

likely to judge their native Breton to be not as “good” as what the children now learn in school.

Still, it might be argued, languages change and the neo-Breton that is emerging from the school children will simply be the Breton of the future, and one should not worry overly whether or not this version of Breton is comprehensible by older speakers, many of whom will not live long into the 21st century. If enough children of Brittany end up in Diwan or other bilingual schools where they acquire a workable knowledge of neo Breton, then this is a possible scenario. At present, though, this not the case, as made clear in a poignant film released in Brittany in May 1999, which followed the lives over two or three years of several students who were the first to earn their “bacs” in Breton-medium and bilingual schools. What we see from that film, unfortunately, is that these young people, deeply committed to Breton, find it difficult to maintain social relationships in that language, in large measure because they are so diffusely scattered through the population of Brittany. Yet, ironically, encounters with native Breton speakers are scarcely more productive (linguistically) than with French monolinguals.

Balance Sheet

It is altogether too easy for outsiders to critique the well-meaning and indeed heroic efforts of language activists in Brittany (and in other Celtic countries) to restore and promote their heritage language, and I wish to make clear that any observations I make here or elsewhere are meant only in a most positive way. There have been both benefits and losses in the construction and propagation of neo-Breton over the past century. These will be briefly described here.

Benefits. The benefits of the development of neo Breton are several: it affords a means of communicating in Breton across traditional dialect areas; at least this is true of the written variety. It has acquired symbolic value as a marker of Breton identity, and has helped eradicate the centuries-old self-stigmatization of Breton by its native speakers. As part of this, some sectors of the public domain, previously closed to Breton, have opened up. This is truest of education; Breton presence on TV and radio are more than in the past, but still not great. The re-worked lexicon – though still too puristic – has nonetheless brought Breton into the modern world, as has the creation of a substantial secular literature.

Losses. The linking of a divergent koiné variety of Breton with a movement of linguistic restoration and the establishment of an elitist bretonnant literary tradition has had several consequences:

1. The very existence of the new prestige variety further stigmatized the vernaculars – a double inferiorization effect, which may have influenced more people to rely on French; this was happening before, but the process accelerated after the Second World War.
2. It further distanced the native speaker population from the high variety of the language. Many older native speakers claim, with some testiness, not to be able to understand neo-Breton.
3. It meant that language planning was entirely in the hands of a select few intellectuals, highly motivated, but also with a political and ideological agenda; in a way this could be called a self-appointed language-planning oligarchy. Many at the core of the early

movement were not native speakers of the language (Hemon, Taldir, Meavenn, Mordiern, Mordrelle).

4. The language moved from a rural to an urban basis in terms of whose perspectives and whose interests would be encoded in the emerging, enriched lexicon. This is not surprising of course, and indeed, was needed if Breton were to be recognized as a language of European, if not international, scope. However, what was downplayed, or benignly ignored, in the forging of the new variety was much of the richness of the vernaculars' expressive repertoire – idioms, proverbs, sayings, riddles, salutations, address terms, invectives. Consider, for example, such idioms as *Hennez a zo digor e skrin* 'He's hungry' or *Uhel eo an avel gantañ* 'He's arrogant'. While certain ones were incorporated, the majority were forgotten, overlooked, or excluded. Curiously, certain commonplace turns of phrase were reformulated as Breton translations of French models – e.g., *Devez mat!* ('Good day!') *Aotrou* ('Sir'), *Itron* ('Madam'), *Dimezell* ('Mademoiselle'); *Aoutrounez hag Itronezed* ('Gentlemen & Ladies' [cf. French *Messieurs et Madames*])

Moreover, in every society, the universal aspects of human existence are to be found, and we find them commented on in such expressive language as proverbs and sayings. These are generally readily comprehended in translation, and it is not uncommon to find quite parallel expressions of this genre across languages and cultures. Thus, it would have benefitted new generations of learners of Breton had more figurative expressions been incorporated into updated versions of Breton grammars and dictionaries. There are pedagogical reasons for so doing: often the sayings are rhymed, and this may facilitate the learning process. Perhaps originators of sayings were aware on some level that rhyming could assist children in learning the values and perspectives contained within them. There are also linguistic lessons in sayings for a learner of Breton, which shares with the other Celtic languages a complex morphophonemic system in its initial consonant mutations, for it is likely that repetition of proverbs and sayings provided juvenile learners easily remembered models for these mutations; their repetition could do the same for adult learners.

Conclusion

Language ideologies in Brittany in the past century have promoted an emphasis on a form of Breton, the one currently being taught as a second language, that is in many ways quite different from the native, spoken forms of the language. Deliberately constructed to avoid any appearance of French influence, the teaching of neo-Breton has produced new cohorts of speakers who do not share many of the same expressive and creative resources with the native speakers; a sort of linguistic dissonance is the result when neo- and paleo-speakers attempt to engage in conversation. I have suggested that more attention might have been paid, and might still be paid, in the construction of grammars and dictionaries to some traditional genres in vernacular forms of the language – e.g., conversational styles that incorporate more idioms, proverbs, and sayings to help provide a bridge between the native and neo Breton speakers. The conversational and age gap between younger and older speakers may already be so great as to render the crossing of this bridge impracticable or impossible. An unanswered question (and unanswerable at present) is whether or not the neo-speakers will become sufficiently numerous to propagate their own version of the language and to promote, through time, its further elaboration as a set of vernaculars as expressive and creative as the ones that are currently being lost.

