

A study of trainee teachers' competence and ability in teaching the target language of Welsh in the primary classroom through a bespoke programme for trainee teachers.

Key Words: Bilingualism, Welsh, Welsh Second Language, PGCE, CLIL approach, Qualitative research,

Introduction and Context

Introduction

This project reflects on the experiences of English medium Primary PGCE students teaching Welsh. Their competence and ability in teaching the content of a non-language based subject through the target language of Welsh is examined with the aim to develop what Baker (2011) recognises a more bilingual classroom.

The aim was to develop a bespoke programme that incorporated personal Welsh language skills with innovative pedagogical approaches appropriate to Welsh speaking students on an English medium pathway of a PGCE course. The programme incorporated recognised good practice in primary schools in Wales (Estyn 2011b, 2012a, 2013, 2014c, 2015, 2016c, 2017) with international approaches to teaching a target language (L2). The case study was based around successful teaching of minority languages (in a similar position to Welsh) and how majority languages, such as English are taught to non-English speaking students (Coyle, Holmes and Marsh, 2009, 2010).

In recent years, Welsh Government (WG) have emphasised the need to raise standards in Welsh in both Welsh and English medium settings (WG, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016). With the WG aim for a million Welsh speakers by 2050, it is vital for trainee teachers to improve their personal levels of Welsh to support the development of pupils' Welsh language skills (WG, 2016). WG (2013b) stress that teaching standards are better when the teacher is more proficient in Welsh where errors in instruction and lesson content are kept to a minimum; the rationale for selecting the target group. Welsh universities have introduced government funded Sabbatical schemes where teachers can be seconded to learn Welsh at an appropriate level thus

showing commitment to improving teachers' Welsh language skills (cysiausabothol.cymru). Estyn (2017) recognises that teacher confidence in teaching Welsh and competence in teachers' personal Welsh language skills contributes to the success of being able to teach Welsh to an appropriate standard. Worryingly, Estyn (2017:40) noted that

In all three teacher education centres in Wales, Welsh language provision for English-medium trainee teachers is underdeveloped. The quality of training is too variable in all three centres.

In light of this statement, it is imperative that the approach in preparing trainee teachers for teaching Welsh needs to be developed in preparation for raising standards of Welsh in English-medium schools. The aim of this project was therefore to explore alternative methods of delivering Welsh sessions in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) institutions in Wales.

Context & Rationale

While Estyn (2017) recognise that pupils make a good start in Welsh oracy skills and have positive attitudes towards the subject, they also highlight the fact that excellent standards are observed in very few schools. Where excellent teaching occurs, Welsh is taught consistently across the curriculum and through informal activities where significant proportions of time are dedicated to the subject and most teachers maintain a coherent approach. A positive vision is usually instigated by a head teacher who recognises the benefits of creating a bilingual ethos and where time and finances are invested appropriately. Alarming, a third of English medium school in Wales have Welsh identified as being an area for improvement which can contribute to the overall judgement of the school (WG, 2014). This is now a part of Estyn's agenda, although it can be argued that this is an unfair indictment on an otherwise well performing school.

Previously, WG (2009a, 2009b) stressed that trainee teachers must have both knowledge and understanding of teaching Welsh Language Development to achieve Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) standards although the level of proficiency needed was not stated. WG has introduced updated Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership (WG, 2017) where explicit reference is made to responsibility for Welsh in

the curriculum. Teachers are expected to be pro-active in developing their own knowledge and understanding of the Welsh language and to demonstrate a personal commitment to continuing their professional development (WG, 2017). Within the pedagogy standard, teachers are expected to recognise and plan for the different approaches, pedagogies and disciplines needed to teach different areas of learning. Promoting Welsh language and culture is now specifically recognised as the responsibility of school leaders who now need to

seek out and use every opportunity to value and promote Welsh culture and extend the use of the Welsh language in formal and informal situation ... (by setting an) example to learners, colleagues and community with a positive commitment to enjoy learning the Welsh language” (WG, 2017, page unspecified).

Estyn (2012b, 2013a) and WG (2012, 2013a, 2014) have consistently recognised that school leaders have the overall responsibility for creating a Welsh ethos within the school. The emphasis on the Welsh language in the new teaching standards is certainly a step forward in raising standards in the development of Welsh Second Language and supports the WG’s commitment towards its target to achieve a million Welsh speakers in Wales by 2050 (WG, 2016) thus almost doubling the number of current Welsh speakers. The number had decreased between the last two published censuses through migration, death and people’s perceptions of what constitutes a Welsh speaker. (WG website).

In the university where the research was conducted, trainees are historically taught Welsh in differentiated ability sets. Castello (2015, p.8) recognises that mature learners are far more self-conscious and anxious about learning an additional language and that there is “tension between the established identity and the developing ego associated with L2” although Harley (1986) argues that an adult’s ability to learn an additional language is dependent on the individual’s determination and environmental factors. Empirical evidence supports evidence that ability sets reduce trainees’ stress and trainees have consistently commented in end of year module evaluations that they feel that setting according to ability has had a positive impact on their progress. Historically, university-based sessions have been delivered through the modelling of good practice with trainees being taught through pedagogical

approaches mirroring approaches usually undertaken in primary schools - predominantly topic-based sessions linked to common/general conversation points - greetings, weather, clothes, food, holidays, etc. (Central South Consortium Website). This approach was appropriate for trainees needing to improve their confidence in using Welsh. Empirical evidence, through end of year module feedback, suggests that students felt that they needed this input before attempting teaching Welsh in school, due to their personal lack in confidence and competence. Swanson (2014) stresses that confidence is necessary for teaching a language with teachers needing training and support throughout their careers.

