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Lost in transition?

Celtic language revitalization in Scotland and Wales: the primary to secondary school stage

Fiona O’Hanlon

Thesis Presented for the Degree of PhD by Research
The University of Edinburgh
2012
Declaration of authorship

I confirm that this thesis has been composed solely by myself, and that the work contained within it has neither previously been published nor submitted for another degree.

Fiona O’Hanlon
Abstract
The development of education through the medium of Celtic languages (here specifically Welsh and Scottish Gaelic) is often placed within a language planning framework in which Celtic-medium education is viewed as a means of sustaining a threatened language in the context of levels of intergenerational transmission which are insufficient to maintain speaker numbers. The primary to secondary school stage is a critical juncture from such a perspective, as language revitalization requires the language competencies, patterns of Celtic language use and positive attitudes towards the Celtic language fostered at the primary school stage to be maintained and developed at the secondary school stage. However, the secondary school stage has often been associated with a reduction in the uptake and availability of Celtic-medium education and with a decline both in Celtic language use and in positive attitudes towards the language. Such a policy and research context raises two sets of research questions, the first relating to choice of medium of instruction of education, and the second to aspects of pupil language relevant to language planning and maintenance:

(1) Research Questions: Choice
- What factors influence parental decisions for Celtic-medium education at the primary school level?
- What factors influence Celtic-medium pupil decisions regarding language of education for the first year of secondary school?
- Do the responses and patterns of response regarding choice differ between (i) the primary and secondary school stages and/or (ii) the Scottish and Welsh contexts?

(2) Research Questions: Language Planning
- What are Celtic-medium pupils’ patterns of (a) language use (b) perceptions of their linguistic ability (c) identification with the Celtic language and (d) perceptions of the usefulness of the Celtic language for their future at the primary and early secondary school stages?
- Do the responses and patterns of response differ between the Scottish and Welsh contexts at the primary school stage?
- Do the responses and patterns of response shift between the primary and secondary school stages in either the Scottish or the Welsh contexts?

This thesis presents the results of a longitudinal study of 28 Gaelic-medium and 57 Welsh-medium final year primary and first year secondary pupils, their parents and teachers, conducted in 2007-2008. English-medium pupils from dual stream schools were also incorporated, primarily as a control group for the experiences of their Celtic-medium counterparts (17 English-medium Scotland and 34 English-medium Wales pupils, their parents and teachers).

The research questions are investigated using multiple research methods in a longitudinal design. Pupils took part in semi-structured interviews in the final year of primary school and in the first year of secondary school concerning their experience of learning a Celtic language, the reasons for their decisions regarding the medium of instruction of secondary school subjects, their identification with their Celtic language and their perceptions of its usefulness. At each of these two school stages, pupils also completed standardized questionnaires (which yielded statistical data) on their language use and their perceived language competence in their Celtic language
and in English. The pupil interviews were supplemented by interviews with their teachers at primary and secondary school, and with their parents at the primary school stage; thus a total of 383 interviews were conducted. Comparison was made not only longitudinally but also between the Gaelic and Welsh groups and, where relevant, between each of them and their English-medium counterparts.

The results are discussed in relation to contextual factors (for example national and local authority policies, the linguistic demographics of Scotland and Wales and the level of Celtic-language institutionalization in the two countries), in relation to previous research on choice, language use, language ability and language attitudes in the Scottish and Welsh contexts, and in relation to theories of language maintenance.


Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisors, Lindsay Paterson and Wilson McLeod, for their advice, guidance and support throughout the PhD process.

I would also like to extend my thanks to the Local Authority Advisors and Head teachers who granted me access to their schools, and to express my profound gratitude to all of the pupils, parents and teachers who shared their experiences for the research.

Tha mi fada nur comain. Rwyf yn eich dyled.
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<td>ACCAC</td>
<td>Awdurdod Cymwysterau, Cwricwlwm ac Asesu Cymru — Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales</td>
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<tr>
<td>BEP</td>
<td>Bilingual Education Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BnG</td>
<td>Bòrd na Gàidhlig — The Gaelic Language Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BoE</td>
<td>Board of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>CACfE</td>
<td>Central Advisory Council for Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCW</td>
<td>Curriculum Council for Wales</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDT</td>
<td>Craft, Design and Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>clàrsach</td>
<td>Harp</td>
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<tr>
<td>CnaG</td>
<td>Comunn na Gàidhlig — National Gaelic Development Agency</td>
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<td>CnamP</td>
<td>Comann nam Pàrant — Association for parents of children in Gaelic-medium education (Local Level)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CnamPN</td>
<td>Comann nam Pàrant Nàiseanta — Association for parents of children in Gaelic-medium education (National Level)</td>
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<td>CNES</td>
<td>Comhairle nan Eilean Siar — Western Isles Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>CNSA</td>
<td>Comhairle nan Sgoiltean Àraich — Gaelic Pre-school Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>CoE</td>
<td>Council of Europe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eisteddfod</td>
<td>Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Cymru — The National Eisteddfod of Wales</td>
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<td>EMS</td>
<td>English-medium Scotland</td>
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<td>EMW</td>
<td>English-medium Wales</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estyn</td>
<td>Office of Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales</td>
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<tr>
<td>fèis</td>
<td>Gaelic culture and arts festival</td>
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<td>GCC</td>
<td>Gwynedd County Council</td>
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<td>GIDS</td>
<td>Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale</td>
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<td>GLPS</td>
<td>Gaelic Learners in the Primary School</td>
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<td>GM</td>
<td>Gaelic Medium</td>
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<td>GME</td>
<td>Gaelic-medium education</td>
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<td>GMU(s)</td>
<td>Gaelic Medium Unit(s)</td>
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<td>GOC</td>
<td>Gaelic Orthographic Conventions</td>
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<td>GROS</td>
<td>General Register Office Scotland</td>
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<td>GTC(S)</td>
<td>General Teaching Council (for Scotland)</td>
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<td>HE</td>
<td>Home Economics</td>
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<td>HIDB</td>
<td>Highlands and Islands Development Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>HMI(e)</td>
<td>Her Majesty’s Inspectorate (of Education)</td>
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<tr>
<td>IASG</td>
<td>Inter-Authority Standing Group for Gaelic</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>L1</td>
<td>‘Language 1,’ a person’s first language or mother tongue</td>
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<td>L2</td>
<td>‘Language 2,’ a person’s second language</td>
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<tr>
<td>LA</td>
<td>Local Authority</td>
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<td>LEA</td>
<td>Local Education Authority (a term employed in Wales but generally not in Scotland)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mod</td>
<td>Am Mod Nàiseanta Riogail — The National Royal Mod</td>
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<td>MFL</td>
<td>Modern Foreign Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
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<td>MYM</td>
<td>Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin – Welsh-medium early years education provider</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAFW</td>
<td>National Assembly for Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1, P2, P3 etc</td>
<td>Primary One, Primary Two, Primary Three etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE</td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RME</td>
<td>Religious and Moral Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHAG</td>
<td>Rhieni dros Addysg Gymraeg – Parents for Welsh Medium Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLS</td>
<td>Reversing Language Shift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1, S2, S3 etc</td>
<td>Secondary One, Secondary Two, Secondary Three etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCCC</td>
<td>Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCRE</td>
<td>Scottish Council for Research in Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEED</td>
<td>Scottish Executive Education Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMO</td>
<td>Sabhal Mòr Ostaig – Scotland’s Gaelic College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOED</td>
<td>Scottish Office Education Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPCB</td>
<td>Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stòrlann</td>
<td>Stòrlann Nàiseanta na Gàidhlig – National Gaelic educational resources agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SQA</td>
<td>Scottish Qualifications Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TWf</td>
<td>Welsh ‘Raising Children Bilingually’ Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UHI</td>
<td>University of the Highlands and Islands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urdd</td>
<td>Urdd Gobaith Cymru - The Welsh League of Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URYC</td>
<td>Undeb Rhieni Ysgolion Cymraeg – The Union of Welsh-medium School Parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAG</td>
<td>Welsh Assembly Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WLB</td>
<td>Welsh Language Board – Bwrdd yr Iaith Gymraeg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WM</td>
<td>Welsh Medium</td>
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<tr>
<td>WME</td>
<td>Welsh Medium Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMU(s)</td>
<td>Welsh Medium Unit(s)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Typographical & methodological conventions

**Qualitative data:**

| … | Ellipsis |
| [ ] | Interpolated material |
| *Italic* | Emphasis (respondent’s except where stated otherwise) |

**Translated material**

Translated material Translations are my own unless stated otherwise.

**Quantitative data:**

| Predominantly | More than fifty per cent of the time. When referring to the Celtic language, this reference encompasses the categories ‘Always or almost always in the Celtic language’ and ‘in the Celtic language more often than English.’ When referring to the English language the meaning is analogous. |
| Marginally not significant | Level of statistical significance of a comparison is marginally higher than 5%, but is lower than 10%. |
Chapter One  Introduction

1.1 Theoretical frameworks of bilingual education

Minority language medium education can be set in three theoretical contexts: ‘Bilingual education as Language Planning, as Pedagogy and as Politics’ (Baker 2000: 102). The first views bilingual education as ‘one essential means of language maintenance, language revitalization and reversing language shift,’ the second views ‘bilingual education as effective pedagogy’ and the third relates to the view that ‘bilingual education can only be fully understood in relation to political ideology, movements in political ideas and political opportunism’ (Baker 2000: 102).

The primary to secondary school stage is a ‘critical juncture’ (Cunningham 2004: 1, quoting Norris 1999: 98) from all three of these perspectives. From a language planning perspective, bilingual education is employed as part of acquisition planning in order that minority language speaker numbers be maintained or increased in the context of levels of intergenerational transmission which are not self-sustaining (Fishman 1991: 369). The achievement of such aims hinges on gains made in terms of language acquisition, language use and positive attitudes towards the minority language at the primary school stage being developed in secondary school.

From a pedagogical perspective, bilingual education is argued to be associated with ‘wider communication, broader enculturation, biliteracy, cognitive benefits, raised self-esteem, a more secure identity, economic advantages’ and the suggestion that ‘classroom achievement is increased through content learning occurring via dual language curriculum strategies’ (Baker 2006: 255). The primary to secondary school transition stage is crucial, as all such aspects potentially depend on the continued provision of minority language education at secondary school – in order that pupils’ communication and literacy skills be developed into adult fluent speaker level competencies, in order that any cognitive benefits that may result from learning subjects bilingually be sustained, and in order that the pupil continues to feel confident about their bilingualism and to identify with the Celtic language and its culture.

From a ‘political’ perspective, Fishman notes that ‘modern education is a prerogative of the polity’ (1991: 99). Such a situation requires state support of, or at
least acquiescence in, minority language groups’ preferences regarding the incorporation of language into education. The primary to secondary school stage is a critical juncture, as it is one at which stakeholders’ views of ‘what is minimally adequate’ and what is ‘desirable’ (Fishman 1991: 100) regarding the incorporation of the minority language into the secondary school curriculum differ widely. Baker argues that:

Surrounding bilingual education are usually political debates about national identity, dominance and control by elites in power, power relationships among politicians and civil servants, questions about social order and the perceived potential subversiveness of language minorities.

(Baker 2000: 116)

1.2 Continuity in language education

The notion of continuity in language education at the primary to secondary school stage pertains to all school systems which offer minority language-medium or bilingual education in primary school and which make provision for the language in secondary school. As Cunningham highlights in relation to the introduction of ‘community languages’ into the Australian educational context:

The first battle to be won was that of a change in language choice offered by a secondary school confronted by ... a range of learners having had prior learning in a different language.

(Cunningham 2004: 1)

This thesis examines continuity in language learning at the primary to secondary school stage in the Scottish and Welsh contexts, drawing particularly on Celtic-medium pupils’ experiences. The main theoretical focus is on language planning, though some attention is also given to pedagogy and politics.

1.2.1 Continuity in Celtic language education – Wales

In 1999, the Welsh Language Board held a national conference with policy makers, researchers and educationalists to discuss continuity of Welsh language education from pre-school to further and higher education. They identified a ‘major dysfunction between secondary and primary schooling with regard to the Welsh language’ (Welsh Language Board 1999: 15). This was evidenced in terms of
discontinuity with regard to the progression of Welsh-medium primary pupils to first language Welsh classes at secondary school level:

between 19% and 20% of children leave primary schooling as first language (or fluent) Welsh speakers. Thereafter there is decline and not growth … in Year 7 (the first year of secondary school) only 12.9% of pupils are taught Welsh as a first language.

(WLB 1999: 15)

Expressed in relation to pupils who were in Welsh-medium primary education, the resulting discontinuity figures were judged to be ‘even more alarming’ (WLB 1999: 17) – ‘approximately one in three (33.2%) children taking Welsh as a first language in primary school are no longer doing so in secondary school’ (WLB 1999: 17).

The word ‘alarming’ reflects the strength of concern regarding such a disjunction by the Board charged with the task of ‘promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language’ in the Welsh Language Act 1993 (Part 1:Section 3). The bases for such alarm pertain to both the language planning and pedagogical frameworks outlined above. With regard to language planning, the role of the school in language maintenance is explicitly highlighted:

only 16.5% of households … reproduce Welsh in their children … not enough families are reproducing the language. If the maintenance target of 18.7% is to be met … the production of Welsh through schooling becomes a vital part of Welsh language maintenance.

(WLB 1999: 6)

The Board identify the uptake of Welsh First Language courses at the secondary school stage as being of concern in terms of language maintenance:

First language Welsh in primary schools is well above the literacy level in the 1991 census. However, at secondary school level, the percentages are beginning to drop below literacy levels.

(WLB 1999: 20)

The premise that the school is a key vehicle for such language maintenance (Baker & Jones 2000: 117) foists an expectation of continuity on the secondary schools in the provision of, and pupil uptake of, Welsh First Language and Welsh-medium

2 The uptake of first language Welsh classes is only an indication of continuity of Welsh-medium secondary education, as it is possible for pupils to study Welsh First Language in otherwise English medium secondary schools.
education. From such a language planning perspective, the discontinuity in the level of Welsh language studied between primary and secondary school whereby ‘7% to 8% of children in Wales move from the first language to the second language Welsh category’ (WLB 1999: 16) is taken to be proof that: ‘the Welsh language is not being sufficiently strengthened and supported by secondary schooling’ (WLB 1999: 16).

Such a sense of secondary schools’ responsibility for Welsh language continuity from a language planning perspective interweaves with a pedagogical rationale for the continued encouragement of pupil continuity in Welsh-medium and Welsh language education. The Welsh Language Board argue that: ‘As one of their central aims, secondary schools should be building on the firm foundations made in Welsh language acquisition among all pupils’ (WLB 1999: 15; Gruffudd et al. 2004: 6). Specifically, the Welsh Language Board state that:

In an educational system that is successfully supporting the Welsh language … those children fluent in Welsh by the end of primary schooling should have their Welsh extended, enriched and enlivened.

(WLB 1999: 15)

The ambiguity of the opening phrase here as to whether its reference is the support of the Welsh language itself, or the pupils’ Welsh language, exemplifies the overlap and potential integration of at least two of the three perspectives of bilingual education.

The conceptual integration of the three perspectives – of language planning, pedagogy and politics – is evidenced in the rationale underpinning the ‘action points’ (WLB 1999: 26) that the Welsh Language Board recommend in relation to the continuity issue:

If the momentum in Welsh medium education is to be maintained, the issue on continuity becomes crucial and critical. Since the 1950s, a reformation occurred in education in Wales by giving equality of language opportunity to many parents, many children in many areas. The momentum of that reformation needs to be continued in affirmative action on the continuity issue. If the high standards achieved by bilingual children in bilingual schools are to be shared by more children, issues of continuity need urgently promoting.

(WLB 1999: 26)

Such a rationale implicitly integrates the three perspectives by means of the latent ambiguities regarding the word ‘momentum.’ The first instance of the word appears
to mean that the ‘momentum in Welsh-medium education’ be maintained in
furtherance of a pedagogical or a language planning objective, while in the second
instance, the ‘momentum of that reformation’ may relate to a political aspect of
bilingual education (‘equality of language opportunity’), or to the pedagogical
rationale of ‘high standards’.

The Welsh Language Board’s call was thus to politicians, educationalists and
language planners to be pro-active in facilitating continuity in Welsh Language
education by developing ‘policy … on continuity in Welsh-medium education,’ by
‘marketing and promoting Welsh-medium provision at strategic points during an
individual’s progression through the system’ (WLB 1999: 27), and by means of
‘action research to look in detail at the reasons behind the reduction in the numbers
of pupils and students following Welsh-medium and bilingual education post 11
years of age’ (WLB 1999: 26). Such action research specifically aimed to bridge
knowledge gaps regarding two key areas:

(i) the reasons for discontinuity in the provision of Welsh language education across
the education sectors.

(ii) the reasons for students’ lack of continuity within the available Welsh-medium
and bilingual education provision (WLB 1999: 26-27).

The Welsh Language Board asked that such issues be investigated from the
perspectives of key educational stakeholders at both the macro-level and the micro-
level. They stated a need for research which would:

consult with the various sectors of education, individually and also as a group, to
discuss the reasons for lack of continuity and progression in terms of Welsh
medium education and training … [and] examine in detail practical problems
which prevent or discourage pupils from pursuing a bilingual education. These
could include issues such as transport issues, lack of suitable staffing, teaching
resources etc.

(WLB 1999: 26-27)

The Welsh Assembly Government responded in 2003 in Iaith Pawb: A
National Action Plan for a Bilingual Wales. This document incorporated both a
statement acknowledging the issue of continuity in Welsh Language education and a
pledge of pro-active intent regarding the investigation of the issue: ‘We shall be
asking ACCAC, Estyn and the Welsh Language Board to examine these issues in
more detail’ (WAG 2003: 40). Two aspects of the Welsh Assembly Government’s policy statement are of particular significance. The first is that the Welsh Assembly Government’s characterization of the issue of discontinuity provides a more refined definition of the aspects of Welsh language continuity than had the Welsh Language Board in 1999. Whilst the Board had assessed such continuity mostly in terms of the continued uptake of Welsh First Language as a subject at secondary school by pupils from Welsh-medium primary education, the Welsh Assembly Government additionally incorporated the consideration of continuity with regard to the medium of teaching and learning of subjects other than Welsh at the primary to secondary school stage (WAG 2003:40). The second notable aspect is that the rationale given for the Welsh Assembly Government’s advocacy of research by the Welsh Curricular and Qualifications body, the Inspectorate and the Welsh Language Board on issues of continuity is not situated within any one perspective on bilingual education. Indeed, their pledge to ‘research further into the question of linguistic continuity’ (WAG 2003: 40) could be underpinned by a pedagogical, language planning or political framework, or a combination of the three perspectives.

However, despite the Welsh Assembly Government’s characterization of continuity addressing both Welsh as a subject and Welsh as a medium of instruction, the subsequent research conducted on behalf of the ACCAC (Gruffudd et al. 2004) focused on linguistic continuity primarily in terms of the movement from First Language to Second Language Welsh (as a subject) at the primary to secondary school stage, with consideration of continuity of medium of instruction with regard to subjects other than Welsh restricted to Science and Mathematics. This research mapped patterns of continuity at the national level, and by region and school type, and investigated the likely reasons for such trends by means of questionnaires to primary and secondary schools regarding their ‘linguistic practices’ (Gruffudd et al. 2004: 7), an examination of the language policies and guidance documentation issued to parents by local authorities and secondary schools at the primary to secondary school stage, and interviews with primary and secondary school head teachers and parents. In so doing, the research primarily addressed the ‘provision’ and ‘consultation of key macro level educational stakeholder’ aspects of the Welsh Language Board’s 1999 specification of required research on the continuity issue.
However, the study arguably did not adequately address the linguistic continuity issue at the micro level as it did not consult pupils.

Indeed, Gruffudd et al.’s research methods only enabled them adequately to answer one of the five ‘key topics’ identified as the subject of their study, namely ‘the procedures that counties and schools have in terms of linguistic progression’ (Gruffudd et al. 2004: 7). The investigation of the other four research topics (‘the advice given to parents and pupils on linguistic progression,’ ‘the influences on pupils and parents in making their choices,’ ‘the influence of studying subjects through the medium of Welsh or English on the choice,’ and ‘the linguistic progression in terms of the learning medium in subjects other than Welsh’ (Gruffudd et al. 2004: 7) would all have benefited from the incorporation of pupil experiences and views.

Thus, although by 2004 there had been some progress in terms of explaining the ‘disconcerting discontinuity’ (Baker & Jones 2000: 116) in Welsh-medium and bilingual education between the primary and secondary school stages, and it could no longer be said that ‘there is no empirical evidence to explain the causes of discontinuity’(Baker & Jones 2000: 116), such research on macro level stakeholders was insufficient to reliably formulate ‘explanations…for this dysfunction in the educational system of Wales’ (Baker & Jones 2000: 116).

1.2.2 Continuity in Celtic language education – Scotland

The issue of continuity in Celtic language education at the primary to secondary school stage has only recently come to the fore in Scotland, in a report by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Education (2005). This is in part due to a lack of political agreement to provide Gaelic-medium education at the secondary school level at the point at which the first Gaelic-medium primary pupil cohorts progressed to secondary school. Such a lack of political agreement in the mid 1990s was evidenced in a statement by the HMI that although

the growth of Gaelic-medium primary education [since 1985] has accentuated demands for similar provision in the secondary sector…the provision of Gaelic-medium secondary education in a number of subjects, determined by the vagaries of resource availability, is neither desirable nor feasible in the foreseeable future.

(SOED 1994: 3)
The HMI’s position was based on concerns regarding the ability of schools to provide quality Gaelic-medium secondary schooling and on issues pertaining to teaching and learning. It was thought that ‘the limited availability of teachers of quality who are confident in the use of Gaelic as a teaching medium’ might lead to ‘fragmented and incidental provision’ in which ‘the nature and number of courses offered were determined largely by the availability of Gaelic-speaking teachers’ and that this would ‘not present a positive image of Gaelic language and culture’ (SOED 1994: 3). In relation to teaching and learning it was felt that the small pupil groups in Gaelic-medium secondary education would be conducive neither to ‘the exchange of pupils’ views and ideas’ nor ‘an overall sense of community,’ as ‘the Gaelic-medium stream can be seen as separate and isolated from the main school’ (SOED 1994: 3). Additionally, there existed a fear that pupils did not have, or may not have been able to develop, the requisite linguistic competencies in Gaelic for secondary school level subject learning (SOED 1994: 3). This related to concerns that were expressed in relation to primary education:

It is too early to evaluate how standards of attainment in Gaelic-medium units compare with those in English language streams, and this should be kept under review… consideration should be given to a longitudinal study of pupils’ attainment in English and Gaelic.

(SOED 1994: 2)

Thus, rather than encouraging subject teaching through the medium of Gaelic at the secondary school level, the HMI recommended that the ‘recognised’ ‘need, as part of secondary education, to reinforce and extend Gaelic language competence and to enhance pupils’ self-confidence as Gaelic speakers’ (SOED 1994: 2) should be achieved by pupils from Gaelic-medium primary education taking a secondary school level course in Gaelic language, and additionally having the opportunity to study ‘aspects of Gaelic culture, including elements from History, Geography, Music Art and Drama…through the medium of Gaelic’ (SOED 1994: 3) in the first two years of secondary school. These courses were made the responsibility of the Gaelic department, thus restricting both the domain of Gaelic-medium education at the secondary school level, and its scope for expansion.
Such a perspective has gradually been modified, evidenced in the attitude towards continuity of Gaelic-medium education into the secondary school sector expressed by HMI in 2005:

There continue to be key weaknesses in the extent to which Gaelic-medium provision is systematically followed through from primary to the secondary stages. The needs of all pupils who successfully complete seven years of Gaelic-medium education in primary school and achieve fluency in Gaelic are not being met fully. A single Gàidhlig course with minimal daily exposure to the language or less, if the timetable so dictates, is insufficient to maintain and develop fluency in a range of domains.

(HMIE 2005: 36)

This policy shift reflects the emergence of political support for the development of Gaelic-medium subject provision at the secondary school stage. Two other aspects of the Inspectorate’s 2005 position are worthy of note: the first is that the onus for the development of the Gaelic-medium secondary education sector is shared between the schools, local authorities, and national level bodies (HMIE 2005: 36) rather than Gaelic education being the ‘responsibility’ (SOED 1994: 3) of Gaelic departments at the secondary school level. The second is the engagement with the pedagogical and language planning frameworks outlined in Section 1.1. With regard to pedagogy, HMIE emphasize the importance of continuity of Gaelic-medium education across the school stages (HMIE 2005: 33). This encouragement of Gaelic-medium education at the secondary school level is based upon the acknowledgement of bilingual pupils’ ‘needs’ and on the ‘potential advantages’ of Gaelic-medium education at this school stage, whether these be personal or community based. HMIE note:

Too many secondary schools in areas traditionally seen as ‘the Gaelic heartland’ have not yet embraced the concept of providing Gaelic-medium education in a range of subjects, with the potential advantages that could bring.

(HMIE 2005: 37)

In relation to language planning, there is both a reference to the role of secondary school Gaelic-medium education in language maintenance– ‘in 2004, only 55% of Primary 7 pupils from Gaelic-medium primary classes enrolled in Gaelic-medium education in Secondary 1 … these figures bode ill for a self-sustaining language’ (HMIE 2005: 36-37) – and a call for national bodies and education authorities to
‘promote the advantages of bilingualism so that enough people study Gaelic to a standard which will ensure the future sustainability of Gaelic as a living language’ (HMIE 2005: 39).

Such a push for an ‘active promotion of Gaelic-medium education in secondary schools,’ (HMIE 2005: 33) is a marked shift from Gaelic-medium secondary education being ‘neither desirable nor feasible’ (SOED 1994: 3). \(^3\)

However, the achievement of such policy aims in relation to secondary school is hindered by a knowledge gap regarding the reasons for the limited number of pupils continuing with Gaelic-medium education at the secondary school stage. The research gap is highlighted by Nisbet in 2006 and by Bòrd na Gàidhlig in 2007. Nisbet argued that:

Ceann-uidhe nan sgoilearan ann am Bun-sgoil 7…’s e fear de na duilgheadasan as motha a gheibhne an lùigh forglaim Ghàidhlig…Tha e coltach gun cuir mòran phàrant romhra an cuid chloinne a chur gu sgoiltean Beurla nuair a bhios iad ullamh den bhun-sgoil. Ann an 2005 [recte 2004]\(^4\), cha deach ach 55% de sgoilearan meadhann na Gàidhligh ann am Bun-sgoil 7 gu ard-sgoiltean meadhann na Gàidhligh. Feumar barrachd rannsachaidh a dhèanamh air carson a thug na pàrantan eile an cuid chloinne a-mach à GME, mus tèid aig ùghdarrasan ionadail no buidhnean Gàidhlig coimhearsnachail dearbhadh dhaibh gum biodh e na b’ fhéarr fuireach anns an t-siostam Ghàidhlig.

(Nisbet 2006: 62)

[the destination of Primary 7 pupils … is one of the most serious problems facing Gaelic education … Many parents seem to make the decision to move their children into English-medium education at the end of their primary schooling. In 2005 [recte 2004]\(^4\), just 55% of Primary 7 Gaelic-medium pupils transferred into Gaelic-medium secondary education. Research is needed to know why other parents removed their children from GME, before local authorities and Gaelic community organizations can convince them that it would be better to stay within the Gaelic system.]

(Nisbet 2006: 62)

Bòrd na Gàidhlig similarly noted a study of the factors motivating linguistic continuity in Gaelic-medium education at the primary to secondary school stage to be a ‘research priority’ (BnG 2007a: 38). However, unlike Nisbet, the Bòrd also

\(^3\) HMIE’s most recent report, Gaelic education: Building on the successes, addressing the barriers (2011), also encourages the development of Gaelic-medium secondary provision.

\(^4\) Nisbet is citing the continuity figure for Primary 7 pupils from the 2003-04 school year who transferred to Secondary 1 in the 2004-05 school year. The continuity figure for the 2004-05 to 2005-06 school years was 58% (Robertson 2005).
emphasised the stakeholder role of the pupil in decisions regarding language of secondary school education in stating the need for ‘a study of the motivational factors for parents and older pupils to access Gaelic-medium secondary education’ (BnG 2007a: 38).

MacNeil and Stradling identify an additional knowledge gap in relation to the nature of the experiences of Gaelic-medium primary pupils in the transition to secondary school. In interview-based research with 76 Second and Fourth Year secondary school pupils who had attended Gaelic-medium primary education (2000), the authors highlight that the primary-secondary school transition experience of Gaelic-medium pupils warrants further investigation from both a linguistic and a cultural identity perspective. They note of the primary-secondary transition stage:

> for the Gaelic-medium students … care must be taken to minimize potential harm to their fluency, their use of Gaelic and the Gaelic-related components of their sense of self, while, at the same time, maximizing their sense of moving confidently with their peer group as a whole, into the next phase of their education.

(MacNeil & Stradling 2000: 31)

This thesis investigates the reasons for decisions regarding the medium of instruction of secondary school subjects, and the effect of the move from primary to secondary school on aspects of the pupils’ language use, perceived linguistic abilities and identifications with the Celtic language. The transition from primary to secondary school is important from a language planning perspective because – as will be outlined in Chapter 2 and subsequently – it is the point at which the immersion language is or is not integrated into the identity of the learner in a way that might be sustained into adulthood.

### 1.3 Substantive outline of thesis

This was the policy and research context at the inception of the work for the thesis.\(^5\) There was a clear need for further research on the factors motivating decisions regarding the medium of instruction of first year secondary subjects of pupils who had been in Celtic-medium primary education, and for research on the

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\(^5\) Recent (2008-2011) policy developments which pertain to the continuity issue are considered in the final chapter.
impact of the transition between primary and secondary school on various aspects of Celtic-medium pupils’ language relevant to language planning. The present study aims to investigate the reasons for the choice of medium of instruction of first year secondary school subjects, and whether the transition from primary to secondary school affects pupils’ language use, confidence in their linguistic abilities, identification with the Celtic language or their perceptions of the usefulness of the Celtic language for their future. Broad research questions are thus:

- What factors influence decisions regarding language of education for the first year of secondary school?
- Does the move from primary to secondary school affect aspects of pupils’ language pertinent to language planning?

