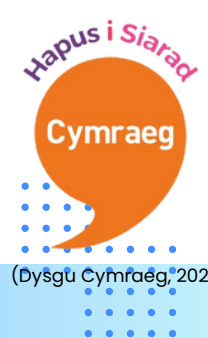




“Mae’r Gymraeg yn perthyn i ni i gyd”
“Cymraeg belongs to all of us”
(Miles, 2022)



Archwiliad beirniadol
A critical examination



(Dysgu Cymraeg, 2025)



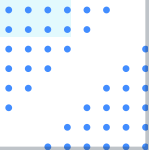
Bore/Prynhawn da. In the next eight minutes, I will critically examine the statement "Mae'r Gymraeg yn perthyn i ni gyd - Welsh belongs to all of us," made by Jeremy Miles, former Minister for Education and the Welsh Language, in his 2022 speech about his vision for the Welsh Language.



Cyd-destun Context

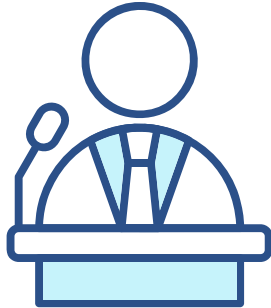


- Cymraeg 2050: Miliwn o Siaradwyr (Llywodraeth Cymru, 2017)
- 17.8% 2021 (Office of National Statistics, 2022)
- Deddf Y Gymraeg ac Addysg (Llywodraeth Cymru, 2025)



In 2017, the Welsh Government published Cymraeg:2050 - its strategic plan for its aim to achieve a million Welsh speakers by 2050. When Jeremy Miles gave his speech, it was 5 years after the publication of the strategic plan, and 10 months before the publication of the 2021 census data on language, which revealed a 1.2% decline in the number of Welsh speakers. More recently, the Welsh Language and Education Act was passed to support the Welsh Government's aim.

Sylw'r cyfryngau Media coverage



Banners on buses - choose Welsh-medium education!

CATEGORIES: PRESS RELEASE | 24 FEB 2025



(Cyngor Sir Bwrdeistref Merthyr Tudful, 2025)



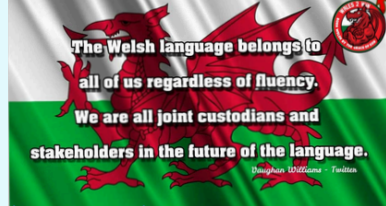
'CYMRAEG BELONGS TO US ALL'
PROTECTING WELSH LANGUAGE

(ITV, 2025)

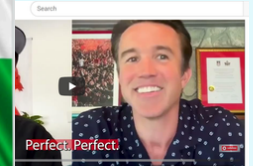
Wales2Win

March 17

The Welsh language belongs to all of us regardless of fluency. We are all joint custodians and stakeholders in the future of the language.



(Williams, 2025)



Perfect Perfect

Rob McElhenney speaks Welsh with Maxine Hughes

JET TV MEDIA PRODUCTIONS

202 views 28 Jul 2025

Rob McElhenney speaks the Welsh for the first time in his new show 'Perfect Perfect' and talks to @WelshLanguage about the importance of the language.

(JET TV Media Productions, 2025)

Jeremy Miles's statement has become a popular phrase used by Local Authorities to promote Welsh-medium education, by politicians to announce funding for Welsh language initiatives, and by social media groups to remind everyone of their role as 'custodians' of the language. Various organisations also use it to highlight efforts by notable figures to learn Welsh. It has, it could be argued, been powerful in garnering support for protecting the language.

Positifrwydd *Positivity*

- ✓ **Dull gwahanol – Different approach**
(Lewis, 1962), (Griffiths, 1962)
- ✓ **Eglurder – Clarity**
Cymraeg: 2050 (Llywodraeth Cymru, 2017)
- ✓ **Cynhwysol – Inclusive**
'I ni gyd' – 'To us all' (Miles, 2022)



The positivity around the statement reflects a shift in language inspiring people to support Cymraeg. In 1962, speeches portrayed Welsh as a victim with Saunders Lewis focusing on 'Tynged yr Iaith' - the fate of the Welsh Language, and the then Home Secretary, Jim Griffiths emphasising the need to save the language. Jeremy Miles's recent words are more empowering. His statement encapsulates the Cymraeg 2050 strategy, emphasising that everyone, regardless of their Welsh proficiency, plays a role in securing the language's future and fostering inclusivity.