Literature Review

Introduction

Estyn (2016c) reported that while pupils make good progress in many schools, there are too many schools where this is not the case highlighting disparities in provision. Lewis (2008) contradicted this statement, stating that Wales leads in bilingual educational practices and policies among countries which prioritise a bilingual educational system. This demonstrates that standards could have fallen in the twelve years between the two reports. Gutierrez, Eugenio and Saville (2017, cited in Hopwood et al., 2018) reported schools' failure to equip pupils with the required linguistic skills had a negative impact on pupils' motivation. This recent Europe-wide observation can certainly be linked to the current situation in Wales. Estyn (2013a, 2014c) noted that while standards in teaching and learning in Welsh Language Development are good in the majority of Foundation Phase classes, this diminishes in Key Stage 2 (KS2). As stated previously, Estyn (2014c) explain that provision is usually better when the teacher is a fluent Welsh speaker and that in a few instances, practitioners have inadequate personal Welsh skills to deliver lessons at KS2; and they rely heavily on a narrow range of sentence patterns, consequently failing to extend pupils' Welsh language skills. WG (2013a) reports that insufficient confident and competent Welsh speakers are being produced through the education system, despite having had thirteen years of compulsory Welsh lessons. Hopwood et al. (2018) note that very few pupils leave the English-medium sector with a level of fluency in Welsh raising questions about pedagogic approaches.

Castello (2015) and Richards and Rodgers (2015) observed that Welsh Second Language is usually taught following an Audio-Lingual method where the target language is taught in specific language lessons in short weekly sessions. Lessons are usually teacher-led in contrast with the L1 approach of immersing the pupils in the language (Richards and Rogers, 2011). Cummings (1991, cited in Castello 2015) explains that L2 teaching is often task-based with few contextual links, thus preventing the pupils from making connections with real-life situations through the target language. Donaldson (2015) stresses the need to make authentic links to real-life situation where the learning is linked to previous experiences to encourage learners to develop an interest in learning the language. Baker's (2011, p.246) research supports this concept stating that pupils need to make connections to gain relevant personal understanding rather than having 'chunks of information' delivered in specific language sessions. Although many teachers favour one teaching approach over another, Donaldson (2015) emphasises that teachers should use a varied repertoire of teaching approaches with full consideration of the learning context, suggesting that priority should be given to encourage pupils' interest and passion for the subject (Stronge, 2007).

Content and language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

This pedagogic approach for second language teaching is widely practiced in Europe (Llinares, 2015, cited in del Pilar and Mayo, 2017). This approach incorporates teaching the target language in tandem with the content of another subject area where equal emphasis is placed on both aspects (Coyle, Holmes and King, 2009). Marsh (2008, p.243, cited in Baker, 2011) defines CLIL as 'bind(ing) together diverse dual-forced educational practices with explicit attention given to both content and language' where contextualising learning a language is more natural and successful. Studies into the success of CLIL repeatedly state that students that have been taught through the CLIL method outperform their contemporaries who have been taught by a more traditional approach in both subject content and language skills (Lasagabaster, 2008, cited in del Pilar Garcia Mayo, 2017). Richards and Rogers (2015) identified contextualised learning in language as more natural and successful. Aligning learning to everyday situations is advocated by Donaldson (2015) in the new curriculum and further endorsed by the Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership (WG,

2017) which advocates the use of real-life settings for teaching. Current research indicates that teaching through the target language is the most effective way of developing pupils' bilingualism by increasing confidence and proficiency in the language (Baker, 2011; Richards and Rodgers, 2015).

Numerous researchers have demonstrated success in teaching through the medium of the target language (Coyle et al. (2009); WG (2012); Baker & Wright (2017). However, there is currently limited evidence of this in English-medium primary schools in Wales and trainees are rarely given opportunities to observe or teach in this way. Britzman (1991, cited in Hopper, 1991) explain that many student teachers initially teach in the style that they were taught which may explain the difficulty in applying this new approach to their teaching repertoire. Davison and Williams (2011, cited in Baker, 2011) also state that the CLIL approach enables learning on two platforms (academic and conversational) for a genuine purpose advancing language acquisition. As the learning takes place holistically, CLIL can be linked to Constructivism (Baker, 2011). Richards and Rogers (2015, p.119) highlight that the CLIL approach 'activates the cognitive and interactional processes that are the starting point for second language teaching'.

While the CLIL approach is considered an effective method of teaching an additional language, teachers need to be well trained and have a high level of personal competence in the target language, as well as access to appropriate resources. Hopwood et al. (2018) reports that the CLIL approach has been successfully implemented into *Ikastola* schools in the Basque region of Spain to develop a third language, that is neither the medium of the school or the pupils' first language. Training and resources in the CLIL programme are carefully thought out requiring time, training and financial investment to ensure effective delivery.

Competence

Driscoll, Jones and Macrory (2004, pg 3, cited in Jones and McLachlan (2009) explain that competence can be defined as 'knowledge, skills and ability of the teacher'. Therefore, teacher knowledge is fundamental in language teaching at primary level where a good understanding of L2 primary pedagogy and of additional language

acquisition is needed as well as an understanding of the appropriate resources needed.

Arva and Medgyes (2000, cited in Castello 2015) and Pachler and Field (2001) agree that non-native speakers teaching the target language can negatively affect the quality of delivery and the proficiency of the learners. It could therefore be argued whether L2 should be taught by specialist language teachers. Driscoll and Frost (1999, cited in Jones and McLachlan (2009) suggest that primary aged pupils could either be taught by a 'specialist' language teacher or by their regular teacher. Jones and McLachlan (2009) highlight that a 'specialist' teacher could be – a secondary trained L2 teacher with limited understanding of primary pedagogy or a native-speaker primary teacher without L2 training. However, they acknowledge that teachers with a basic understanding of the L2 language along with a good understanding of primary pedagogy is an effective combination. The teaching of Welsh as L2 has long been established within Wales in all schools since the introduction of the National Curriculum in 1988. However, the level of teacher competence required for L2 effectively remains unclear and fluency alone is inadequate. Baker (2011, p.12) notes that levels of competence can be divided into two categories: 'surface fluency' where a person can hold a simple informal conversation as opposed to 'academically related aspects of language competence' which is unnecessary in the primary school.