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Welsh Medium and Bilingual Teaching in the Further Education Sector

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Abstract

Astudiaeth ragarweiniol o ddulliau cyflwyno a dysgu yn y Sector Addysg Bellach sef 16+ galwedigaethol ac academaidd yng Nghymru. Manylir ar y cyd-destun dwyieithog ar draws y sectorau er mwyn gosod y cyd-destun ieithyddol ar gyfer yr astudiaeth, a rhestrir rhai o'r dulliau cyflwyno dwyieithog mewn ysgolion uwchradd. Yna dadansoddir y sefyllfaoedd dysgu dwyieithog cadarnhaol a welwyd gan gynnig argymhellion sy'n berthnasol i unrhyw wlad lle defnyddir methodoleg ddysgu ddwyieithog i ymestyn y defnydd o'r iaith leiafrifol.

The Welsh Context

- 6.3% of the pupils speak Welsh through transmission at home,
- an additional 8.1% speaking the language to mother tongue fluency levels via bilingual education, even though they did not speak it at home,
- a further 27.2% spoke the language but not fluently.

This is an indication of language shift which has happened during the second half of the twentieth century, whereby the education system and the State rather than the hearth and home have increasingly become guardians of the Welsh language.

- 12.0% of year 11 pupils (16 year olds) are categorised as Welsh L1, and
- 31.3% are in the L2 category.
- 5.7% sat external examinations through the medium of Welsh in 1996 compared to 11.3% sitting L1 examinations in Welsh.
(Welsh Office 1997)
- in 1960, 33 candidates sat Welsh medium papers at 'O level' in 4 subjects only.
- In 1996 the equivalents at GCSE were, 16,540 entries in 49 different subjects.
- At 'A level' the percentage number of candidates sitting Welsh medium papers was 5.2%; a total of 1,343 entries in 25 different subjects.
- 2.3% assessed through the medium of Welsh at Further Education level.

This national figure of 2.31% fails to disclose the institutional or geographical propensity. 38.4% of the 4419 students assessed through the medium of Welsh came from one institution and 24.4% from another institution.

Bilingual Teaching Methodologies at Secondary School Level

Williams (1994) noted that 32% only of the classrooms he visited during part 1 of his research in traditional bilingual secondary schools adopted a loosely bilingual methodology. The situations observed could be categorised as:

1. a mechanical, slavish practice of translating from one language to the other throughout the lesson
2. a selective transition from one language to the other
3. groups within a class choosing and using one language only,
4. the native Welsh speakers taught through the medium of Welsh with the L2 pupils being taught through the medium of English
5. oral work in one language (usually Welsh) with written work in the other language
6. a structured policy where some units or modules being presented by the teacher, discussed and reported in one language, and others studied through the medium of the other language.

Within these situations, two common practices which undermined any attempt at establishing a coherent policy were evident.

- Using an English text-book when oral delivery was in Welsh. This often led to a degenerate and unacceptable form of language.
- The tendency for individual pupils to deliberately answer oral Welsh questions in English because of an unfavourable adolescent attitude towards Welsh/English bilingualism.

Category (6) above implies a more deliberate bilingual teaching policy and the more successful teachers within this classification demonstrate certain common characteristics in their planning and teaching strategies. They:

- were highly aware of the bilingual development of each individual within the teaching group, the preferred language etc.
- were highly aware of which language was to be used with each group at any given moment;
- had ensured beforehand that all reference material, text books, transparencies etc. were in the official language of that lesson or block of lessons;
- were aware that linguistic development and subject area development happened simultaneously and therefore ensured sufficient opportunities for pupils to utilise the active language skills of talking and writing as well as the passive skills of listening and reading;
- provided more pupil-centred activities;
- adhered to the departmental language/medium policy.

(Williams, 1994 p 259)

The Context, Aim and Objectives of the Present Study

The **main aim** of the study therefore was to identify and disseminate good practice in bilingual delivery and learning within the sector.

The **main objectives** were:

1. to categorise examples of a range of teaching methods used in a bilingual context in Further Education Colleges;
2. to analyse these examples and identify models of good practice;
3. to use the good practice identified as a foundation for an in-service training programme in order to encourage more lecturers and colleges to adopt a variety of bilingual teaching methods.

Method of Research

The study was ethnographic in nature, concentrating on what happens usually and naturally in the classroom. No attempt was made to manipulate the situation in any way or to interfere with lecturers' normal teaching methods regarding presentation nor their use of bilingualism.

Results

The results are broadly divided into two sections; the first short section addresses the conditions affecting bilingual setting and the second more detailed section concentrates on the classification and typology of teaching styles within each setting.

