, other perspectives may exist of which account has not been taken. No participants from the 20 – 29 age group were included in the study, and ideally more participants who eventually gave up learning, and more working class participants, might have been desirable. Although the research reflects the perspectives of participants, the meanings attached to individual experiences have, in keeping with the constructivist underpinning of the study, been subject to interpretation by the researcher. This does raise issues of the extent to which the interpretation represents a valid account of participants' experience. The gap of a year or more between the completion of the interviews and of the typology meant that it has not been possible to ask the original participants for their opinion; however a small focus group composed of individuals who have either learned Welsh or knew others who had might provide an interesting additional perspective and perhaps enable the typology to be refined. This might constitute a small supplementary study.

There is considerable potential for further research in this area, in which there is a dearth of existing studies; further studies might take into account the perspectives of different actors, for example language planners, traditional Welsh speakers, or individuals who have chosen not to learn Welsh. Mixed method studies combining survey and interview or focus group methods might enable larger scale research to be carried out, and comparative studies might contrast the experiences of new speakers in different parts of Wales. Although the inclusion of “experienced speakers” as well as learners in the present study has to some extent allowed the temporal dimension to be considered, longitudinal research following one cohort of participants over time would provide additional insight into how identities develop and evolve. Observation or focus groups might be used to study group experiences of learning Welsh.

Possible avenues of investigation which have become particularly evident in the course of this study concern the impact of Welsh language policy on different dimensions of individuals' lives – in the family, the community, and the workplace. The detailed grounding of this study in the social context has provided a number of insights into this impact, but very few dedicated studies have been carried out, either in

general, or with particular reference to new speakers of Welsh. The growing recognition of new speakers as a linguistic category, together with the strategic prioritisation by the Welsh Government of the family and the workplace, seems to earmark this as an important area for future work.

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Appendix 1: Initial Participant Information and Questionnaire

Profiadau Pobl Sydd yn Dysgu ac yn Siarad Cymraeg fel Ail Iaith yng Ngogledd Cymru ***Experiences of Learning and Speaking Welsh as a Second Language in North Wales.***

Bydd yr ymchwil yma, sydd wedi'i gartrefu ym Mhrifysgol Bangor, yn edrych ar brofiadau siaradwyr ail iaith wrth ddysgu a defnyddio'r Gymraeg yng Ngogledd Cymru, er mwyn darganfod beth sy'n effeithio ar y ffordd y maent yn dysgu ac yn defnyddio'r iaith Gymraeg.

Bydd yr ymchwil yn cynnwys cyfweiliadau, yn ogytal â'r opsiwn ychwanegol o gadw dyddiadur sy'n cofnodi'r ffordd yr ydych yn defnyddio'r iaith Gymraeg o fewn y gymuned ehangach, yn eich bywyd bob dydd. Bydd y cyfweiliadau a'r dyddiaduron yn eich helpu i ddysgu o bosib, drwy daflu goleuni pellach ar y broses ddysgu ei hun.

Os oes gennych ddiddordeb mewn cymryd rhan, yna llenwch y ffurflen a'i rhoi i'r tiwtor, er mwyn i'r ymchwilydd gysylltu â chi gyda rhagor o wybodaeth.

Bydd unrhyw wybodaeth yr ydych yn ei darparu yn aros yn gwbl gyfrinachol.

The above research study, based at Bangor University, is looking at the experiences of second language speakers of learning and using Welsh in North Wales, to identify what affects how they learn and use the Welsh language.

The research will involve interviews, and also the additional option of keeping a diary of how you use the Welsh language in your everyday life within the wider community. The diary and interviews could help you to learn by increasing your insight into how you are learning.

If you think you might be interested, please fill in the form and return it to your tutor, and the researcher will contact you soon with more information about what would be involved. Any information you provide will be completely confidential.

