

Link to recording of Seminar One:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mvw3zpvPByrLyW5FdVDc82M99oMCI_Ye/view

Link to recording of Seminar Two:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zRIngwobaYkR3gkz0L4URvnjLkv9jyP/view>

Seminar One

Introduction

I will be presenting my findings on the historical development of the Welsh Language. I aim to cover two key points: First, an overview of how the Welsh language evolved. Second, an explanation of what is meant by the term 'bilingualism' with a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages. There will also be a focus on current policy and legislations associated with bilingualism.

Slide One

Welsh is one of the oldest languages in Europe, originating from a language now called Indo-European (Davies, 2014), which is the root of nine other languages, one of which became the Celtic language (UK Government, 2013). The Celtic language evolved to the Brythonic language which formed 'the basis of Welsh, Cornish, and Breton' (Jacob, 2017).

In 1536, Henry VIII passed the Act of Union (Davies, 2014). Thereafter, the Welsh Language began to suffer. People were expected to communicate in English only and removed Welsh from the school curriculum.

The translation of the bible into Welsh was a key driver into keeping Welsh alive in communities (National Trust, 2021), however, concerns about the Welsh language becoming extinct grew (Brain, 2021) because the Welsh had no power to help reverse laws set in the Tudor times. However, it was not until devolution, when Wales was able to take full control again. The Government of Wales Act 1998 introduced the National Assembly for Wales (UK Government, 2018) who worked hard to promote and save the Welsh Language, including having a voice in the Education Reform Act 1988. In 1990, Welsh became a compulsory subject for children in Key Stages one, two and three.

Then in 1999, all school children up to the age of sixteen in Wales were expected to learn Welsh (Welsh Government, 2017).

Slide Two

Grant and Gottardo (2008) claim that Bilingualism is as simple as knowing two languages. However, on the other hand Grosjean (1982) suggests that only those who use two or more languages in their everyday lives should consider themselves as bilingual. From this we can learn that the term Bilingualism has varying definitions, and it is important to consider them all.

Slide Three

Children naturally have the capacity to learn an additional language (Suryantari, 2018). Diamond (2010) stated that bilingualism provides children with many advantages. To begin, children who can communicate in two or more languages are expected to have greater social skills (Pransiska, 2017), which is supported by King and Mackey (2007) who imply that bilingual children will form friendships easily as they accept difference.

According to Antoniou (2019) bilingual children have an increased understanding in learning cognitive stimulating activities, such as learning how to play a musical instrument (Musacchia et al. 2007). Those who speak two languages will be at an advantage when learning any other language (University College London, 2021). Ultimately, individuals who can use multiple languages have greater employment and career opportunities (Pransiska, 2017).

Slide Four

Although there are many advantages to bilingualism, it is important to consider the potential disadvantages. In the 1920-1950s it was strongly believed that bilingualism had a negative impact on cognitive development. It was argued that bilingual children presented lower marks in their verbal and cognitive tests in comparison to monolinguals (Antoniou, 2019). Saer (1923) also argued that bilingualism led to 'mental confusion'.

More recently, Pransiska (2017) suggests there are concerns that come with learning a second language, such as learning delays. This is supported by Bialystok (2008) who claims that bilinguals will have a smaller vocabulary.

Slide Five

The myths surrounding bilingualism contribute to a misunderstanding of its potential benefits. The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015) is working towards creating 'The Wales we want', identifying seven well-being goals (The Welsh Government, 2021). Ultimately, this Act will protect Welsh speakers and ensure that their opportunities are equal.

To develop the Welsh Language, it is essential for parents and educators to work together to promote bilingualism (Pransiska, 2017). By directing parents' attention to see the positives of speaking Welsh as well as English, there will be a greater interest in the Welsh language. This supports the Welsh Government's vision of developing a bilingual nation and increasing the number of Welsh speakers to one million in Wales by 2050 (The Welsh Government, 2018). In addition, The Welsh Government (2018) stated that to realise this goal, they want to increase the number of children attending Welsh-medium schools to 30% by 2030.

Slide Six

Welsh was removed from the school curriculum in Tudor times to suppress the language. However, now, the curriculum is a tool to promote the Welsh language. Teachers are now required to support bilingual development and encourage students to learn Welsh to the best of their ability.

Trainee teachers are also required to develop their Welsh to ensure that they are prepared for the curriculum changes in 2022. All children are now required to learn Welsh at first language standard (Wightwick, 2019). It is therefore essential that teachers have a good understanding to promote bilingualism.

Slide Seven

To conclude, the development of the Welsh language has faced many barriers and challenges. In the 21st Century, the prominence of the language is evidence that the promotional changes are effective. Whilst there are still challenges in changing negative attitudes that people have towards the language, there are many more who celebrate the prominence Welsh is given in the curriculum.

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Seminar Two

Introduction

It is important that educators consider and offer their learners a range of techniques when learning a new language (Teaching and Learning Strategies, 2013). This presentation will use theoretical perspectives to outline best practice relating to teaching Welsh in schools.