The questions will be situated in their policy and research contexts in Chapter 2.

Such research questions are addressed through a longitudinal study, based on interviews and questionnaires, of 27 Gaelic-medium and 53 Welsh-medium final year primary and first year secondary pupils from 6 primary schools providing Gaelic-medium education in Scotland and 4 providing Welsh-medium education in Wales. Parental and teacher stakeholders were also interviewed. English-medium pupils in dual stream schools who learnt the Celtic language as a subject for learners were also invited to participate in the research, to enable a comparison of Celtic-medium and English-medium pupils’ Celtic language use, perceptions of linguistic ability in English, and identifications with the Celtic language within the same school and community contexts. This incorporation of data from English-medium pupils enabled aspects unique to the Celtic-medium pupils to be identified. 17 English-medium pupils from Scotland and 34 English-medium pupils from Wales, drawn from 5 primary schools, participated in the research.

1.4 Chapter outline of thesis

This chapter has identified, in a preliminary way, gaps in existing research on Celtic-medium education in the Scottish and Welsh contexts, and has briefly outlined the theoretical frameworks within which such issues can be conceptualised. Chapter 2 situates the issues of choice and continuity in Celtic-medium education within their national policy and research contexts, paying particular attention to
questions of language planning. Chapter 3 outlines the methodological approach to, and the methods employed in, the collection and analysis of the empirical data presented in the thesis. Chapter 4 presents data relating to choice of the medium of instruction of schooling at the primary and secondary school stages, whilst Chapter 5 presents findings relating to language planning, specifically longitudinal data regarding continuity and change in patterns of pupil language use, language ability, identifications with the Celtic language and perceptions of the usefulness of the Celtic language for the future between the primary and secondary school stages. Chapter 6 provides a discussion of key findings in relation to theory, policy and research, incorporating also discussion of policy developments since the fieldwork was carried out (2008-2011).
Chapter Two  Celtic-medium education in Scotland and Wales: choice and language planning at the primary and early secondary school stages

Chapter Two situates the issues of choice and continuity in Celtic language education at the primary to secondary school stage in Scotland and Wales within their respective national historical and current policy contexts. In so doing, the chapter outlines key concepts and defines key terms that inform the research design and analysis of the project’s findings. The tripartite theoretical framework identified in Chapter One informs the theoretical base of the chapter, with particular attention to Celtic language education as language planning structuring the consideration of ‘continuity’ in Celtic language education between the primary and secondary school.

2.1 Choice of bilingual education in the context of the demographics of language

This section outlines the historical development of the choice of Celtic-medium education in Wales and Scotland within the context of demographic data about the languages. Particular reference is given to the stakeholders and ideologies prompting such educational developments. Existing research on the reasons for the choice of Celtic-medium education at the primary and secondary school stages is presented before the provision of statutory school level Celtic-medium education in the Scottish and Welsh contexts at the time of this research project (2006-2008) is summarized. The Welsh context is presented in Section 2.1.1 and the Scottish context in Section 2.1.2.

2.1.1 Choice of Welsh-medium education

2.1.1.1 Historical development of Welsh-medium education

The Elementary Education Act 1870, which constituted the first legislative framework for the provision of English-medium education for children aged 5 to 12 in England and Wales, is also argued to have ‘opened the door to teaching Welsh in schools’ (Jones 2001: 8) as capitation grants were paid to schools which taught Welsh (Jones 2001: 37). However, it was not in the tradition of UK education legislation for the provision of Welsh to be directly regulated by the Act itself, and thus the school was the key stakeholder in the provision of Welsh language education at the elementary school level. Edwards notes that the provision of such Welsh language instruction was at ‘the whim of the head teacher and staff’ (Edwards...
Official support for the teaching of Welsh came in 1888 when the *Report of the Royal Commission on the Working of the Elementary Education Acts* recommended that Welsh be taught as a subject in schools in Wales. This was at a time when the ability to speak Welsh was relatively widespread. The first census to ask about ability to speak Welsh in 1891 revealed that 910,239 people, or 54% of the population over 3 years of age, were able to speak the language (Census of England and Wales 1891: 82). The Welsh Board of Education’s *Code of Regulations for Public Elementary Schools in Wales* of 1907 adopted the recommendation that Welsh be taught as a subject in schools in Wales, and additionally allowed Welsh-medium teaching in any curricular area (Board of Education 1907, cited in Imperial Education Conference 1911: 257). The analogous *Regulations for Secondary Schools in Wales* of 1907 recommended the teaching of Welsh as a subject in Welsh-speaking areas, and similarly enabled Welsh-medium and bilingual subject teaching at the secondary school stage.

The implementation of such recommendations is evidenced by the note in the *Report of the Imperial Education Conference* that the Welsh language was being taught as a subject in elementary schools in Anglicized areas (1911: 256). However, no mention was made of the teaching of Welsh as a subject at the secondary school stage. In relation to Welsh-medium instruction, Morgan notes that ‘schools were very slow to adopt the [1907] proposals even in Welsh-speaking areas …’ (Morgan 2003: 22; see also Jones 1966: 77).

Support for the Welsh language in education was emphasized by the Board of Education in 1927 (BoE 1927). The Board recommended the teaching of Welsh as a subject in primary and secondary schools and additionally recommended Welsh-medium education for Welsh-speaking children, at least at the elementary school level, as they had found that half of elementary schools in Welsh-speaking areas only made provision for the teaching of Welsh as a subject (BoE 1927: para 289). This Welsh-medium provision was primarily intended for Welsh-speaking areas, but the establishment of Welsh-medium schools for Welsh-speaking children in Anglicized areas was also recommended. Jones (1966) argues that the report saw elementary education to be ‘key’ to the position of Welsh in Wales, situating the establishment of Welsh-medium education within a language planning perspective,
at a time when the number of Welsh speakers had declined from 977,366 (43.5% of the population over the age of 3) in 1911 (Census of England and Wales 1911: 1) to 923,098 in 1921 (37.1% of the population over the age of 3) (Census of England and Wales 1921: 190).

In 1929 the Board of Education recommended continuity of medium of instruction from the infant to the junior school (an educational transition which occurred when pupils were 6 or 7 years of age):

in the predominantly Welsh-speaking areas the medium of instruction should continue to be Welsh [from the infant to junior school] with English as a second language, and that the converse should hold for English-speaking areas. In linguistically mixed areas, children should attend the appropriate [Welsh-medium or English-medium] school or class according to their home language [and that English or Welsh be introduced as a second language].

(Gittins 1967: 209)

Partly as a result of these developments, by 1939 ‘many rural [elementary] schools used Welsh as their natural mode of instruction’ (Williams 2003: 10) and Welsh-medium primary school provision existed in bilingual areas such as Cilfynydd, Glamorgan and in Trelogan, Flintshire (Morgan 2003: 25). The anticipated anglicisation of a local school in Aberystwyth with the arrival of wartime evacuees from Liverpool (Williams 2003: 45) prompted the establishment of private Welsh-medium education in the town in 1939, by a group of parents who wished to protect their children’s Welsh language and identity. However, Williams notes that ‘the establishment of a Welsh-medium school in an Anglicized town or industrial region was a revolutionary concept [at that time].’ (Williams 2003: 10) Such a wish to safeguard Welsh language and culture existed within a context in which Welsh national identity largely centred on ‘ethnic markers’ such as ancestry, country of birth and language rather than ‘civic characteristics’ (Paterson & Jones 1999: 183) such as national institutions or country of residence. Without nationally distinctive and autonomous legal, educational, religious or local governmental institutions, national identity in Wales came to centre on aspects of cultural distinctiveness, such as language. However, Baker notes that the use of the Welsh language had typically been restricted to the home and church contexts in the nineteenth and early twentieth

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6 In 1931, 30.5% of the population of Glamorgan, and 31.7% of the population of Flintshire were Welsh speakers. (Williams 1953: 332)
century due to the greater economic potential of English and the negative attitude towards the Welsh language amongst the nineteenth century Nonconformist elite (Baker 1985: 42).

The *Education Act 1944* marked a shift in stakeholder influence regarding the provision of Welsh-medium education from the school, as it both allowed local authorities to open new Welsh-medium schools, and determined that ‘pupils … be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents’ (section 76). Although the latter is often cited as the ‘crucial clause’ (Williams 2003: 11) of the *1944 Education Act*, and parents cited as the key stakeholders in the establishment of state Welsh-medium education (Lewis 2008: 7), such a representation fails to acknowledge the actions of the UCAC, *Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru* (The National Union of Welsh Teachers), which played a key role in the development of Welsh-medium education both in advance of and subsequent to the *1944 Education Act*.

In 1942, for example, UCAC thanked R. A. Butler, the President of the Board of Education, ‘for his encouragement … [for Welsh local authorities to redouble their activities on behalf of the language] and also call upon him to send that encouragement in written form to the county councils of Wales’ (Morgan 2003: 27). This resulted in the distribution of Circular 182, *The Teaching of Welsh*, which required all education authorities in Wales to ‘draw up plans to promote the teaching of Welsh in their schools (Morgan 2003: 27), increasing the UCAC’s ‘stakeholder influence’ (Varvasovszky & Brugha 2000: 344) in the issue of the development of Welsh-language provision.

After the enactment of the 1944 Act, the General Secretary of the UCAC used this stakeholder influence to forge a partnership with parents to mobilize parents to campaign for Welsh-medium education. A result was the establishment of the first state-funded Welsh-medium primary school in 1947 and of a further 19 Welsh-medium primary schools, many in Anglicized areas, within the next five years. In August 1952 parents took responsibility for the support and expansion of Welsh-medium education when Undeb Rhieni Ysgolion Cymraeg (URYC) – *The Union of Welsh-medium School Parents* – was established to ‘represent parents’ associations within Welsh-medium schools’ (Morgan 2003: 39), to help existing
Welsh-medium school provision and to promote and support applications for further Welsh-medium nursery and primary provision.

Morgan (2003: 39) emphasizes that all such support and development was aimed to create provision for Welsh-speaking children. However, he argues that the Union of Welsh-medium School Parents played a key, pro-active role by ‘bringing pressure to bear on parents’ committees to set up nursery classes for non-Welsh-speaking children to feed the [Welsh-medium] schools’ (Morgan 2003: 40) in bilingual and Anglicized areas.

In relation to secondary schooling, it was noted in 1953 in a report by the Central Advisory Council for Education (Wales) that there often existed a lack of continuity between the primary and secondary school stages in relation to Welsh-medium instruction, which entailed a ‘completely new orientation of pupils’ linguistic interests and a sudden change in the medium of their education’ (1953: 26). The Board of Education made the recommendation that ‘the continuation of Welsh-medium education in the secondary sector … be ensured’ (ibid.: 26). Jones and Martin-Jones note that Local Authorities, rather than parents, were the key stakeholder in the development of Welsh-medium secondary education, with Flintshire establishing the first and second Welsh-medium secondary schools in 1956 and 1961 and Glamorgan establishing a bilingual secondary school in 1962 (Jones & Martin-Jones 2004: 50). Indeed, the Parental Attitudes Survey of a random sample of 1,222 parents of primary school children across Wales conducted by Gittins for the 1967 Primary Education in Wales report (discussed in 2.1.1.2) highlighted ‘parental reluctance’ regarding Welsh-medium teaching at the secondary school stage (Gittins 1967: 238).

Baker (1990a: 82) notes that 18 Welsh-medium secondary schools were established between 1956 and 1988 by seven councils and argues that the development of such bilingual secondary schooling relates not only to pedagogy but also to language planning. He states:

The development of bilingual education in Wales is not a purely educationally derived phenomena. It does not derive from simple arguments about the educational virtues of bilingual education. Rather, such growth is both an action and a reaction in the general growth of consciousness about the virtues of preserving the indigenous language and culture.

(Baker 1990a: 79)
The linguistic context of the development of such consciousness was the dramatic decline in the number and proportion of Welsh speakers in the mid-twentieth century, from 909,261 in 1931 (Census of England and Wales 1931: Table 39) to 714,686 in 1951 (35% and 29% of the population respectively) (General Register Office 1951: vii). The number and proportion of Welsh speakers further decreased between the 1951 and 1961 and the 1961 and 1971 censuses, reaching 542,425 speakers in 1971 (20.8% of the population over 3) (Office of Population Censuses and Surveys 1971: 39).

2.1.1.2 Reasons for the choice of Welsh-medium education

In the absence of academic studies of parental choice of Welsh-medium education prior to 1978 (Williams et al. 1978, discussed below), early parental rationales for the choice of Welsh-medium education must be gleaned from other sources. One such source is statements from the parental body Undeb Rhieni Ysgolion Cymraeg (URYC). In their March 1965 evidence to the Gittins Committee (a group charged with the task of examining education in Wales at the primary school stage and in the transition to secondary school), the URYC associated the choice of Welsh-medium education with national linguistic and cultural heritage when they asserted:

A civilized country has the privilege of basing the education of its children upon its nation’s traditions, language and culture. This principle is at the heart of the movement which has flourished in Wales these past twenty years to establish Welsh-medium schools, a movement which has relied, almost exclusively upon the vision and determination of parents.

(URYC, 1965, cited in Williams & Reynolds 2003: 363)

As in the campaigning for Welsh-medium education from 1939 onwards, the parents’ organization framed their wish for Welsh-medium education within a ‘romantic nationalist discourse’ (MacDonald 1997: 219), which associates language and nation and views languages not only as means of communication but as the central source and marker of ‘peoplehood’ …‘heritage languages’ – i.e. languages with which a person should particularly identify on account of their ethnicity, which usually would be the mother tongue – are seen to lie at the heart of a deep-seated identity from which individuals and peoples should not be estranged.

(MacDonald 1997: 219)
Such an association of a language and membership of a national community is known as ‘linguistic nationism’ (Kramsch 1998: 72). For the parental organization, the establishment of Welsh-medium education – ‘an education which [is] both linguistically and culturally Welsh’ – is ‘one of the most heroic developments in the history of our nation’ (URYC 1965, cited in Williams & Reynolds 2003: 363). The parents thus asked the Gittins Committee to recommend that the Education Authorities of Wales take the initiative in relation to the expansion of Welsh-medium education, rather than being reactive to parents’ demands.

The Gittins Committee largely supported the argument and suggestions put forward by the Union of Welsh-medium School Parents and stated in the *Primary Education in Wales* report:

> We believe the time is ripe for education authorities and teachers purposefully to implement a positive policy of bilingualism in the primary schools of Wales. (Gittins 1967: 213)

The Committee thus recommended the establishment of a system of bilingual primary education in Wales, incorporating existing Ysgolion Cynradd (Welsh-medium schools in Welsh-speaking areas) and Ysgolion Gymraeg (Welsh-medium schools in English-speaking areas), and additionally proposing bilingual schools in Anglicized areas for English first language pupils. Such ‘proposed experimental bilingual schools’ in Anglicized areas would have ‘the basic medium of instruction at the first stage in English, but would progressively introduce Welsh as a medium of instruction until approximate parity [of linguistic competence] is reached’ (Gittins 1967: 252). The argument for the development of such a system of bilingual education – to be available throughout Wales – was made on the basis of preserving the Welsh cultural heritage in terms of ‘literary and artistic traditions’ (Gittins 1967: 212) and preserving Welsh national identity by means of preserving the Welsh language. The value of Welsh for communication in Welsh speaking-areas was also acknowledged (Gittins 1967: 213). Bilingual education was thus proposed for social rather than economic or educational reasons, to enable children to ‘receiv[e] their rightful heritage’ (Gittins 1967: 213).

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7 Such schools accepted both L1 and L2 speakers of Welsh, with the L2 speakers typically having acquired basic Welsh competence at the pre-school stage.

8 Language and identity will be further discussed in Section 2.3.
Within a broader perspective, such a policy development – and parallel developments such as *The Welsh Language Act 1967* – were in part a response to an emergent political nationalism, expressed most visibly in growing support for *Plaid Genedlaethol Cymru* (the Welsh National Party). Such political nationalism was still strongly related to the language, however, as *Plaid Genedlaethol Cymru* had the maintenance and development of the Welsh language through institutionalization in public life and through Welsh-medium primary, secondary and tertiary education as key aims of their 1925 foundation document (Butt 1975: 14). The setting up of the Welsh Office in 1964 was the most fundamental political response to these changes, and the Welsh Office oversaw much of the education and language policy of the ensuing decades.

In relation to the development of Welsh-medium education, the Gittins report stated that ‘every child should be given sufficient opportunity to become reasonably bilingual by the end of the primary stage’ (Gittins 1967: 245), whilst in relation to choice, parental choice is forefronted:

> In Anglicized areas where there are sufficient numbers to justify them, further Ysgolion Cymraeg (Welsh language primary schools) should be established to meet the needs of those children whose mother tongue is Welsh or whose parents wish their children to acquire Welsh.

(Gittins 1967: 253)

Another source of insights into parental rationales for the choice of medium of instruction of education (Welsh-medium or English-medium) is research into parental attitudes to Welsh and the Welsh language in education. Gittins’s survey of 1,222 parents of primary-school children ‘asked whether respondents saw advantages or disadvantages in knowing Welsh, and in their child learning Welsh, and to give the reasons’ (Gittins 1967: 232). Gittins notes that 75% of Welsh-speaking parents perceived knowing Welsh to be an advantage. There were three key reasons: communication with family and communities, particularly in Welsh-speaking areas, language maintenance and participation in literary and cultural activities (Gittins 1967:236), with the first being the ‘major advantage’ and the second and third cited by 33% and 18% of respondents respectively (Gittins 1967: 236). In relation to parents’ perceptions of their child learning Welsh, 85% of respondents where both parents spoke Welsh saw advantages to their child doing so,
but that view was held by only 46% of respondents in families where the mother could not speak Welsh (Gittins 1967: 236). This underlines the importance of social (family and community) factors in relation to the perceived usefulness and value of learning the Welsh language in Wales in the mid-1960s. Moreover, of the 53% of the total parent group who saw advantages in their child learning Welsh, only one in five believed that knowing Welsh would help their child to find employment in the future (Gittins 1967: 236).

Gittins’ finding that learning Welsh was more strongly associated with social and community factors than with economic factors is substantiated by a research study conducted by Morgan in Maesteg, Glamorgan (an Anglicized county of South Wales), in the mid-1960s, which noted a tendency for the parents of pupils in Welsh-medium education to be middle-class (Morgan 1969). Khleif comments on the social demographics of choice of medium of instruction of education in Wales in the early 1970s:

It should be stressed that English-medium schools cater to the needs of two kinds of people: either Welsh-speaking mobility orientated, rural or urban working-class, or English-speaking, middle- or working-class. On the other hand, Welsh-medium schools predominantly serve a Welsh-speaking middle class – parents and pupils who are already in the middle class but whose home language is Welsh or whose aspirations are more Welsh than ‘British.’

(Khleif 1980: 124)

Khleif thus explicitly associates English-medium education with social mobility, and argues that middle-class parents (being financially secure) are more likely to be able to afford to prioritise their Welsh identity over social mobility and choose Welsh-medium education. Interestingly, Khleif associates such a Welsh identity with either Welsh-speaking or with Welsh-based ‘aspirations’, the latter being what Watson (1964) would call ‘burghers’, that is to say people who view social mobility ‘in terms of a more restricted spatial context, being tied to a more localized community’ (Williams et al. 1978: 195).

However, the 1970s saw a shift in the nature of the association between Welsh and social mobility. Marshall and Alderman note that the British civil service expanded into ‘less-favoured regions as a counter-weight to the heavy concentration of private business and financial services in the South East of Britain’ (Marshall &
Alderman 1991: 52) between 1960 and 1979, and Williams et al. argue in 1978 that the decentralization of aspects of the civil service and broadcasting from London to Cardiff ‘played an important role’ in promoting ‘Welsh language loyalty and … bilingualism’ as it ‘served to create more high-status employment within Wales, many of the positions carrying a Welsh language qualification’ (Williams et al. 1978: 194).

In a study of two groups of 40 working-class parents ‘evenly distributed by gender and chosen randomly from among the parents of children attending two primary schools, one being a bilingual school and the other teaching exclusively through the medium of English’ (Williams et al. 1978: 195) in the Rhondda Valley in Anglicized South-East Wales, Williams et al. aimed to investigate whether such new economic status for the Welsh language influenced parental choice between Welsh medium or English medium. They hypothesized that working-class parents may choose Welsh-medium education in order that their children gain the skills to access the new Welsh language economy.

However, the research found that the social-mobility argument alone did not typically prompt a choice for Welsh-medium education; rather, such a decision tended to result from a combination of factors. The study concluded that:

it is the combination of a positive attitude towards the language in identity terms, a belief in the superiority of the bilingual education institution and the possibility that the Welsh-language ability might help to widen the job market which underlie the preference for Welsh medium education.

(Williams et al. 1978: 201)

The authors illustrate this finding with examples of the parental wish that their children be taught the ‘mother tongue’ (Williams et al. 1978: 198) of their family or of the nation, and the parental belief that Welsh-medium education is ‘an identity marker associated with a heightened ethnic awareness’ (ibid.: 200). The perceived ‘superiority’ of Welsh-medium education was associated with multifarious indicators of quality, for example the student/teacher ratio, school ethos and discipline, and the cognitive benefits of bilingual education, such as the belief that it ‘served to “make the mind more flexible” or served as the basis for facilitating the learning of a third language’ (ibid.: 200). In relation to employment, parents who had chosen Welsh-medium education were much more likely to feel that Welsh created wider job
opportunities than did those who had chosen English-medium education (Williams et al. 1978: 200). The authors note that ‘in many cases the nature of the [intended Welsh-language] employment was specified as being associated with the media, local government, tourism, government administration or teaching, all of them being significantly middle-class occupations’ (Williams et al. 1978: 201). However, as such enhanced job opportunities would be restricted to Wales, Williams et al. also hypothesized that:

those parents who send their children to the bilingual schools for reasons of mobility aspirations are more likely to view the social mobility of their children as ‘burghers’ [social mobility tied to a more localized community] rather than ‘spiralists’ [who combine social and geographical mobility.] (ibid.: 195)

This hypothesis was confirmed (Williams et al. 1978: 203-204). Thus, whilst Khleif’s assertion that parents who choose Welsh-medium education are likely to have aspirations that are ‘more Welsh than British’ (Khleif 1980: 124) was substantiated by Williams et al.’s research, the 1978 research returned shifts in relation to Khleif’s assessment of the social characteristics of parents of Welsh-medium pupils from the early 1970s, with Welsh-medium education becoming a choice also made by working-class families, as the changing economic context in Wales enabled parents to prioritise ethnicity without sacrificing social mobility. An additional shift from Khleif’s findings is in a rise in the proportion of parents for whom Welsh is not their first or family language (Williams et al. 1978: 200). The Williams et al. study indicated that such a shift towards more English-speaking or English-dominant parents choosing Welsh-medium education for their child may have been related to a wish to integrate into a lost family tradition of Welsh speaking, or into a national linguistic heritage through associating with ‘the symbolic value of the Welsh language as an identity marker of ethnic status’ (ibid.: 204).

Such integrative motivations existed within a national context in which there was an ongoing push for cultural resurgence associated with pressure groups such as Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg (the Welsh Language Society), which was established in 1962 and strove to raise of the visibility, use and social status of the Welsh language. Such cultural nationalism emphasized the importance of ethnic markers such as language in national identity. Bourhis et al. (1973) concluded from their
interviews with 21 Welsh speakers, 21 Welsh learners and 21 non-Welsh speakers from Cardiff and Pontypridd that ‘it would seem that to possess a full Welsh identity, one needs at least to be involved in learning the language’ (Bourhis et al. 1973: 457).

Jones (2008) also emphasizes the role of Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin (The Welsh Nursery School Movement), which accepted pupils from both Welsh-speaking and non Welsh-speaking homes, in facilitating such a shift in the linguistic demographics of parents of pupils in Welsh-medium primary education (Jones 2008: 4). Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin was established as a national organization in 1971 to support the 60 Ysgolion Meithrin (Welsh-medium nursery schools) which existed by 1970 (Jones & Martin-Jones 2004: 50).

Research into parental choice of Welsh-medium education in the Anglicized area of Gwent conducted by Bush, Atkinson and Read in 1977-78 similarly refuted Khleif’s notion that Welsh-medium schools were typically attended by the middle classes (Khleif 1980: 217). The authors concluded ‘we are certainly not dealing with the educational aspirations of a small class-based elite’ (Bush et al. 1984: E8). The study rather found a decision for Welsh-medium education to be a lifestyle choice: ‘commitment to the minority language is more likely to define ‘status groups’ than be based on social class’ (ibid.). Bush et al. further emphasise that such a cultural commitment to the Welsh language could exist amongst both Welsh-speaking and non Welsh-speaking parents. Indeed 91% of the parents sampled described English as the main language of the home (Bush et al. 1984: E11). The authors concluded that the choice of Welsh-medium primary education in Gwent was:

A mixture of both ‘expressive’ and ‘instrumental’ attitudes … the ‘instrumental’ include concerns for educational standards and achievement, enhanced life chances and the like. The ‘expressive’ correspond to what have been called ‘integrative’ values [connected to social and cultural life.]

(Bush et al. 1984: F1)

However, the pattern of expressive and instrumental reasons found by Bush et al. differed from that found by Williams et al. (1978). Bush et al. note that the employment-related factor found by Williams et al. – where there was reported to be a ‘tendency’ for parents of Welsh-medium pupils to hold ‘middle-class occupational aspirations for their children’ (Williams et al. 1978: 202) – was ‘relatively unimportant’ in their study (Bush et al. 1984: F1).
The attitudinal and policy ‘reorientation’ (Williams et al. 1978: 194) towards the Welsh language in the 1960s and 1970s also impacted upon the nature of parental wishes regarding the medium of instruction of education in Welsh-speaking areas. Williams (2003) notes that whilst ‘in Gwynedd and Dyfed and parts of Clwyd and Powys, many primary schools used the [Welsh] language naturally as a means of education before there was talk of Welsh-medium schools’, there was a ‘lengthy and hard-fought battle to increase Welsh-medium education within the secondary schools of Gwynedd and Dyfed and to break the traditional hold of English-medium education’ (Williams 2003: 16-17) in the 1970s. Williams notes that ‘these initiatives followed from the example of Welsh-medium secondary schools [in more Anglicized areas] rather than leading the way’ (2003: 17), thus describing a gradual process of development that aligns with Baker’s characterization of the growth of bilingual schools in Wales as a ‘gentle revolution’ (Baker 1993: 9).

The importance of Welsh-medium secondary school had been highlighted in the Gittins Report of 1967, which recommended that ‘bilingual education, in appropriate form, should continue at least in the first years of secondary school’ (Gittins 1967: 253). In Anglicized areas, this was to be achieved by means of bilingual secondary schools (Gittins 1967: 253). Such a strong policy recommendation aimed to address the issue of the challenges in providing Celtic-medium secondary education to relatively small pupil cohorts, which is pertinent to the current Scottish context (Section 2.1.2.3). The report notes:

Pupils from Ysgolion Cymraeg, or Welsh-speaking children in general, often face difficulties when they enter the local secondary school. They are often few in number and the school may find it difficult to make provision for them to be taught through the medium of Welsh. We have recommended that, where practicable in terms of numbers, there should be bilingual secondary schools so that children from Ysgolion Cymraeg may continue their education through the medium of Welsh.

(Gittins 1967: 157)

However, the recommendations concerning Welsh-medium provision in Welsh-speaking areas were less prescriptive, leaving the establishment of such provision to parental and pupil demand (Gittins 1967: 253).

Humphreys notes the ‘increased emphasis on the Welsh language in Gwynedd from 1975 onwards’ (2003:289) and attributes it to parental pressure.
together with ‘the election to Gwynedd council a group of councillors with a vision for bilingual education’ (Humphreys 2003:290) following the reorganization of local authority areas in Wales in 1974. The resulting *Gwynedd County Council 1975 Language Policy* aimed to make ‘every child in the county thoroughly bilingual’ (Humphreys 2003: 290, quoting GCC: 1975). Nursery and primary schools were expected to work to bring pupils to age and stage-related levels of fluency in both English and Welsh in all of the linguistic skills by the end of Year 6 (the final year of primary school), and secondary schools were to provide ‘continuity of Welsh-medium teaching in a number of subjects in secondary school’ and to ensure ‘that each pupil uses both languages as a medium to a differing extent in line with individual requirements, in order to ensure continuity of the bilingual education offered in primary schools’ (Humphreys 2003: 294, quoting GCC: 1975). The Welsh provision depended on the size of the school and the language background of the pupils, with six possible Welsh-English bilingual language models proposed (GCC: 1975), and a language co-ordinator appointed in each secondary school.\(^9\) That such national and county level Welsh language education policies contributed to language revitalization is evidenced in the 7.2% increase in 3-15 year old Welsh speakers in the 1981 census, from 77,560 in 1971 to 83,153 in 1981. The increases were not sufficient to stem the overall numerical decline of Welsh language speakers from 542,425 (20.8% of the 3+ population) in 1971 to 503,549 (19% of the 3+ population) in 1981, however (Office of Population Censuses and Surveys 1971, 1981).

Such ‘institutionalization’ of the Welsh language into education at a county level was paralleled by institutionalization at a national level in the *Education Reform Act 1988*, which stipulated that Welsh would be a ‘core’ subject of the *National Curriculum in Wales* in ‘Welsh speaking schools’ (section 3(1)(b)) and a ‘foundation’ subject in other schools. The criteria for qualification as a ‘Welsh speaking school’ were defined as the teaching of more than half the subjects of ‘religious education and the subjects other than Welsh and English which are

\(^9\) The implementation of the current Gwynedd Council Language Policy is described in relation to Primary School 10 and Secondary Schools 10.1 and 10.2 in the study presented in this thesis. [Appendix 4, B.2 & B.3, Chapter 5.Topic 2, Section 2.2.1]
foundation subjects in relation to pupils at the school … wholly or partly in Welsh’ (section 3(7)).