Manylion Personol/Personal Details			
Enw <i>Name</i>			
Teitl <i>Title</i>			
Cyfeiriad e-bost <i>E-mail address</i>			
Rhif ffôn <i>Phone number</i>			
Cyfeiriad Post <i>Postal address</i>	Stryd/Rhif y tŷ <i>Street/House number</i>		
	Tref/Pentref <i>Town/Village</i>		
	Ardal <i>District</i>		
	Côd Post <i>Post Code</i>		
Dyddiad geni <i>Date of birth</i>			
Gender <i>Gender</i>	Benywaith <i>Female</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gwrywaith <i>Male</i>
Ym mha wlad cawsoch chi eich geni? <i>In which country were you born?</i>			
Ym mha wlad cawsoch chi eich magu? <i>In which country did you grow up?</i>			
Cenedl <i>Nationality</i>	Prydeinig <i>British</i>	Albanaidd <i>Scottish</i>	
	Cymreig <i>Welsh</i>	Gwyddelig <i>Irish</i>	
	Seisnig <i>English</i>	Arall (rhowch fanylion) <i>Other (please specify)</i>	
Ethnigrwydd <i>Ethnic Identity</i>	Gwyn <i>White</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cymysg <i>Mixed</i>
	Du <i>Black</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tseiniaidd <i>Chinese</i>
	Asiaidd <i>Asian</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Arall <i>Other</i>
Iaith gyntaf <i>First language</i>			
Ers faint o amser yr ydych chi'n byw yng Nghymru? <i>For how long have you lived in Wales?</i>			

Eich gwaith <i>Your occupation</i>		
Addysg <i>Education</i> (Rhowch y dyddiad ar gyfer pob categori sy'n berthnasol, os gwelwch yn dda) <i>(Please give the date for every category which applies)</i>	Addysg uwchradd <i>Secondary education</i>	
	Addysg bellach <i>Further education</i>	
	Addysg uwch <i>Higher education</i>	
	Cymhwyster proffesiynol <i>Professional qualification</i>	
Statws priodasol <i>Marital Status</i>	Priod neu'n byw gyda phartner <i>Married or living with partner</i>	
	Sengl <i>Single</i>	
	Wedi cael ysgariad/wedi gwahanu <i>Divorced/separated</i>	
	Gŵr/Gwraig (g)weddw <i>Widow(er)</i>	
Faint o blant sydd gennych chi? <i>How many children do you have?</i> (Os nad oes gennych chi blant, yna teipiwch 0) <i>(If you have no children, type 0)</i>		Oedran(nau) eich plant <i>Age(s) of your children</i>
Oes yna (neu oedd yna) unrhyw aelod(au) o'ch teulu'n siarad Cymraeg, fel iaith gyntaf neu ail iaith? Rhowch fanylion os gwelwch yn dda. <i>Do(es) (or did) any member(s) of your family speak Welsh, as a first or second language?</i> <i>Please give details</i>		
Beth ydy enw'r cwrs Cymraeg yr ydych chi'n ei ddilyn ar hyn o bryd? <i>What is the name of the Welsh course you are following at the moment?</i>	Mynediad/ <i>Entry</i>	
	Sylfaen/ <i>Foundation</i>	
	Canolradd/ <i>Intermediate</i>	
	Uwch/ <i>Higher</i>	
	Hyfedredd/ <i>Proficiency</i>	
Ym mha dref/bentref yr ydych chi'n dilyn y cwrs? <i>In which town/village are you following the course?</i>		
Ers pryd ydych chi'n dilyn y cwrs hwn? <i>For how long have you been following this course?</i>		
Ydych chi wedi dilyn cyrsiau Cymraeg eraill yn y gorffennol? Rhowch fanylion os gwelwch yn dda <i>Have you followed other Welsh courses in the past? Please give details.</i>		
Dywedwch, mewn un brawddeg, beth yw eich prif reswm dros ddysgu Cymraeg, <i>Please state, in one sentence, what is your most important reason for learning Welsh</i>		

Appendix 2: Detailed Information Sheet Sent to Interested Participants

Experiences of Learning and Speaking Welsh as a Second Language in North Wales.

You are being invited to take part in the above research study. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

About the research

The National Census of 2011 has shown a fall in the number of Welsh speakers in Wales. There is a view that this is partly due to non-Welsh-speakers moving into Wales. However, more and more people who move to Wales are learning Welsh. Also, many people who were born in Wales do not speak Welsh, and decide to learn.

Very little research has been done on second language Welsh speakers, and their potential to reverse what is seen as a shift from Welsh to English in Wales.

This research study will look at the experiences of second language speakers of learning and using Welsh in North Wales, as part of their overall life experience, including their relationship with first language speakers, to identify what affects how they learn and use the Welsh language.

Why have I been invited to take part?

The research aims to find out about the experiences of all different people – for example, people of different ages, gender, nationality, marital status, stage of learning Welsh, and the researcher would be very interested to hear all about your particular experience.

Do I have to take part?