It can be concluded that although many foreign language teachers believe that their students expect them to have excellent command of the language, this is not the case and it is believed that non-fluent speakers are often more empathetic of learners (Michigan State University, 2016). These were not the sentiments shared by the participants within this project who believed that being able to converse confidently in Welsh was fundamental.

Methodology

Research Aims

The overall aim of the project was to give participants the opportunity to learn about alternative approaches to teaching primary school Welsh through a variety of experiences to develop confidence and competence in becoming better Welsh teachers. Trainees worked with five partnership schools with varying levels of

expertise in teaching Welsh to collaboratively plan sessions and to teach pupils bilingually, with a high proportion of the instruction being in Welsh. Trainees received input from school and university staff to ensure that they were fully prepared and supported during the experience. The research project aimed to investigate whether the experience allowed the trainees to attempt this teaching and learning methodology during their subsequent PTE.

The Programme Design

The programme was split into four distinct parts. Part 1 introduced current legislation for teaching Welsh with references made to government documentation (Donaldson, 2015; WG, 2008, 2009a, 2013b) emphasising teachers' statutory obligations to teach Welsh from Estyn annual reports (2011b, 2012a, 2013a, 2014c, 2015, 2016, 2017). The trainees had the opportunity to discuss the current situation of teaching Welsh in English-medium schools and to identify good practice and short-comings (Estyn, 2012b). University-based input on different language theories and approaches to the teaching of a target language was delivered. Language methodology expert, Dr Emyr Davies (date unknown, cited in Jones and Morris, 2000:1) states that a 'single perfect method' does not exist and that practitioners should have a repertoire of methods that they vary depending on the context, including the Direct Method, Grammar Method, Immersion, Audio-lingual, Total Physical Response (TPR), Task-based Learning, Incidental Welsh and CLIL.

In part 2, various classes in four partnership schools were visited to observe different approaches to teaching Welsh. Three were English medium schools while one was a bilingual school with separate English and Welsh streams. Almost all pupils within the four schools came from English speaking homes with very few pupils coming from homes where Welsh was spoken (Estyn 2011a, 2014b, 2016a, 2016b). While the overall Estyn judgements varied standards in teaching Welsh were judged as outstanding and the pupils were able to speak both languages across the curriculum, at varying levels (Estyn, 2016a). The trainees observed teachers who were either fluent Welsh speakers or could converse with a degree of fluency (Estyn, 2011, 2017). Trainees observed a range of examples of Welsh across the curriculum as well as

‘Slot ddrilio’¹. Outstanding teachers (Estyn, 2016a) also visited the university to give input on how the excellent practice was achieved.

In part 3 of the programme, the trainees visited four classrooms to observe practice, discuss the classes’ needs before planning and delivering two sessions, in groups. Depending on the wishes of the teachers, the trainees team-taught either cross-curricular lessons with high Welsh input or dedicated language lessons. During the taught sessions, two researchers undertook non-participant observations using an agreed observation schedule to ensure consistency (Walliman, 2011). The Welsh that was used by the trainees was noted on the schedule (Appendix 2). On-line questionnaires were completed at the start and end of this part of the programme.

In part 4, the participants completed their PTE without formal observations by the researches. At the end of the practice, participants completed a third on-line survey and a sample took part in focus group interviews to reflect on the project.

THE TARGET GROUP

A group of seventeen trainees on an English medium (PGCE) course was targeted due to having higher personal Welsh language skills who were identified following the self-assessment questionnaire completed by all trainees at the start of the academic year (Appendix 10). Some had had been taught through the Welsh medium pathway while others had studied Welsh second language at A level. Although the range of abilities was vast within the group, all trainees could converse, read and write in Welsh, albeit with differing levels of confidence and accuracy. The aim of the research was to write a new programme to address the specific needs of this group.

Research Methods

The research was a mixed-model research design using lesson observations, questionnaires and focus group interviews. All data provided was of a qualitative format.

¹ ‘Slot ddrilio’ is a short daily teaching technique used in schools to practice and consolidate new language. This is usually an oracy-based session. (Baker, 2011)

Questionnaires

All three questionnaires were created using an online commercial software package to address time constraints and the lack of opportunity to spend time with the participants to carry out the questionnaire. Brown (2001, p.6, cited in Dornyei, 2002) defines questionnaires as “any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers”. All data collected from the questionnaires were qualitative. While all questions were open, participants did not provide the lengthy responses expected by the researcher. In the final questionnaire, the researcher added the words ‘no more than 100 words’ to encourage lengthier answers but this was not successful and only two participants responded. Questionnaires were chosen as the researcher believed that the participants would be keen to share their thoughts on the programme at the key points in a confidential and safe manner. This was not the case when the results were analysed. Dornyei (2002) realises that this is often the case but stresses that the use of questionnaires in research is time effective although the desired information was not gleaned. In future, the researcher would investigate the use of a Likert-style questionnaire or a multiple choice style questionnaire which would be less time consuming to complete and would then give quantitative data that would support the data gleaned from the interviews rather than repeating the same type of comments.

Non-Participant Lesson Observations

The lesson observations were carried out by two researchers in two KS2 classes in each of two schools (School A and School B). Each pair of lessons followed on from each other and so continued with similar themes. Two pairs of lessons were cross-curricular with a focus on language while the remaining two pairs of lessons concentrated fully on language development. Through observation, the researchers could note the Welsh language used, how it was used and whether it was used consistently throughout the lesson by all participants. The participants visited their respective classes to observe the class teacher delivering a Welsh session in a style in which the pupils were accustomed with the opportunity to discuss the teacher’s requirements. The two observers were PGCE tutors who were accustomed to carrying out such work. A template (Appendix 2) was created to ensure consistency and validity

in the collection of data. The participants worked in groups of 4 or 5 and delivered to classes of approximately 30 pupils. Each group of participants included fluent speakers and learners thus allowing participants to support each other.