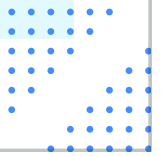


Dulliau rhyngwladol *International approaches*

Seland Newydd / New Zealand – Kōhanga Reo (Language Nests)
(Mahrooqi & Asante, 2012)

Canada – National Action Plan for Indigenous Languages
(Government of Canada, 2019)

Cernyw / Cornwall – Cornish Language (Kernewek) and Heritage
(Education and Recognition) Bill
(Gelderd, 2025)



The international context shows similar efforts to protect minority and endangered languages. Notably, New Zealand's Kohanga Reo (Language Nests) exemplifies a nurturing, community-based approach. Canada has launched a decade-long national action plan for the protection and growth of its 70 indigenous languages. It has a clear focus on inclusivity, addressing the needs, for example, of LGBTQ+ members of indigenous communities. Additionally, a recent bill in the UK aims to grant equal status to Kernewek (Cornish) alongside Cymraeg. These initiatives reflect very similar sentiments present in Jeremy Miles's statement about all of our roles in safeguarding Cymraeg.

Cyfyngiadau *Limitations*



Anrheg – Gift

(Mauss, 1925, dyfynnwyd yn Trotter, 2022)



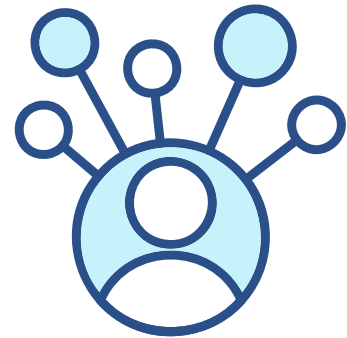
Perthyn – Belong

(Cohen, 2022, dyfynnwyd yn Anderson, 2022)



Canfyddiadau – Perceptions

(Llywodraeth Cymru, 2025)



However, the phrase "Mae'r Gymraeg yn perthyn i ni gyd" also has limitations, particularly in viewing language as a "possession," which creates a divide among those who possess the ability to speak the language and those that don't. This echoes Marcel Mauss's view that gifting that doesn't lead to solidarity is contradictory. The term 'perthyn' (belong) is also problematic amid what Cohen describes as a 'crisis of belonging,' potentially reinforcing exclusion among those who feel disconnected. This perspective aligns with findings from the National Survey for Wales, suggesting that the Welsh language is perceived as belonging to only certain individuals, which isn't as inclusive as the statement might initially suggest.

Awgrymiadau Suggestions

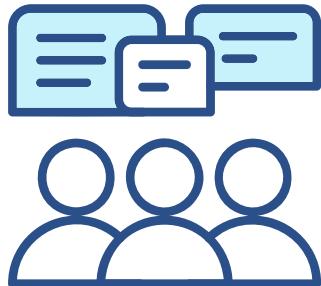
- ✓ **Mae'r Gymraeg yn tyfu gyda ni gyd**
Inclusion and participation (Tajfel & Turner, 1979)
- ✓ **Mae pawb yn rhan o ddyfodol y Gymraeg**
Community and stewardship (Cohen, 2022, dyfynnwyd yn Anderson, 2022)
- ✓ **Mae'r Gymraeg yn rhan o'n taith ni i gyd**
Participation over ownership (Tajfel & Turner, 1979)



In summary, while the statement has been powerful in galvanising support for Cymraeg, its future effectiveness will depend on deepening true inclusivity. Welsh will thrive not because it “belongs” to everyone, but because everyone feels welcome, supported, and inspired to belong within a living, evolving Welsh-speaking community.

I gau pen y mwdwl

Final thoughts



- Galluogi vs Breuder
Empowerment vs Fragility
(Freire, 1970)
- Cyfranogi vs Perchnogrwydd
Participation vs Ownership
(Tajfel & Turner, 1979)

To draw this presentation to a close, Jeremy Miles's statement "Mae'r Gymraeg yn perthyn i ni gyd – Welsh belongs to all of us" captures an important modern shift: from viewing Welsh as endangered and fragile to framing it as an empowering, collective cultural project. This rhetoric has helped mobilise support across government, local authorities, communities, and public figures, aligning with global movements to revitalise minority languages through inclusion, pride, and shared responsibility.

However, the phrase also carries limitations. Describing language as something that "belongs" can unintentionally reinforce divides between those who speak Welsh and those who do not, particularly in a wider context where many may already be experiencing a "crisis of belonging." If the language is framed as a possession, it risks implying ownership rather than participation, undermining the solidarity the phrase aims to inspire. So how might the statement's wording be improved? Here are some suggestions...

Rhestr gyfeiriadau

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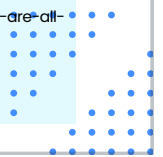
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