It is entirely up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time, and without

giving a reason. Deciding not to take part, or to withdraw from the study, will not affect any services you receive as a Welsh learner.

What will happen if I take part?

If you decide to take part, you will be invited to an interview to tell the researcher about your experience of learning and using Welsh as part of your life experience. You will also be invited to a second interview about six months later to say how things have changed. The interviews can be arranged at a time and place convenient for you. In the interviews, it will be entirely up to you what you say; you can take as long as you like, and will not be interrupted while you talk. After the interview, the researcher may ask you some follow-up questions. It is estimated that each interview will take between one and two hours. If you give your consent to the interview being recorded, the researcher will do this, as it helps create an accurate transcript. You will be shown the transcript when completed.

You will also be given the additional option of keeping a “language diary” for a period of six weeks. If you choose this option, you will be able to choose either a form-based diary or a “free-form” diary. If you choose to write a free-form diary, you will be supplied with a notebook for the purpose. You can write your language diary in Welsh or English, or both. A Facebook support group will be available for participants in the diary research, and there will be a “diary party” at the end of the research period where you can discuss your experience of keeping the diary with the researcher and other learners. In your second, follow-up interview, you will be asked to discuss your diary with the researcher.

People attending language courses at Nant Gwrtheyrn may be invited to take part in focus groups, when they will be given the additional option of taking part in the interview and diary studies.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

By taking part in the study, we hope you will gain insight into what happens when you learn and use Welsh, and, as a result, you may learn better and use Welsh more. If you choose the diary option in addition to the interview, the diary will be yours to keep as a record of your Welsh learning experience. In the long run, it is hoped the results of the study will help other second language speakers in the future.

Will what I say in this study be kept confidential?

All the information collected about you as an individual will be kept strictly confidential. Your identity will not be revealed in the completed study. The data gathered during the study will be kept on a secure server, where it will be retained for a maximum of twelve years after the completion of the project.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results of the research will be used in my thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). Articles based on the research may also be published in academic journals, and the research findings may be presented at academic conferences.

Who is organising and funding the research?

I am conducting the research as a post-graduate student in the School of Social Sciences, College of Business, Social Sciences and Law, Bangor University. I am organising the research myself, with the help of my PhD supervisors, and it is being financed partly from my own funds, and partly through teaching work in the School of Social Sciences.

What should I do if I want to take part?

If you decide to take part, please sign the consent form(s) and send it/them, using the pre-paid envelope, to: Eileen Tilley, c/o Dr. Robin Mann, School of Social Sciences, Neuadd Ogwen, Bangor University, College Road, Bangor LL57 2DG.

Contact for Further Information

For further information about the study, you may contact me, Eileen Tilley, at e-mail address e.f.tilley@bangor.ac.uk. If you have any concerns about the way in which the study has been conducted, you should contact the Chair of the College Research Ethics Committee at:- (d.seddon@bangor.ac.uk).

Thank you

Thank you for taking the time to read the information sheet! Eileen Tilley, 1/11/14.

Appendix 3: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of First Eleven Selected Participants

M /F	Level	Where they Live/ Learn	Where came from	National Identity	Reason for Learning	Occupation	Criteria	Age	Welsh Family
F	Mynediad	Trefor/Pwllleli	England	Welsh/ English	Keep language alive and achieve what mother couldn't	Retired teacher	Retirement Identity	57	Mother but not L1
F	Meistroli	Felinheli/Bangor	Venezuala	British	I live in Wales	Admin/project assistant	New family Migration	61	L1 husband
M	Wlpan/ Fndn	Colwyn Bay	Wales	British/ Welsh	Myriad of Reasons	Retired teacher	Retirement Welsh Born	57	Mother L1 but Welsh not spoken In childhood home
F	Fndn	Pwlheli/Sarn	England	British	Communicate with husband's grandchildren and L1 friends	Secretary/self-Employed marine biologist	New family Parenthood	53	L1 husband, husband's grandchildren
M	Pellach	Rachub/Bangor	England	British	Children/converse With L1	Lecturer	Parenthood	34	Children learning
F	Meistroli	Llanfairfechan/ Llandudno	England	British	Living language/ Participate/high proficiency needed	Retired administrator	Retirement Advanced level	66	No
F	Uwch	Cemaes/ Llanfairpwll	UK	UK	Byw yng Nghymru partner yn siarad Cymraeg	Retired	New Family Advanced Level No HE	61	L1 partner/family
M	Fndn	Cemaes	England	Welsh	Something I must do to call myself a Welshman	Retired civil servant	Retirement Identity	69	L1 father, wife (both deceased), 2L adult son
F	Pellach	Porthmadog	Wales	British/ Welsh	Regret didn't learn as a child	Retired tutor	Retired Welsh born	54	Nephews, nieces
F	Pellach	Criccieth	England	British	Understand and communicate in Welsh in everyday life	Writer	New family	37	Partner L1
F	Wlpan 2	Porthmadog/ Criccieth	England	British	I live in Wales/academic Challenge	Translator Spanish/EnglishEnglish	Migration?	57	No