Focus Group Interviews

Focus group interview were carried out towards the end of PTE to achieve a deeper insight into whether participating in the project had impacted on the their approach to teaching Welsh on PTE. The interviews also gave a deeper insight into the participants' views of the project, whether they had benefited from the experience, thus allowing insight into the participants' perspectives (Kvale, 1996, cited in Dilshad, 2013). Permission was sought for the interview to be audio recorded to obtain an uninterrupted record of what was said. Three separate focus group interviews were carried out with a total of 8 participants overall. Having three participants in the group is smaller than recommended (Dilshad, 2013; Vaughn, Shumm, and Sinagub, 1996) but the low number allowed the participants to share their views in a safe, relaxed environment around a circular table (Kruegar, 2002). The participants were selected based on the location of their schools due to time constraints. This could have been recognised as being biased but a selection of Welsh speakers and learners made up the sample. Set questions were written (Appendix 11) but these were adapted slightly in line with comments made by the participants.

Ethical Issues

Both researchers involved have a good working knowledge current ethical practices and procedures (BERA, 2011, 2018; UWTSD, 2017). There were therefore minimal risks to the trainees, the researchers or the university. Prior to starting the project, trainees received both a written and verbal explanation of the content of the pilot scheme (Appendix 15). The role of the researcher and the participant was explained clearly and trainees had the opportunity to ask questions. Trainees were given the opportunity to either leave the group and join another teaching group or remain in the group and not be involved in the project. Participants were told that they could leave the research project at any time and that they would not be regarded unfavourably and their grades on the PGCE course would not be affected by their withdrawal (BERA, 2018).

As only a small sample were needed to participate in the focus group interviews, participants could opt out of this part of the project. Participants that volunteered for the interviews were then chosen due to location rather than a stratified group. Participants could also withdraw at any point during the interview if they felt the experience was uncomfortable or distressing. Again, this would have no impact on their progress or qualification. Although the trainees would be working with children at the schools, the children would not form part of the research project.

Not at any point have the university, the schools, the researchers, the trainees or the pupils been named during the writing of the case study. The questionnaires were completed anonymously as they were completed on-line. Notes taken during the lesson observation refer to schools and observers by a letter and trainees by a number. All trainees are referred to as female. Trainees and schools are not identifiable from the notes or Estyn reports. Due to the nature of the lesson observations and the focus group interviews, the trainees were known to the researchers but reference to their identity has not been made in the written report. Unnecessary personal data of participants was not collected (GDPR, 2018).

Analysis of Findings

Focus Group Interviews

At the end of the project, three focus group interviews (referred to as 'interview' from here on) were carried out with a total of 8 participants. All participants interviewed spoke positively of what they had learnt through the programme. They were all appreciative for the opportunities that the project provided and had 'enjoyed' the experience. They realised the value of observation time-served teachers who had been recognised for their strength in teaching Welsh (Estyn 2011a, 2014a, 2014b, 2016a, 2016b). Swanson (2014, p.37) supports this, explaining that 'master teachers are vital to constructing the foundations of a strong sense of efficacy' and that novice teachers learn best from 'veterans modelling best practice'. Although some had found the delivering of the lessons in groups challenging, they appreciated that it was a 'beneficial' experience and that they had learnt from the class teachers and from each other. Responses from questionnaires (Appendix 3, 4, 5) supported this with participants agreeing that 'implementing Welsh through song', 'slot drillio', 'incidental

Welsh' and a large selection of interactive games and activities to make 'Welsh lessons fun'.

The two fluent Welsh speakers explained that they had to be aware of and revise the correct second language patterns to ensure consistency. The resource packs provided (Appendix 14) helped them to focus on the appropriate sentence patterns. One fluent speakers expressed concern on knowing how much Welsh to use in class while in contrast, the other fluent speaker was much more confident to use a lot of Welsh. This could be due to personal self-confidence levels of the individuals. The more confident individual had previously worked as a teaching assistant in an English class in a bilingual school where Welsh had had a high status and this previous experience had impacted on her confident use of Welsh. The participant spoke positively of what they had observed during the school visits which gave them the confidence to incorporate more innovative and exciting activities and ideas into their current practice. The Welsh learners explained that having the opportunity to speak Welsh openly in university-based lessons had developed their confidence during the year due to the nature and variety of the sessions. Therefore, participants with differing language backgrounds had similar concerns regarding the appropriateness of classroom-based Welsh. All found that they had to be very aware of the sentences structures needed and that specific patterns had to be followed to ensure consistency and to avoid confusing the pupils. The language resource pack provided assisted in ensuring that the correct pattern was followed (Appendix 14).

All participants stated that they had implemented Welsh into PTE2, delivering specific Welsh lessons and using incidental Welsh². It is an expectation that all PGCE students incorporate incidental Welsh and this is reported on by tutors and mentors in formative and summative reports. All had varying success stories. Some had used the 'Promoting Welsh Planning Sheet' (Appendix 13) to support their planning. No participants had had the confidence or opportunity to teach through the CLIL approach although many had used a great deal of Welsh during delivery of Welsh language

² 'Incidental Welsh' is language used by the teacher 'incidentally' throughout the day for greetings, praise, commands, instructions, etc. This allows pupils to hear the target language consistently and attach language to meaning. It is important to also encourage the pupils to incidentally use the target language

lessons. During the interviews, two participants who had worked closely together, explained that the amount of Welsh they used in class correlated with the amount of Welsh used by their class teacher. While one fluent speaker used a great deal of Welsh during delivery through explanations, commands and praise, she had not had the opportunity to teach another subject through the medium of Welsh as suggested by the CLIL approach. All participants explained that it was the lack of competence in using Welsh across other subjects that prevented them from teaching this approach and the fear of making mistakes during delivery. Also, participants lacked the confidence to teach through this approach as it had not been observed in their PTE school.