Policy analysts have noted such a comprehensive institutionalization of Welsh to have been unexpected. Daugherty and Elfed-Owens (2003: 237) describe it as a ‘radical change’ over the four-month consultation period for the *National Curriculum in Wales* which ‘transformed’ the position of Welsh in the curriculum. The authors note an absence of evidence that might explain the influences on such a change (ibid.: 237-8). However, although the extent to which various stakeholders influenced such a curricular development is not known, Williams argues that the Welsh-medium parental lobby contributed to the status of Welsh in the National Curriculum in 1988. He notes of the URYC:

> In the 1980s, having changed its name to Rhieni Dros Addysg Gymraeg (Parents for Welsh-medium Education – commonly known as RHAG), the movement had a new lease of life and became a force to be reckoned with in the development of Welsh-medium education by dint of the detailed research and lobbying it undertook in Mid Glamorgan, and also in Clwyd, Powys and Gwent. 
> (Williams 2003: 11)

Jones and Williams argue that Welsh-medium education also underwent a ‘profound change’ in the 1980s (Jones & Williams 2000: 139). National changes increased the influence of parents in relation both to the school and to school choice. The *Education Act 1986* gave parents greater influence on school governing boards whilst the *Education Reform Act 1988* gave parents choice regarding the school they wished their child to attend, by means of the creation of a ‘market/consumer driven provision of state education’ (John 1990: 36). Bellin et al. note that:

> In the context of the creation of a ‘social market’, opting into Welsh-medium education became one option among others on the government’s social market stall.
> (Bellin et al. 1999: 178)

These developments prompted academic interest in the social characteristics and the motivations of parents who used the market mechanisms which enabled school choice in Wales. In a study of Mid and South Glamorgan in Anglicized South Wales,

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10 The foundation subjects are history, geography, technology, music, art and physical education.

11 The Union of Welsh-medium School Parents became known as Rhieni Dros Addysg Gymraeg (Parents for Welsh-medium Education) from 1983.
Bellin et al. used 1991 census data and interviews with a sample of families from five Welsh-medium and five English-medium secondary schools to investigate the relationship between the choice of Welsh-medium education and social class. On the basis of studies in England which found parental use of market mechanisms to relate to parents’ ‘cultural capital’ (Gewirtz et al. 1995), with Ball arguing that the market had ‘as one of its major effects the reproduction of relative social class (and ethnic) advantages and disadvantages’ (1993:4), Bellin et al. hypothesized that the choice of Welsh-medium education in Wales may also have ‘privileged class interests’ (Bellin et al. 1999: 178), allowing middle-class parents to “play” the market to enable their child access to Welsh-medium schools in South East Wales in which ‘standards … were agreed to be high’ (Bellin et al. 1999: 178).

Although there was too little time between the passage of the Education Reform Act 1988 and 1991 for the census data to truly reflect Welsh parents’ use of the market mechanisms established by the 1988 Act, the key finding of Bellin et al.’s research was that the choice of Welsh-medium education is related more to lifestyle than to social class factors, thus confirming Bush et al.’s 1984 hypothesis. Bellin et al. note that ‘being a young Welsh speaker cuts right across social class’ (Bellin et al. 1999: 184) and emphasize that such a finding was the case ‘whatever social indicators may be used to operationalize class differences’ (Bellin et al. 1999: 183) within the census data. Bellin et al. thus did not find in Wales that the market operated in a similar way to that which Gewirtz et al. (1995) found in England, reproducing cultural capital. Their interviews showed there to have been an institutionalization of Welsh-medium education into the community culture of Anglicized areas of South Wales. They note:

Choosing Welsh-medium education is seen as part of a lifestyle with high local prestige – a ‘tidy’ lifestyle … [preserving] … a steady respectability in spite of vicissitudes of personal, familial and areal economic fortunes … the mix of [instrumental] motivations with cultural expression belongs with the ‘local’, the familiar and the sense of community … participation [in Welsh-medium education] concerns lifestyles and values that are interwoven into the neighbourhood sense of place rather than emulation of an outside elite.

(Bellin et al. 1999: 188, 190)

Bellin et al. also found ‘any discussion about whether one school had better results than another kept to surrounding schools with the same language of instruction’
(1999: 186), and reported the reasons for the choice of Welsh-medium education to be ‘a mixture of instrumental motivation and cultural expressive reasons … whatever the occupational background [of the parent]’ (Bellin et al. 1999: 186). The authors note that ‘there was usually mention of a family history which included some contact with the Welsh language. In more affluent areas there was also mention of cultural opportunities with the all-Wales cultural institution concerned with youth (Urdd Gobaith Cymru)’ (ibid.) They note that ‘dilemmas discussed by Khleif (1980) such as worry about potential for mobility’ to be ‘completely absent’ in their data (Bellin et al. 1999: 186).

A study conducted by Packer and Campbell (1997) with parents of 24 Year 6 Welsh-medium pupils at a school near Cardiff in 1990-1993 also investigated the motivations for the choice of Welsh-medium education amongst parents in an Anglicized area. The authors hypothesized that a ‘probable’ factor in the choice was Welsh-medium schools’ ‘reputation as highly successful educational institutions’, but also wished to investigate claims that Welsh-medium education was a means by which ‘middle class parents sought to recuperate social selectivity’ and that Welsh-medium schools ‘represented a concentration of parents whose political opinions inclined to Welsh Nationalism’ (Packer and Campbell 1997: 3-4). The authors did not find evidence to support either of the last two claims, and thus, so far as selectivity is concerned, reached similar conclusions to those of Bellin et al. (1999). However, in relation to the initial hypothesis, Packer and Campbell (1997) reported the quality of the school to be but one of several reasons for the choice of Welsh-medium education by English-speaking parents. Indeed, the rationales of the Welsh-speaking and English-speaking parents were remarkably similar. For example, whilst Welsh-speaking parents who had chosen Welsh-medium primary education for their children ‘seemed to present the choice as a natural reflection of the family culture’ (ibid.: 5), many English-speaking parents also gave a cultural rationale for the choice of Welsh-medium education, perceiving it to be ‘a special opportunity to learn the language’ (ibid.: 5). Several such parents ‘stated regret at not speaking Welsh themselves’ (ibid.: 5), and thus may form part of a ‘lost generation’ within a formerly Welsh-speaking family, or part of a group who wish to integrate into a Welsh-speaking Welsh identity. In both parental linguistic groups, such a cultural
rationale was often accompanied by the perception that the Welsh-medium school had a ‘good reputation’ (ibid.: 5), with a good ethos and good discipline. Both the English-speaking and Welsh-speaking parental groups also mentioned ‘personal and career development’ for their children (ibid.: 5), the latter encompassing both wider job opportunities and a greater likelihood of employment in Wales (ibid.: 6). Personal advantages cited included bilingualism itself, bilingualism facilitating the easier acquisition of subsequent languages (ibid.: 8, 11) and the child’s having a ‘Welsh cultural consciousness’ (ibid.: 8). Thus, Packer and Campbell’s (1997) findings also align with those of Bush et al. (1984) and of Bellin et al. (1999) in reporting a combination of instrumental and cultural motivations as influencing the choice of Welsh-medium education.

Such studies illustrate a widening of both the reasons for the choice of Welsh-medium education and of the range of social and linguistic characteristics of parents choosing such education in parallel with the greater institutionalisation of Welsh-medium education and the increase in status of Welsh in the public sector in Wales between 1970 and 2000. Jones and Williams reflected in 2000:

bilingual schools are now championed as models of good educational practice and as significant locales in preparing citizens to participate fully within a bilingual democracy and a multicultural European Union.

(Jones & Williams 2000: 139)12

Bilingual schools were also proving to be successful in relation to language maintenance, with an increase in the overall number of Welsh speakers from 503,549 people in 1981 (19% of the 3+ population) (Office of Population Censuses and Surveys 1981: 28) to 508,098 people in 1991 (18.7% of the 3+ population) (Office of Population Censuses and Surveys 1991: 22). That Welsh-medium education (and Welsh as a subject provision) contributed to such an increase is evidenced by the 36% increase in the number of 3-15 year old Welsh speakers from 1981 to 1991, from 83,153 to 113,236.

Jones & Williams’ (2000) view of Welsh-medium education as preparing pupils for life within a bilingual democracy – following the Welsh Language Act

12 The outcomes of bilingual schools in relation to language acquisition will be considered in Section 2.2.3.2.
1993 and the establishment of the National Assembly for Wales in 1999 – is also noted by Williams (1994), who perceives Welsh-medium education to be a ‘recognition’ and reflection of the ‘plural identity of modern Wales’ (Williams 1994: 138). However, the establishment of Welsh institutions does not necessarily strengthen the place of the Welsh language in Welsh national identity. Indeed, Paterson & Jones posit that the gradual institutionalisation of Welsh identity since the late nineteenth century by means of the establishment of Welsh institutions ‘will eventually lead to a form of identity that places more stress on civic characteristics in addition to – or in place of – ethnic markers’ such as language’ (Paterson & Jones 1999: 183).

Opinion varies regarding the centrality of the Welsh language to Welsh national identity. Whilst Livingstone et al. recently identify the Welsh language as being ‘widely accepted as a [my emphasis] defining dimension of Welsh identity by Welsh speakers and non-Welsh speaking Welsh people alike’ (2011: 749), others argue that the Welsh language is the defining dimension of Welsh identity: for example, Aitchison and Carter claim that ‘to be Welsh, in any meaningful way, a person must speak, or at least understand Welsh. Otherwise he or she is no more than someone dwelling in a defined area called Wales’ (Aitchison & Carter 2000: 3).

Such a view partly concords with what Fishman describes as ‘the ideological pinnacle of language nationalism … [in which] language is clearly pictured as more crucial than the other symbols and expressions of nationality’ (Fishman 1973: 163). However, Thompson and Day argue that the manifestation of national identity is related to local experience:

While people may draw upon other sources, such as discussions in the media and their knowledge of the history, literature etc of Wales, it is in their encounters with others at the everyday level, and in their awareness of events in the local context that their sense of belonging to a given national community is lent shape. (Thompson & Day 1999: 45-46)

The relationship between language and identity, as perceived by Celtic-medium pupils in the Scottish and Welsh contexts, is investigated in this thesis (Chapter 5, Section 5.1; Chapter 6, Section 6.2.3).

One recent study of parental choice of Welsh-medium education at the primary school stage remains to be mentioned before consideration is given to research on the choice of medium of instruction of education at the secondary school
stage. In an interview-based study of 60 non-Welsh speaking parents in the Anglicized Rhymni Valley, South Wales in 2008, Hodges found the main reasons for the choice of Welsh-medium education to be cultural, followed by educational, economic and personal reasons (Hodges 2011). Examples of cultural reasons included ‘the intrinsic value of the Welsh language, the pride associated with learning the mother tongue of Wales … the significance of their children taking part in traditional elements of Welsh culture … and the concept of the “lost generation”’ (Hodges 2011: 308). Educational reasons included Welsh-medium-education’s high academic success, provision of extra-curricular activities and pastoral care. Economic reasons were typically linked to the perception that there were increased and wider job opportunities for Welsh-speaking people in a bilingual Wales, whilst personal reasons included having a Welsh-speaking extended family, or the belief that Welsh-medium education would suit the child’s individual educational needs. Hodges concludes that the primacy of the cultural reasons ‘suggests that parents have a heightened awareness of the implications of their educational choices on the future of the Welsh language itself’ (2011: 311). Such ‘heightened awareness’ of the Welsh language at the time of Hodges research (2008) existed within the context of 2001 census results in which Wales had stemmed the decline of the Welsh language. Between 1991 and 2001 the number of Welsh speakers increased from 508,098 to 582,000 (19% and 21% of the population respectively). The number of 3-15 year old Welsh speakers increased 59% from 113,236 to 179,646 in the same period. Indeed, 37% of 3-15 year olds in Wales were Welsh speaking in 2001 (Office for National Statistics 2001: 8). That education contributed to such a figure is evidenced by Jones’ (2009) analysis of language data for 3 year olds in the 2001 census, which concluded that a maximum of 14.9% of 3 year olds had acquired Welsh by means of intergenerational transmission in the home (Jones 2009: 2).

There is a lack of research in relation to choice of medium of instruction of education at the secondary school stage in the Welsh context. Research conducted by Gruffudd et al. (2004) on the reasons for the choice of level of Welsh language learning (Welsh First Language or Welsh Second Language) and on the reasons for the choice of medium of instruction of school subjects at the primary-secondary school stage noted that ‘where the system allows freedom in terms of linguistic
progression [between primary and secondary school], a large number of factors can interfere with the process [of linguistic continuity]’ (Gruffudd et al. 2004: 30). In focus group interviews with 60 parents of Year 6 [final year primary] Welsh-medium pupils in four counties, Gruffudd et al. found regional variations in parental attitudes regarding the continuation of Welsh-medium education at the secondary school stage:

parents who choose Welsh-medium education in Anglicized areas do not see a problem in continuing with Welsh as a first language [at secondary school], nor for their children to learn science and mathematics through the medium of Welsh, [but] there is a tendency for some parents in traditionally Welsh-speaking areas to think that primary school Welsh skills are sufficient for their children.

(Gruffudd et al. 2004: 36)

Parents of Welsh-medium pupils in traditionally Welsh speaking areas are also reported to ‘lack confidence in their children’s linguistic skills’ (Gruffudd et al. 2004: 36). Other parents were reported to wish their child to attend an English-medium secondary school because they felt it ‘marketed itself more effectively’, because of a parental fear that they would be unable to support their child’s school based learning through the medium of Welsh or because of a wish for better GCSE [General Certificate of Secondary Education] results in Welsh Second Language (Gruffudd 2004: 36). Gruffudd et al. also note that ‘there is a tendency for pupils to follow friends’ (Gruffudd et al.:2004: 22) in relation to the choice of Welsh First Language or Welsh Second Language at the early secondary school stage, thus identifying the pupil as a key stakeholder in decisions. As outlined in Chapter 1, pupils were not included in Gruffudd et al.’s project, but this is a gap in the research that the present project addresses.

Thus, there is a paucity of research regarding the reasons for the choice of Welsh-medium education in bilingual and Welsh-speaking areas of Wales at the primary school stage. There is also a lack of research nationally in relation to choice of medium of instruction at the early secondary school stage. These are two gaps in existing knowledge that this study aims to fill by considering:

- What factors influence parental decisions for Celtic-medium education at the primary school level?
- What factors influence Celtic-medium pupil decisions regarding language of education for the first year of secondary school?
Do the responses and patterns of response regarding choice differ between (i) the primary and secondary school stages (ii) the Scottish and Welsh contexts?

2.1.1.3 Provision of Welsh-medium education at the time of the research

The final part of this section outlines the provision for Welsh-medium primary and secondary education at the time of the present research: the school years 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 respectively. In relation to primary education, there were 466 ‘Welsh speaking’ primary schools, as defined in the Education Reform Act 1988 (outlined in Section 2.1.1.2) in 2006-2007, constituting 30.5% of all primary schools in Wales (WAG 2007a: 64). Thomas (2008) attributes such a number to a steady growth in Welsh-medium primary provision, with an average of 15 new schools or units opening in each ten-year period between 1947 and 1996 (Thomas 2008: 52). However, Thomas notes a ‘hiatus’ in the expansion of Welsh-medium primary education between 1996 and 2006 with the establishment of ‘only eight new Welsh-medium schools’ (ibid.: 52). The Committee of Experts of the Council of Europe, who assess the United Kingdom’s implementation of its commitments in relation to Welsh in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages – namely to ‘make available’ pre-school, primary school and secondary school education in the regional or minority language (CoE 1992:Article 8 a(i), b(i), c(i)) – similarly comment ‘there does not seem to have been a sufficient expansion of Welsh-medium education since the last report [2004] to meet the growing demand’ (CoE 2007: 22).

Each of the 22 unitary authorities in Wales made some provision for Welsh-medium primary education following the Welsh Language Act 1993, the requirements of which were tightened by the Single Education Plan (Wales) Regulations 2006 which require local authorities to provide information on ‘demand for Welsh medium provision in schools maintained by the authority as compared with available places for the school year’ (Schedule 3, Regulation 4). Such demand can be evidenced through parental and pupil surveys, but the Welsh Language Act 1993 does not grant a parental or pupil right to Welsh-medium education. The proportion of pupils in Welsh-medium education in a unitary authority ranged from 93.6% in Gwynedd to 3.0% in Newport in 2006-07 (derived from WAG 2007b: 6). Most counties make provision for Welsh-medium schools, but Welsh-medium provision is sometimes in ‘dual stream’ provision – Welsh-medium and English-
medium education within the same school (for example in Powys and Carmarthenshire). Welsh is ‘the sole or main medium of instruction’ for 53,342 of the 54,009 pupils in Welsh-medium primary schools, meaning that 20.3% of the total number of primary pupils in Wales were taught predominantly in Welsh in 2006-7 (WAG 2007b: 5). The Government reported some 15,332 or 7.6% of primary pupils to ‘speak Welsh fluently at home’ in 2006-7, a judgement based on parental assessment of their child’s language abilities and use (WAG 2007a: 71). Thus, a maximum of 29% of Welsh-medium primary pupils can be fluent home language Welsh speakers in 2006-7.13

Interview-based research with 302 Welsh-speaking parents of children 7 years or younger across 14 areas of Wales (Gathercole et al. 2007) suggests that parental choice of language(s) for use with their child is influenced by the parents’ own home linguistic background and their linguistic competencies (Gathercole et al. 2007: 73). In a study of 12 families (4 in each of Gwynedd, Carmarthenshire and Denbighshire) in 2005, Jones and Morris additionally emphasized the influence of the extended family and community context in the Welsh language socialization of young children. They note that the language(s) of interaction with family and friends and the language(s) of the family’s interaction with the local community and with childcare services all influence a child’s minority socialization from ‘a very young age’ (Jones & Morris 2005: 14). Thus, the low levels of family-based Welsh language use amongst parents of Welsh-medium primary pupils are likely due to a combination of the wider community linguistic context and parental lack of competence in the Welsh-language, whether parents are Welsh-speaking but lack home-based Welsh language experience or confidence, whether they are a ‘lost generation’ of Welsh-speakers within a Welsh-speaking family (Packer & Campbell 1997, Hodges 2011), or whether they are non-fluent Welsh learners or non-Welsh speaking.14

In relation to the secondary school stage, there were 54 ‘Welsh speaking’ secondary schools in 2007-2008, constituting 24% of the secondary schools in Wales

13 There is a ‘maximum’ of 29% of pupils in Welsh-medium education with Welsh as a home language as this calculation assumes that all home language Welsh speakers are in Welsh-medium education.
14 The influence of home and community based minority language socialization on language use will be considered in literature relating to pupils’ language use in Section 2.2.3.1.
A ‘Welsh speaking’ secondary school is defined as a school in which more than half of foundation subjects, other than English, Welsh and Religious Education, are taught wholly or partly through the medium of Welsh, as determined by the Education Act 1996 (Section 354(b)). These secondary schools taught 40,756 pupils in 2007-2008, with 16.5% of Year 7 pupils taught Welsh as a first language (WAG 2008: 66, 78). There were no national level data as to the percentage of pupils who continued with various proportions of their schooling through the medium of Welsh at the secondary school stage at the time of selecting case study schools for this project (2006), due to the lack of adequate categories to differentiate Welsh-medium secondary school provision across Wales. This was highlighted as an area for improvement in the report on the implementation of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (Council of Europe 2007: 22-23). The secondary school subjects available through the medium of Welsh in the schools involved in the present project are outlined in Appendix 4.B.3.

Section 2.1.2 will analogously outline (i) the historical development of Gaelic-medium education in Scotland, (ii) existing research on the choice of Gaelic-medium education and (iii) the provision of Gaelic-medium education at the time of the research.

2.1.2 Choice of Gaelic-medium education

2.1.2.1 Historical development of Gaelic-medium education

The Education (Scotland) Act 1872, which established the provision of school education for children from the ages of 5 to 12 in Scotland, made no mention of Gaelic. MacLeod perceives this to have been a ‘disastrous omission’ (1966: 320), which has been associated both with a perception of a negative governmental view of Gaelic (Campbell 1950:66, MacKinnon 1972: 131) and a negative subsequent treatment of Gaelic in education (Johnstone 1994: 32). However, other academics frame the lack of mention of Gaelic in the Education Act 1872 within a less hostile policy-making context. Paterson argues that the Argyll Commission of the 1860s

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15 This clause was reproduced in the Education Act 2002 (Section 105(7)).
16 The taxonomy ‘Defining schools according to Welsh medium provision’ published by the Welsh Assembly Government in 2007 will be discussed in the final chapter, as its implementation and operational phases occurred after the present study was conducted.
(which laid the foundation of the 1872 Act) had been ‘sympathetic’ to Gaelic (Paterson 2003: 45) and views the lack of incorporation of Gaelic into the Act as typical of a tradition of Scottish educational policy making which is permissive rather than prescriptive. Indeed, Paterson perceives policy at the time to be largely indifferent to Gaelic:

from 1872 until the end of the century official views were not systematically hostile to Gaelic, but nor was there any enthusiasm. (Paterson 2003: 45)

Evidence put forward by Durkacz (1983) substantiates the view that the polity was sympathetic towards Gaelic in education at the time of the Act, but that legislation was not the appropriate context for the expression of such support. Durkacz argues that:

In 1871 the Gaelic Society of London approached the Lord Advocate, asking that the forthcoming Education Act give Gaelic a statutory place in highland education. He admitted the force of the arguments put to him by the society. But as he correctly pointed out, its aims would be better realized by an appropriate provision for Gaelic in the Education Code. It was not parliament, he argued, but the Scotch Education Department who could satisfy its demands. (Durkacz 1983: 178)

MacIver (2010) argues that the absence of provision for Gaelic in the 1872 Act occurred in the context of a developing ‘Gaelic Renaissance,’ a process of thinking about the role and place of Gaelic in education and in society. However, such considerations were restricted to education in the Highlands and Islands, the heartland of the language since the fourteenth century (McLeod 2010: 1). MacLeod (1966) highlights the role of the Gaelic Society of Inverness in this resurgence:

A continuous campaign for the recognition of Gaelic was initiated by the Gaelic Society of Inverness, which had been formed in 1871, and which for the next few years regarded the question of Highland education as one of the most important issues of the day. (MacLeod 1966: 320)

Durkacz’s account confirms the key role of the Gaelic Society of Inverness in the establishment of provisions for Gaelic in the Education Code during the 1880s (Durkacz 1983: 178), but also identifies the Education Committees of the Free Church and Church of Scotland and the Edinburgh Gaelic School Society as key stakeholders in these developments.
The Education Code allowed the testing of pupils’ attainment through the medium of Gaelic at Standards I and II in 1872 and permission was given to schools in 1878 to use part of their allocated financial resources to pay teachers of ‘special subjects’ for example ‘Gaelic, drill or cooking’ during school hours (Campbell 1950: 72). The Napier Commission report of 1885, which condemned ‘the discouragement and neglect of the native language in the education of Gaelic speaking children’ (Napier Commission in Durkacz 1983: 173), resulted in the Scotch Education Department giving a grant of £10 per annum to schools in which the majority of pupils were home language Gaelic speakers when they employed a Gaelic-speaking teacher, and allowing examinations in Gaelic at the elementary school levels where pupils were taught bilingually (Imperial Education Conference 1907: 259). Gaelic was also given a place as a grant-earning specific subject in the Education Code for teaching at the higher levels beyond elementary education, which enabled schools to claim grant money for teaching the language as a subject. Thus, the financial provision was similar to the capitation grants associated with the Education Act 1870 in Wales.

Such concessions were made on pedagogical grounds. Durkacz notes the 1872 provision on Gaelic-medium attainment testing to be significant as ‘it tacitly admitted the principle that the use of the mother tongue in the early stages was educationally desirable’ (Durkacz 1983: 179), but the Scotch Education Department’s funding of Gaelic-speaking primary teachers was allowed in order that infant Gaelic-speaking children better understand English rather than stemming from a desire to use education to strengthen Gaelic. Henry Craik (from 1885 Secretary of the Scotch Education Department), in the Report on Highland Schools (1884) explains:

It is urged, and this, if accepted, is the strongest argument of all [for the provision of Gaelic-speaking teachers], that without some Gaelic interpretation to the younger pupils English is repeated to them with parrot like facility and conveys no real meaning to the mind of the pupil. ... The pupil, it is affirmed, on leaving school hesitates to use a language which has been only superficially acquired, and thus the absence of some Gaelic interpretation at the beginning really perpetuates the use of Gaelic as the colloquial language.

(Craik 1884: 7)
The Scotch Education Department’s intention in the provision of Gaelic-medium education was mainly to facilitate the acquisition of English and thus to enable pupils’ opportunity to gain social advancement in adult life. The association of English with social mobility in the 19th and first part of the 20th century seen in Wales was also in evidence in Scotland. However, provision was made for studying Gaelic as an academic subject in its own right (rather than for the purposes of acquiring English) in 1905 when a Lower Grade examination in Gaelic was introduced as part of the School Leaving Certificate, with an analogous provision in relation to the Higher Grade introduced in 1916. In this period, the demographics of Gaelic had shifted. The census of 1891 reported there to be 254,415 Gaelic speakers (6.3% of the Scottish population) (Census Office Scotland 1911: cvi). The number subsequently decreased to 202,398 in 1911. The proportion of Gaelic-speaking children in the Gàidhealtachd who were monolingual Gaelic speakers remained high, however. The 1911 census report noted of the island areas of Argyll, Inverness and Ross and Cromarty:

in 1891 the number of Gaelic speaking children of three and four years of age unable to speak English constituted 72.6% of the population of those ages, and this rate is now found to be practically unchanged, being 72.7%  
(Census Office Scotland 1911: cvi)

Legislative provision for Gaelic education was made in the Education (Scotland) Act 1918, with support from the Highland Societies, An Comunn Gaidhealach (a national Gaelic preservation and promotion organization founded in 1891), churches, political figures and the Educational Institute of Scotland (MacIver 2010). The support of the Educational Institute of Scotland for Gaelic-medium education has some parallels with the role of the National Union of Welsh Teachers in the development of Welsh-medium education, although some of the key roles the NUWT performed in encouraging parents to lobby for Celtic-medium education were rather conducted by Comunn na Gàidhlig in Scotland in the 1980s (below). The Education (Scotland) Act 1918 required education authorities to make ‘adequate provision’ for the ‘teaching of Gaelic in Gaelic speaking areas’ in ‘school education’ and in ‘further education’(Section 1), and this article remained in force throughout the century, being also incorporated into subsequent education Acts, most recently the Education (Scotland) Act 1980. The consequent key stakeholder role of the local
authority in the establishment of Gaelic education is highlighted by McLeod, who argues that the lack of legal definition of the terms ‘Gaelic-speaking area’ and the ‘the teaching of Gaelic’ (McLeod:2003: 121) meant that it was left to the discretion of the individual local authority as to which areas would be defined as Gaelic speaking, and if so, whether they wish to provide Gaelic-medium education or whether they would prefer to provide Gaelic as a subject in an otherwise English-medium school.

However, although a limited provision in terms of enforceability (Council of Europe 2004: 32, McLeod 2003: 121), the 1918 Act provided a formal, and symbolically important, acknowledgement of the needs of Gaelic-speaking children, as had been identified by, for example An Comunn Gaidhealach (1907). The Act also set a precedent in terms of official support for Gaelic. Paterson notes that ‘all the post-1945 official reports expressed support for Gaelic, and thus continued in the spirit of the 1918 Act’ (Paterson 2003: 124). The Gaelic language continued to decline between 1921 and 1931, however, with 158,779 speakers reported in 1921 (3.5% of the population) and 136,135 speakers returned in the 1931 census (3% of the population) (Census of Scotland 1931: xxxix). By 1931 the number of monoglot Gaelic speaking children of 3-4 years of age had fallen to 1,190 (62.7% of the age group) even in the island areas of Argyll, Inverness and Ross and Cromarty (1931: xli).

An Comunn Gaidhealach’s Report on Gaelic in Schools and Colleges (1936) found there to be 7,129 primary pupils being taught Gaelic as a subject in 284 schools and 864 post-primary pupils being taught Gaelic in 22 schools (1936: 12). This provision was typically for native speakers of the language (as only a native speaker level secondary school examination existed). Subject instruction through the medium of Gaelic was also intended for native speakers and focused on the infant stages, with provision at the middle and upper primary school stages typically restricted to social subjects such as ‘Nature Study, Geography, Gardening, Music and History’ (1936: 6). The report provided a series of recommendations regarding both the increase of provision of Gaelic as a subject for native speakers (and, if possible, for learners) in the Elementary school, the widening of Gaelic-medium teaching to English-first language speakers in Gaelic-speaking areas, and the
provision of Gaelic as a subject (with two levels – native speakers and learners) in secondary schools across Scotland. The rationale given for the proposed developments relating to Gaelic-medium subject provision was an interest in Gaelic-medium education by parents who were a lost generation of Gaelic speakers in Gaelic-speaking areas together with the belief that Gaelic-medium learning helped pupils’ acquisition of standard English. The rationale for the wish to offer Gaelic as a subject across Scotland related to national heritage (1936: 10).

The Education (Scotland) Act 1945 set two precedents that were to be important in the development of Gaelic education: (i) child-centred education, what Paterson calls ‘a growing respect for the learner’ (Paterson 2003:124) and (ii) the beginnings of parental choice in education, the ‘general principle that … pupils are to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents’ (Part 2, Section 20). The 1956 Schools Code provided an official sanction of the use of Gaelic as a teaching medium for subjects other than Gaelic for Gaelic-speaking pupils:

In Gaelic-speaking areas reasonable provision shall be made in schemes of work for the instruction of Gaelic-speaking pupils in the Gaelic language and literature, and the Gaelic language shall be used where appropriate for instructing Gaelic-speaking pupils in other subjects.