Appendix 4: Alphabetical List of Participants (Pseudonymised) with Brief Descriptions

Number	Name	Age	Country of Origin	Occupation	Residence
1	Alan	34	England	Lecturer	Bethesda Area
<p>Alan originally came to Bangor as a student and stayed. He never considered learning Welsh until he became a parent. He lives in a Welsh speaking area, and is keen to help his children become fluent Welsh speakers. He is currently doing the Uwch. He is glad the area is so strongly Welsh, but sometimes wishes the local school was more “bilingual”, as opposed to “monolingual”.</p>					
2	Alice	54	Wales	Retired Tutor	Pen Llŷn
<p>Alice was born and brought up in Wales, but in the South, so Welsh was not spoken either at home or at school. She left Wales just when the fight to save the language was starting. In retirement, she and her English husband are both learning Welsh. Alice very much wants to learn the language she regrets not learning as a child. She is currently enrolled in the Pellach course. Her family were initially resistant to the idea of her, and particularly, her English husband, learning, but have now “come round” to some extent. Alice and her husband are trying hard to establish local Welsh connections; they are aware of the lack of integration between the Welsh and English speaking communities in the area, and their sympathies very much lie with the Welsh speakers.</p>					
3	Carys	37	United States	Administrator	Caernarfon Area
<p>Carys met her Welsh speaking husband while they were both doing a course at an American university. As he came from a very Welsh family, they decided to move to North Wales, where she put all her energies into learning Welsh in order to communicate with her husband and his family in their first language. Though initially unconvinced of her linguistic abilities, she eventually won the Welsh Learner of the Year competition, and was able to get a job as a teacher in a Welsh medium primary school. Although Welsh is always spoken with her husband’s parents, there are some confusions over what language should be spoken within the nuclear family. Carys is not certain that she will stay in Wales all her life, as she is not sure whether she can pursue her career as she would like in the North Wales area, and in some ways still feels more culturally attuned to the United States than Wales.</p>					

4	Colin	56	England	Retired Police Officer	Pen Llŷn
<p>Colin is Melanie's husband and remembers Welsh cycling holidays from his teens. Retirement to Wales has given him an opportunity to pursue his own projects in a rural environment away from the pressures of work and city life. He is keen to establish local connections and wants to learn Welsh to communicate with local people in their own language, as well as to keep Melanie company, but would be content to talk just about everyday things, as he did as a tourist in France. He is not confident about achieving more as he feels he has little linguistic ability, but is more confident than Melanie in having day-to-day conversations in Welsh. He identifies as having English heritage, but as being Welsh in the sense that he lives in Wales.</p>					
5	David	57	Wales	Retired Teacher	North Wales Coast
<p>David was born along the North Wales coast and had an English speaking father and a Welsh speaking mother, so English was the language of the home. He was transferred from an English to a Welsh medium school, where he was bullied for the standard of his Welsh, and as a result he completely disowned the language. His attitude gradually changed due to the more pro-Welsh orientation of society in general. Having retired from teaching, he is now enrolled for the Wlpan and is learning to communicate with his elderly mother in her first language. Apart from his mother, he has few Welsh speakers he can communicate with, as most community activities where he lives are conducted through English.</p>					
6	Fiona	43	Scotland	Web Administrator	Anglesey
<p>Fiona was born in Orkney, where she found it difficult to fit in because she had English parents. She originally came to North Wales because of her husband's job, and soon realised that to get a job herself, she would have to learn Welsh. She initially found this easy as her first job was in a Welsh speaking environment, but child care and a transfer to a unit which was mainly English speaking made it more difficult. Her husband has never learned, as his work environment has always been English speaking. She now lacks confidence in her ability to help her children with their Welsh medium homework, and has felt frustrated in her efforts to get involved with the Welsh speaking community</p>					
7	Gilly	27	England	n/a	Pen Llŷn
<p>Gilly is Colin and Melanie's daughter, and is staying with her parents while recovering from illness. Prior to coming to Wales, she was living in America. Before arriving in Pen Llŷn, she viewed Wales as part of England, but with mountains, and has revised her opinion since starting to learn Welsh; however she is not sure whether she will continue learning, as she may return to the States to live with her American boyfriend. She is more relaxed than her parents about communicating in a mixture of Welsh and English. She has found rural Wales to be more secure, but less eventful and stimulating, than the cities where she has been used to living. In a way she would prefer living in France rather than Wales, as Wales is a bit too much like England for her liking.</p>					