The Welsh in Education Action Plan 2017-21 highlights the ambition that the new curriculum offers to developing the use of the Welsh language. The document provides clear plans for inspiring and motivating young people to enjoy Welsh. It is also stated that learning is dependant of teachers' understanding, therefore as educators it is crucial to understand the best practice for language acquisition (The Welsh Government, 2017).

Slide One

Firstly, the use of incidental Welsh in the classroom is a good way to encourage the Welsh language (Welsh Government, 2011). This could be simple phrases like, bore da, sut wyt ti? or asking to go to the toilet in Welsh. This technique adopts Baker's (2011) communicative proficiency model as children are encouraged to use everyday communication through bilingualism (Ahnagari and Zamanian, 2014).

To help visual learners, it is good practice to include Welsh phrases on work displays and notice boards (Jackson, 2016). In addition, I have experienced childcare settings including Welsh in their classroom roles, for example having a 'Helpwr' of the day. This is a technique which supports children who learn best when it is relaxed and gradual (The British Association for Early Childhood Education, 2012). Children become familiar with the language and without realising their confidence will grow too. Moreover, it is good practice to translate phrases in Welsh back to English so that terminology is fully understood, this is supported by Bruner (2001) who suggests that children learn through repetition.

Adopting cross curricular learning will develop a child's knowledge and interest in the language. According to Cynllun Colegau Cymru (2021) the most effective way for a child to develop their language acquisition is through cross curricular learning and not during a lesson focused on the language. In addition, this technique supports the new

curriculum for Wales 2022 of making the Welsh language part of everyday lessons (Lovell, 2019). However, it is argued that Teachers are not provided with the adequate training to improve their own Welsh skills, therefore, find it difficult to promote and develop the Welsh language (Lovell, 2019).

Moreover, Baker (2014) suggests that children who learn to read a second language naturally improve their ability to read in their first language, which will support a child in all cross curricular subjects. This argument supports Cummins (1979) statement that bilingual children are more likely to excel in their academic studies (Brisk, 2002).

Slide Two

It is beneficial to revisit previous learning of the Welsh language before introducing new knowledge. This is supported by Piaget (1952) who claims that a person processes and retains information as part of their cognitive development (Simatwa, 2010). The pedagogy drilling could be implemented to support previous learning. For example, if the children were learning about body parts, then to learn a song such as head, shoulders, knees, and toes in Welsh will help retain information (Good, Russo and Sullivan, 2015). Teachers can also plan games which are engaging and help to understand new vocabulary, such as bingo and matching cards (Cynllun Colegau Cymru, 2021), this supports the learner's cognitive development (Ahmad et al., 2016).

Furthermore, questioning expands children's thinking skills (Rashid and Qaisar, 2016), but it also supports teachers to understand the standard of Welsh language in the classroom (NSW Government, 2021). This pedagogy is supported by Cummins (1979) as questioning allows for differentiation in the classroom, therefore, the advanced Welsh speakers could be asked a question which will challenge them, ultimately, progressing their learning (Nasen, 2020).

Slide Four

In summary, all the above pedagogies look to improve and develop the Welsh language within the classroom. Overall, it is the responsibility of the teacher to assess the ability of their class and adopt the correct pedagogy. Learning strategies should be varied so that

all children have an equal opportunity to develop their Welsh language. The statement 'Children learn through first-hand experiential activities with the serious business of 'play' providing the vehicle' (Welsh Government, 2015, p.5) projects that the best practice to adopt when learning Welsh would be 'drilling' as children can be enjoying their learning whilst understanding and engaging in the Welsh vocabulary.

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Seminar Three

Slide One

Introduction, Bore da.

Un, Dau, Tri

Sing Bore da song in Welsh (20 Seconds).

Slide 2

Explain today's lesson, look at colours and shapes

In welsh/Yn cymraeg

Today/Heddiw.

Learning Objectives:

LO 1 – Develop an understanding of colours and shapes through the medium of Welsh.

LO 2 – Contribute to lesson task of identifying and matching colours and shapes

Slide 3

Talk through the different colours in Welsh and English.

Green/Gwyrdd

Red/Coch

Blue/Glas

Slide 4

Talk through the different shapes in Welsh and English.

Triangle/Triongol

Star / Seren

Square / Sqwre

Slide 5

- ❖ What is this shape?

Triangle / Triongal

- ❖ The colour of this shape is...

Green / Gwrydd

- ❖ How would we say that in Welsh?

Green Triangle / Triongal Gwrydd

Slide 6

- ❖ What is this shape?

Star / Seren

- ❖ The colour of this shape is...

Red / Coch

- ❖ How would we say that in Welsh?

Red Star / Seren Coch

Slide 7

- ❖ What is this shape?

Square / Sqwre

- ❖ The colour of this shape is...

Blue / Glas

- ❖ How would we say that in Welsh?

Blue square/ Sqwre glas

Slide 8

Discuss their understanding of the lesson by posing the following questions:

Can you name one colour or shape that you have learnt in todays lesson?

Diolch

Goodbye / Hwyl Fawr.