(MacLeod 1966: 325)

However, no provision was made for Gaelic-speakers in non-Gaelic speaking areas or for non-native Gaelic speakers.

The Scottish Council for Research in Education conducted a survey of Gaelic-speaking children in Highland schools in 1958. They found that whilst 20% of primary school stage pupils were receiving instruction in Gaelic as a subject, only 5% were ‘taught other subjects through Gaelic’ (SCRE 1961: 72,74) despite teachers reporting Gaelic to be the language in which 13.3% of Primary 1 and 2 pupils ‘are more at ease and which they tend to use first in conversation’ (SCRE 1961: 80). The SCRE situated such figures within the context of both a regional decline in the number of Gaelic-dominant pupils over time – illustrated by the fact that 17% of first year Secondary pupils in the Highlands had Gaelic as a home language in 1959 (SCRE 1961: 80) – and of a national level decline in the Gaelic language, the rate of which they note to have ‘accelerated’ since 1881 (SCRE 1961: 17). Most recently, the census of 1951 had returned a decline in the number and proportion of Gaelic
speakers over time, with 95,447 Gaelic speakers reported in 1951 (2% of the population over 3) compared with 136,135 (3% of the 3+ population) at the previous census in 1931 (General Register Office 1961: x). The SCRE thus situated their recommendations for further pedagogical research studies on Gaelic-medium education within the framework of education as language planning, noting that:

> studies have usually demonstrated the fact that if a language in a minority position is to be preserved, far less restored, the schools of the communities who speak the language must be used as a conscious instrument for this purpose. In Wales at the present time the schools, backed by the Welsh-speaking communities, are being used in this way, and the result of all this effort is that the Welsh language is holding its own.

(SCRE 1961: 64)

The Inverness-shire Gaelic Education Scheme, launched in Skye, Barra, the Uists and Harris in 1960 – where 70.1% of infants in Primary 1 and 2 were reported to be Gaelic dominant (SCRE 1961: 80) – was a parallel development that emerged after the 1956 Education Code ‘to encourage a more liberal interpretation and a fuller implementation of the department’s policy [for Gaelic]’ (MacLeod 1966: 326). The voluntary scheme operated throughout the 1960s and into the 1970s in Inverness-shire and Ross-shire, although MacLeod notes that it had ‘lost some of its momentum by 1975’ (MacLeod 2003: 2). Although both pedagogical and language planning elements are mentioned in the scheme’s aims, it was predominantly focused on making better pedagogical provision for Gaelic-speaking pupils.

The role of education in language maintenance was proposed in the SCRE report and considered in the Inverness-shire Gaelic Education Scheme within a context in which the numbers of Gaelic speakers had further declined to 80,978 in 1961 (1.7% of the population) (General Register Office 1961: x). Although an increase in speaker numbers was recorded in the 1971 census, with 88,415 speakers (1.8% of the population) (General Register Office 1961: x, 1971: 1), the validity of the data was called into question by the census managers: the 1971 question had been modified to ask about the ability to read and write Gaelic as well as to speak Gaelic, which may have increased responses for Gaelic speaking (General Register Office 1971: viii, x).

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17 Section 2.2 will present a discussion of education and language planning.
In accordance with the Scottish Education Department’s *Primary Education in Scotland* (1965) report, which strongly encouraged the growth of child-centred education, the *Inverness-shire Gaelic Education Scheme* focused its bilingual approach on Environmental Studies, as this new curricular area (which encompassed history, geography, science and mathematics) enabled primary schools to ‘discharge their function fully in providing an education in keeping with the needs and interests of pupils’ (SED 1965: 199) in relation to both language and culture. Such developments ran parallel to the development of the *Primary Education in Wales* report (Gittins 1967). The *Primary Education in Scotland* report both re-emphasised the pedagogical importance of using the ‘mother tongue … functionally when appropriate as a means of instructing Gaelic-speaking pupils in’ subjects other than Gaelic (1965: 199) and underlined the suitability of Environmental Studies for this purpose due to its links between school and the social and environmental aspects of the local community (SED 1965: 201). The report also alludes to the role of education in language maintenance:

> If the Gaelic language and culture is to be preserved, it is important that teachers should adopt the methods which have been found effective in arousing and maintaining the interest of pupils.

(SED 1965: 201)

Such official mention of the preservation of the Gaelic language and culture concords with MacDonald’s account, which situates Gaelic policy developments within the context of a wider ‘ethnic revival’ across Europe beginning in the 1960s (1997:63). MacDonald argues that:

> Linguistic specificity, now firmly cast as at the heart of a coherent [national] cultural identity, became increasingly politicised. Within Scotland this led to a flourishing of Gaelic policies and developments … To an unprecedented extent, Gaels found themselves regarded as a valuable repository of culture, tradition and community within Scotland.

(MacDonald 1997: 63)

However, MacDonald notes the Gaelic renaissance to have ‘taken place more under the wing of the state than has much ethno-nationalist activity elsewhere’ (1997: 56), for example in Wales.
In relation to language and national identity, Gaelic had not been strongly linked to Scottish identity since medieval times. The Treaty of Union between England and Scotland of 1707, unlike the Act of Union between England and Wales of 1543, was a ‘partial’ union (Paterson & Jones 1999: 176) which enabled Scotland to retain distinctive legal, educational, local governmental and religious institutions. The development of such a civil society in Scotland in the 18th Century contributed to the creation of a Scottish identity centred on such civic administrative structures, with ethnic markers such as language being more peripheral. The marginal position of Gaelic in Scottish identity was partly due to largely indifferent or negative views of the language amongst the Scottish governing elites (Withers 1984: 29) and was likely also partly due to the peripheral geographical nature of Gaelic in Scotland.

However, Gebel notes that from the mid-twentieth century ‘Gaelic development agencies and ‘front line’ activists … contributed to the gradual demise of the Highland Line by seeking to restore Gaelic as a language for the whole of Scotland’ (Gebel 2002: 200). Macdonald argues that the 1960s ‘saw the first significant state support for Gaelic and the beginnings of what was to become a massive increase in pro-Gaelic policy-making and developments throughout Scotland’ (MacDonald 1997: 57). The educational developments of the 1960s and later may be interpreted as examples of such state support for Gaelic, for instance in the Scottish Education Department’s contribution to the funding of An Comunn Gàidhealach from 1965, and its joint funding of the 1975 Bilingual Education Project with Comhairle nan Eilean (Western Isles Council), an all-purpose local government area under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 which had powers to make local education policy.

The Bilingual Education Project, like the Inverness-shire Gaelic Education Scheme, aimed to develop child-centred bilingual education for Gaelic-speaking pupils from Gaelic-speaking areas on the premise that ‘primary education should be sufficiently flexible and relevant to respond positively to the local environment and community’ (Murray and Morrison 1984: 9). The project, like the Inverness-shire scheme, thus focused primarily on Environmental Studies as it both easily facilitated a link between the curriculum and the culture of the community and was believed to

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18 Section 2.2. will investigate the shift to a national conceptualization of Gaelic in language policy from a language planning perspective.
be the subject most likely to ‘stimulate children to use Gaelic as a natural language for exploration and description of experience’ (Murray and Morrison 1984: 5), one of the key aims of the Bilingual Education project.

The project began with the development of bilingual teaching materials for delivery to the lower primary school stages of twenty primary schools with a high proportion of Gaelic-speaking pupils and teachers (92% of the children in the project schools and 96% of the teachers had at least some knowledge of Gaelic) (Murray & Morrison 1984: 6). Such Gaelic-medium provision was extended throughout the primary school stages by 1978, was extended to 34 primary schools in 1978, and was broadened to encompass all 54 primary schools in Comhairle nan Eilean Siar in 1981 (Murray & Morrison 1984: 88, 163). MacLeod notes that:

The Bilingual Project gained a deserved international reputation for its success in encouraging schools to devise a curriculum rooted in the local community … and for its child-centred approach. However, its other main objective, to introduce Gaelic gradually alongside English as a medium of teaching, was less uniformly successful.

(MacLeod 2003: 2)

Two key factors were identified by the project team for the range of Gaelic-medium input in the bilingual language models employed across the primary schools: (i) variation in the implementation of bilingual education between teachers and (ii) variation in the Gaelic language abilities of pupils within classrooms, especially after the expansion of the project to the less strongly Gaelic-speaking primary schools. In relation to the latter, the project team note that ‘no materials were produced specifically for teaching Gaelic to non-Gaelic children’ (Murray and Morrison 1984: 81).

Similar concerns about the need to modify bilingual Gaelic-English education to meet the needs of non-native Gaelic speakers were expressed in relation to the bilingual education scheme launched in Skye primary schools in 1978. Robertson notes that:

The lower incidence of Gaelic speaking children on Skye [than in CNES] required a rather different bilingual approach with greater emphasis placed on the needs of learners.

(Robertson 2003: 251)
Such a wish that non-Gaelic speaking children be incorporated into bilingual education emerged alongside a concern about the efficacy of the bilingual education project in promoting Gaelic-English bilingualism amongst Gaelic-speaking children by the end of primary school (Robertson 2008a: 236). Such a concern about the project’s linguistic results was substantiated by the Scottish Office-funded evaluation of the project (Mitchell et al. 1987), which assessed 47 Primary 4 and 49 Primary 7 pupils’ comparative linguistic competence in Gaelic and English by means of a series of oral and written exercises and expressed reservations both about the efficacy of the bilingual language model itself and about the future applicability of the model in a linguistic environment marked by language shift to English (ibid.: 192). The language shift to English referred to in relation to the Western Isles, where there was a decrease of Gaelic speakers from 81.6% of the population in 1971 to 79.5% in 1981, was part of an ongoing national decline in the number of Gaelic speakers, with numbers decreasing from 88,415 (1.8% of the 3+ population) in 1971 to 79, 297 (1.6% of the 3+ population) in 1981. The number of Gaelic-speaking 3-15 year olds increased from 9,050 in 1971 to 9,454 in 1981 however, an increase of 4%, perhaps aided by such educational initiatives (General Register Office 1971:8, Registrar General Scotland 1981: 4).

The 1980s marked a conceptual shift in relation to Gaelic education, with both a move from bilingual to Gaelic-medium education and a diversification of such provision from Gaelic-speaking areas to also incorporate Anglicized areas. Robertson notes the former shift to have come out of the pedagogical concerns outlined above. He notes:

Doubts about the ability of bilingual models to deliver fluency in Gaelic comparable to that in English and a growing awareness of the erosion of the language amongst the school-age population made parents, educationists, and language activists realise that another approach was needed. Developments in Welsh and in other minority languages were studied, and the findings suggested that use of the minority language as the medium of education had to be maximised to ensure language maintenance and transmission. The first Gaelic playgroups had demonstrated the viability of this approach and convinced parents that it should be continued in primary school.

(Robertson 2008a: 236)
MacLeod confirms the influence of the Welsh ‘total immersion’ model on parents’ wishes regarding Gaelic-medium education in the Scottish context (MacLeod 2003: 3-4).

Following a pilot Gaelic-medium playgroup in Inverness, Gaelic pressure groups such as Strì campaigned for Gaelic-medium playgroups in the late 1970s, with four such groups established in Oban, Edinburgh, Pitlochry and Sleat (Isle of Skye) in 1980-81. Such playgroups accepted children from both Gaelic-speaking and non Gaelic-speaking backgrounds, as had the Celtic-medium pre-school provision established in Anglicized areas in Wales, and were primarily concerned with the maintenance of the Gaelic language. Comhairle nan Sgoiltean Àraich (CNSA, the Gaelic playgroup association) was set up as a support organisation in 1982, and became a key stakeholder in the development of Gaelic-medium education at both the pre-school and primary level. Indeed, Robertson credits the pre-school Gaelic-medium sector with having been ‘the seedbed for much of the regeneration and growth in Gaelic’ (2008a: 235).

MacLeod notes that ‘CNSA’s main objective was the survival of the Gaelic language’ (MacLeod 2003: 4) and that ‘this struck a chord with parents’ (MacLeod 2003: 4). The establishment of the first Gaelic-medium primary school units in Glasgow and Inverness in 1985 is often attributed to parents of pupils in Gaelic-medium playgroups’ supplications to their local authorities requesting the provision of follow-on Gaelic-medium primary education for their children (MacLeod 2003: 5). Such a request was made within a policy context of increased parental choice in education as the Education (Scotland) Act 1981 had enabled parental choice of individual school within a local authority area and within a permissive statutory policy context in which, as noted earlier, the Education (Scotland) Act 1980 maintained that ‘pupils are to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents’ and that provision be made for ‘the teaching of Gaelic in Gaelic speaking areas’ in school and further education. MacLeod argues that the parental leaders of Gaelic-medium playgroups were ‘mostly professional people … confident enough to take the first steps into what was, in Scotland, largely unknown territory at the time’ (2003: 5).
However, the framing of the establishment of the choice of Gaelic-medium primary education as being the result of a group of educated parents using their social capital to lever policy and demand an education that aligns with their ideologies and principles is to overlook the support given to parents by Comunn na Gàidhlig, a Gaelic-support organization established in 1984. As noted earlier, Comunn na Gàidhlig provided a facilitating role similar to that conducted by the National Union of Welsh Teachers in the Welsh context, namely to foster interest in Celtic-medium education amongst parents and then to liaise with local authorities regarding the development of such provision on the parents’ behalf. Comunn na Gàidhlig (CnaG) was established as a result of the recommendations in the 1982 Highlands and Islands Development Board report *Cor na Gàidhlig* and, in relation to education, was charged with setting up a Youth Activity Pilot Project and a Gaelic Playgroup Network to support the work of Comhairle nan Sgoiltean Araich in addition to the general promotion and development of Gaelic in education (HIDB 1982: 90-92). The parental group Pàrantan airson Foghlam Gàidhlig (Parents for Gaelic Education), modelled on the Welsh counterpart Rhieni Dros Addysg Gymraeg, was established in 1985 in Inverness. Further state support for the development of the choice of Gaelic-medium education came in 1986 with the enactment of the *Grants for Gaelic Language Education (Scotland) Regulations 1986*, which provide up to 75% funding to local authorities for the first three years of Gaelic education projects.

Despite such developments in Gaelic-medium education, which had resulted in the establishment of 31 Gaelic-medium primary departments by 1991 (MacLeod 2003: 13), the 1991 census returned a decrease in the number and proportion of 3-15 year olds reported to be Gaelic speakers, with 7,092 children being reported to be so, compared with 9,454 in 1981. This was a 25% decline in the number of 3-15 year old Gaelic speakers (Registrar General Scotland 1981:4, General Register Office for Scotland 1991: 755). The census also returned a further decline in the total number of Gaelic speakers, to 65,978 (1.4% of the 3+ population). The developments in

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19 Pàrantan airson Foghlam Gàidhlig was renamed Comann nam Pàrant (The Parents’ Association) in 1994.
Gaelic-medium education were thus not sufficient to counteract the decline in intergenerational transmission at this stage.\(^{20}\)

Subsequent state-supported provisions for the development of Gaelic-medium education included the *Standards in Scotland’s Schools etc Act 2000* and the *Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005*. The former required each authority to give ‘an account of the ways in which, or the circumstances in which they will provide Gaelic medium education, and, where they do provide Gaelic medium education, the ways in which they will seek to develop their provision of such education’ (Section 5:2). The *Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005* empowered Bòrd na Gàidhlig to require public bodies to prepare a Gaelic Language Plan in which they must ‘have regard to the most recent national Gaelic language plan’\(^{21}\) and consider ‘the potential for developing the use of the Gaelic language in connection with the exercise of [their] functions’ (Section 3: 5). The statutory *Guidance on the Development of Gaelic Language Plans* suggests that ‘specific issues local authorities might address are how they will promote Gaelic education, provide Gaelic education, meet demand for the provision of Gaelic education … and develop and improve the provision of Gaelic education’ (BnG 2007b: 33).

However, as neither the *Standards in Scotland’s Schools etc Act 2000* nor the *Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005* grant a parental right to Gaelic-medium education, the local authority remains the key stakeholder in decisions regarding such provision. For example, although the *Education Guidance* under the 2000 Act recommends that those local authorities in receipt of the Grant for Gaelic Language Education give ‘a commitment to deliver Gaelic medium education as an entitlement at pre-school and primary wherever reasonable demand exists’ (2004: 6), the definition of ‘reasonable demand’ is left to the Local Authority. The Gaelic-medium educational provision available at the time of the 2001 census facilitated a small increase in the number and proportion of Gaelic-speakers in the 3-15 age range, with 7,435 pupils within this category, an increase of 5% on the 1991 figure. Such an increase served to help reduce the overall rate of decline in the number of Gaelic speakers (from a 17% decline between 1981 and 1991 to an 11% decline between 1991 and 2001) but was not sufficient to stem the overall decline in the number of

\(^{20}\) Section 2.2.1.1. will discuss the role of education in language acquisition planning.

\(^{21}\) The role of education in the *National Plan for Gaelic 2007-2012* is outlined in Section 2.2.2.2.
Gaelic-speakers, which fell to 58,652, or 1.2% of the population over 3 in 2001 (Registrar General for Scotland 2001: 27). That education contributed to such a reduced decline is suggested, as whilst 0.9% of 3-15 year olds were Gaelic speaking at the time of the 2001 census (ibid 2001: 42), Jones’ (2009) analysis of the Gaelic language data of 3 year olds in the 2001 census indicated that a maximum of 0.5% of the age cohort were Gaelic speakers by means of intergenerational language transmission in the home (2009: 2).

Secondary school subject provision through the medium of Gaelic is typically requested to meet the needs of pupils who have received bilingual or Gaelic-medium education at the primary school level. The first such provision was delivered by Comhairle nan Eilean in 1983 when two secondary schools taught history and geography in Gaelic to pupils who had been educated through the bilingual project at the primary school stage, and Robertson (2008a: 238) notes that some Gaelic-medium subject teaching was also provided in Glasgow, Inverness and Portree by 1992. Issues of current provision and of the definition of Gaelic-medium education at the secondary school stage will be outlined in Section 2.1.2.3.

2.1.2.2 Reasons for the choice of Gaelic-medium education

In the absence of academic studies of parental choice of Gaelic-medium education prior to 1993 (MacNeil 1993), early parental rationales for the choice of Gaelic-medium education must be gleaned from sources mapping the development of Gaelic-medium education. In relation to urban contexts, Grant (1983) conducted a study of the feasibility of the establishment of Gaelic-medium education in Glasgow and Argyll and noted the existence of parental demand for such provision both from Gaelic-speaking parents who wished to continue a tradition of Gaelic-speaking in their family, and from non-Gaelic speaking parents who wanted their children to learn the language as they perceived Gaelic to be a part of Scottish identity and heritage or because of the perceived benefits of bilingualism in the acquisition of subsequent languages.

In relation to more rural contexts, Roberts’ 1989 survey of parents of pre-school children in the Western Isles, which was commissioned by Comhairle nan

\[^{22}\text{The percentage here is a ‘maximal’ figure as it is possible that some children acquired their reported Gaelic language competence through the education system in the 0-3 age range.}\]
Eilean Siar to ascertain future levels of parental demand for Gaelic-medium education, revealed there to be a difference between parental support and parental choice of Gaelic-medium education, with some 71% of the 329 parents who completed a questionnaire supporting ‘the idea of Gaelic-medium education as part of Western Isles’ Bilingual Policy’ (Roberts 1991: 263) but only 49% of parents expressing a wish to enroll their child in such education. Roberts reported views about Gaelic-medium education from interviews with 55 parents. Some perceived it to be more appropriate to the bilingual development of pupils for whom Gaelic was not their home language than was the bilingual education model previously employed in the Bilingual Education Project, to more closely align with theories of language learning which suggest that a concentrated early immersion period in the target language better facilitates language acquisition than does a bilingual model, and to serve as a means by which the Gaelic language and culture be maintained. However, other parents had doubts about Gaelic-medium education because of a fear about the impact of learning through Gaelic on children’s attainment in other areas of the curriculum or because they did not feel Gaelic-medium education to be necessary if children are from a Gaelic-speaking home (Roberts 1991: 262-264). The notion that the acquisition or development of Gaelic language skills was associated with integration into the local community rather than with social mobility was evidenced by some parents’ wish that Gaelic oracy be prioritized over Gaelic literacy (Roberts 1991: 262), and by the parental belief that English and other modern languages would be more important than Gaelic to the child’s future employment.

The first research study to investigate the reasons for the choice of Gaelic-medium primary education came in 1993, when MacNeil interviewed 100 parents of Gaelic-medium primary pupils in various parts of Scotland (71% of whom were in the Western Isles) as part of a broader study of parental experience of Gaelic-medium education. The principal set of reasons given by parents for the choice of Gaelic-medium education ‘focused around issues of the language and its heritage’ (MacNeil 1993: 23) and typically involved a family connection to Gaelic, with Gaelic either spoken in the home (sometimes as the child’s first language), or by at least one set of grandparents. Some parents also expressed a broader commitment to the maintenance of the Gaelic language. Education-related factors were also
identified, with parents being impressed with the linguistic outcomes of Gaelic-medium education. These two sets of reasons – linguistic heritage and education – were the most common (MacNeil 1993: 24). However, one group of parents, particularly those in ‘professional occupations’, emphasised the value of bilingualism for cognitive and linguistic development. MacNeil also notes that ‘a few parents chose Gaelic medium education as a means to integration’ (MacNeil 1993: 24) into a Gaelic-speaking community.

Similar motivations for decisions regarding the medium of instruction of a child’s primary schooling were returned by the national questionnaire survey of 224 parents of pupils in Gaelic-medium education from seven local education authorities conducted by Johnstone et al. in 1997. Similarities between the two studies included the citation of linguistic and cultural heritage, the perceived benefits of bilingualism and the perceived quality of Gaelic-medium education (Johnstone et al. 1999: 61). However, as motivations for choice of Gaelic-medium education was but one aspect of a parental survey which itself existed within a larger study of the attainments of pupils in Gaelic-medium primary education, the qualitative illustrations of the parental comments which constitute the rationales for choice in Johnstone et al.’s research are typical examples rather than representing the range of response within a category. The Johnstone et al. study did not present the choice of Gaelic-medium education as relating to an explicit wish to preserve or revitalize the Gaelic language as a key reason, as had MacNeil’s study, though the existence of a wish to maintain the Gaelic cultural and linguistic heritage was evidenced in some parental comments (Johnstone et al. 1999: 61). Interestingly, Johnstone et al.’s report provides quantitative evidence to substantiate the qualitative indication from Roberts’ research that parents do not associate Gaelic with social mobility. Johnstone et al. note: ‘Only a small group of the parents’ responses [3%] indicated that they felt that choosing Gaelic-medium education would help their children’s employment chances’ (Johnstone et al. 1999: 61).

Such findings raised similar considerations to those in the Welsh context, namely whether Gaelic-medium education was a choice typically made by parents whose social status was secure, and who could afford to prioritize their ethnic identity over social mobility through employment. Perceptions of parents of Gaelic-
medium pupils being more ‘middle class’ than their English-medium counterparts were reported by the Headteachers’ surveys in Johnstone et al.’s (1999) research, and were confirmed by an analysis of free school meals entitlement (ibid.: 2).

In 2002 Stockdale et al. conducted a study to determine the socio-economic and linguistic characteristics, migration history and parental attitudes associated with the choice of Gaelic-medium primary education in three Gaelic-speaking or residually Gaelic-speaking areas of the Highlands and Islands (Ullapool, Stornoway and Barra). The analysis of the results of a questionnaire survey of 172 parents of English-medium primary pupils and of 58 parents of Gaelic-medium primary pupils found the choice of Gaelic-medium education to be associated with a family tradition of Gaelic, highly educated parents and a positive parental attitude towards Gaelic and Gaelic-medium education. The finding that enrolment in Gaelic-medium education is ‘more commonly associated with highly educated parents’ (2003: 30) is based on an analysis of parental academic qualifications, but the researchers note that ‘many parents in the sample appear to be in occupations not consistent with their higher level of qualifications’ as the choice of Gaelic-medium education is not associated with parents’ occupation (Stockdale et al. 2003: 31). Such a finding is of interest in relation to the question of the socio-economic status of Gaelic-medium parents, something that was not found to significantly differ from that of English-medium parents of pupils in dual stream schools in Scotland in 2007 (O’Hanlon et al. 2010: 28). In relation to parental rationales for the choice of Gaelic-medium primary education, Stockdale et al. conducted a small-scale qualitative study, by means of interviews with 6 parental respondents from each study area (a total of 18 parents representing both the choice of English-medium and Gaelic-medium education). A sample of such data is presented in ‘raw’ form in the Appendix to the research, and displays the key themes found in previous research in connection with the choice of Gaelic-medium education, namely a family linguistic heritage of Gaelic speaking, the perceived benefits of bilingualism, for example the belief that being bilingual facilitates the easier acquisition of a third language, a belief that Gaelic-medium education is a good quality education in terms of the amount of individual attention pupils receive in small classes, and a wish that Gaelic-medium education help preserve the Gaelic language (Stockdale et al. 2003: 65-66).
Three further studies are relevant to understanding the choice of Gaelic-medium education. In 2009, Stephen et al. conducted case studies of three early years Gaelic-medium education providers in order to investigate the factors influencing the provision of, and parental choice of, Gaelic-medium early years’ education. The case study providers ‘were chosen to represent the very different contexts in which GM education can be found: one island community where Gaelic is widely spoken; one small, northern town and one southern city, both locations where Gaelic is not widely spoken’ (Stephen et al. 2010: 7). The parents interviewed as part of these case studies cited three main reasons for the choice of Gaelic-medium early years’ education for their child: (i) to continue a heritage of Gaelic speaking, whether within their family or to maintain the Gaelic language, (ii) to enable their child to benefit from the advantages of bilingualism and (iii) to allow their child access to what they perceive to be the ‘social and educational advantages’ (Stephen et al. 2010: 33) of Gaelic-medium education, for example small class sizes and an education with pupils of like-minded parents.

Research conducted by O’Hanlon et al. in 2009, which investigated choice of Gaelic-medium education at the primary and secondary school stages, produced similar findings to those of Stephen et al. (2010). Twenty three parents of Gaelic-medium Primary 7 pupils and 32 parents of Secondary 2 pupils who were studying Gàidhlig (fluent speakers)\(^{23}\) were interviewed about the factors influencing the choice of Gaelic-medium education for their child at the primary and secondary school stages. Parents were drawn from eight primary-secondary school pairs selected to be representative of the range of contexts in which Gaelic-medium education is provided in Scotland. The Head teachers and Local Authority advisors connected to these schools were also interviewed. The research found there to be five sets of reasons for the choice of Gaelic-medium education, relating to: (i) heritage, (ii) bilingualism, (iii) general qualities of Gaelic-medium education, (iv) characteristics of parents and (v) continuity (O’Hanlon et al. 2010: 46-58). Heritage and the perceived benefits of a child’s growing up bilingual were the motives for choosing Gaelic medium that were reported most frequently. The category of heritage had four distinct versions: family heritage, local community heritage, local community heritage, local community heritage, local community heritage.

\(^{23}\) The Scottish Qualifications Authority officially labels courses for fluent speakers as ‘Gàidhlig’ and courses for learners as ‘Gaelic’.
heritage of the Highlands and Islands and Scottish heritage. Some respondents also expressed the view that Gaelic was a linguistic heritage that they wished to preserve, and thus language maintenance was a fifth version under this category. The advantages of bilingualism had two distinct versions – the perception that there are cognitive benefits of being bilingual, and the belief that growing up as a bilingual offers a greater capacity to learn subsequent languages. Both of these were often the result of the respondent’s having become familiar with relevant bilingualism research. The third and fourth sets of reasons for the choice of Gaelic-medium education – namely ‘characteristics of parents’ and ‘general qualities of Gaelic-medium education’ – are similar to the analogous findings by Stephen et al. (2010: 33). The final set of reasons for the choice of Gaelic-medium primary or secondary education was ‘continuity’ – within a family or across school stages. Once one child had gone to Gaelic-medium education, parents often chose it for their subsequent children, and once a child had attended one stage of Gaelic-medium education there was a desire not to lose the Gaelic that had already been learnt. However, in relation to this last finding, the research acknowledges that ‘several people reported … that pupils themselves were more involved in decisions about language at secondary school than they had been on entry to primary school’ (2010: 66), thus identifying the pupil as a key stakeholder in decisions regarding language in education at the primary to secondary school stage.

In a study of 109 Gaelic-medium Primary 7 pupils from 20 primary schools across Scotland (which formed part of a larger study of language use, language abilities and language attitudes, discussed in Section 2.2), Cochran investigated pupils’ intentions regarding the continuation of their Gaelic-medium education at the early secondary school stage. She notes that ‘the majority of students [71%] planned to continue with whatever level of Gaelic provision was available to them in their community [secondary school]’ (Cochran 2008: 163). Five percent of pupils wished only to continue with Gaelic as a subject (and not with subjects through the medium of Gaelic), 17% did not want to continue with Gaelic, 7% were unsure and 1% were transferring to independent schools which did not have the option of Gaelic. Cochran solely describes the pupil rationales of those not wishing to continue with Gaelic-medium education, and notes:
Of the 22% of students who did not want to continue with the classes taught through Gaelic that were available … about half of the students did not want to continue because they wanted room in their schedules for other subjects such as French, PE or Science. The remainder (about 11% of total P7s, [total] n = 109) did not want to continue because they felt their Gaelic was not sufficiently fluent to handle the coursework or that Gaelic in general was too difficult … A few students from the above two groups indicated that they felt Gaelic would not be useful in the future or generally had not enjoyed being in Gaelic-medium.