8	Jane	57	England	Translator	Pen Llŷn
<p>Jane was previously married to a man of Spanish nationality and lived in Catalonia for a number of years. Her two children still live in Spain. She has retired to North Wales with her husband and works as a free-lance translator. She is learning Welsh because she thinks she should do so as part of living in Wales, and is currently enrolled on the Wlpan Stage 2. Her husband has a hearing impairment and is not interested in learning. She is experiencing a degree of cultural conflict between the Welsh and English speaking communities in her village. Jane finds Welsh Government language policy to be less “draconian”, and therefore less effective, than the one she had experienced in Catalonia.</p>					
9	Karen	58	England	Administrator	Anglesey
<p>Karen’s parents retired to North Wales when she was in her teens. Changing to a Welsh medium school had a disruptive effect on her education, and she eventually married a local Welsh speaking man instead of going to university. She never became very fluent in Welsh due to her experiences at school, but later started to learn while doing a university course in order to have the career she had missed while bringing up her children, and developed an interest in English and Welsh cultural identities. She feels she is now “sitting on the fence” identity-wise, with one foot on both sides. Her husband speaks Welsh with his male friends, but never with her. He told the children stories in Welsh when they were very small, but only spoke English to them once they started to grow up.</p>					
10	Kay	51	England	Nurse	Bethesda Area
<p>Kay was born in Liverpool, to a Welsh mother and an English father. Her parents divorced when she was young and she and her mother came to live in North Wales; however she never learned Welsh as her mother was not Welsh speaking, and at that time, only children whose first language was Welsh were educated in Welsh. She decided to learn when she and her husband moved to the Bethesda area in order to make connections with other young mothers in the community. Kay now speaks Welsh at work and is involved in some Welsh speaking community activities, although she and her children do not speak Welsh at home, as her husband has never learned. In her community activities, she sometimes experiences political tensions around the attitudes of first language Welsh speakers towards people who do not speak Welsh.</p>					
11	Kevin	51	England	Bank Employee/Barista	Bethesda Area
<p>Kevin’s birth mother was Nigerian; he was adopted as a baby by English parents in Warrington. He was never quite sure where he fitted in at school. He started to learn Welsh after meeting , in North Wales, the Welsh speaking grandmother of a female friend. She showed him a religious picture of a little black boy meeting Jesus, and told him that he was the boy, and that she had been waiting for him. After that he started learning so that he could speak to his “Welsh grandmother” in her own language. Kevin later became an actor in the North of England, where he continued learning Welsh by attending Welsh speaking chapels; a pastor at one of the chapels encouraged him to compete in the Eisteddfod, where he won a prize for recitation. One day he decided to take the train to Bangor, where for the first time he encountered Welsh as a</p>					

living language. He gradually formed connections there, and now lives in the Bethesda area with his partner. He uses Welsh in both his jobs, at a bank and a café, and has become known in the area as a person from a minority ethnic group who, unexpectedly, speaks Welsh.

12	Malcolm	69	England	Retired Civil Servant	Anglesey
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Malcolm was born in Liverpool of Welsh parentage; since his father was Welsh speaking but his mother was not, he was brought up and educated in English. His first wife was a Welsh speaker but unwilling to speak Welsh with him when he originally tried to learn. Having worked in various locations in England and, latterly, on the North Wales Coast, he has now retired to Anglesey, and is learning Welsh because it is something he feels he must do to call himself a Welshman. He is currently enrolled on the foundation course. His wife is also learning, but is not as motivated as he is.