Lesson Planning and Lesson Observations

For one observed lesson, Participant 1 (P1), a fluent Welsh speaker, had been instrumental in leading the group during the university-based planning activity. All participants played an active role within each part of the lesson as specific roles had been discussed at the planning stage. Participants encouraged pupils to respond with appropriate actions when a verb was called. Pupils were familiar with the vocabulary so a *Total Physical Response* method was not used (Richards and Rodgers, 2015). The pace was fast and students linked verbs to an appropriate action, e.g. neidio (jump), nofio (swim), rhedeg (walk). Pupils were then split randomly into 4 groups to work with one participant at a time through a carousel of activities that were accessed by all pupils by the end of each session. Each participant remained with their activity while the pupils moved through the activities. This allowed the participants to ensure that they were confident in the necessary Welsh questioning and vocabulary for their activity where specific patterns and vocabulary were encouraged (Eison, 1990).

Participants used appropriate Welsh (Appendix 14) throughout the observed lessons, using the planned language patterns and vocabulary accurately with correct pronunciation. Welsh was also correctly used for praise and commands (Appendix 14). As the participants had had the opportunity to discuss the pupils previous learning (WG, 2009b) with the class teacher, they were able to consolidate previous learning while also introducing new vocabulary eg 'Un cam yn ol' (one step back), 'Symud ymlaen un waith eto' (move on one more time) (Appendix 6). Although the vocabulary

was new, pupils could understand the commands by using deduction skills. Pupils were encouraged to try and explain themselves in Welsh rather than English with the prompt 'Yn Gymraeg?' (In Welsh?) (Appendix 6). As a fluent Welsh speaker, P1 took a more dominant role within the lesson, supporting when she could see that others lacked knowledge or confidence. Three Participants (P1, P3, P4) of the four participants generally displayed more general confidence in the lesson delivery and also used more Welsh. P2 explained in the later interview that although she felt uncomfortable in the situation at first, she knew that being in that situation developed her confidence in using Welsh stating that she was thankful of the support given by P1, which then gave her the confidence to 'have a go'. P2 was not actively involved in the second observed lesson due to the high level of Welsh needed explaining in the interview that she did not have the 'Welsh knowledge to deliver the task'. When using Welsh terms, P2 tended to translate the Welsh terms that she used eg 'mewn grwpiau ... in groups'. Translation of familiar vocabulary or Welsh words that are similar to the English equivalent was not necessary but the possible explanation of this was due to lack of self- confidence.

P5, P6, P7, P8 and P9 planned and delivered two classroom-based Welsh language lessons. The lesson was collectively planned and resources were created to a high standard, using sentence patterns in line with ERW recommendations for year 6 pupils (Appendix 12). The participants were a mix of both fluent Welsh speakers (P5, P8) and Welsh learners (P6, P7, P9). The lesson started with 'slot ddrilio' to consolidate and introduce the appropriate sentence structures (Appendix 7). P8 took the lead and broke down the sentences when needed which helped the pupils to make links with previous work. Participants modelled question and answer patterns and explained expectations clearly. Pupils were used to accessing different resources to support their writing. P8 and P9 were especially strong in leading the learning. Both were generally effective practitioners with a good level of Welsh (Appendix 14). This combination allowed them to deliver the lesson with confidence. Although P9 made some grammatical errors, this did not impact on the learning. Each participant sat with one group of pupils who had been grouped according to ability. Less able pupils were in smaller groups and could therefore benefit from additional support. Whilst the less confident (P5, P6, P7) stayed with their groups, P8 and P9 circulated the class giving support and encouragement to all pupils. Participants with more self-confidence and

a higher level of Welsh interacted with the whole class as opposed to remaining within the security of their own group (Appendix 6 & 7). Had these participants had more opportunity to teach in this way then their confidence may have grown.

P10, P11, P12 and P13 delivered Welsh language lessons in School B. They used two language games that they had observed during a university-based input session to 'warm up' the pupils along with a few minutes of 'slot ddrilio'. Swanson (2014, p.37) supports the strategy of observing experienced teachers to develop ideas to add to their 'tool-box'. P12 took the lead within the delivery of the lesson, moving confidently around the classroom, responding well to pupils' needs and encouraging the pupils to use Welsh (Appendix 8). Two participants were less confident to stand at the front of the class while P13 confidently led the 'slot ddrilio'. All participants praised pupils in Welsh, using incidental Welsh and subject-based Welsh consistently in the lessons (Appendix 8). In this instance, the fluent Welsh speaker did not take a lead in the lesson delivery due to lack of personal self-confidence (Appendix 10). This is in contrast to the previous two observed sessions noted above.

P14, P15, P16 and P17 adapted a published PowerPoint as a starting point for their observed lessons. Some participants praised pupils in Welsh but this was not consistent throughout the lesson and 'opportunities were missed' (Appendix 9). P17, a Welsh speaker, introduced the lesson mostly in Welsh with support from another 'more energetic' individual. Overall, the level of Welsh used by each participant was 'fairly equal' (Appendix 9) although all had different backgrounds in Welsh, so previous knowledge of Welsh did not have an impact on the delivery of lessons by this group.

Overall, all participants had taken an active role in the delivery of all sessions. The level of participation had varied greatly dependent on individual's personal attributes. While the participants highlighted in the interviews that they felt their proficiency in Welsh was the most significant factor, notes taken by the researchers indicated that self-confidence was more significant. As most English Language Teaching is taught internationally by non-native speakers, parallels can be drawn between this and the research in discussion. Empirical research highlights that English language teachers in many countries recognise that their personal level of English is a significant hurdle when delivering lessons. Berry (1990, cited in Gu and Papageorgiou, 2016)

discovered that English teachers in Poland highlighted that language improvement is more necessary than methodology training while research in Venezuela (Chacon, 2005, cited in Gu and Papageorgiou, 2016) and Austria (Saidlhofer, 1999, cited in Gu and Papageorgiou, 2016) also supported this theory.