(Cochran 2008: 165)

Cochran posits that the wish to continue with the available secondary school level Gaelic-medium provision may relate to council area (with 92% of pupils from Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, 55% of pupils from Highland and 76% of pupils from other council areas wishing to continue with subjects through Gaelic) or to home language background: ‘students who speak little or no Gaelic at home were overall less likely to say that they definitely want to continue with Gaelic’ (Cochran 2008: 169).

As in the Welsh context, there thus exists a gap in the research in Scotland regarding Celtic-medium pupils’ role in decisions regarding the medium of instruction of their secondary schooling, and the rationales underpinning their linguistic choices. Thus, the research questions posed at the end of 2.1.1.2 are also of relevance to the Scottish context.

2.1.2.3 Provision of Gaelic-medium education at the time of the research

In relation to primary education, there were 62 primary schools providing Gaelic-medium education in 2006-7, constituting 2.8% of the total number of mainstream publicly funded primary schools in Scotland (Scottish Executive 2007: 1). MacLeod (2006) notes such a number to be the result of uneven growth in Gaelic-medium education, with the establishment of an average of three classes a year at the outset (1985-1988), an average of six per year between 1989 and 1993, an average of three per year between 1994 and 1999, and growth slowing to only 3 units in total being established between 2000 and 2006 (MacLeod 2006: 6, 14). 14 of the 32 unitary authorities in Scotland made some provision for Gaelic-medium primary education. Three councils – Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Highland and Argyll and Bute – provided the majority of such provision, maintaining 25, 20 and 6 Gaelic-medium primary providers respectively, whilst the remaining 11 councils each
provided one primary school Gaelic-medium option. The proportion of pupils in Celtic-medium education in a unitary authority ranged from 24.3% in Comhairle nan Eilean Siar to 0.1% in Perth and Kinross (derived from Scottish Executive 2007: 49). The vast majority (98%) of Gaelic-medium primary provision was Gaelic-medium streams within dual stream schools, with only one school – Sgoil Ghàidhlig Ghlaschu (the Glasgow Gaelic School) – being a freestanding Gaelic-medium school. McLeod notes this to be atypical of minority-language medium education internationally (McLeod 2010: 8).

2,092 primary pupils were educated through the medium of Gaelic in the 2006-7 school year, constituting 0.5% of the Scottish primary population (Scottish Executive 2007: 1). The Gaelic-English language models within which these pupils learn are not easily discernible from published sources, however, as the categorizations employed by the Scottish Executive to classify Gaelic-medium provision in Scottish schools both fail to be mutually exclusive (Scottish Executive 2007: 18) and do not ask local authorities for the data by school stage, an important consideration in an education system which begins with an ‘initial [Gaelic] immersion phase of at least two years duration’ (SOED 1993: 25), but which subsequently solely requires Gaelic to be ‘the predominant teaching medium throughout the primary stages’ (SOED 1993: 6). Such inadequacies in the classification of Gaelic-medium primary provision at the national level necessitated the national-level questionnaire employed for sampling purposes for the current study described in Section 3.3.1.1.

The Government reported Gaelic to be the ‘main home language’ of 656 pupils (0.09% of pupils) in publicly funded primary or secondary schools in the 2006-7 school year, a judgement based on parents’ assessment of pupils’ language use (Scottish Executive 2007: 18). As there were 3037 pupils enrolled in either Gaelic-medium primary education or Gàidhlig (fluent speakers) classes in the 2006-7 school year, such figures suggest that Gaelic was the ‘main home language’ of, at most, 22% of the pupils enrolled in Gaelic-medium primary or Gàidhlig fluent speaker education in 2006-7.

There were 20 secondary schools classified as providing ‘Gaelic-medium education’ in 2007-8, constituting 5% of the total number of publicly funded
secondary schools in Scotland (Scottish Executive 2008: 1). A Gaelic-medium providing secondary school is defined as a school in which at least one subject in addition to Gaelic is provided using Gaelic as a medium of instruction (Robertson 2008b: 6). This criterion was also used in practice by the Scottish Executive, as although their Gaelic-medium secondary education category was entitled ‘some subjects other than Gaelic taught through Gaelic’, the only other category is ‘Gaelic the only subject taught through Gaelic’ (Scottish Executive 2008:84). The criterion for ‘Celtic-medium education’ at the secondary school level is therefore much weaker in Scotland than in Wales, as described in Section 2.1.1.3.

Robertson notes that such ‘Gaelic-medium’ secondary schools typically provide two or three subjects through the medium of Gaelic with ‘only two schools, Portree High and Sgoil Ghàidhlig Ghlaschu, offering the majority of specialisms in Gaelic’ (Robertson 2008b: 238). These 20 Gaelic-medium providing secondary schools taught 322 pupils in 2007-8 (Robertson 2008b:6), with an additional 646 pupils solely receiving Gàidhlig fluent speakers provision at the secondary school stage in these and an additional 19 secondary schools that solely provide Gàidhlig as a subject (Robertson 2008b: 7). At the Secondary 1 stage, 143 pupils were taught through the medium of Gaelic for subjects in addition to Gàidhlig with an additional 105 studying solely Gàidhlig as a subject. Thus, 0.4% of Secondary 1 pupils were taught Gàidhlig for fluent speakers (Robertson 2008b: 7, Scottish Executive 2008: 30). There was no national level data as to the percentage of pupils who continued with various proportions of their schooling through the medium of Gaelic at the secondary school stage in 2007-8, due both to a paucity of such provision and to the absence of sufficiently detailed categories to differentiate between existing Gaelic-medium secondary school provision across Scotland.

The Committee of Experts assessed in 2007 that the UK Government’s pledge in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages to ‘make available’ secondary education in Gaelic was only ‘partly fulfilled’ (CoE 2007: 36). The Committee reported the concerns of non-governmental organizations about the ‘serious decline in Gaelic-medium education after primary school’ (CoE 2007: 35) and noted that ‘the lack of continuity from primary to secondary education is still of considerable concern’ (CoE 2007:33). As is the case in the Welsh context, Gaelic-
medium primary pupils’ options with regard to the continuance of Gaelic-medium education at secondary school varies by local authority area and by school, but Robertson additionally identifies the size of the average Gaelic-medium primary cohort as a key factor ‘hampering’ the development of Gaelic-medium secondary provision, on grounds of cost (Robertson 2008b: 238). However, there also exists a problem of the availability of Gaelic-speaking secondary subject specialists, which was highlighted by both the Inspectorate and by the General Teaching Council for Scotland in 2005 (HMIE 2005: 37, GTCS 2005: 5-6). These were problems that faced Welsh-medium education in Anglicized areas in the 1960s, as outlined in Section 2.1.1.2.

2.2 Welsh and Gaelic at the primary-secondary school stage: a language planning perspective

This section considers the issue of continuity of Celtic-medium education at the primary to secondary school stage from a language planning perspective. Section 2.2.1 briefly outlines the theory and process of language planning with particular regard to threatened languages and to the role of education in their maintenance. Section 2.2.2 presents the role Celtic-medium primary and secondary school education is expected to play in language planning in Scotland and Wales, as expressed in national policy at the time of the research (2007) and considers such national approaches in the light of key language planning theorists’ views on the place of education in language planning. The section concludes with the identification of the research questions that this thesis aims to address in relation to language planning. Section 2.2.3 presents existing research on the aspects of language relevant to language planning that are investigated in the thesis.

2.2.1 Language Planning: principles and agents

2.2.1.1 Principles of language planning

The discipline of language planning has its origins in work by Haugen (1966), who identified a four-stage process of ‘selection of norm’, ‘codification of form’, ‘elaboration of function’ and ‘acceptance by the community’ (Haugen 1966: 18-24) in relation to the establishment of a national language in Norway. However, Cobarrubias argues that these four stages of language planning were primarily
Concerned with the development of the language variety itself, ‘from vernacular to standard’ (1983: 3) rather than with the relationship between language and society.

In 1969 Kloss drew a distinction between ‘corpus planning’ activities and ‘status planning’ activities and in so doing emphasized the social aspects of language planning (Kloss 1969). ‘Corpus planning’ was concerned with attempts to modify ‘the nature of the language itself’ (Kloss 1969: 81) by means of, for example, standardization of spelling and modernization of terminology, whilst ‘status planning’ focused on the language’s ‘standing alongside other languages or vis-à-vis the national government’ (Kloss 1969: 81). Language planning thus came to be concerned with both linguistic and sociolinguistic activities.

In 1989, Cooper proposed that the concept of language planning be divided into three sub-categories, distinguishing ‘acquisition planning’ from the other aspects of status planning (within which it had always previously been subsumed), leaving ‘status planning’ to be concerned more with the prestige of a language (1989: 33). ‘Acquisition planning’ concerns the teaching and learning of a particular language, whether in the home, community or educational domain. Hornberger summarizes the three key concepts of language planning:

With respect to language planning, we may think of status planning as those efforts directed toward the allocation of functions of languages in a given speech community; corpus planning as those efforts related to the adequacy of the form or structure of languages; and acquisition planning as efforts to influence the allocation of users or the distribution of languages, by means of creating or improving opportunity or incentive to learn them, or both.

(Hornberger 1994: 78)

Language planning can be conducted both in relation to majority languages and in relation to threatened languages, which Fishman defines as:

Languages that are not replacing themselves demographically, i.e. they have fewer and fewer users generation after generation and the uses to which these languages are commonly put are not only few, but additionally, they are typically unrelated to higher social status (prestige, power) even within their own ethno-cultural community.

(Fishman 1991: 81)

Huss et al. (2003: 5) highlight that such ‘linguistic revitalisation contexts’ require the implementation of a certain type of language planning, involving closely linked status and corpus planning. They note that for ‘linguistic revitalisation cases’:
access to new domains for using the language often presupposes development of new terminology, new orthographies and frequently, a substantial increase of the literary use of the language.

(Huss et al. 2003: 5)

The domain of education is often cited as a key micro-level social domain (Spolsky 2004) for the development of threatened languages. The incorporation of the language into education both provides a context in which ‘language management’ (Spolsky 2009) – the use of authority to create a legitimate context for the threatened language – may occur, and contributes to the status planning of the language by means of its incorporation into such a prestigious social domain.

Other theorists have emphasised the centrality of education to acquisition planning in language planning for threatened languages. Baker and Jones argue in relation to such languages that:

Language acquisition planning is an essential foundation on which status and corpus planning can build. Without [it] there is little basis for other forms of language planning.

(Baker & Jones 2000: 121)

Within language acquisition planning, Ferguson notes that in the case of the maintenance of threatened languages:

teaching the regional language is seen as an essential complement to intergenerational language transmission within the family.

(Ferguson 2006: 34)

However, the complementarity of ‘language transmission in the family’ and ‘bilingual education’ as the two components of acquisition planning (Baker & Prys Jones 2000: 121) is the subject of much debate. On the one hand is a ‘systemic’ approach to language planning propounded by Ó Flatharta et al. which equates maintenance and use, and posits use to be the product of the ‘co-presence’ of linguistic ability in the target language, the opportunity to use the language in a particular societal domain and positive attitudes towards the language (Ó Flatharta et al. 2009: 4). The authors posit that such linguistic capacities and positive attitudes can be developed by means of education. Ability in Irish, they say, ‘is nurtured informally in homes and families and other intimate relationships of society as well
as formally in the education system’ (Ó Flatharta et al. 2009: 5) whilst they note that education can ‘reverse negative attitudes towards Irish language use and foster positive attitudes in their place’ (Ó Flatharta et al. 2009: 17). From such a perspective, the two strands of home-based and school-based acquisition planning are complementary as both are posited as being equally capable of facilitating the linguistic ability and positive attitudes towards the language required for language use.

On the other hand, Fishman (1991) argues that the use and maintenance of a threatened language is most likely to be ensured when an individual has strong identity bonds with the language. He argues that such ethno-cultural identifications are most easily created through the ‘affective intimacy of the family-neighbourhood-community identity-and society binding experience’ (1991: 374) of acquiring a language as one’s mother tongue, or in early childhood simultaneously with another language, and thus prioritises home-based intergenerational transmission in acquisition planning. In the case of a threatened language which has had its intergenerational transmission interrupted, Fishman (1991: 373) argues that the school could facilitate both language acquisition of the target language by second language pupils and also foster pupil identification with the target language and culture. However, Fishman argues that a crucial aspect of such an educational process is the fostering of pupil language use out with the school in the ‘family-neighbourhood-community arena’ (Fishman, 1991: 373) in order that pupils develop a strong enough ethno-cultural bond with the language community to encourage them to transmit the language to their own children. From such a perspective, minority language education is a high-order ‘prop’ (Fishman 1991: 380), a short-term intervention which is intended to re-establish the self-sufficient maintenance of the target language (Fishman 1991: 372). Bilingual education in a threatened language is thus viewed as serving an ‘initiatory’ or ‘contributory’ (Fishman 1991: 372) function in relation to the ‘nexus of mother tongue transmission’ (1991: 279) of acquisition planning rather than being a ‘complementary’ and parallel initiative to intergenerational transmission. Indeed, Fishman aims to achieve a ‘nativisation effort (the effort to increasingly reinstate Xish as the characteristic mother tongue or co-mother tongue of Xmen)’ (Fishman 1991: 370).
Such approaches come from two very different perspectives, which perhaps reflect the distinction between the pragmatism of a policy document (Ó Flatharta et al.) and the complexity of a theory (Fishman and others). Ó Flatharta et al. primarily aimed to maintain a language at a national level: their aim was to ‘increase the number of daily or active users of Irish from the current level of approximately 72,000 to 250,000 in 20 years’ (Ó Flatharta et al. 2009: 7). They thus did not draw a distinction between first and second language speakers and did not situate the policy within a particular local minority culture community. The theoretical approach of Fishman is not tied to a particular linguistic context and thus is more general. Fishman argues that the development of language policy should be based on a ‘prior value consensus’ (Fishman 1991: 82) amongst language planners and the language community regarding the purpose of the language planning endeavour. In the case of a threatened language, this could involve the consideration of whether language planning aims to foster the use of a language at a national level or to maintain a language in its traditional communities, in addition to a consideration of the social domains in which one wishes to maintain or to develop the threatened language.

Thus, research issues central to language planning are how school-use or community-use of a language relate to each other, how that relationship might change during the transition from primary to secondary school (a crucial period both for language acquisition and for children’s education generally), and – from the policy perspective – how minority-language use relates to that of the majority language. Before turning to language planning for Welsh and Scottish Gaelic, the process of language planning is briefly considered in Section 2.2.1.2.

2.2.1.2 Agents in the language planning process

Jernudd and Das Gupta (1971) propose language planning to be an instance of social planning, and thus argue it should be ‘considered at the level of national society’ (Jernudd & Das Gupta 1971: 195-196). Within such a framework, language planning is conceived as ‘a political and administrative activity for solving language problems in society’ (ibid.: 211). The key stakeholder role of governmental officials in ‘authorising’ (Weinstein 1980: 56) language planning activities for a particular language is also emphasised by Weinstein (1980) and Baldauf & Kaplan (2003).
Language planning is thus, like minority language education itself, ‘a prerogative of the polity’ (Fishman 1991: 99). However, Jernudd and Das Gupta argue such political support for language planning to be essential to achieve the necessary ‘coordinated attention of political, educational, economic and linguistic authorities’ (1971: 196-197). They propose an ‘ideal process of planning’ involving the delegation of the language planning task from the politicians to ‘a body of experts’ who design and implement strategies, evaluate their effectiveness, and provide guidance on language planning to those implementing planning policy (1971: 196). Such agents were assumed by Cooper in 1989, who anticipated that ‘formal elites, influentials, counter-elites and non-elite policy implementers’ (1989: 98) would be the key agents involved in the language planning process.

However, when language planning is being conducted in relation to a threatened language, theorists such as Fishman and Romaine have argued for the prioritisation of a micro-level and community-led approach to language planning because

a threatened language is not necessarily similarly or equally threatened in every community or in every social network in which it is still employed.  
(Fishman 1991: 86)

In relation to the agents involved in the language planning process, Fishman argues that such community level ‘tailor-made efforts also permit more local input, elicit more local commitment and make better use of diverse local talent’(Fishman 1991: 86). Such community involvement in language planning is framed as the ‘empowerment’ (2008: 14) of local people within Romaine’s ‘eco-linguistic’ approach to language planning, which advocates the parallel development of both the social and linguistic community environment. She notes that a community of language speakers ‘can exist only where there is a viable environment for them to live and a means of making a living’ (Romaine 2008: 13-14).

However, Liddicoat and Baldauf warn against the drawing of a distinction between macro-level and micro-level language planning: ‘interactions between the micro and the macro, between the local and the national, can operate in either direction’ (Liddicoat & Baldauf Jr 2008: 11). Considering language planning within the social policy perspective outlined by Jernudd and Das Gupta is most appropriate
both for the consideration of the proposed role of education in language planning in Scotland and Wales and for the contextualisation of the empirical data within the thesis, which constitutes an international comparison of aspects of Celtic-medium pupils’ language relevant to language planning at the national level: the interaction of micro and macro is unavoidable in any detailed consideration of policy and experience in schools.

2.2.2 The role of education in language planning: policy in the Scottish and Welsh contexts

This section outlines the aims of language planning for Welsh and Gaelic and the proposed role of Celtic-medium education in achieving these aims, as expressed in national policy at the time of the research (2007). The two national contexts are presented separately, because of Haugen’s point (1966: 16) that the aims and approaches to language planning vary in relation to the ‘specific social context’ (Haugen 1966: 16). Such variation includes, for example, the size of the linguistic community, the relationship between the language and national identity, and the language planning policy processes of the nation in question. Moreover, Romaine notes that the resultant language policies are themselves context-bound in their implementation and outcomes:

What is ostensibly the same policy may lead to different outcomes, depending on the situation in which it operates.

(Romaine 2002: 4)

The policy outline here presented is thus not intended to facilitate a comparison of the ‘effectiveness’ of the nation’s language planning policy for education either in relation to reversing language shift, as indexed by speaker numbers in the 2001 census (Sections 2.1.1.2 & 2.1.2.1) or in relation to the empirical results presented in Chapter 5. Rather, the purpose is to enable the empirical results to be interpreted both within their own national contexts, and also in relation to the international comparison of trends. As the thesis focuses on the primary to secondary transition stage, detailed policy analysis of education in language planning will focus on these school stages.
2.2.2.1 Language Planning and Education in Wales

The operative national language planning policy at the time of the present research was *Iaith Pawb: A National Action Plan for a Bilingual Wales*. The plan was published in 2003 by the Welsh Assembly Government, and is Wales’ first national language plan. It emerged from a series of policy statements regarding the individual and societal benefits of Welsh-English bilingualism from Welsh legislative and governmental authorities dating from the inception of the National Assembly for Wales in 1999. Examples include *A Better Wales* (NAfW 2000), *A Plan for Wales* (NAfW, 2001) and *A Bilingual Future* (WAG, 2002).

With regard to the ‘prior ideological clarification’ (Fishman 1991) of the Welsh language planning endeavour, the Welsh Assembly Government declare that:

> the Welsh language is an integral part of our national identity [and] an essential and enduring component in the history, culture and social fabric of our nation.  

(WAG 2003: 1)

The stated goal of *Iaith Pawb* is to create ‘a sustained increase in the number and percentage of people able to speak Welsh’ (WAG 2003:11) and to create ‘a truly bilingual nation … a country where people can choose to live their lives through the medium of either Welsh or English and where the presence of the two languages is a visible and audible source of pride and strength to us all’ (WAG 2003: 11). The language plan thus aims both to revitalise a language and to create a national context in which Welsh is incorporated into all key social domains. Such ‘language acquisition’ and ‘status planning’ targets are expected to create more Welsh speakers and to provide social contexts in which Welsh speakers may use Welsh as an expression of their personal, community or national identity across Wales. For those who do not speak Welsh, *Iaith Pawb* provides the opportunity for individuals to positively associate themselves with the language as a citizen of a bilingual nation. Williams notes that ‘the declared aim of *Iaith Pawb* … to create a bilingual Wales in

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24 *Iaith Pawb* means ‘Everybody’s Language’.
25 Under the *Welsh Language Act 1993* Welsh must be treated ‘on a basis of equality’ with English in ‘the conduct of public business and the administration of justice’ (1993, Chapter 38, Part I: 3(2)(b)). However, the use of Welsh in the private sector operated on a voluntary basis at the time of the commencement of this research in 2007.
an inclusive, comprehensive manner … is the first time that such sentiments have been voiced as an integral part of government policy’ (Williams 2005: 2).

The education sector is heavily implicated in the ‘language acquisition’ strand of *Iaith Pawb*:

we want to sustain the growth of the language which has been achieved over the past two decades among school-age children, improve the rate of language transfer from Welsh-speaking parents to their children and encourage those who have used or acquired the language at school to retain and use it once they have left.

(WAG 2003: 11)

Such a statement prioritises early language learning, and thus forefronts the two key contexts of such acquisition – the school and the home. Indeed, two of the five ‘key targets’ identified in *Iaith Pawb* are concerned with increasing, respectively, the percentage of pupils in Welsh-medium pre-school education and the percentage of families where Welsh is the main language of the home (WAG 2003: 11). Of most interest to the present study, however, is the implicit acknowledgement that the achievement of the primary aim of *Iaith Pawb*, namely to create a ‘sustained’ (WAG 2003:11) increase in the number of Welsh speakers, is dependent on these young Welsh speakers continuing to use their Welsh language into adulthood.

The factors that contribute towards self-motivated Welsh language use among young people are alluded to later in the *Iaith Pawb* document:

if Welsh is to flourish, young people in particular need to develop a sense of ownership of the language and to see it as their language and not simply the language of school and culture. The Assembly Government will work to ensure that we maximize the opportunities for our young people and teenagers to use the language in everyday leisure and social situations.

(WAG 2003: 48)

Such policy excerpts are situated within the wider theoretical context outlined in Section 2.2.1.1 regarding the necessary components of language use – whether expressed as the ‘co-presence’ of linguistic capacity, opportunities to use the language and positive attitudes towards the language (Ó Flatharta et al. 2009: 4), or as linguistic ability, opportunities to use the language in the home and community context and ethno-cultural identifications with the language and the language community (Fishman 1991). *Iaith Pawb* (2003) highlights the need for a better
understanding of the ways in which minority language education relates to the range of linguistic and social variables involved in current and future language use.

Such a policy context thus identifies the need for a study of the aspects of young Welsh speakers’ language pertinent to language planning, such as their existing patterns of Welsh language use, their perceived linguistic abilities, their identifications with the Welsh language and their perceptions of the usefulness of the Celtic language for the future. This thesis investigates such aspects of language amongst a group of Welsh-medium pupils at the upper primary and early secondary school stages. The longitudinal element of the study aims to give an indication as to whether the move from the primary to the secondary school context has an impact on these variables (the methodological approach is outlined in detail in Section 3.8.1.3).

The present research will thus address the following questions:

- What are Celtic-medium pupils’ patterns of (a) language use (b) perceptions of their linguistic ability (c) identification with the Celtic language and (d) perceptions of the usefulness of the Celtic language for their future at the primary and early secondary school stages?
- Do the responses and patterns of response differ between the Scottish and Welsh contexts at the primary school stage?
- Do the responses and patterns of response shift between the primary and secondary school stages in either the Scottish or the Welsh contexts?

2.2.2.2 Language Planning and Education in Scotland

The key stakeholder in Gaelic language planning in Scotland is Bòrd na Gàidhlig, a non-departmental public body charged with the development of a National Gaelic Language Plan by the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005. The National Plan for Gaelic 2007-2012 (BnG 2007a) was Scotland’s first national language plan for Gaelic and was the key operative language planning document at the time of the empirical research for the present thesis. Two successive advisory groups on Gaelic had been commissioned by the Scottish Executive since devolution, the Taskforce on the Public Funding of Gaelic (2000) and the Ministerial Advisory Group on Gaelic (2002). The reports from both of these groups recommended the development of a national strategy for Gaelic, with the establishment of a Gaelic Development Agency (2000:16, 2002:42). The National Gaelic Education Strategy, which formed part of the National Plan for Gaelic 2007-2012, was...
2012, had its roots in campaigning for national level planning for Gaelic education since the 1990s (for example, in Comunn na Gàidhlig 1997).

With regard to the ‘prior value consensus’ (Fishman 1991: 82) amongst language planners and the language community (Section 2.2.1.1 above), Bòrd na Gàidhlig state their wish to revitalize the Gaelic language to be based on the premise that:

Gaelic belongs to the people of Scotland and it is our responsibility as a nation to maintain its existence in a modern, multicultural and multilingual Scotland.

(BnG 2007a: 8)

The ‘vision’ (BnG 2007a: 12) of A National Plan for Gaelic is to create:

a sustainable future for Gaelic in Scotland in which the language will be:

- the preferred language of an increasing number of people in Scotland
- the mother tongue of an increasing number of speakers
- supported by a dynamic culture in a diverse language community.

(BnG 2007a: 12)

The language plan thus focuses on ‘status planning’ and on ‘acquisition planning’, as had Iaith Pawb in the Welsh context. However, whilst the Welsh context prioritises both education and intergenerational transmission in acquisition planning, the National Plan for Gaelic particularly prioritises intergenerational language transmission. In relation to ‘status planning’, the Scottish plan focuses on the encouragement of language prestige and language use at an individual speaker level, rather than status planning at a societal level as envisaged in Wales. Indeed, rather than presenting a vision for national societal bilingualism and biculturalism as had Iaith Pawb, the National Plan for Gaelic rather outlines a wish for a national societal multiculturalism in which the Gaelic language will be ‘supported’ by a vibrant national Gaelic culture appreciated by speakers of Gaelic, English and other languages.

The focus on home-based language acquisition in acquisition planning in the National Plan for Gaelic is evidenced as two of the three language acquisition targets pertaining to children relate to intergenerational transmission. The Bòrd note:
we want to see (i) an increase in the use and transmission of Gaelic in the home (ii) an increase in the percentage of children acquiring Gaelic in the home (iii) an increase in the uptake and availability of Gaelic-medium education.

(BnG 2007a: 12)

However, later in the document education is argued to be ‘crucial in the acquisition of Gaelic’ (BnG 2007a: 20) – both for mother tongue Gaelic speakers who develop Gaelic literacy through Gaelic-medium education, and for non-Gaelic speakers who acquire both oracy and literacy in the language through education.

There thus appears to be a tension in the *National Plan for Gaelic 2007-2012* between the role of education in ‘acquisition planning’ as a short-term strategy to ‘initiate’ or ‘re-initiate’ (Fishman 1991: 372) intergenerational language transmission, and the acknowledged necessity of Gaelic-medium education for Gaelic literacy acquisition for all. The aim of expansion in Gaelic-medium education (by means of a series of Primary 1 Gaelic-medium enrolment targets – from 313 in 2006 to 4,000 by 2021, 10,000 by 2031 and 15,000 by 2041 (BnG 2007a: 15)) is said to aim to ‘restore … the Gaelic language to a state of natural growth’ by 2031 (BnG 2007a: 15), with the phrase ‘natural growth’ suggesting language acquisition through intergenerational transmission.

However, there is the acknowledgement in the *National Plan for Gaelic*, as there had been in *Iaith Pawb*, that although essential for language acquisition, the school context may not be sufficient to ensure that Celtic-medium pupils identify with the Celtic language and culture sufficiently to continue to use the language in adulthood and to pass it on to their own children. The *National Plan for Gaelic* states:

> education alone will not reverse language decline and young people must be provided with a range of opportunities and activities that allow them to use their acquired language confidently in a number of domains and contexts.

(BnG 2007a: 55)

Such an approach accords with Fishman’s belief that ‘school use of language is just not enough’ (1977: 102) and his theory of the importance of language use in the ‘family-neighbourhood-community arena’ (Fishman 1991: 373). 26

26 The draft *National Gaelic Language Plan 2012-2017* marks a shift from the *National Plan for Gaelic 2007-2012* as it prioritises school-based Gaelic-language learning within acquisition planning:
This thesis accordingly investigates aspects of Gaelic-medium pupils’ language pertinent to language planning, namely their patterns of Gaelic language use in the home, school and community domains, their perceived linguistic abilities, their identifications with the Gaelic language and their perceptions of the usefulness of the Celtic language for their future. The research additionally maps continuity or change in such aspects of language between the primary and secondary school stages and offers a comparison of Celtic-medium pupils in the Scottish and Welsh contexts in relation to patterns of language at the upper primary school stage and patterns of shift between the primary and secondary school stages. [See research questions at the end of Section 2.2.2.1]

2.2.3 Previous literature on aspects of pupils’ language relevant to language planning

This section presents existing research on the aspects of language pertinent to language planning identified in the research questions in Sections 2.2.2.1, namely language use, linguistic ability, identifications with the Celtic language and attitudes towards the use of the Celtic language beyond the school context. Although such aspects of language are interdependent at the individual pupil level, the themes will be considered separately in the literature review and in the Presentation of Findings to facilitate academic analysis of pupil group responses within the specific cultural contexts of Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium education. Consideration will be given to the interaction of such aspects of language at an individual pupil level in vignettes at the end of the Presentation of Findings and in the final section of the Discussion of Findings. Each section (language use, linguistic ability, perceptions of the Celtic language) will begin with ‘methodological underpinnings’ in order that the research presented be situated within its disciplinary contexts, as Ricento emphasises that ‘research in language policy and planning must be understood as both a multidisciplinary and an interdisciplinary activity’ (2006:9). The presentation of research within each section will focus on the Scottish and Welsh contexts for the reasons of the context-specificity of social and linguistic variables pertaining to

‘The significant expansion of Gaelic-medium provision is the keynote of the National Plan, on which the success of much of the rest of the plan depends’ (BnG 2011: 14). Such a shift in the focus of language acquisition planning in the Scottish context will be further discussed in the final chapter.
lesser-used languages outlined in Section 2.2.2. Research concerning children in upper childhood and adolescents (aged 10-14 years) will be foregrounded, as this is most directly relevant to the present research.