13	Margot	60	Germany	WFA Tutor	Anglesey
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Margot was born in Germany but her parents moved to England when she was a child. When her parents divorced, she did not want to stay at home, so completed her education at a sixth form college in Cambridge, where she met her future husband. After studying in Manchester and travelling to various locations in Europe, they became interested in environmental issues and acquired a smallholding first in Orkney, then in North Wales. She began learning Welsh when her children started at the local school. She developed an academic interest in the language, and went on to win the Welsh Learner of the Year competition. Welsh eventually came to form the basis for her career; she became a language planning officer and a Welsh for Adults tutor. Margot chose to be interviewed in Welsh; in her community, she communicates mainly in Welsh. Despite this, she and her husband speak English at home, as he has never learned, and some of her children are more committed to the language than others. She sometimes doubts whether, when she speaks, she actually sounds very Welsh.

14	Melanie	57	England	Retired Teacher	Pen Llŷn
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Melanie was born in England, but her mother was Welsh, and was prevented from learning the language when in school. In retirement, she and her husband are converting a seventeenth century Welsh farmhouse. Melanie is learning to help keep the language alive and achieve what her mother could not; she sees herself as having mixed Welsh and English identity. She is doing the Mynediad course with two different providers. She is trying to speak as much Welsh as she can with neighbours and in shops, but finding she lacks confidence. She hopes that one of her daughters, who is currently a student in Cardiff, will become a Welsh speaker.

15	Olivia	67	England	Retired Teacher	Bangor
<p>Olivia grew up on the English border, in a community which was aware of Welsh culture, but also quite disparaging of it. She did her degree and teaching certificate in Bangor, where she met her husband. She initially taught at an English speaking school, but after doing an elementary Welsh course, got a community development job in Caernarfon, although she did not yet speak Welsh very well. She found that many of her clients were more confident speaking Welsh with her, than with first language speakers who spoke “posh Welsh”. Although her husband never learned to speak Welsh, he had formed strong connections with the Welsh speaking community (the “tafia”!) through his position at the University, and over the years, this has helped Olivia to develop an extensive Welsh speaking network. Despite this, she has had sometimes had to struggle to be recognised as a Welsh speaker. Some of her children are more integrated into the Welsh speaking community than others; one of them has moved to England and changed her Welsh name to an English one. Olivia herself is politically committed to keeping resources in North Wales, rather than being “siphoned off” to other parts of the country.</p>					
16	Pete	35	England	Self-Employed	Anglesey
<p>Pete is Margot’s son-in-law. He was born in England and moved to Wales when he married Margot’s daughter. He became aware of the importance of the language in the work context while living in South Wales, but did not himself decide to learn until his son was born. As the school his son went to was not very Welsh, however, it was not until they moved to North Wales that he got serious about learning. When his son became more fluent than he was and made fun of his Welsh, he became discouraged. He also came to feel that Welsh culture was not very “business-friendly”, and has now given up.</p>					
17	Phyllis	70	England	Retired Nurse	Anglesey
<p>Phyllis was born in England but married a Danish man and lived for many years in Denmark, where she learned fluent Danish. She self-identifies as Danish. Having retired to North Wales, Phyllis is learning Welsh because she wants to be involved in the community. However, she is finding this much more difficult than when she learned Danish, chiefly because of lack of integration between the Welsh and English speaking communities in the Anglesey village where she lives. She has just completed the Uwch.</p>					
18	Prue	66	England	Retired Administrator	North Wales Coast
<p>Prue has retired with her husband to the North Wales coast, where they have a cottage which they bought as a holiday home three years ago. She had previously come to Wales on holiday as a child. She is learning Welsh because she would like to participate in local life, but is having difficulty getting involved. Her husband is also learning, but is not as motivated as she is.</p>					