Conditions affecting bilingual settings

Individual lecturers had a tendency to interpret bilingual teaching according to the linguistic conditions prevalent in the class at any given time. Amongst these conditions were:

1. the language of the majority of the students;
2. the lecturer's own first or preferred language;
3. the language in which the course was to be examined in the case of the majority of students;
4. the consideration of whether one or more of the student group were non-Welsh speakers or were recent in-migrants into the area;
5. the strength of personality of individual students, some of whom were insistent on changing the language of discussion.

Classification and Features of the Teaching Styles

The observed situations were categorised into seven main types of teaching settings, three of which were deemed to be positive. For the purpose of this paper positive settings and features only will be discussed.

Positive Settings

- Approximately equal use of two languages sessions in terms of presentation and materials, with each individual choosing his/her preferred medium.
- Sessions where the lecturer was working with individuals rather than being group-based or class-based; each individual was therefore able to choose his/her preferred medium.
- Officially the work was through the medium of the one agreed language, with the other language being used to reinforce or strengthen understanding where appropriate.

Positive Features

1. Respect was accorded to both languages.
2. Written material was available in both languages.
3. The lecturers were using the appropriate terminology consistently and frequently in both languages; students were also familiar with their usage in their own preferred medium.
4. The students accepted bilingualism as a natural phenomenon and saw it as an advantage rather than a problem:
5. There was a clear tendency to vary the teaching and learning activities and to set 'real,' purposeful tasks for the students
6. Oral bilingual presentations, which can become burdensome if overdone, were restricted and students worked more extensively in their chosen language
7. The sessions tended to be more student centred.
8. One common model: - a bilingual presentation > group work or 1:1 instruction.
9. An advantage of 1:1 communication was that bilingual lecturers responded to individuals in their chosen language medium.
10. There was a tendency for those same students to ask for English notes and to perform all their written tasks through the medium of English. This is a form of additive bilingualism. (Lambert 1974)
11. One of the most positive situations bilingually was a session where the official language was English, but where Welsh was used to strengthen and reinforce comprehension; and vice-versa.

Discussion

There are many influences that can affect the success or failure of bilingual teaching in any sector. Each of these should be considered in the context of Further Education and any weak aspects should be strengthened. The main considerations are noted below, together with some recommendations for effective practice.

1 The educational philosophy which forms the basis of the language medium policy should be transparent to members of staff and students alike.

The purpose of bilingualism within the Further Education sector should be established; either:

1. to create practical conditions to enable students to follow their subjects through the medium of Welsh or English, i.e. administrative and organisational purposes only, or
2. using and developing the bilingualism of each student (or group of students) further, i.e. creating curricular, professional and vocational purposes.

2 The attitude of lecturers is vital for the effective operation of the policy.

If lecturers do not fully understand the aims of the institutional policy, unfavourable conditions are created in the way that policy is put into effect in the classroom. It is this lack of understanding, rather than outright objection, that leads to negative thinking and lack of respect for the value of a bilingual policy.

3 The attitude of students is a key factor in the success of bilingual teaching.

In some classes, short-term considerations tended to outweigh long-term issues. Students' unfavourable attitudes towards the Welsh language because of previous educational background, a lack of confidence when expressing themselves in Welsh and personal prejudices were all evident. The accumulative effect was that many students used English when completing written work. They did not consider that there is an increasing demand both locally and nationally for a bilingual workforce, and that their bilingualism needed to be practised in order to develop. They were often willing to use their bilingualism orally but not in writing.

4 The linguistic nature of a class can affect the governing medium.

Where a class contained one or more students who had not been educated under the local bilingual system, there was a marked tendency for the language medium to change to English. The policy adopted by a department or institution should govern; not the linguistic nature of a particular class.

The aims of each bilingual class should include using and developing a student's existing bilingual ability.

5 One of the major obstacles to successful bilingual teaching is the lack of minority-language resources and materials.

The fact that most of the printed material used during the sessions that were viewed for this study was in English affected the language of discussion and/or terminology used by lecturers and students alike. Where teaching material is available in the majority language only, students who are following those courses in the minority language are disadvantaged by their departments. Their work-load is heavier as they have to translate their own notes and, in some instances, devise their own terminology.

6 There is a need to consider the quality of language and the use made of terminology.

A student who has chosen to study his topic entirely through the medium of the minority language has a right to expect that that language is used suitably and correctly, including an extensive use of suitable terminology.

7 The adopted teaching and learning methodologies may influence effectiveness.

If a lecturer keeps to a lecturer-centred methodology, where oral knowledge transfer and concept explanation is the main teaching method, the effort of maintaining bilingualism in the class will become oppressive for the students. During the sessions viewed, a student-centred approach with purposeful material provided in both languages, proved to be a more successful and less oppressive teaching strategy.

8 A lack of specific training for teaching in a bilingual setting hampers professional development in this area.

There is a need for careful planning and presentation of an initial in-service training scheme which prioritises the elements of teaching in the bilingual setting outlined above. This could be done on a national basis with a view to establishing a certificate or diploma qualification.

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