Questionnaires

Through questionnaires (Appendix 3,4,5), participants highlighted that their personal confidence in using Welsh as well as their competence in teaching Welsh with an innovative approach were possible barriers in delivering Welsh lessons in line with the international research that had been discussed in sessions. Comments on questionnaires supported comments made during interviews that participants had not had the confidence to attempt teaching with a CLIL approach. Comments during the interviews explained that this had been due to the lack of the teaching methods being observed in their PTE school. Due to the lack of details included in the questionnaires, little additional information was gained from this aspect that had not been gained from the lesson observations or interviews. In subsequent research questionnaires, the researcher would aim to collect more quantitative data through providing more multiple choice questions and answers or a Likert-scale style questionnaire where the participants could choose the most suitable response which would 'measure the extent to which a person agrees or disagrees with a question' (Schagen and Elliott, 2004:124)

Conclusion

The purpose of this research project was to ascertain the success of a new programme in teaching Welsh to Welsh speaking students on a PGCE course. Through observations, questionnaires and interviews, the researcher was able to critically reflect on the information gleaned to improve future provision.

The students that took part in this study could be described as motivated students. Lightbown and Spada (2017, pg. 88) define motivated students as 'usually those who participate actively in class, express interest in the subject matter, and study a great deal'. They were keen to develop their pedagogical skills in all aspects of teaching as well as being good language teachers (Dörnyei, 1998). They actively participated in

all sessions and reported enthusiasm for all aspects of the programme during the interviews.

As a novice researcher, but seasoned practitioner it has been enlightening to reflect on the different perspectives – autobiographically, through the eyes of the participants, through discussion with colleagues and through interaction with literature (Brookfield, 1995, cited in Trevitt, 2007). Through involvement in a university-based research group interested in the development of the Welsh language at all levels, the researcher will continue to develop research within this field.

The lesson observations clearly gave the researcher insight into what the participants could achieve and to identify gaps within their knowledge. It was evident that practitioners with greater fluency comfortably displayed a higher level of leadership within sessions and were less self-conscious delivering in front of their peers. This finding though, cannot be extrapolated to all participants as non-fluent self-confident trainees were prepared to 'have a go' in all aspects of delivery.

The on-line questionnaires gave minimal insight into participants' attitudes and impressions of the programme at different points but responses were often short, obvious and lacked deep reflection. A possible explanation for this could be the lack of time due to the intensity of the PGCE course at the timing of the project. Multiple-choice questions would have been more appropriate as the interviews provided more in-depth explanations.

The Focus Group Interviews gave far more of an insight into the participants' feelings towards the programme and the project. It was mostly through this aspect of collecting data that the researcher could make recommendations for delivering this programme in the future.

Recommendations

Through consultation with colleagues involved in the project, discussion with the participants and through self-reflection, the following recommendations were compiled to move the programme forward.

- To continue with the main aspects of the programme – research into effective teaching of MFL and Welsh in English-medium schools in Wales and overseas, observing good practice, planning and delivering Welsh lessons in mixed ability groups
- To source schools who follow a CLIL approach in teaching a subject area and Welsh concurrently.
- To encourage participants to engage with research in the field
- To continue to gauge trainee's attitudes and views of the programme as well as progress through classroom observations and Focus Group Interviews

Through writing this report, the researcher realised that more research is needed in:

- Methods in keeping both interviewer and interviewee focussed to ensure that the desired information is obtained during Focus Group Interviews
- To design multiple choice questionnaires as a more effective process of collecting qualitative data

While this project was a pilot study, the intention is to deliver the programme in a subsequent academic year to a PGCE group with a similar demographic. Implementation of the recommendations noted above should impact future delivery of the programme.

REFERENCES

BERA (2011) Ethical Guidelines for Educational research. London: BERA

BERA (2018) Ethical Guidelines for Educational research. London: BERA

Baker, C. (2011) *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*. 6th Edition. Bristol: Multilingual Matters

Castello, D. (2015) *First Language Acquisition and Classroom Language Learning: Similarities and Differences*. Available at: <https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-artslaw/cels/essays/secondlanguage/First-Language-Acquisition-and-Classroom-Language-Learning-Similarities-and-Differences.pdf>. [Accessed on 21st June 2018]

Cook, V. (2008) *Second Language Learning and Language Teaching*. London: Hodder Education

Coyle, D., Holmes. B. & King, L. (2009) *Towards an integrated curriculum: CLIL national statement and guidelines*. London: The Languages Company.

Coyle, D., Holmes. B. & King, L. (2010) *CLIL: Content and Language Integrated Learning*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge

Del Pilar Garcia Mayo, M. (2017) *Learning Foreign Languages in Primary School*. Bristol. Multilingual Matters

Dilshad, R.M. (2013) Focus Group Interview as a Tool for Qualitative Research: An Analysis. Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences (PJSS) Vol. 33, No. 1 (2013), pp. 191-198 Available at: <https://www.bzu.edu.pk/PJSS/Vol33No12013/PJSS-Vol33-No1-16.pdf> [Accessed on 2nd July 2018]

Dörnyei, Z. (1998) 'Motivation in second and foreign language learning', *Language Teaching*, Volume 31, Issue 03, July, pp 117-135. [Online] Available at: http://scholar.google.co.uk/scholar?q=dornyei+motivation+in+second+and+foreign+language+learning&btnG=&hl=en&as_sdt=0%2C5&as_vis=1 [Accessed on 17th July 2018]

Dörnyei, Z. (2002) *Questionnaires in Second Language Research: Construction, Administration, and Processing*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers. Available at: <http://www.tesl-ej.org/wordpress/issues/volume6/ej23/ej23r6/?wsc=> [Accessed on 3rd July. 2018]