19	Reggie	55	England	Administrator	Caernarfon Area
<p>Reggie came to Wales with his late wife to live the “good life” in a smallholding in the Caernarfon area. He soon realised he would have to learn Welsh in order to compete with his colleagues at work, as the organisation had a very strong language policy and you had to learn Welsh to get one. On finding colleagues, friends and neighbours reluctant to change from English to Welsh when speaking to him, he became even more determined to be recognised as a Welsh speaker, and insisted on speaking Welsh on all occasions. He has no sympathy with work colleagues who have not made the effort to learn, and has been very assertive in explaining his pro-Welsh attitudes to his unenthusiastic English relatives. Some negotiation has been required with his second wife around what language should be spoken at home, as, although she had learned Welsh, she had been accustomed to speaking English with her children, whereas he had always used Welsh with his.</p>					
20	Sandra	35	England	General Practitioner	North Wales Coast
<p>Sandra was born in England, but her grandmother was Welsh speaking, and she remembers being shown the Welsh family bible when she was a child. She chose to train and work as a GP in North Wales because of family connections there. She did not start to learn Welsh immediately due to difficulty in fitting the classes round her work schedule. Sandra would like to be able to communicate with her patients and her Welsh speaking friends in Welsh, but is not sure she will ever be fluent enough to speak with the patients, as she is more comfortable with the written than the spoken language; she is better at texting her friends in Welsh than having conversations with them. She is currently doing the Wlpan course.</p>					
21	Stella	61	England	Retired	Anglesey
<p>Stella’s partner is from Anglesey, which meant their both retiring there. She is learning Welsh because her partner and all his family are Welsh speakers, and is currently doing the Uwch, but is finding it difficult to have conversations with her partner in Welsh. She is finding the Welsh culture quite difficult, and in Welsh classes, has found her classmates to be an impediment to learning.</p>					
22	Steve	50	United States	Lecturer	Caernarfon Area
<p>Steve describes himself as unusual in having come to Wales because of his interest in the Welsh language, rather than, like most people, having learned as a result of coming to Wales. At university in the United States, he developed an interest in Celtic languages and literature, and also in native American languages. He subsequently moved to Wales in order to learn Welsh. He is now employed in a post where he is required to speak and write Welsh to a very high level; Steve chose to be interviewed in Welsh. He is married to a first language Welsh speaker and lives in a very Welsh speaking area, and most of his social life is conducted through Welsh; however he is not sure whether he will stay in Wales indefinitely, as he still has elderly parents in the States.</p>					

23	Tracy	38	Australia	Librarian	Anglesey
<p>Tracy came to North Wales to meet up with a Welsh penfriend whom she subsequently married. For a while she was not sure whether they would stay in Wales, as her elderly parents were still in Australia. The people she met were mostly English speaking, and convinced her she did not need to learn Welsh to live in Wales. It was only when she realised she would need Welsh to get the job she wanted that she decided to learn. She went back to Australia when her father became ill and returned to Wales when he died, but after that she felt rather despondent and lost interest in learning until her contract of employment was changed to “Welsh essential”. She feels she is now gradually being accepted as a Welsh speaker by at least some people at work, and has become much more pro-Welsh in her attitude, but still does not speak a great deal of Welsh at home or in the community. Her husband is resistant to learning because of bad experiences at school.</p>					
24	Ulrike	45	Germany	Translator	Bethesda Area
<p>Ulrike originally came to Wales to improve her English while doing a degree in translation at a German university. When she discovered that Wales had its own language, she decided to specialise in Welsh translation, to which end she moved to Bangor. She says she found learning quite easy because, as Germany is right in the middle of Europe, German people have a very different attitude to other languages than English people, who find learning quite difficult. As a result of having married a Welsh speaker and of living in the Bethesda area, she has been able to integrate effectively into the Welsh speaking community, but has been finding relationships more difficult since her husband died three years ago.</p>					

Appendix 5: Interview Schedule for Biographical Narrative Interviews

PHASE 1

Framing: Before we start, since you're going to tell me all about you, I'll tell you a little bit about myself. I was born in Devon, and I grew up and was educated in Scotland. I've lived and worked in various places, as a teacher and a librarian, and eventually, I came to work as a librarian at Bangor University in 1991. Since I've been living and working here in this area, I've learned Welsh, which is how I came to be interested in this particular research. After I took retirement from the library in 2010, I decided to go back to studying, so I've done a Master's Degree in Social Sciences, and now I'm doing a higher degree, which is how I came to be doing this research project.

I'm aiming, in the research, at finding out about people's experiences of learning Welsh, and of using their Welsh. The experience of learning and speaking Welsh has been a significant one in my life, and I'd be very happy if you could share with me what it has been like for you. The information sheet you got tells you all about the research – do you have any questions about anything in the sheet? OK – now I'm going to ask you just one question, asking you to tell me all about your experience of learning and using Welsh, as part of your life experience.