2.2.3.1 Language use: methodological underpinnings

Research on language use in the Scottish and Welsh contexts typically derives from research on the social domains of language use by Schmidt-Rohr (1932) and Mackey (1962), the latter of whom identified five domains of language use, namely ‘the home, community, school, mass media and correspondence’ (Mackey 1962: 56), and from research on the importance of ‘role-relations’ (Fishman 1964: 38) within such social domains. The concept of role-relations, first identified by Braunshausen (1928), is concerned with the nature of language use between specific interlocutors within a social domain, for example language use between a mother and child within the family domain. In 1965, Fishman summarized the approach when he characterized the key language use research question for multilingual settings to be ‘Who speaks what language to whom and when?’ (Fishman 1965: 67)

The general methodological approach to language use research in the Scottish and Welsh contexts is thus typically similar – studies usually ask respondents to assess their patterns of language use on a scale ranging from ‘Always or Almost always in Celtic language’ to ‘Always or almost always in English’ in relation to specific interlocutors in a range of linguistic domains. However, there is variation in the validity of the specific methodological approaches taken to investigating children and adolescents’ language use in both the Scottish and the Welsh contexts.

2.2.3.1.1 Wales

There exists a national level survey of Welsh language use – the Welsh Language Use Survey. This study had the methodological strengths of being a national survey and of being large scale – encompassing some 7,700 Welsh speakers (including 1,967 children) over a three year period (2004-6). However, there are three key methodological flaws in this research which limit the validity and

27 Methodological aspects of ‘home international’ comparisons (Raffe et al 1999) will be discussed in Section 3.8.1.1.
reliability of the findings for the present purposes, and therefore would make any summary of the results intrinsically misleading. The first concerns the respondent to the questionnaire: parents were asked to complete the language use form on their child’s behalf if the child was under 12 years of age, and were allowed to answer on behalf of children of 12-15 years of age (WLB 2008: 63). Such adults’ assessments of children’s language use are methodologically less reliable than individuals’ assessments of their own language use when children or adolescents are at a stage of cognitive development that enables self-assessment and self-reporting. The ability to complete a language use questionnaire is contingent on an ability to perform ‘serial ordering operations [which] relate to ability to generalize along a linear dimension or to arrange objects (or their properties) in series’ (Inhelder & Piaget 1958: xvi). By about the age of ten, the child has typically:

acquired serial ordering operations [and] is able to register in detail the changes in magnitude of a given variable.

(Inhelder & Piaget 1958: xvi)

Such an ability would enable the reporting of language use patterns along a scale of the sort outlined in Section 2.2.3.1. The second methodological weakness of the Welsh Language Board study is the generality of the social domains enquired about in the questionnaire – the questionnaire asks for respondent’s language use ‘at school, college or university’ (WLB 2008: 70). Such general domains of language use do not take differences of social context within educational institutions into account. The need to distinguish between formal and informal areas of the school in relation to language use was highlighted in the first research on the social domains of language use, when Schmidt-Rohr divided the school domain into ‘language of instruction, subject of instruction and language of recess and entertainment’ (Fishman 1972: 80, quoting Schmidt-Rohr 1932: 74).

The third methodological weakness of the study in relation to the purposes of the present research is the division of results into broad age categories, concealing differences in language use patterns as between different educational structures. For example, although data on the language of education at the ‘primary school’ and ‘secondary school’ stages is used to illustrate a decrease in Celtic language input and use in the classroom between the two school stages – from 95% of fluent 5-10 year
olds ‘receiving their primary education mainly or solely through the medium of Welsh’ to only 76% of 11-15 year olds so doing in relation to their secondary education (WLB 2008: 24) – pupils’ language use data is presented within a 3-15 age category which does not enable the comparison of the primary and secondary school stages. Moreover, even if the data was presented within 3-7, 8-11 and 12-15 age bands, the cross-sectional rather than longitudinal nature of the 2004 to 2006 Welsh language use survey data would not enable the tracking of differences in language input and shifts in patterns of pupil language use over time at the individual pupil level. (The benefits of the employment of a repeated measures longitudinal approach are outlined in Section 3.8.1.3).

Other studies of children’s and young adolescents’ Welsh language use have been regional in scope (Jones 1995, Löffler 1999, Gruffudd 2000, Thomas & Roberts 2011, Iaith 2011). Three such studies are of particular interest to the present research (Jones 1995, Gruffudd 2000, Thomas and Roberts 2011).

Gruffudd’s (2000) study of 329 16 to 18 year olds from bilingual secondary schools within a twenty-mile radius of Swansea is of particular interest in relation to methodological approach. It investigated pupils’ patterns of language use at the primary to secondary school stage as part of a larger language use survey which asked pupils to report their current patterns of language use in the home, school, community and mass media contexts (Gruffudd 2000: 182). Gruffudd asked the pupils to retrospectively assess their Welsh language use with other pupils in school during the last two years of primary school and at the start of secondary school on a five-point scale of ‘English only’, ‘mainly English’, ‘equal’, ‘mainly Welsh’ and ‘Welsh only’ (Gruffudd 2000: 196). The pupils’ responses were fairly evenly spread across the five linguistic categories in relation to the upper primary school stage, with 16.7% of pupils reporting ‘English only’, 20.7% mainly English, 21.9% English and Welsh equally, 18.8% mainly Welsh and 21.9% ‘Welsh only’ (Gruffudd 2000: 196). However, there were shifts in patterns of reported language use between the late primary and early secondary school stages. Gruffudd notes ‘there was a swing at both ends of the scale,’ with 25 percent saying they used less Welsh and 30 percent saying they used more (2000: 197). Moreover, ‘significant swings in both directions were seen among children of both Welsh-speaking and English-speaking parents’
The results of such a study are potentially unreliable as they are based on respondents’ retrospective accounts of language use, a methodological approach the Welsh Language Board deems to be ‘problematic’ (2008: 24) due to difficulties in accurately remembering past patterns of linguistic behaviour. However, the study nevertheless underlines the importance of a longitudinal survey of peer Welsh language use in the transition from primary to secondary school. The present research provides such a survey.

Learning from both the Welsh Language Survey (2006, 2008) and the work of Gruffudd (2000), the current study asked children to complete a language use questionnaire which incorporates distinctions between formal and less formal areas of the school (for example the classroom and the playground) at the end of primary school and after the first term of secondary school, in order that the impact of the move from primary to secondary school on home, school and community-based aspects of language use may be investigated.

Although a longitudinal study of Welsh-speaking pupils’ language use between the primary and secondary school stages did not exist prior to this research, two studies of Welsh-medium pupils’ language use at the primary (Roberts & Thomas 2010, Thomas & Roberts 2011) and secondary (Jones 1995) school stages respectively identify the key dimensions of variation in language use of relevance to designing the current research, and to the interpretation of its findings in the final chapter. In a questionnaire study of 145 8 to 11 year old pupils across 16 bilingual primary schools in the strongly Welsh-speaking area of Gwynedd in North Wales, Roberts and Thomas (2010: 13) noted there to be differences in pupils’ Welsh language use both in relation to domains of language use – between formal and informal areas of the school, with pupils using more Welsh in formal areas – and in relation to interlocutors within these school-based domains, with pupils using more Welsh with adults than with their peers.

Thomas and Roberts’ (2011) study further investigated whether a pupil’s home language background, the proportion of first-language Welsh pupils within the school, or the density of Welsh speakers within the community influenced pupils’ language use. The researchers found the language of the home to be:
one of the most influential factors in pupils’ responses … influencing language in the community (street, shop etc), language in school (teacher in class, friends in class and in the playground [with no teacher in the playground].

(Roberts & Thomas 2010: 14)

The researchers particularly note peer-peer interactions in this regard, with a far higher proportion (69.5%) of children from Welsh-speaking homes tending to use Welsh with their peers in class than children from English-speaking homes (31.6%) and mixed-language homes (42.2%) (Thomas & Roberts 2011: 103).

The proportion of Welsh first-language speaking pupils in a school was also found to significantly affect the percentage of pupils who reported using predominantly Welsh with teachers and pupils in the various school-based domains of language use. This variable was investigated using a binary category which classified schools according to whether or not they had less than 65% of pupils from a Welsh-speaking home. In relation to language use with teachers, 94.9% of pupils in the 65%+ Welsh schools reported speaking to their teacher predominantly in Welsh in the classroom, compared to 76.7% of the <65% group. The difference between the school contexts is more striking in relation to Welsh language use with friends, with 81.4% of the pupils from the Welsh-first language dominant schools speaking to friends in class predominantly in Welsh, compared with 24.7% of pupils doing so in the English-first language dominant schools (Thomas & Roberts 2011: 98). There were analogous findings between the two school linguistic contexts for pupil language use to teachers and to friends in the school when outside of the classroom or outside of school (Thomas & Roberts 2011: 96-99, 103). Such findings, where there is a tendency for children to use their home language in interactions with peers, particularly where there is a critical mass of such home language speakers, is of potential concern to a Celtic language education system in which a maximum of 29% of Welsh-medium pupils nationally are Welsh-first language speakers (Section 2.1.1.3).

In relation to the density of Welsh speakers in the community surrounding the school, Roberts and Thomas’ investigation was based on a binary variable with the categories (i) less than 70% Welsh speakers in the local area and (ii) at least 70% Welsh speakers in the area, but no differences in use of Welsh in school were found between the two. However, it must be noted that Roberts & Thomas’ study was
conducted in Gwynedd, which has a high density of Welsh-language speakers. Thus, such a finding is based on a sample in which the lowest percentage of Welsh speakers in the community was still relatively high (at 40%), and in which therefore the effects on school language use of there being much lower percentages of community Welsh speakers could not be tested.

A study by Jones (1995) of 212 14 to 15 year old pupils in four Welsh-medium secondary schools – two ‘designated’ Welsh-medium secondary schools in Anglicized areas and two ‘non-designated’ Welsh-medium secondary schools in traditionally Welsh-speaking areas – indicates that the density of Welsh speakers in the community does affect pupils’ language use in the school context, however. Indeed, Jones argues that the comparison of designated and non-designated Welsh medium schools is a community language comparison, ‘essentially comparing the linguistic character of the areas in which the schools are located’ (Jones 1995: 86). He observed a difference by school type in terms of pupil language use with school friends in both the school and community contexts, when controlling statistically for pupils’ home language use. Of a comparison of the language use of Welsh-home language pupils to friends in the school context, Jones reports:

the Welsh-speakers in the non-designated schools use far more Welsh with their school friends while those in the designated schools opt more for Welsh and English.

(Jones 1995: 87)

Jones argues that peer-group interactions out with the classroom ‘belong to … the community domain … even if the interlocutions occur in school’ (Jones 1995: 83). Such an argument is of concern to language planners who envisage the school domain as a context for Welsh-language use both within the classroom and in the less formal areas of the school, and moreover intend that such Welsh language use ‘initiate’ (Fishman 1991: 372) more pupil Welsh-language use in the community (Section 2.2.1.1).

Jones posits that such low levels of peer Welsh language use in anglicized areas are linked to the methods of learning and teaching language employed in the immersion school context from mid-primary upwards. He argues that the teacher-centred nature of classroom discourse does not facilitate sufficient opportunity for
second language speakers to develop ‘language for social purposes’ (Jones 1995: 102). Jones’ argument that pupils’ peer language use relates to the linguistic characteristics of the community will be investigated in relation to the Scottish and Welsh contexts in the present research, in which there is a relatively weaker density of Celtic language speakers in the communities surrounding the Gaelic-medium schools than their Welsh-medium counterparts (as outlined in Appendix 4, B.1).

In relation to older pupils, research by the Centre for European Research (Wales) and Cwmni Iaith (2006) on the social language use of 288 13-17 year olds from 12 areas of Wales replicated Jones’ (1995) and Thomas and Roberts’ (2011) findings concerning the relationship between home language use and social use of the Celtic language.28 Such replication of findings with the older age group is of interest from a language planning perspective in a context in which education of second language pupils is intended to form the basis for the reinvigoration of social use of the Celtic language in the home and community contexts.

2.2.3.1.2 Scotland

There is no national Gaelic language use survey similar in size to the government-funded Welsh Language Use Surveys of 2004-6. Three language use surveys of national scope have been conducted since the mid-1990s, however, which I will outline before turning to studies of regional scope.

A Gaelic language use survey was first conducted in 1994-1995 as part of the European-level Euromosaic survey (MacKinnon 1995a, 1995b).29 The survey employed the methodologically strong approach of asking respondents to report their language use to specified interlocutors in various social domains on a five-point scale, as outlined in Section 2.2.3.1, but is of only limited use to the present research as the survey consisted solely of adult participants (n = 322, 216 in the Gàidhealtachd and 106 in the Lowlands) and was primarily concerned with adult Gaelic language use. The adult respondents were asked to report their children’s language use in relation to their siblings only, with 17% of the 153 children reported

28 The Welsh-speaking pupils were sampled according to the Welsh language competence of their parents, with one-third of the sample in each area having two Welsh-speaking parents, one-third having one Welsh-speaking parent and one-third having no Welsh-speaking parents. The pupils had variously attended Welsh-medium, bilingual and English-medium primary education.
29 A parallel Euromosaic study was conducted in Wales. http://www.uoc.edu/euromosaic/web/homean/index1.html
to speak to their brother(s) or sister(s) predominantly in Gaelic (MacKinnon 1995b:3). Such a survey thus does not provide data on the range of contexts of children’s Gaelic language use. The limitations of such parental representations of children’s language use in relation to older children were discussed in Section 2.2.3.1.1.

In 2000, MacNeil and Stradling reported a national-level study of the educational and linguistic experiences of 45 Secondary 2 and 31 Secondary 4 pupils who had attended Gaelic-medium primary education and who now attended a secondary school which provided at least one curricular subject in addition to Gàidhlig (fluent speakers) through the medium of Gaelic. The pupils were asked to complete language use questionnaires for a range of interlocutors in the home, school (classroom and school grounds) and community domains on a five-point scale which ran ‘Gaelic almost all the time’, ‘Gaelic more than English’, ‘Both to the same extent’, ‘English more than Gaelic’ and ‘English almost all the time’ (MacNeil and Stradling 2000: 11). Although such a survey was not conducted at the primary to secondary school stage, it, like Jones (1995) and Thomas and Roberts (2011) in the Welsh context, provides an empirical point of comparison for the present study in relation to the relevant dimensions of variation in language use. MacNeil and Stradling identified differences in pupils’ Gaelic language use with adults and peer interlocutors in both the classroom and community domains. In relation to the classroom, 89% of the Secondary 2 pupils reported themselves to use Gaelic at least as often as English with Gaelic-speaking teachers, but only 71% reported themselves to do so with Gaelic-speaking friends in the Gaelic classes (Gaelic-medium or Gàidhlig subject classes) (ibid.: 13). Such a distinction in the language use to adults and peers was replicated in the community (MacNeil and Stradling 2000: 15). The finding is mirrored by Thomas & Roberts (2011) in the Welsh context. The distinction of Celtic-medium primary educated pupils’ language use in formal and informal domains (Roberts & Thomas 2010: 13) is also replicated in the Scottish context: much higher proportions of Secondary 2 pupils predominantly used Gaelic with friends in their Gaelic classes than used it with Gaelic-speaking friends in the school grounds (ibid.: 13).
MacNeil and Stradling’s (2000) analysis goes beyond that of Thomas & Roberts (2011), however, in additionally comparing pupils’ language use to Gaelic-speaking peers between Gaelic-medium and English-medium classes. Such Gaelic use was far higher in Gaelic-medium classes than in English-medium classes (ibid.:13). MacNeil and Stradling attribute this to the influence of the Gaelic-speaking teacher which emphasizes that pupil language use is not solely related to power, but is also related to the legitimacy of Gaelic language use. The creation of domains for Gaelic use is a key aspect of status planning, as outlined in Section 2.2.1.1. In this instance, the teacher, by means of his or her authority and linguistic example, establishes a context in which the use of Gaelic is legitimate. MacNeil and Stradling (2000: 16) argue that the combination of legitimacy and authority is likely to be present with adults in both the home and the school contexts. However, in ‘less controlled’ environments (ibid.: 16) such as English-medium classrooms, the playground and the community, where children do not have the ‘authoritative back up’ (ibid.: 9) of teachers or parents encouraging their Gaelic language use and creating a context which facilitates such use, MacNeil and Stradling argue that children have to be proactive in their Gaelic language use. The authors argue that such proactivity requires pupils to have a strong self-identification with the Gaelic language (MacNeil and Stradling 2000: 15).

The theoretical underpinnings of such a link between language use and identity were outlined in Section 2.2.1.1. If such a relationship is the case in this context, the low levels of Gaelic language use with friends in the English-medium classes, in the school grounds and with friends in the community (ibid.: 13,15) would be linked to low levels of pupil self-identification with Gaelic. This thesis investigates both Celtic-medium pupils’ propensity to use the Celtic language in social domains where its use would have various levels of legitimacy and the extent and nature of pupil identifications with the Celtic language. The relationship between language use and identity will also be investigated in the vignettes in Topic 6 of the Presentation of Findings (Chapter 5, Sections 6.1 - 6.3). However, this is not the focus of the present research, and an in-depth investigation of such links would require further investigation in a future study.
MacNeil and Stradling’s (2000) study also indicated that pupils’ Gaelic language use decreased over time in informal areas of the school. However, their pupil sample was cross-sectional rather than longitudinal and statistical tests to ascertain whether such differences over time were statistically significant were not conducted. The present study will thus test MacNeil and Stradling’s hypothesis that pupil Gaelic language use with friends decreases more than pupil language use with teachers over time, using a sample of Gaelic-medium pupils at the primary to secondary school stage. The comparison with analogous data concerning Welsh will allow some assessment of the importance of contextual legitimacy in language use. The value of such a language use study at the primary to secondary transition stage is highlighted by MacNeil and Stradling’s report. The authors note, as did the Welsh Language Board (2008) of the Welsh context (Section 2.2.3.1.1), that the move from primary to secondary school is a key point of change in pupils’ linguistic input in the school domain (ibid.: 48), there essentially being less Gaelic and more English (MacNeil & Stradling 2000: iii). The transition from primary to secondary school may consequently be a key point for shifts in pupils’ own language use. The authors recommend that Gaelic-medium pupils’ language use be investigated at the primary to secondary school stage (MacNeil and Stradling 2000: 52). This thesis accordingly investigates whether aspects of Celtic-medium pupils’ language use shift between the upper primary and lower secondary school stages by conducting statistical tests on longitudinal data that enables individual pupils’ responses at the two time points to be compared (Section 3.6.1.2.1).

The third survey of Gaelic language use of national scope was conducted in 2008 when Cochran surveyed the language use and attitudes of 362 Gaelic-medium educated Primary 7 to Secondary 4 pupils from 31 schools across Scotland (Cochran 2008). The empirical findings had the potential to be of great use to the present research, but weaknesses in the methodology reduced its value. The research did not use the standard approach to language use research outlined in Section 2.2.3.1 but rather asked pupils three language use questions: (i) How often do you use Gaelic outside of school with people you know well? (ii) How often do you use Gaelic with people you don’t know well? (iii) Do you ever use Gaelic with your friends outside
of school? (Cochran 2008: 216). Pupils were asked to assess their language use on a scale which ran ‘Always/Often/Sometimes/Occasionally/Never’ (ibid.: 216).

Such questions exhibit several methodological limitations. For example, they do not specify role-relations, as recommended by Braunshausen (1928) and Fishman (1965) (Section 2.2.3.1), or make a distinction between adult and peer interlocutors, a key variable in language use. The social domain enquired about is not specified in Question (ii), and the wording of the question changes between the first two questions and the third, reducing comparability between domains. The results of this survey were not presented in Cochran’s thesis.

However, the study by Cochran (2008) does provide some valid qualitative data that informs our understanding of pupil language use in the Scottish context. An interview question employed by Cochran indicates that Gaelic language use out with the classroom, when this is defined broadly as being in the school or community context, is related to the amount of Gaelic in the surrounding community. In answer to the question ‘With whom have you used Gaelic outside of class time yesterday and today?’ Cochran found that whilst 59% of the pupils had used Gaelic with someone other than the interviewer, this declined in parallel with the density of Gaelic speakers in the local authority region, with 69% of pupils from Comhairle nan Eilean Siar having done so, 56% of pupils from Highland and 51% of pupils from other regions of Scotland (Cochran 2008: 138). However, statistical tests of difference by local authority were not reported.

Three regional studies of children and adolescents’ Gaelic language use are relevant to the current project: Stockdale et al. (2003), Müller (2005) and Morrison (2006). As part of a larger study of choice of medium of education (discussed in Section 2.1.2.2), Stockdale et al. asked the parents of 58 Gaelic-medium primary pupils from schools in the Gàidhealtachd (Stornoway, Castlebay and Ullapool) to report whether their children used Gaelic in conversation with a restricted range of interlocutors (mother, father, siblings, grandparents, wider family) and in three social domains (playground, shops, wider community) (Stockdale et al. 2003: 35). In having only a binary response variable (uses Gaelic/does not use Gaelic) and in identifying only an interlocutor or a social domain rather than a combination of the two, the research is methodologically less sophisticated than the prototypical
language use research outlined in Section 2.2.3.1. The research found Gaelic-medium primary pupils to use Gaelic most frequently in the family domain, but few pupils were reported to use Gaelic in the playground and in the community, despite pupils living in Gaelic-speaking areas (ibid 2003: 35).

In a study of the language use, language attitudes and linguistic ability of 84 Gaelic-medium Secondary 1 to Secondary 4 school pupils from Portree High School in 1997, Müller (2005) followed the methodology outlined in Section 2.2.3.1. Pupils were asked to answer on a four-point scale – according to whether they spoke to the interlocutor in Gaelic, in English, in both Gaelic and English, or in another language (ibid.: 373). Müller also investigated the frequency of pupils’ language use, on a four-point scale of ‘regularly’, ‘often’, ‘seldom’ and ‘never’ (ibid 2005: 374). Müller’s research findings mirror those of MacNeil and Stradling (2000) in the Scottish context and Roberts and Thomas (2010) and Thomas and Roberts (2011) in the Welsh context in relation to different patterns of Celtic-medium pupil language use being reported in formal and in informal contexts of the school and in relation to adults and children, with little Gaelic use at home but more with parents than with other children. Müller notes: ‘The authority of the parents seems to be an important factor when the GM pupils of S2 use Gaelic at home’ (Müller 2005: 380), a concept of ‘authority’ that is analogous to the concept of legitimacy which was discussed above.

In relation to Gaelic language use in formal and informal areas of the school Müller notes Gaelic-language use to be higher with teachers when inside of the classroom than when out with it (Müller 2005: 381). Analogous patterns at a lower level held for pupils’ language use to friends when inside and outside the classroom (Müller 2005: 380). Müller again links this to the authority of adults in relation to language use in the school domain (Müller 2005: 380). However, Müller did not specify the secondary school lesson/s for which pupils were to judge their language use, and thus pupil responses may refer to their Gaelic lesson (where they were when completing the questionnaire), or to an average of their class-based Gaelic language use across all their subjects (the five secondary subjects they learn in Gaelic and their other English-medium subjects). Such a methodological flaw is avoided in the
present research by means of the naming of individual secondary school subjects in
the pupil questionnaire (as described in Section 3.4.2.1).

More of Secondary 2 Gaelic-medium pupils reported using mainly Gaelic
with friends when outside of school than immediately after the lesson (Müller
2005:381). Such a contrast would be of concern for language planners who wish to
see the school as a ‘controlled’ (MacNeil and Stradling 2000: 10) Gaelic language
domain. Müller’s study indicates that the use of English increases over time in all
non-home based contexts – classroom, school and with friends in the community.
However, Müller’s study is cross-sectional and does not use tests of statistical
significance.

The final language use study of relevance to the present research was of 88
Secondary 1 to Secondary 6 Gaelic-medium primary educated pupils from four
secondary schools in the Western Isles (the Nicolson Institute in Lewis, Sir E Scott
in Harris, Sgoil Lionacleit in Uist and Castlebay in Barra) conducted by Morrison
(2006). Morrison asked pupils to report their language use in various social domains
on a three-point scale of ‘mostly Gaelic’, ‘mostly English’ or ‘both equally’
(Morrison 2006: 145). Of particular interest here is that pupils were asked to
retrospectively assess their language use at the primary school stage, an approach
which mirrors that of Gruffudd (2000) in the Welsh context and is subject to the
same limitations (Section 2.2.3.1.1). Morrison notes that 88% of the pupils reported
that they ‘usually’ spoke English in the primary school playground, a finding that
concords with the 16% Gaelic language use reported by parents in Stockdale’s
research (2003:35) in similar geographical areas. Morrison argues that such low
levels of Gaelic language use in the playground may be due to the dual stream
structure in which Gaelic-medium education is provided in the Western Isles, noting
that ‘some children felt that they stood out in school as a different ‘tribe’ in the
playground, set apart from the ‘English only’ stream’ (Morrison 2006: 45).

Whilst it is true that there exists a larger percentage of dual stream schools
than individual schools of the Celtic language in the Scottish context than in the
Welsh context (as outlined in Sections 2.1.1.3 and 2.1.2.3), the results from
Stockdale et al. (2003) and Morrison (2006) can alternatively be interpreted in terms
of the debate between Jones (1995) and Thomas and Roberts (2010) (presented in
Section 2.2.3.1.1) regarding the relationship between community language use and language use in school in informal domains. Following Jones’ (1995) argument, there would be similar levels of Celtic language use in the community as in informal areas of the school. However, despite there being a high percentage of Gaelic speakers in the community (60% of the residents of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar being Gaelic speakers in the 2001 census) Morrison found that, for the secondary school stage, 86% of the Gaelic-medium primary educated pupils reported ‘rarely’ or ‘never’ speaking Gaelic to friends out of school (2006: 150), and Stockdale et al. similarly reported only 16% of pupils to use Gaelic in the community, the same percentage as in the playground. Thus these findings tend to suggest, with Thomas and Roberts (and against Jones), that there is not a strong relationship between pupils’ in-school informal language use and the frequency of general Celtic language use in the community.

Morrison’s research is also of interest to the present study in illustrating the magnitude of the potential disparity between pupil and parent accounts of language use. The methodological approach adopted by the Welsh Language Board (2008) and Stockdale et al. (2003), where parents were asked to report the language use of pupils over 10 years old, was earlier criticized (Sections 2.2.3.1.1 & 2.2.3.1.2). In the survey of 88 Gaelic-medium primary educated secondary pupils and their parents, Morrison asked respondents to assess the frequency with which pupils would hear Gaelic being spoken in the secondary school out with the classroom. 71% of parents reported Gaelic to be heard ‘sometimes’ or ‘very often’, compared with 5% of pupils reporting this to be the case (Stockdale et al. 2003: 147).

Sections 2.2.3.1.1 and 2.2.3.1.2 show there to be a paucity of language use data from primary school aged pupils in both the Scottish and the Welsh contexts, and of longitudinal studies of pupils’ language use across the primary and secondary school stages. The present research, although small-scale, is an attempt to begin to fill these gaps.

2.2.3.2 Linguistic ability: methodological underpinnings

The key methodological distinction in studies of linguistic ability of relevance to the present research is that between self-assessment and teacher or researcher assessment. Studies of the former are more directly relevant to the
methodological approach adopted in the present research, but the findings of studies that adopt the latter approach are also outlined as they provide a context within which the present findings may be interpreted.

Self-assessment of linguistic abilities typically involves asking the respondent to rate their competence in a particular aspect of a specified language – understanding, speaking, reading or writing – on an ordinal rating scale, or to evaluate their comparative competence in two languages on a particular language skill. In a meta-analysis of the research on linguistic-self assessment in a second language, Ross (1998) notes:

The most common approach to self-assessment in the second and foreign language literature reviewed involved correlating self-assessment scales with an outcome measure according to specific [language] skill areas … reading, speaking, listening and writing.

(Ross 1998: 3)

The methodological limitations of self-assessments of linguistic ability, as to their accuracy, reliability and validity in measuring linguistic performance in comparison to criterion-referenced or standardized language tests, are often discussed (e.g. Bailey 1998: 229). Such criticisms relate to ‘relativity’ (Ross 1998: 17, quoting Moritz: 1995) – who the respondents assess their linguistic skills against – and ‘subjectivity’ (Blanche & Merino 1989: 314) – individuals’ tendencies to over-report or under-report their skills. These distortions might be due to, for example, personality, cultural traits, teacher expectations, previous test results or future work aspirations (Blanche & Merino 1989: 324).

However, meta-analyses of the research on linguistic self-assessment in a second language (Blanche & Merino 1989; Ross 1998) found high levels of correlation between people’s self-assessment of linguistic ability and performed competence. Based on an investigation of 16 language use studies with adult second language learners Blanche and Merino conclude:

The emerging pattern is one of consistent overall agreement between self-assessments and ratings based on a variety of external criteria.

(Blanche & Merino 1989: 315)

In a more quantitatively based meta-analysis of ten studies of university students’ self-assessment of their second language skills, Ross similarly found there to be
‘ample evidence of robust correlations … regarding the concurrent validity of self-assessment with criterion skills’ (Ross 1998: 10), with the average correlation for 60 sets of linguistic self-assessments 0.63, ‘less than one chance in one hundred thousand that the observed effect would emerge serendipitously’ (ibid.: 4). However, Ross found people’s ability to accurately self-assess their linguistic competence to vary with the linguistic skill in question, with people being more accurate in relation to the receptive skills of listening and reading than in the productive skills of speaking and writing (Ross 1998: 6-9).

Krashen (1982) argues that children can monitor and assess their linguistic performance from Piaget’s Formal Operational Stage (age 11-12) and Blanche and Merino state an expectation that ‘the more [linguistic] training one has been exposed to, the greater one’s monitoring capacity will be’ (Blanche & Merino 1989: 328). Celtic-medium pupils of 11-12 years of age who have been taught through the medium of the Celtic-language for at least seven years – and who have accordingly developed Cognitive Academic Linguistic Proficiency in the second language, which Cummins argues takes five to seven years to develop (Cummins 1984: 133) – should thus be capable of evaluating their linguistic capacities. Indeed, Towler and Broadfoot (1992) argue that pupils can self-assess their school learning from the early primary school stages.