Donaldson, G. (2015) *Successful Futures*. Cardiff: Crown

Eiston, J. (1990) Confidence in the Classroom: Ten Maxims for New Teachers in *College Teaching*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (Winter, 1990), pp. 21-25. Taylor & Francis Ltd. Oxon. Available at: <https://www.uwo.ca/tsc/resources/pdf/Confidence%20in%20the%20Classroom%20College%20Teaching%20Article.pdf> [Accessed on 19th July 2018]

Estyn (2011a) *Inspection report on [REDACTED] Primary School 2011*. Cardiff: Estyn. Available at: [https://www.estyn.gov.wales/provider/\[REDACTED\]-primary-school](https://www.estyn.gov.wales/provider/[REDACTED]-primary-school) [Accessed 16th June 2018]

Estyn (2011b) *The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales 2010-2011*. Cardiff: Estyn Available at: <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/annual-report/annual-report-2010-2011> [Accessed on 19th June 2018]

Estyn (2012a) *The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales 2011-2012*. Cardiff: Estyn Available at: <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/annual-report/annual-report-2011-2012> [Accessed on 19th June 2018]

Estyn (2012b) *Welsh Second Language Comes First*. Cardiff: Estyn. Available at: <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/effective-practice/welsh-second-language-comes-first> [accessed on 19th June 2018]

Estyn (2013a) *The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales 2012-2013*. Cardiff: Estyn Available at: <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/document/annual-report-her-majestys-chief-inspector-education-and-training-wales-2012-2013> [Accessed on 3rd July 2018]

Estyn (2013b) *Welsh language Development in the Foundation Phase*. Cardiff: Crown Available at: <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/thematic-reports/welsh-language-development-foundation-phase-january-2013> [Accessed on 16th June 2018]

Estyn (2014a) *Inspection report on [REDACTED] Primary 2014*. Cardiff: Estyn. Available at: [https://www.estyn.gov.wales/provider/g\[REDACTED\]-primary](https://www.estyn.gov.wales/provider/g[REDACTED]-primary) [Accessed 16th June 2018]

Estyn (2014b) *Inspection report on [REDACTED] Primary School 2014*. Cardiff: Estyn. Available at: <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/provider/gorseinon-primary-school> [Accessed 16th June 2018]

Estyn (2016a) *Inspection report [REDACTED] Primary School 2016*. Cardiff: Estyn. Available at: <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/provider/penllergaer-primary-school> [Accessed 16th June 2018]

Estyn (2014c) *The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales 2013-2014*. Cardiff: Estyn Available at: [https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/default/files/documents/The Annual Report of Her Majestys Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales 2013-2014.pdf](https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/default/files/documents/The%20Annual%20Report%20of%20Her%20Majestys%20Chief%20Inspector%20of%20Education%20and%20Training%20in%20Wales%202013-2014.pdf) [Accessed on 3rd July 2018]

Estyn (2015) *The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales 2014-2015*. Cardiff: Estyn Available at: [https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/default/files/documents/ESTYN Annual%20Report%202016%20FINAL ENGLISH Accessible WEB.pdf](https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/default/files/documents/ESTYN%20Annual%20Report%202016%20FINAL%20ENGLISH%20Accessible%20WEB.pdf) [Accessed on 3rd July 2018]

Estyn (2016b) *Inspection report [REDACTED] 2017*. Cardiff: Estyn. Available at: <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/provider/ysgol-yr-hendy> [Accessed 16th June 2018]

Estyn (2016c) *The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales 2015-2016*. Cardiff: Estyn Available at: <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/document/annual-report-2015-2016> [Accessed on 3rd July 2018]

Estyn (2017) *The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales 2016-2017*. Cardiff: Estyn Available at: <https://www.estyn.gov.wales/document/annual-report-2016-2017> [Accessed on 16th June 2018]

Gu, L. and Papageorgiou, S. (2016) Exploring the Relationship Among Teacher Confidence, Learning and Test Performance Within the English-for-Teaching Course. Available at: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1124771.pdf> [Accessed on 2nd August 2018]

Harley, B (1986) *Age in Second Language Acquisition*. Multilingual Matters. Clevedon, England.

Hopper, T (1991) *PE teachers teach the way they were taught. Asset or handicap?* Publisher unknown. Available at: <https://web.uvic.ca/~thopper/Cupr/Archived/waytaught.htm> [Accessed on 22nd July 2018]

Hopwood, M., Meek, E., Lloyd, L. and Ebbsworth, M. (2018) *An Overview of the assessment of language proficiency in a sample of bilingual jurisdictions*. Publisher unknown

Jones, C. and Morris, S. (2000) *Cyfoethogi'r Cyfathrebu*. Cardiff: Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru

Jones, J. and McLachlan, A (2009) *Primary Languages in Practice*. Open University Press. Maidenhead.

Krueger, R.A. (2002) *Designing and Conducting Focus Group Interviews*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Publisher unknown

Lewis, W. G. (2008) *Current Challenges in Bilingual Education in Wales*. AILA Review. Available at <http://www.jbe-platform.com/content/journals/10.1075/aila.21.06lew> [Accessed on 16th June 2018]

Lightbown, P. and Spada, N. (2017) *How Languages are Learnt*.

Mohan, B. (1986) *Language and content*. Reading MA: Addison Wesley.