This is the Question: Because learning Welsh is part of people's lives, it'd be really great if you could tell me the story of your life, in terms of your relationship with the Welsh language, and, by implication, with Wales and the Welsh language community, and the part all this has played in your life; how, in your life, you came to learn Welsh; what it's meant in your life to (perhaps) move to Wales, to learn Welsh and start to use Welsh; the different phases it's gone through, how it's going now, and how you think or hope it might go in the future....and especially, how you've felt about the things you tell me about. Start wherever and like and however you like, and take all the time you need to tell me your story. Don't worry about what order things come out in, and don't worry about whether what you're telling me is negative or positive. Remember, it's all about your

experience, so tell your story however you want; you're telling the story for you, not for me. I'm just going to listen to you; I won't interrupt you as you talk, unless there's anything I don't understand and would like you to clarify. I'll just be taking some notes in case I've got any follow-up questions for you when you've come to the end of your story. Do you have anything you want to ask me now? OK, tell me your Welsh learning story!

Additional Prompts Once Interviewee Has Finished

Thanks very much indeed for sharing your experience with me.

- Is there anything more you would like to add?
- Does anything else come to mind?
- Thinking back about what you've said so far, is there anything else you'd like to say to make sure I completely understand what you've told me?

Now, would you like a break?

PHASE 2

Questions generated by interviewer's notes: different phases in interviewee's experience, incidents/themes of particular significance, evoking strong emotion, or particularly relevant to research agenda.

I noted down some key points as you were telling me your story, and I would like us to go back and talk about these some more.

PHASE 3

Semi-structured questions

Thank you very much, again. Now I've got some follow-up questions I'd like to ask you. Again, take as long as you like to think about them, and also as long as you like to answer them. And remember, it's about your experience – there are no right or wrong answers.

Topics to explore if not mentioned, or to explore further:-

- Can you tell me about how you came to learn Welsh? How did you find out about the classes? (For experienced speakers) What classes you did, and your overall impression of your learning experience.
- How did it feel to move to Welsh-speaking Wales? (This question might come later for current learners)
- Is there anything about learning (and using Welsh) you've particularly enjoyed or found to be particularly rewarding? Can you tell me about any instances of this happening?
- Anything you're found to be particularly stressful or difficult? Again, can you tell me about any times this happened?
- Is there anything or anybody that/who has particularly encouraged you in learning/using Welsh – what?
- Anything/anybody that/who has particularly discouraged you in learning/using Welsh – what?
- (For learners) What “messages” have you had from your tutors about what learning Welsh involves?
- Can you describe what the experience of learning (or, for people who have learned) using Welsh has been like so far? What different stages have there been, and how have you felt about them?
- Tell me about how you use Welsh now – how often do you think it happens, and who does it tend to be with? Can you remember a particular time it's happened recently, and tell me about it?
 - Do you ever use Welsh when you do day-to-things, like shopping? Can you tell me about a time when you did, and what that was like?
 - Do you ever use Welsh at work? Who with? About how often? Can you tell me a bit about how that happens or doesn't happen, and what that's like?

- Do you socialise at all with first language Welsh speakers, and if you do, what language do you all speak? Who with? How often? Can you tell me a bit about a time when what you're talking about happened, and what that was like?
 - Do you ever speak Welsh at home, with your family? Who with, and about how often? Can you tell me a bit about how that does or doesn't happen, and what that's like?
- Can you think of periods in your life where you have spoken/used more/less Welsh? Were there any event(s) in your life at that time which may have moved you in that direction?
- How has your relationship with the Welsh language community changed in the time since you first started learning? What different stages has it gone through? What do you think it's like now? What do you think first language speakers think about you? What about your relationship with non-Welsh-speakers? Has it changed?
- How has your view of yourself and your relationship with the wider world changed? Can you remember any times when you've been aware of this change happening?
- Do you feel you're different when you speak Welsh than when you speak English – or not really?
- If so, can you describe in what way?
- If you speak Welsh most of the time in your daily life, are there times when you'd rather speak English – if so, when does this happen?
- How important has learning Welsh been in your life? What part do you think Welsh might play in your life in the future?
- Why is learning/speaking Welsh important?

- Do you think you'll ever describe yourself as "Welsh?" How about "Welsh speaking"? What do you think about the term "dysgwr/wraig" as applied to people who have learned?
- How would you feel if Wales became an independent country within the UK? (for UK nationals)
- Can I ask if you are a UK citizen? How did it come about that you are/are not? How would you feel about Welsh citizenship, if such a thing existed? (for non-UK-nationals)
- How important is nationality to you?

Closing Question

Is there anything else that you would like to tell me or ask me, perhaps something that you were expecting to talk about that we have not covered?

Thank you. Is it OK for me to come back to you if there's anything else that occurs to me?