Moreover, although studies have shown adults to more accurately self-assess their linguistic abilities in relation to specific linguistic situations than in relation to ‘global self-appraisals of macro-skills’ (Blanche & Merino 1989: 324) such as writing, reading, listening and understanding (Blanche & Merino 1989: 324, Ross 1998: 16), school pupils’ familiarity with language skills being assessed on these four linguistic aspects ensures that they are familiar with such concepts and categories. In relation to the methodological issues of ‘relativity’ and ‘subjectivity’, Celtic-medium pupils are likely to relate their linguistic competencies to those of peers in their class and to conceptualize their linguistic abilities in relation to results of recent language assessments and levels of comfort and confidence in their two languages.

Self-assessment of linguistic ability was believed to be the most appropriate approach for this research as the thesis is primarily concerned with Celtic-medium
education in relation to language planning. From a language planning perspective, pupils’ language use is contingent on pupils’ subjective confidence in their linguistic abilities rather than on objective tests of the linguistic abilities themselves (Section 2.2.1.1). The specific methodological approach adopted in this study is outlined in Section 3.6.1.2. Sections 2.2.3.2.1 and 2.2.3.2.2 outline existing research on the linguistic attainments of Celtic-medium primary and secondary school pupils. The accounts focus on pupils’ linguistic attainments in the Celtic language and in English rather than additionally incorporating consideration of attainments in other subjects as the thesis is primarily situated within a language planning rather than a pedagogical theoretical framework.

2.2.3.2.1 Wales

There exists little research on Welsh-medium pupils’ linguistic attainments in their Celtic language and English. Indeed, Baker’s 1997 comment that ‘research on bilingual education in Ireland, Scotland and Wales is remarkable for its relative absence’ (Baker 1997: 134) is still valid in relation to the issue of linguistic attainment in the Welsh context.

In 1970, research was conducted by Sharp et al. (1973a, 1973b) which investigated (i) the Welsh language attainments of pupils in bilingual education as compared with Welsh-first language pupils in communities with varying levels of community Welsh and (ii) the English language attainments of pupils in bilingual attainments of pupils in bilingual education as compared with pupils in the aforementioned community language groups. The research investigated pupil attainment at three school stages – Junior 4 (10 years of age), Secondary 2 (12 years of age) and Secondary 4 (14 years of age). Linguistic attainment was investigated using a ‘composition test’ in the pupil’s first language and an ‘objective test’ – a multiple choice test of vocabulary, comprehension and usage – for which there was one version for English and two versions for Welsh (for First Language and Second Language pupils). The authors reported the Welsh First Language pupils attending bilingual schools to attain more highly in Welsh than the Welsh first language pupils from either Band A areas (68-81% Welsh speaking) or Band B areas (48-55% Welsh speakers) (Sharp et al.
Such strong Welsh language performance amongst pupils in bilingual education was also found at the Secondary 2 and Secondary 4 stages (ibid.: 113-114).

Of particular interest for the present purposes is the ‘bilingual schools experiment’ (Sharp et al. 1973b: 41) that the research team conducted in relation to Welsh Second Language pupils within bilingual schools. Welsh First Language tests were administered to Welsh Second Language pupils in the bilingual schools in order to investigate such pupils’ Welsh language performance as compared with Welsh First Language pupils within bilingual schools and Welsh first language pupils within English-medium schools in Welsh speaking communities. At both the primary and (broadly) the secondary school stages, such an investigation showed the mean Welsh language score of Welsh Second Language pupils within bilingual schools to be statistically significantly lower than that of Welsh First Language pupils within the same schools, but for such Welsh Second Language pupils’ Welsh language performance to be comparable to that of Welsh first language pupils from community bands A and B (68-81% and 48-55% community Welsh respectively) (ibid.: 41). With regard to attainment in English, English-first language pupils within bilingual primary schools were found to perform at least as well as English-first language pupils in English-medium schools in Bands A, B and C (Sharp et al. 1973a: 121).

Though the Sharp et al. study is old, its conclusions – that bilingual schooling in a second language may strengthen pupils’ acquisition of their first language (as compared with the first language performance of their monolingual counterparts) – are confirmed by international research on bilingual education, as summarized in a meta-analysis of the international research on school-based second language immersion programmes by Johnstone (2002: 2).

Only two studies of Welsh-medium pupils’ linguistic attainments have since been conducted in relation to the linguistic attainments of Welsh-medium upper primary or lower secondary school pupils (Baker 1995, Gathercole & Thomas 2009). In a study of the linguistic attainments of 2225 Year 9 (14 year old) secondary school pupils attending 55 Welsh-medium and bilingual schools, Baker (1995) investigated

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There were no Welsh First Language speakers in the pupil sample from Category C – schools with 3-26% Welsh speakers in the community.
the Welsh language attainments of Welsh-home language and English-home language pupils using the criterion-referenced National Curriculum Assessments for Welsh First Language. The study found Welsh-home language pupils to perform statistically significantly better than their English-home language counterparts in relation to Welsh oracy, reading and writing (Baker 1995: 142) and thus replicated Sharp et al.’s findings in relation to the Welsh-language attainments of Welsh-home language and English-home language pupils attending bilingual schools. However, Baker argued that the differences were not ‘educationally significant’ even though they were statistically significant (Baker 1995: 145) as ‘English-language children educated through the medium of Welsh are attaining levels in Welsh as a first language in line with National Curriculum expectations’ (Baker 1995: 153). Baker concludes that:

in a criterion-referenced system, … evaluation should be made against expected distributions [of attainment on national curriculum levels] rather than by directly contrasting the two language groups.

(Baker 1995: 146)

However, a series of studies reported by Gathercole and Thomas (2009) further investigated the nature and magnitude of linguistic differences amongst Welsh-medium pupils from varying language backgrounds – mainly (80% or more) Welsh at home, Welsh and English at home, mainly English at home – and with different school-based language models (fully Welsh-medium education, bilingual education). The three studies of pupil performance in Welsh vocabulary, grammar and syntax showed home language also to influence pupils’ linguistic ability in Welsh at the primary school stage (ages 5, 7, 9 and 11): pupils with ‘mainly Welsh’ home-language backgrounds statistically significantly outperformed their ‘Welsh and English’ and ‘mainly English’ home language peers in relation to each linguistic assessment. Whilst Gathercole and Thomas (2009) found home language to be the main factor influencing the acquisition of a particular linguistic structure for pupils of a given age, they additionally found the strength of the school language model to be significant for those pupils from less-strongly Welsh home language backgrounds.

Furthermore, and significantly for the role of education in language planning, Gathercole & Thomas (2009: 228-232) cite evidence from linguistic assessments of vocabulary and idioms with adults from different home language backgrounds in
childhood (mainly Welsh, Welsh and English, mainly English) and in adulthood (indexed by the home language background of their partner using the same tri-partite categorisation). Such adult-level studies suggest that the maintenance of individual-level Welsh language ability may be contingent on continued Welsh-language input throughout the lifespan (ibid.: 234).

Such a finding is important from a language planning perspective in a context in which the maintenance of Welsh-language competencies in adolescence and into adulthood is acknowledged to be key to reversing language shift (Section 2.2.2.1). An investigation of pupil perceptions of their Welsh linguistic abilities in the move from primary to secondary school – which may involve a reduction in the amount of Celtic-medium instruction – is part of the rationale for the present study.

Gathercole and Thomas (2009) conducted parallel studies of the same pupils’ acquisition of English vocabulary and the same adults’ acquisition and maintenance of English vocabulary and idiom (ibid.: 224-232). The authors report a ‘striking asymmetry between attainment (and maintenance) of Welsh and English’ (ibid.: 216), noting acquisition and maintenance of English to be correlated to home language background only at the early school stage (age 4) and to school language background (Welsh-medium or bilingual) only at the middle-primary stage (age 9) (Gathercole & Thomas 2009: 233). The authors conclude that:

Children’s and adults’ knowledge of Welsh is directly tied with the level of input they have or have had in Welsh [at home, at school and in adulthood], but, at the same time, that all speakers appear to develop equivalent, mature command of English, regardless of exposure at home and school.

(Gathercole & Thomas 2009: 213)

Such a study compares Welsh-medium and bilingual pupils’ linguistic attainments by home language background, age and language model. When comparisons across pupil groups are made, Baker argues for the employment of multi-level modeling techniques in the assessment of the attainments (1990), in order that account be taken of the influence of the school, in addition to pupil-level variables such as social class, gender, ability, home language and age (Baker 1990b: 273). A multi-level approach would also allow estimates of variation at intermediate levels, such as variation among school classes in the proportion of the curriculum
studied through the medium of the target language. An example of the employment of such a statistical technique in the Scottish context is presented in Section 2.2.3.2.2.

2.2.3.2.2 Scotland

Two national studies of the linguistic attainment of Gaelic-medium pupils are of relevance to the present research (Johnstone et al. 1999, O’Hanlon et al. 2010). These are based on 5-14 National Assessments, criterion-referenced tests linked to the national curricular guidelines (SOED 1993).

Johnstone et al. (1999) investigated the attainments of Gaelic-medium Primary 3, Primary 5 and Primary 7 pupils across three academic years (1995-6, 1996-7 and 1997-8) using a national sample of the 34 Gaelic-medium primary schools which had Primary 1 to Primary 7 provision at the time of the research. In relation to Gaelic-medium pupils’ attainments in Gaelic, as judged against national attainment targets, Johnstone et al. reported the majority of Gaelic-medium pupils to have passed the expected attainment level in all four aspects of linguistic competence – listening, talking, reading and writing – at the Primary 3 and Primary 5 stages (Johnstone et al. 1999: 23). At the Primary 7 stage, whilst the majority of pupils achieved the expected attainment level (Level D) in listening, talking and reading across the three years under study, the results for writing were lower and more variable with 39%, 47% and 61% passing in the 1995-6, 1996-7 and 1997-8 school years respectively (Johnstone et al. 1999: 27).31

Johnstone et al. found Gaelic-medium pupils’ attainment in English in the 5-14 assessments to be consistently stronger than their attainment in Gaelic at the Primary 5 and Primary 7 stages in all four linguistic skills across the three school years under study (ibid.: 23). Writing remained the weakest linguistic skill, however (ibid.: 29).

At the Primary 7 stage, the Gaelic-medium pupils outperformed their English-medium counterparts in the same school in English in all four aspects of linguistic competence across all three school years studied (ibid.: 33). Gaelic-medium pupils’ performance in English as compared to English-medium pupils nationally displayed a more varied pattern over the three years - ‘roughly comparable

31 The pupil bases for these percentages were n = 93, n = 100 and n = 98 for the 1995-6, 96-7 and 97-8 school years respectively (Johnstone et al 1999: 22).
in 1995-96’, ‘English-medium scores … slightly higher in 1996-97’ and ‘Gaelic-medium scores … slightly higher in 1997-98’ (ibid.: 33). The Gaelic-medium pupils’ performance in English was thus similar overall to that of the national English-medium sample. The English-medium pupils displayed the same pattern of linguistic attainment across the four language outcomes as did the Gaelic-medium pupils, with their performance being weaker in relation to writing. This lower performance in relation to English writing is thus a general phenomenon, rather than specific to Gaelic medium.

In 2010, O’Hanlon et al. conducted a study of Gaelic-medium pupils’ attainments at the Primary 3, Primary 5, Primary 7 and Secondary 2 stages.\footnote{Only data from the Primary 5, Primary 7 and Secondary 2 stages will be here presented, as it is most relevant to the present study.} 5-14 attainment data for the study came from the *Scottish Survey of Achievement 2007* and a national survey (in 2009) of primary schools which provided Gaelic-medium education and of secondary schools which provided Gàidhlig (fluent speakers) as a subject (O’Hanlon et al. 2010: 11-14). The former asked for results of national assessments in Gaelic and English reading and writing carried out by teachers in the 2006-7 school year whilst the latter asked for teacher judgements of pupil abilities in all four linguistic competencies in the 2008-9 school year. The 2009 survey found the majority of Gaelic-medium pupils to be achieving the expected national assessment level in Gaelic at the Primary 5, Primary 7 and Secondary 2 stages, with regard to listening, talking and understanding, with the proportions passing the expected level being lower in relation to writing (ibid.: 22). However, the percentage of Primary 7 Gaelic-medium pupils passing Gaelic writing in the 2006-7 and 2008-9 school years were higher than reported by Johnstone et al. in the late 1990s (ibid.:22,26 Johnstone et al. 1999: 27). There were no statistically significant differences in pupil performance in Gaelic by language model (indexed by the proportion of teaching conducted through the medium of Gaelic at the Primary 7 stage) (O’Hanlon et al. 2010: 38). No data was available on pupils’ first or home language.

The research found a similar proportion of Gaelic-medium Primary 5 pupils to be achieving the expected national attainment target in the English-language competencies as had done so for Gaelic (ibid.: 21-22, 24) but found a greater
proportion of Gaelic-medium Primary 7 pupils to attain the expected level in English than in Gaelic (ibid.: 26). However, although Gaelic-medium pupils’ Gaelic literacy skills were statistically significantly weaker than their English literacy skills, their Gaelic literacy skills were still comparable to the English literacy skills of a group of English-medium pupils ‘matched’ to the Gaelic-medium pupils in respect to gender, level of socio-economic deprivation and local authority. Moreover, the Gaelic-medium pupils were statistically significantly better in English-reading than these ‘matched’ English-medium counterparts (ibid.: 26, 30). Such a result adds weight to Sharp et al.’s hypothesis (1973a) regarding bilingual Celtic-medium pupils’ superior English-language performance (discussed in Section 2.2.3.2.1). The multi-level modeling employed in O’Hanlon et al.’s study further enables us to posit such a Gaelic-medium pupil English-language advantage to be related to home and community support for English, as there was less school-level variation in Gaelic-medium pupils’ English attainment than in more school-based skills and subjects such as Gaelic, mathematics and science.

Two studies (MacNeil & Galloway 2004 and Müller 2005) investigated Gaelic-medium pupils’ Gaelic language performance by home language background. As with the Welsh research (Sharp et al. 1973a, Baker 1995, Gathercole & Thomas 2009) both studies found having the Celtic language at home to be an advantage in relation to grammatical accuracy, vocabulary and knowledge of idiom in the Celtic language. In a study of the spoken Gaelic of 11 Secondary 1 and 12 Secondary 3 Gaelic-medium primary educated pupils from across Scotland, MacNeil and Galloway (2004) note that pupils with a Gaelic-speaker at home used a higher number of words in their Gaelic interview and were more likely to use ‘Gaelic in its traditional forms as reflected in noun cases, structures specific to Gaelic and idiomatic usages rooted in the language’ (MacNeil & Galloway 2004: 51). In relation to verb usage, MacNeil and Galloway note that the Secondary 1 pupils with Gaelic at home used a slightly higher number of verbs (per 30 minute interview) than did the Secondary 3 pupils who had an English-home language background (n = 181 and n = 170 respectively) (ibid.: 36) and that a higher proportion of the pupils with Gaelic at home used more complex verb usages (i.e. other than the present, past and future)

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33 This was a dichotomous variable, with ‘deprived’ meaning that the pupil lived in one of the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland, as classified by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation.
However, in relation to oracy the authors reported the English-language dominance found by Johnstone et al. (1999) and O’Hanlon et al. (2010), noting, particularly of the English-first language pupils, that ‘the complexity of the [Gaelic] language used did not reflect the social maturity of the young people’ (MacNeil & Galloway 2004: 51). Such a finding, that Gaelic-medium pupils do not attain the same level of fluency in their second language as in their first language, is substantiated in a meta-analysis of the international research on immersion education by Johnstone (2002), who notes that ‘despite their impressive progress and attainments, immersion pupils do not reach native speaker levels in their immersion language’ (Johnstone 2002: 3).

In her study of 22 Secondary 2 and 17 Secondary 3 Gaelic-medium primary educated pupils, Müller (2005) found the writing of Gaelic-medium pupils with Gaelic at home to be better than that of pupils who did not have Gaelic at home, when children’s competencies were judged using an Error Index in which syntactic, morpho-syntactic, morphological, style and word choice were assessed in relation to the length of the student’s essay (Müller 2005: 376-377). Müller’s data showed that whilst a similar proportion of pupils with and without Gaelic at home passed the Gaelic essays, there were differences in relation to the proportion of pupils achieving the highest-level categorisations of ‘excellent’ and ‘good’, with 39% of pupils with Gaelic at home doing so, compared to 13% of pupils with an English home language background (ibid.: 397). However, Müller notes there to be ‘no correlation between the English Error Index [which measures pupil performance in English writing] and the frequency of Gaelic use at home’ (ibid.: 398). This is thus a similar finding to that reported by Gathercole and Thomas (2009) in the Welsh context. Müller’s results were also similar to the findings of the Johnstone et al. (1999) and O’Hanlon et al. (2010) studies in relation to Gaelic-medium pupil dominance in English writing. However, Müller argues that Gaelic-medium pupils’ competencies in Gaelic writing improve with time, noting the Gaelic essays of the Secondary 3 pupils to be stronger than those of their Secondary 2 counterparts (2005:394).

These two studies by MacNeil & Galloway (2004) and Müller (2005) are the most relevant to the present research. A third study, by Stradling and MacNeil (2000), also replicated the findings (Sharp et al. 1973a, Baker 1995, Gathercole & Thomas
regarding the existence of a positive relationship between target language input in the home and community contexts and increased target language competence (Stradling & MacNeil 2000:23). The sample comprised 63 parents of Gaelic-speaking children from across Scotland. The study is less relevant because it used parental reports of children’s home and community language use and parental assessments of children’s linguistic competence. The methodological limitations of adults’ reports of children’s language use were outlined in Section 2.2.3.1.1, whilst issues of the validity and reliability of parental assessments of children’s linguistic competence are acknowledged by the authors (Stradling & MacNeil 2000: 23).

There additionally exist three studies which investigate Gaelic-medium pupils’ own perceptions of their linguistic ability (MacNeil & Stradling 2000, Morrison 2006, Cochran 2008). In a study of 45 Secondary 2 and 31 Secondary 4 Gaelic-medium primary educated pupils, MacNeil and Stradling found 25% of the young people to assess themselves to be ‘very confident’ in their Gaelic fluency, and 62% ‘confident to some extent’ (MacNeil & Stradling 2000: 7). Moreover, when comparing the pupils at the Secondary 2 and Secondary 4 stages, MacNeil and Stradling report pupil confidence in Gaelic language ability to increase with age. However, the confirmation of such a hypothesis would require a longitudinal approach to pupil perceptions of their linguistic abilities. The present research provides such a study at the primary to secondary school stage.

In the study of 88 Gaelic-medium primary educated pupils from four secondary schools in the Western Isles across Secondary 1 to Secondary 6 (presented in relation to language use in Section 2.2.3.1.2), Morrison asked pupils to self-assess their competencies in Gaelic and English on a four point scale – ‘very good’, ‘good’, ‘ok’ and ‘not good’ (Morrison 2006: 143). In relation to speaking, Morrison reports the pupils to be more confident in English than in Gaelic, with 91% reporting themselves to be ‘good’ or ‘very good’ in English, compared with 66% reporting themselves to be so in Gaelic (n = 88)(ibid.: 143-144). The pupils were additionally asked to retrospectively rate their relative competencies in Gaelic and in English at the end of primary school. In relation to speaking, 55% of pupils perceived that they had been equally competent in the two languages, 30% that they were English
dominant and 12% that they were Gaelic dominant (n = 88) (Morrison 2006: 144). The methodological limitations of asking respondents to retrospectively assess aspects of their language was discussed in relation to language use in Section 2.2.3.1.1. However, such differences in Gaelic-medium pupils’ perceived comparative competence across their two languages between the primary and secondary school stages nevertheless underlines the importance of a longitudinal survey of Gaelic-medium pupil perceptions of their linguistic abilities in this educational transition.

The final study of relevance to the present research in relation to linguistic ability is the national survey of 109 Primary 7 pupils and 253 Secondary 1 to Secondary 4 pupils conducted by Cochran in the 2004-5 school year (Cochran 2008). Cochran asked Gaelic-medium pupils to assess their Gaelic oracy (understanding and speaking) and literacy (reading and writing) skills, and their English literacy skills on a five point scale – ‘very confident’, ‘quite confident’, ‘fairly confident’, ‘not so confident’, ‘not at all confident’ (ibid.: 212). In relation to Gaelic, Cochran reported 74% of the 362 Gaelic-medium pupils to be ‘very confident’ or ‘quite confident’ in understanding Gaelic, 62% to be so in relation to speaking Gaelic, 60% to be so in relation to reading Gaelic and 41% to be so in relation to writing Gaelic (ibid.: 212-213). Such pupil self-assessments of their Gaelic language abilities over the four linguistic competencies are similar to the results of criterion-referenced tests (Johnstone et al. 1999, O’Hanlon et al. 2010). The pupils reported themselves to be stronger in English literacy than Gaelic literacy (Cochran 2008: 213), a finding that again accords with the research on comparative assessments of Gaelic-medium pupils’ literacy skills across Gaelic and English (Johnstone et al. 1999, Müller 2005, O’Hanlon et al. 2010).

Although asking pupils to assess each of their two languages is a valid approach to data collection, asking bilingual pupils to compare their perceived ability on a linguistic skill across their two languages is another useful approach, as Hornberger highlights that bilingual pupils rarely acquire truly equal competence in

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34 A weakness of the research is the failure to ask pupils about their confidence in English oracy, assuming that all pupils would be ‘very confident’ in speaking and understanding English (Cochran 2008: 161).
each language, their linguistic skills rather existing on a continuum (Hornberger 2004: 156). Both such methods of data collection are employed in the present study.

2.2.3.3 Pupils’ perceptions of their Celtic language: methodological underpinnings

The field of language attitudes research is both substantively broad and methodologically complex. In relation to the substantive content, Baker identified eight ‘specific attitudes’, namely to:

- language variation, dialect and speech style
- learning a new language
- a specific minority language
- language groups, communities and minorities
- language lessons
- the uses of a specific language
- attitude of parents to language learning
- language preference

(Baker 1992: 29)

The present research, in addressing parts (c) and (d) of the research question outlined in Section 2.2.2.1 concerning pupils’ identifications with their Celtic language and their perceptions of its usefulness for their future, is thus primarily concerned with the third category – ‘attitude to a specific minority language’.

Garrett et al (2003) highlight a potential methodological problem for investigations of people’s perceptions of a particular language, namely that a language is inextricably linked to the community that speaks it. They note:

It is generally difficult to distinguish attitudes to language varieties from attitudes to the groups and community-members who use them.

(Garrett et al. 2003: 12)

Such an issue of validity is acknowledged, but it does not compromise the comparative methodological approach adopted here. It would be a problem only if Welsh speakers and Gaelic speakers were influenced to a different extent by the factors which Garrett et al. mention. The methodological complexities inherent in language attitudes research are outlined by Oliver and Purdie (1998), who note:

the complex nature of the interrelationship among affective factors … such as motivation, learner expectation, personality, and sociocultural experience.

(Oliver & Purdie 1998: 199)
The authors note of language attitudes research with children:

The dearth of literature in the area [of language attitudes] is even more apparent for child language learners, perhaps because it is assumed that the complexity of the interrelationship [among affective factors] is heightened because of their lower developmental level.

(Oliver & Purdie 1998: 199)

The question of the cognitive capacity of upper primary and lower secondary school pupils to formulate and express identifications with language is a key methodological consideration for the present research. Piaget and Weil (1951) noted children’s conceptions of multiple identities to develop during the ‘Concrete Operational’ stage (age 7-11), with children in the ‘Formal Operational Stage’ (age 11-12) able to understand that they could simultaneously hold a local and a national identity. The finding that pupils of 11-12 years of age are able to comprehend national identity is substantiated by Davies (1968), who notes, on the basis of a meta-analysis of studies between 1958 and 1968, that by the age of 12 children have ‘a firm sense of nationality’ (Davies 1968: 107), whilst the conclusion for personal identities is substantiated by Archer (1982), who found 11-12 year old pupils to be able to express identifications, even if these identifications were ‘developmentally unsophisticated’ (Archer 1982: 1554). Archer reported 89% of 11-12 year old pupils’ expressions of identity (n = 40) to be ‘diffusions’ or ‘foreclosures’ – defined as ‘no [identity] commitment’ and ‘a commitment without exploration’ respectively (Meeus et al. 1999: 420) – rather than the developmentally more sophisticated ‘moratorium’ – ‘a state of active [identity] exploration (ibid.: 420) or ‘identity achievement’, an identity ‘commitment’ (ibid.:420). The fact that children’s identities are typically still in the early stages of development at this age leads Archer to posit that environmental changes, such as moving to a new school, could initiate identity development (Archer 1982: 1552). The approach of the present study is thus to investigate both the nature of upper primary school pupils’ identifications with their Celtic language and whether this changes with the move to secondary school.

The methodological approach is qualitative and focused on the individual, following Ushioda’s ‘person-in-context’ approach (Ushioda 2009: 218). Ushioda notes that such an approach:
Captures the mutually constitutive relationship between persons and the contexts in which they act – a relationship that is dynamic, complex and non-linear.

(ibid.: 218)

Such a methodological approach best enables the longitudinal exploration of pupils’ personal perceptions of language, as pupils may express their views in their own words and within their own frames of reference. Pupils’ perceptions of the usefulness of their Celtic language for their future is framed within Dörnyei’s application of the theory of ‘possible selves’ to language. Dörnyei argues that second language students are influenced by an ‘ideal self’ and an ‘ought to’ self in addition to their learning experience. He notes:

The ideal L2 self is the L2-specific facet of one’s ideal self … the person we would like to become … The ‘ought-to L2 self’ … concerns the attributes that one believes one ought to possess to meet expectations and to avoid possible negative outcomes.

(Dörnyei 2009: 29)

Such a theory is considered here in relation to both second and first language pupils’ qualitative accounts of the usefulness of their Celtic language for their future. However, both Archer (1982) and Oliver and Purdie (1998) emphasise the tendency for pupils to be influenced by parents and peers in middle childhood and early adolescence. Archer noted ‘stronger pressures for parentally preferred [identity] commitments’ amongst pupils in the sixth and eighth grades (11 and 13 years respectively) as compared with pupils in the tenth and twelfth grades (15 and 17 years respectively) (Archer 1982: 1552), whilst Oliver & Purdie state:

children are strongly influenced by those who are significant to them – people such as their friends and family … their school peers, their teachers and the general school environment.

(Oliver & Purdie 1998: 199)

Thus, upper primary and lower secondary school students (age 11-12) may be heavily influenced by the ‘ought to self’ (Dörnyei 2009:29) in relation to their expressed language identifications and perceptions of the usefulness of the Celtic language for their future.

Although the present study of language attitudes uses qualitative data, the literature presented in Sections 2.2.3.3.1 and 2.2.3.3.2 employs both qualitative and
quantitative approaches. Studies of language attitudes which use quantitative data typically focus on the identification of the factors which influence positive or negative attitudes towards a particular language or language community, and thus provide a useful context for the investigation of attitudes to Welsh and Gaelic in the present research. As in Sections 2.2.3.1 and 2.2.3.2, the literature presented in Section 2.2.3.3 focuses on the Welsh and Scottish contexts and on studies concerned with children and adolescents, as these are most relevant to the present study.

2.2.3.3.1 Wales

Six studies of the language attitudes of primary and early to mid-secondary school pupils in Wales are relevant to the present research, four quantitative (Sharp et al. 1973a, Baker 1992, Reynolds et al. 1998 and Iaith 2011) and two based on qualitative approaches (Scourfield et al. 2006, Murphy & Laugharne 2011).

Research conducted by Sharp et al. (1973a) investigated the language attitudes of pupils aged 10, 12 and 14 respectively from four linguistic categories, as described in Section 2.2.3.2.1. Pupil attitudes were measured by means of Thurstone tests which investigated pupil perceptions of the Welsh and English languages, opinions of their use in the school domain and more generally, and attitudes towards the usefulness of the languages in the future (Sharp et al. 1973a: 158-166). Results were presented on an eleven-point scale, with 0 to 5 classed as ‘favourable’, 5-6 as ‘neutral’ and 6 to 11 as ‘unfavourable’.

The research found primary school aged pupils’ from bilingual schools to hold the most favourable attitudes towards Welsh, with a mean attitude score of 3.21. There was a statistically significant difference (at the 1% significance level) between pupils from bilingual schools and Band A pupils from strongly Welsh-speaking areas (mean attitude score 3.97), Band B pupils from bilingual areas (mean attitude score 4.22), and Band C pupils from Anglicized areas (mean attitude score 5.39) (ibid.: 44,47-48). This pattern of attitudes across the four pupil groups was replicated at the Secondary 2 and Secondary 4 stages (12 and 14 years old respectively). However, although the pattern of attitudes across the four pupil groups was similar at the

35 Band A pupils live in areas with 68-81% Welsh speakers in the community, Band B pupils live in areas with 48-55% of Welsh speakers, Band C pupils live in areas with 3-26% of Welsh speakers, and Band D pupils attend bilingual schools.
various school stages, the pattern of attitudes within each of the four pupil groups changed over time, with the average mean Welsh language attitude score becoming less favourable in all pupil categories. The magnitude of such differences over time were not investigated using statistical tests in Sharp et al.’s research, but such a shift resulted in pupils from Band B moving from the favourable to neutral category between the ages of 10 and 14, pupils from Band C moving from the neutral towards the unfavourable, and pupils from Band A moving from the favourable towards the neutral (ibid.: 55). The attitudinal shift amongst Band D (bilingual school) pupils did not affect their overall attitude classification, which remained ‘favourable’. The pupils’ patterns of attitudes towards English were the inverse of their attitudes towards Welsh, both as between areas and as between ages (ibid.:51). The shifts over time moved the attitudes towards English of pupils from Bands A, B and C from the ‘neutral’ to the ‘favourable’ category between the ages of 10 and 14, and moved those of bilingual school pupils from the ‘unfavourable’ to the ‘neutral’ (ibid.: 55).