Michigan State University (2016) *Foreign language teachers facing a confidence conundrum*. Available at: <https://msutoday.msu.edu/news/2016/foreign-language-teachers-facing-a-confidence-conundrum/> [Accessed on 2nd August 2018]

Pachler, N. and Field, K. (2001) *Learning to Teach Modern Foreign languages in the Secondary School: A companion to School Experience*. London. RoutledgeFalmer

Powys (date unknown) *Can I work for Powys if I don't speak Welsh?* Available at: <http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/employment-services/search-apply-for-jobs/welsh-language/> [Accessed on 17th July 2018]

Richards, J.C. and Rodgers, T.S. (2015) *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. Third Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Schagen, I. and Elliott, K. (2004) *But what does it mean?* Slough: NFER

Stronge, J. (2007) *Qualities of Effective Teachers*. USA: ASCD Publications

Swanson, P. (2014) *Confidence is essential for language teaching*. Contact, 40(3), 34-39. Available at: https://scholarworks.gsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1008&context=mcl_facpub [Accessed on 2nd August 2018]

Trevitt, C. (2007) *What is Critically Reflective Teaching?* Oxford: Publisher unknown. Available at:

<https://www.learning.ox.ac.uk/media/global/wwwadminoxacuk/localsites/oxfordlearninginstitute/documents/supportresources/lecturersteachingstaff/resources/resources/CriticallyReflectiveTeaching.pdf> [Accessed on 3rd July 2018]

UWTSD (2017) *Research, Ethics and Integrity Code of Professional Conduct and Practice*. UWTSD. Available at: <https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/media/uwtsd-website/content-assets/documents/research/research-ethics-integrity-code-practice.pdf> [Accessed on 18th July 2018]

Vaughn, S., Shumm, J.S. and Sinagub, J. (1996) *Focus Group Interviews in Education and Psychology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Available at: <https://books.google.co.uk/books?hl=en&lr=&id=5485DQAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PP1&dq=focus+group+interviews&ots=acxoA6HXVV&sig=D68AljIMs00V9MeD5Bfv73b9Cp0#v=onepage&q=focus%20group%20interviews&f=false> [Accessed on 3rd July 2018]

Walliman, N. (2011) *Research Methods: The Basics*. London. RoutledgeFalmer

Welsh Government (2008) *Welsh Language Development*. Cardiff: Crown Available at: <http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/141111-welsh-language-development-en.pdf> [Accessed on: 19th June 2018]

Welsh Government (2009a) *Becoming a Qualified Teacher: Handbook of Guidance*. Crown. Cardiff Available at: <https://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/090915becomingateacheren.pdf> [Accessed on 19th June 2018]

Welsh Government (2009a) *The Qualified Teacher Status Standards Wales 2009 (2009 No.25)*. Cardiff: Crown Available at: <http://gov.wales/legislation/subordinate/nonsi/educationwales/2009/3220099/?lang=en> [Accessed on: 19th June 2018]

Welsh Government (2009b) *Welsh Second language: Guidance for Key Stages 2 and 3*. Cardiff: Crown Available at: <http://learning.gov.wales/docs/learningwales/publications/111026welshsecondlang-en-v2.pdf> [Accessed on: 19th June 2018]

Welsh Government (2012) *A living language: a language for living – Welsh Language Strategy 2012–17*. Cardiff: Welsh Government. Available at: http://www.estynllaw.org/uploads/s_a_living_language.pdf [Accessed on 19th July 2018]

Welsh Government (2013a) *One language for all: Review of Welsh second language at Key Stages 3 and 4 – Report and recommendations*. Cardiff: Welsh Government. Available at: <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/20135/2/130926-review-of-welsh-second-language.pdf> [Accessed on 19th June 2018]

Welsh Government (2013b) *Welsh Language Development in the Foundation Phase*. Cardiff: Welsh Government. Available at: <https://www.estyn.llyw.cymru/sites/default/files/documents/Welsh%20Language%20Development%20in%20the%20Foundation%20Phase%20-%20January%202013.pdf> [Accessed on 16th July 2018]

Welsh Government (2014) *One Language for All: Response to Welsh second language review group recommendations*. Cardiff: Welsh Government. Available at: <https://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/publications/wagreviews/one-language-for-all/?lang=en> [accessed on 3rd July 2018]

Welsh Government (2015) *Qualified for Life. A Curriculum for Wales – A Curriculum for Life*. Cardiff: Welsh Government. Available at: <https://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/151021-a-curriculum-for-wales-a-curriculum-for-life-en.pdf> [Accessed on 2nd July 2018]

Welsh Government (2016) *Vision for one million Welsh speakers Launched*. Available at: <http://gov.wales/newsroom/welshlanguage/2016/160801cymraeg/?lang=en> [Accessed on 19th June 2018]

Welsh Government (2016) Cymraeg 2050: A Million Welsh Speakers. Cardiff: Crown. Available at: <https://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/170711-welsh-language-strategy-eng.pdf> [Accessed on 19th June 2018]

Welsh Government (2017) Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership. Crown. Cardiff. Available at: <https://www.voicetheunion.org.uk/sites/default/files/OR-WG-teaching-standards.pdf> [Accessed on 19th June 2018]

Websites

Central South Consortium Welsh Second Language Resources. Available at: <https://www.cscjes-cronfa.co.uk/repository/browse?sort=recommendation&language=en&category=Welsh&tags=Welsh&tags=welsh> [Accessed on 18th July 2018]

www.cysiausabothol.cymru. [Accessed on 2nd August 2018]

Powys. *Can I work for Powys if I don't speak Welsh?* Available at: <http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/employment-services/search-apply-for-jobs/welsh-language/> [accessed on 18th July 2018]

Welsh Government Website. Available at: <https://statswales.gov.wales/Catalogue/Welsh-Language> [Accessed on 18th July 2018]

Teaching English Website. Available at: <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/drilling-1> [Accessed on 18th July 2018]

Appendices

- 1 Final Ethics Form
- 2 Lesson Observation Template
- 3 Results of Questionnaire 1
- 4 Results of Questionnaire 2
- 5 Results of Questionnaire 3
- 6 Observation notes of lessons 1 & 2 at School A
- 7 Observation notes of lessons 3 & 4 at School A
- 8 Observation notes of lessons 1 & 2 at School B
- 9 Observation notes of lessons 3 & 4 at School B
- 10 Welsh Proficiency Questionnaire
- 11 Focus Group Interview Questions
- 12 'Frills' sheet to improve sentence structures
- 13 Promoting Welsh Planning Sheet
- 14 Powys Language List
- 15 Explanation given to participants at the start of the project