Such research suggests that pupils’ attitudes towards Welsh become less favourable between the ages of 10 and 12 (a period that would include the pupils’ move from Primary to Secondary school) and that their attitudes become even less favourable between the ages of 12 and 14. However, further research would be required to confirm this hypothesis, as the data presented by Sharp et al. is cross-sectional rather than longitudinal, and thus any claims about ‘change’ in pupil attitude lack the validity of a sample for whom key contextual and individual level variables are constant on both measurement occasions. The research was also conducted four decades ago, before many of the significant developments in the status of Welsh that are outlined in Section 2.1.1.

Baker (1992) provides an investigation of the Welsh language attitudes of secondary school pupils in Wales both cross-sectionally and longitudinally using data collected in 1988 and in 1990. The study involved three pupil groups: pupils from a ‘natural’ Welsh secondary school in a community in which over 70% of people speak Welsh (n = 256), pupils from a ‘designated’ Welsh-medium school in an Anglicized area (n = 270) and pupils from an English-medium school in an Anglicized area (n = 271) (Baker 1992: 52). All schools were in mid-Wales and North Wales. The schools were not matched for the socio-economic composition of
The pupils were drawn from the first, second and third years of secondary school at the first measurement occasion in 1988 (when they were 11-14 years of age), and were asked to re-participate in the research two years later.

The research investigated pupils’ attitudes to the Welsh language in schooling, in the community and in the future – both their own future and that of the language. The items in the language attitude questionnaire were sub-divided into two ‘attitude to the Welsh language scales’ for analysis (Baker 1992: 54). The first was on ‘General attitude to the Welsh language’, derived from traditional language-attitude items (like those employed by Sharp et al. 1973a), whilst the second was on ‘Use, value and status’ (Baker 1992: 55), which assessed pupil perceptions of those aspects of the vitality of the language relevant to language planning.

Factor analysis revealed there to be one latent variable within the ‘General Attitude to the Welsh Language’ scale, consisting of 16 statements such as ‘I prefer to be taught in Welsh’, ‘I like speaking Welsh’, ‘if I had children I would like them to be Welsh speaking’ (ibid.: 58), and for there to be two latent variables on the ‘Use, value and status’ of Welsh scale corresponding to integrative and instrumental attitudes towards Welsh respectively. The integrative scale included items such as ‘talk to friends in school’, ‘talk to people out of school’, ‘play sport’, ‘write’, ‘talk to teachers at school’ (ibid.: 59). The instrumental scale included ‘become cleverer’, ‘earn plenty of money’, ‘pass exams’ and ‘go shopping’ (ibid.: 59).

Using data from the 1988 measurement occasion, Baker found statistically significant differences in pupil attitudes to Welsh by type of school attended, language background and age (but not by gender or self-assessed ability in Welsh). On ‘school type’ Baker notes:

> Across the three language attitude scales [general, instrumental and integrative], the consistent finding was that the English-medium school pupils had less favourable attitudes to Welsh than those from the natural Welsh and designated bilingual schools. Between these latter two schools there was no statistically significant difference.

(Baker 1992: 63-64)

In relation to language background – a variable with four categories: ‘predominantly Welsh’, ‘bilingual - biased to Welsh’, ‘bilingual - biased to English’ and ‘predominantly English’ – Baker found the stronger the pupils’ Welsh language
background the more positive their attitude towards Welsh on the General and Integrative attitude scales (ibid.: 64). There was a marginally not significant difference in relation to language background and the instrumental attitudes scale (ibid.: 64). Baker notes the:

relatively high mean [instrumental attitude score] … held by pupils from predominantly English backgrounds. Such pupils seem to be aware more than their ‘nearest’ group (English only) that Welsh can be the passport to career and monetary rewards and has a functional usage outside of social encounters. … In a group that might be moving towards the majority language, there is apparent awareness of a minority language as instrumentally valuable.

(ibid.: 65)

With regard to age, Baker reports attitudes to Welsh to be less positive with increased age. Statistically significant differences were returned between the 13 and 14 year olds on the general attitude scale, and between the attitudes of the 11-13 year olds (combined) and the 14 year olds cohort on the integrative and instrumental attitudes scales (Baker 1992: 61, 63). Thus, Baker hypothesises on the basis of this cross-sectional data that ‘the period between 13 and 14 years of age is a critical one in terms of language attitude decline’ (ibid.: 63). However, when this hypothesis was investigated using the longitudinal data from the same pupils between 1988 and 1990, there were ‘no statistically significant differences … in change of attitude between different age groups’ (ibid.: 121). The longitudinal data showed attitudes towards Welsh to decline as children age, but did not find any particular age range to be critical for this change.

Baker highlights the limitation of an approach to language attitudes change that does not take account of the range of changes that are happening in the children’s lives at this age when he notes:

The probability is that it is not age that causes language decline. That is, there is not an intrinsic maturational process that creates minority language attitude decline. Rather, it is likely that the socialization process in adolescence has an effect.

(Baker 1992: 42)

The present study thus employs a qualitative approach in the longitudinal investigation of pupils’ identifications with and attitudes towards their Celtic language at the primary to secondary school stage in order to explore the underlying reasons which influence changes in language attitudes.
The importance of investigating the nuances of language identifications and attitudes is underlined by Reynolds et al. (1998). In a questionnaire-based study of Year 11 pupils from two Welsh-medium and two English-medium secondary schools in South East Wales matched for the socio-economic background of their pupil intakes, Reynolds et al. found a larger proportion of Welsh-medium than English-medium pupils to report themselves to feel more Welsh than British and note Welsh-medium pupils’ national identifications to be more complex than those of their English-medium counterparts. In relation to the latter, Reynolds et al. report a contrast between the [English-medium and Welsh-medium] sectors was that in Welsh-medium schools, multiple identities occur – e.g. ‘Welsh first although my parents are English’, ‘Welsh and Irish although being Welsh is most important’. (Reynolds et al. 1998: 22)

The final quantitative study of relevance to the present research is a small-scale study of 55 upper-primary (Year 5) Welsh-medium pupils from two primary schools in Cardiff (Iaith 2011). Fifty one percent of the pupils were from English home language backgrounds, 41% from bilingual home language backgrounds and 8% from Welsh home language backgrounds (ibid.: 7). The language attitudes survey asked pupils to give their opinions of a series of positive and negative statements on the Welsh language. The research found the majority of pupils to have positive attitudes towards Welsh (ibid.: 8-9). For example, 98% of the 52 pupils who completed the language attitude survey said ‘I’m proud to speak Welsh’, 98% agreed that ‘the Welsh language is important to Wales’, 94% perceived that ‘speaking Welsh is cool’, and 92% perceived that ‘speaking Welsh will help with getting a job’. A low proportion agreed with negative statements towards Welsh, for example 14% saying ‘I’m not bothered about Welsh’ and 8% that ‘there’s no point speaking Welsh outside of school’. However, the authors acknowledge potential limitations in the reliability of this data, as it was collected by means of a teacher-led classroom activity, which might have had the effect of ‘colouring children’s responses more positively than they would otherwise have been’ (Iaith 2011: 9). The present research, being based on one-to-one interviews between a researcher external to the school and the pupils, with the assurance that no individual-level data would be reported to the school, is thus methodologically stronger.
Two recent studies have investigated pupil attitudes to Welsh using qualitative approaches (Scourfield et al. 2006, Murphy & Laugharne 2011). In a study of 105 8-11 year olds from three Welsh-medium and three English-medium primary schools across Wales, Scourfield et al. (2006) investigated pupils’ attitudes towards the Welsh language. The pupils were equally sampled by gender, by Welsh-language competence and by school stage. Data was collected by means of 18 focus groups and 54 individual semi-structured interviews.

Scourfield et al. (2006) reported that the pupils in their sample did not typically identify with Welsh on a ‘personal’ level, which the authors define as ‘the extent to which children see the language they speak as essential to their own conceptions of self-identity and who they are’ (Scourfield et al. 2006: 128). They note:

The children know the Welsh language is of public importance, but most have a very taken-for-granted sense that English is their language of ‘self.’

(ibid.: 128-129)

Scourfield et al. (2006) also draw a distinction between pupils’ having an integrative and an instrumental association with the Welsh language, framed within Heller’s (1999) distinction between ‘identity’ and ‘commodity’ (Scourfield et al.: 139). Identity aspects include associating Welsh with family, birthplace or heritage and the perception that the status of Welsh as a minority language adds to its cultural importance and to the value of being able to speak it (ibid.: 141), whilst commodity aspects include employment advantages and the benefits of bilingualism (such as enhanced cognition and ease of learning a subsequent language) (ibid.: 140). Scourfield et al. note that the pupils in their study were more likely to express an instrumental than integrative identification with the Welsh language.

However, there are several methodological points that undermine the generalizability of such findings. The authors note that the low numbers of pupils speaking Welsh at home – 6 of a sample of 105 – ‘might explain some of the lack of talk in our dataset about the Welsh language as a personal attachment’ (ibid.: 139). The employment of peer focus groups is unlikely to glean nuanced individual-pupil accounts of the components of personal identity (see Section 3.2.3.2.1), and the presentation of results ignoring school stage, language background and medium of education is also methodologically questionable, given that these factors have been
found to influence attitudes towards the Welsh language in previous research (Sharp et al. 1973a, Baker 1992).

Moreover, according to the accounts of the development of identity given in the social psychology literature (Section 2.2.3.3), 8 to 10 year-old pupils would not necessarily be able to formulate and clearly express individual and linguistic identities. Such a limitation is evidenced in the authors’ comment on the pupil data:

References to language as a source of identity, in the thicker sense of a culturally filled category, were notably lacking.

(Scourfield et al. 2006: 147)

Scourfield et al. acknowledge that such language identifications may be developing, or may not have been overtly expressed, when they note:

Despite the highly contested and controversial… nature of language debates in Wales, most of our respondents reported an understanding in which language and accent were obvious markers of difference, but where such differences were the cause of little concern, difficulty or indeed overt self-identification. Part of that reaction, particularly amongst first-language English-speakers, rests on a taken-for-granted sense of English being the norm against which any difference has to be measured. Below this secure surface, however, a good deal of more active negotiation is clearly taking place.

(ibid.: 147)

Such ‘active negotiation’ is an example of ‘moratorium’ (Meeus et al. 1999: 420), as described in Section 2.2.3.3. Scourfield et al. additionally acknowledge that the nature of such pupil negotiation of their identifications with the Welsh language will differ by home and school language context (ibid.: 133).

For English-medium pupils, the study by Scourfield et al. (2006) and a study of 27 7 to 8 year old English-medium primary pupils from the South Wales valleys by Murphy & Laugharne (2011) suggest that language is not a key component in pupils’ sense of self or of Welsh identity. However, Murphy and Laugharne’s study is also subject to the same methodological weakness as the Scourfield et al. study in relation to the cognitive capacities of children in middle-childhood to express personal identities.

The present research thus used individual pupil interviews to investigate Welsh-medium and English-medium pupils’ perceptions of the Celtic language at the Year 6 and Year 7 stages, when the pupils are in Piaget’s Formal Operational Stage
(11-12 years old). Questions of pupils’ ‘identity’ and ‘commodity’ associations with the Celtic language (Heller 1999) were explored by asking pupils about the extent of their identification with their Celtic language and their perceptions of the usefulness of the Celtic language for their future.

The links between, on the one hand, greater competence in the Welsh language and, on the other, greater identification with the language and increased optimism about its future use and vitality illustrated in the research presented above have also been found in research with older adolescents and with adults in Wales (NOP 1996: 7, Coupland et al. 2005: 14, Coupland et al. 2006: 363, Laugharne 2007: 228). However, such studies do not distinguish whether such language competence was acquired in the home or in the school. Reynolds et al.’s (1998) finding that Welsh-speaking pupils have multiple identities was replicated in a study by Coupland et al. (2005) with a group of 229 Year 12 and Year 13 pupils (16-19 years of age) in four secondary schools in Wales (2005: 5), whilst Scourfield et al.’s finding that pupils typically see instrumental rather than integrative functions for the Welsh language was replicated by a study of 329 16-18 year olds in bilingual secondary schools in Swansea (Gruffudd 2000: 200). Of this finding, Gruffudd notes:

there must be concern that the language is seen to be least important in the very fields on which Fishman puts most weight, namely ‘intimacy, family, community’.

(Gruffudd 2000: 200)

2.2.3.3.2 Scotland

Five previous studies consider the language attitudes of Gaelic-medium primary and early secondary school aged pupils. Three are quantitative in that they employ language attitude surveys with pre-determined categories (MacNeil & Stradling 2000, Müller 2005, Morrison 2006); two use open-ended questions and are thus qualitative (Cochran 2008, Oliver 2002).

In the study of 45 Secondary 2 and 31 Secondary 4 Gaelic-medium primary educated pupils discussed in relation to language use and attitudes in Sections 2.2.3.1 and 2.2.3.2 above, MacNeil and Stradling (2000) also investigated attitudes towards Gaelic by means of a survey which asked pupils to assess the extent to which they associate with a series of statements on a Likert rating scale. The study found 92%
of the pupils to identify themselves as someone ‘able to speak Gaelic’ ‘to a very great extent’ or ‘to a large extent’, 90% to similarly report themselves to be ‘someone that actually uses Gaelic’, 79% as someone ‘belonging to a Gaelic heritage’ and 64% as someone ‘involved in the Gaelic arts’ (n = 76) (MacNeil & Stradling 2000: 36). MacNeil and Stradling conclude that: ‘the language components [of identity] were very strongly embedded within this particular cohort’ (ibid).

Unlike in Wales (Sharp et al. 1973a, Baker 1992), age did not return large percentage differences in respect of Gaelic-medium primary educated pupils’ attitudes towards their Celtic language in MacNeil & Stradling’s study (2000). This is exemplified by the proportion of pupils who report positive associations36 with their ability to speak Gaelic (Secondary 2 = 93%, Secondary 4 = 90%), with being someone that uses Gaelic (S2 = 89%, S4 = 90%) or with their identification with a Gaelic heritage (S2 = 78%, S4 = 81%). However, there was a larger difference between the age cohorts in relation to association with the Gaelic arts (S2 = 60%, S4 = 71%) (MacNeil and Stradling 2000: 36). The investigation of the components of Gaelic-medium primary educated pupils’ language and cultural self-identifications and of changes in these over time would, however, benefit from a large-scale longitudinal study in which categories of attitude and identity were more nuanced and in which pupil-level variables such as home-language background, gender and school stage were taken into account statistically. The incorporation of an English-medium pupil comparison group (from the same school and community contexts) would additionally strengthen such a study. The present study provides a smaller-scale, qualitative comparison of language and cultural identifications across medium of instruction and over time.

A study of the language attitudes of Secondary 1 to Secondary 4 pupils conducted by Müller (2005) provides such a Gaelic-medium and English-medium pupil comparison in relation to attitudes to Gaelic. Gaelic-medium pupils (n = 61), English-medium pupils at the same (dual-stream) school (n = 61) and English-medium pupils from a freestanding English-medium school (n = 49) were asked to complete a language attitude questionnaire which investigated pupils’ perceptions of

36 Here defined as pupils associating themselves with the statement ‘to a very great extent’ or ‘to a large extent’ (MacNeil & Stradling 2000: 36).
the value and utility of Gaelic and English in school and society. Müller found the 
Gaelic-medium pupil group to be significantly more positive to Gaelic than were 
their Gaelic learner counterparts, who were in turn significantly more positive than 
their English-medium counterparts (Müller 2005: 129). Such findings replicate those 
of Sharp et al. (1973a) and Baker (1992) on the attitudes of bilingual and English-
medium pupils towards Welsh. In relation to English, Müller notes that ‘approval, 
disapproval and ‘don’t know’ could not so easily be assigned to the three groups of 
pupils as with the Gaelic statements ‘perhaps because all pupils are familiar with 
English’ (Müller 2005: 129). However, she notes that ‘there was one key trend … 
the GM [Gaelic-medium] group in most cases showed the highest levels of 
disapproval [towards English]’ (Müller 2005: 129).

The effect of medium of instruction on language attitudes is also investigated 
by Morrison’s (2006) study of 88 Secondary 1 to Secondary 6 pupils from four 
secondary schools in the Western Isles (discussed in relation to language use in 
Section 2.2.3.1. and linguistic ability in Section 2.2.3.2). In a question which aimed 
to investigate the effect of Gaelic-medium education on pupils’ identifications with 
Gaelic, Morrison asked pupils to choose options in response to the question: ‘Having 
been through the Gaelic-medium system, what do you feel Gaelic has done for you?’ 
The options offered can be categorized into integrative and instrumental aspects, 
with ‘made me feel more Scottish’, ‘makes me proud of being a Gael’, and ‘has 
given me a better social life’ examples of integrative aspects and ‘gives me more job 
opportunities’ and ‘has made me better at languages’ examples of instrumental 
aspects. The largest percentage of pupils reported instrumental benefits, with 45% of 
pupils citing job opportunities and 38% citing enhanced language capacities (n = 88) 
(ibid.: 149). About a third of the pupil sample report the integrative attributes of 
‘makes me feel more Scottish’ (33%) and ‘makes me proud of being a Gael’ (31%). 
Only 10% perceive that Gaelic-medium education has given them a better social life 
(ibid 2006:149). Such prioritization of the instrumental value of the Celtic language 
conforms with the findings of Scourfield et al. (2006) and Gruffudd (2000) in Wales.

Cochran’s (2008) national study of 362 Primary 7 to Secondary 4 pupils who 
had attended Gaelic-medium primary education also reported such a pupil emphasis 
on the instrumental benefits of Gaelic. In an open-ended interview question,
Cochran asked pupils ‘What opportunities do you see to use your Gaelic skills in the future?’ and reported that:

Many students only listed job opportunities, without considering using Gaelic at home, in their community, with relatives or with friends as ‘opportunities’ per se, even if they used Gaelic a great deal outside of school.

(Cochran 2008: 171)

Indeed, Cochran reported that whilst 49% of respondents cited employment-related opportunities (23% media, 14% teaching, 12% general), much lower proportions cited future opportunities for Gaelic language use that might be integrative (12% citing use in their home or their communities, 4% in travel to Gaelic-speaking areas and for visiting relatives and 3% in speaking with friends, participating in Gaelic cultural activities or ‘speaking Gaelic to their own child someday’ (n = 362) (Cochran 2008:172). Such findings should be treated with caution, however, as the wording of the question may have biased pupils towards mentioning job opportunities. The present research will investigate Celtic-medium pupils’ intended future language use but will do so using a more neutral question, namely ‘How useful do you think that Gaelic is going to be for your future?’ [Appendix 3, C.1.2. Q18a, D.1.2, Q21].

In research on secondary school pupils in 3rd, 4th and 5th Year (15 to 17 year olds) from two secondary schools, one in a traditionally Gaelic-speaking area (Portree) and one in an Anglicized area (Glasgow), Oliver (2002) used focus group and individual interviews to investigate the linguistic perceptions and identifications of pupils who had three levels of Gaelic language competence – fluent speakers who had been in Gaelic-medium education (n = 21), pupils studying Gaelic as a subject (n = 12) and pupils with no Gaelic (n = 12). Oliver asked pupils whether they thought that they would continue to use their Gaelic in the future, and noted:

Amongst the fluent Gaelic speakers … Gaelic is either perceived as a means of claiming or reclaiming the history and heritage of the respondent’s family; or Gaelic is perceived as a skill to be applied in the modern economy.

(ibid.: 125)

Oliver posits that whilst the ‘commodity’ or instrumental employment aspect of Gaelic in the future is a perception shared amongst the Lowland and Highland
Gaelic-medium pupils, the ‘identity’ or integrative aspect of Gaelic is more likely to be cited by pupils in traditional Gaelic-speaking areas. He notes such ‘continuity of tradition’ (ibid.: 125) to have different referents for the Lowland and Highland pupils, typically ‘family’ and ‘place and community’ respectively (ibid.: 128). Moreover, Oliver posits that the nature of pupils’ identifications with the Celtic language and their perceptions of its usefulness for their future further interact with pupils’ home language backgrounds, with pupils with a Gaelic home language background in traditional Gaelic-speaking areas more likely to express integrative identifications and future uses for the Celtic language (ibid.: 146).

The complexity of language attitudes, together with the multiplicity of pupil-level variables which affect language attitudes and perceptions of usefulness, are reasons why the present study is qualitative and longitudinal, allowing pupils to express their identifications in their own terms within their own frames of reference, and to control for their individual home, school and community level variables across two time points.

Scottish research on adults’ attitudes to Gaelic showed Gaelic speakers to rate the language as more important to their personal identity and to have more favourable perceptions of the use and vitality of the language than did their non-Gaelic speaking counterparts (MacKinnon 1981: 4, Scottish Government 2011: 36). Such findings regarding adults’ linguistic competence and language attitudes parallel those in the Welsh context (Section 2.2.3.3.1). Early adolescents’ views are thus only one point on a longer trajectory.

2.3 Concluding comments

In the light of the policy, provision, theory and research background provided in Chapters 1 and 2, this thesis investigates the factors that prompt the choice of Celtic-medium education at the primary and early secondary school stages in Scotland and Wales, and the patterns of continuity or change, at the primary to secondary school stage, in key aspects of Celtic-medium pupils’ language that are relevant to language planning. The specific research questions which the thesis addresses are outlined below. Chapter 3 will outline the methodological approach, sampling and methods of data collection and analysis employed in the investigation of these research questions.
Research Questions Set 1: Choice of medium of instruction at the primary and secondary school stages

- What factors influence parental decisions for Celtic-medium education at the primary school level?
- What factors influence Celtic-medium pupil decisions regarding language of education for the first year of secondary school?
  Do the responses and patterns of response regarding choice differ between (i) the primary and secondary school stages (ii) the Scottish and Welsh contexts?

Research Questions Set 2: Aspects of language relevant to language planning at the primary and early secondary school stages

- What are Celtic-medium pupils’ patterns of (a) language use (b) perceptions of their linguistic ability (c) identification with the Celtic language and (d) perceptions of the usefulness of the Celtic language for their future at the primary and early secondary school stages?
- Do the responses and patterns of response differ between the Scottish and Welsh contexts at the primary school stage?
- Do the responses and patterns of response shift between the primary and secondary school stages in either the Scottish or the Welsh contexts?
Chapter Three  Research Methods

This chapter outlines the overall methodological approach of the study (Section 3.1), before presenting an account of the research as it developed over time. Such a linear exposition best represents the iterative approach to research design and to the development of data collection instruments in a longitudinal study in which the pilot study and main study stages interweave. Consideration is subsequently given to the approach to the analysis and presentation of the empirical quantitative and qualitative data (Sections 3.6 and 3.7 respectively), and to the internal and external validity of the research methods, two key ‘measures of scientific credibility’ (LeCompte and Goetz 1982: 43)(Section 3.8).

3.1 Methodological foundations

3.1.1 Points of comparison

The empirical research for this study is based upon three points of comparison:

(1) between analogous groups in Scotland and Wales, for example, Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupils;

(2) between Celtic-medium and English-medium pupils from similar local contexts;

(3) between primary and secondary school.

The means by which such comparisons are investigated and elucidated are described in Sections 3.2 to 3.7. Section 3.8 considers the extent to which the comparative framework was effective.

3.2 Methods of data collection – Primary school stage

3.2.1 Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted in June and July 2006, consisting of one-day visits to a Scottish primary school which provides both Gaelic-medium and English-medium education, a wholly Welsh-medium primary school and an English-medium primary school in Wales which provides Welsh for Second Language learners. The

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37 In this thesis ‘Celtic-medium’ is used to encapsulate ‘Welsh-medium’ and ‘Gaelic-medium’. The phrase ‘Celtic-medium pupils’ refers to ‘Gaelic-medium’ and ‘Welsh-medium’ pupils. Analogously, the term ‘Celtic-medium education’ encompasses ‘Gaelic-medium’ and ‘Welsh-medium’ education.
Celtic language provision at each pilot study school is outlined in Appendix 2, C.1 & C.2.

3.2.1.1 Sampling, purpose and conduct of pilot study

The pilot primary and secondary schools were selected as they were expected to exhibit the linguistic discontinuity that is the subject of the research. In the Scottish pilot, whilst 65% of teaching time was reported to be through the medium of Gaelic at the Primary 7 stage in the school questionnaire [Appendix 2, A.1], only Gàidhlig as a subject was provided through the medium of Gaelic during the first year of the associated secondary school. The Welsh-medium school was in Ceredigion, a council area which had been identified by Gruffudd et al. (2004: 9) as being weak regarding linguistic continuity between primary and secondary: for example, 41.2% of the Welsh First Language pupils in Ceredigion transferred to Welsh Second Language between Key Stages 2 and 3 (Gruffudd et al. 2004: 10), compared with a national average of 22% (Gruffudd et al. 2004: 3). The ethical framework regarding research permissions and conduct outlined in 3.3.4 and 3.3.5 was adhered to throughout the pilot study.

The pilot study was intended to serve three functions: (i) to test the research methods so as to be able to reflect upon ways in which the data collection instruments might be modified, (ii) to identify additional topics not previously identified by research and policy and (iii) to test the effectiveness of the data analysis techniques.

3.2.1.2 Key features of primary school pilot study methods

The primary school level pilot study involved the consultation of Celtic-medium and English-medium pupils, their teachers and parents and the systematic observation of the school context [Appendix 2, A.4]

Final year primary pupils were asked to complete a writing exercise and subsequently to participate in an interview. Pupils were asked to write (in either English or their Celtic language) about their experience of primary school and

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38 The Local Authority of the Scottish pilot is not reported to protect anonymity.
expectations of secondary school with regard to their Celtic language [Appendix 2, A.2.1, A.3.1]. The interview asked the final year primary pupils about: (i) their experience of primary education, (ii) their use of the Celtic language at primary school, (iii) their intentions regarding taking the Celtic language at secondary school (whether as a subject or taking subjects through the medium of the Celtic language) and the reasons underpinning such intentions (iv) their feelings about moving to secondary school and (v) their use of the Celtic language outside of school [Appendix 2, A.2.2, A.3.2]. Celtic-medium pupils were also asked to assess their overall comparative linguistic competence in their Celtic language and in English [Appendix 2, A.2.2, Qu.6(b)].

Teachers were asked to complete a questionnaire which asked for details about their primary school and its associated secondary schools, with particular regard to the Celtic language. The questionnaire also enquired about the nature of the primary-secondary transition strategies employed for the Celtic-medium and English-medium pupils [Appendix 2, A.1]. These questionnaires were a pilot of the school level questionnaires that formed the basis of the school sampling process for the main study (Section 3.3.1). The final year of primary school teachers were also invited to participate in an interview about the strategies employed for the primary-secondary transition for Celtic-medium pupils, about the perceived effectiveness of these strategies, and about any challenges remaining in their context [Appendix 2, A.4.1, A.4.2].

Parents were asked to complete a questionnaire which was included with the parental permission letter [Appendix 2, A.6.1, A.6.2]. The questionnaire asked about parents’ reasons for choosing Celtic-medium education or English-medium education for their child at the primary school stage, their knowledge of the available Celtic-medium or Celtic language provision at secondary school, their satisfaction with the provision made for their child’s primary-secondary transition, and their child’s language use out with the school context. The questionnaire was distributed

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39 There is no Scottish version of this parental questionnaire, for the reasons outlined in Section 3.2.1.6; the Welsh version is in Appendix 2. The pilot originally also incorporated language tests of pupil ability – cloze tests, as there exist no standardized Gaelic language assessments – but the Scottish pilot study head teacher did not allow these to be used.
bilingually. A sealable envelope addressed to me was provided for the return of the parental questionnaire to the school, in order to ensure anonymity.

3.2.1.3 Rationale for pilot methods
3.2.1.3.1 Pupils

Two key rationales underpinned the decision to employ pupil writing exercises, one methodological and one relating to research ethics. In relation to methodology, the writing exercise provided data on pupils’ experience of primary school and their expectations of secondary school framed within their own perspective and words, and enabled me to see the extent to which pupils’ spontaneously mentioned language in their responses\(^40\). On research ethics (Section 3.3.5), a key tenet was to ensure that the research experience was positive for all respondents. The writing exercise maximized the likelihood of respondent confidence and comfort as it allowed pupils to work at their own level of ability, it could be completed by several pupils at one time, giving pupils a group experience before an individual interview, and it provided a springboard for discussion in the interview.

Semi-structured interviews were employed as the primary research method with pupils, as they enabled the interview to be organized around key topics, whilst also giving respondents scope to respond ‘on their own terms’ (May 2001: 123). The interactive nature of the interview also enabled me to ask respondents to clarify or elaborate upon responses, a process which enabled pupils’ meaning to be jointly understood. Indeed, Fontana & Frey (2005: 717) argue that the interview is ‘a practical production, the meaning of which is accomplished at the intersection of the interaction of the interviewer and the respondent’. Although the use of semi-structured interviews with individual pupils followed the methodological approach employed in previous research into pupils’ experience of Celtic-medium education (MacNeil and Stradling 2000: 3), the technique had been used with older pupils, in

\(^{40}\) The writing exercise purposefully did not specifically ask about language, in order that it be seen whether Celtic-medium pupils spontaneously mentioned language when following prompts such as: What things do you think will be the same at secondary school as primary school? What things do you think will be different at secondary school?
Secondary 2 and Secondary 4. Thus, a further aim of the pilot was to assess how comfortable pupils were with this approach.

3.2.1.3.2 Parents

The decision to consult parents at the primary school stage of the research was made part way through the pilot study. The original intention had been to consult parents on the second research occasion, after their child’s transfer to secondary school, to allow parents also to reflect on their child’s primary-secondary transition. Thus, parental participation was not sought during the Scottish primary school pilot study. However, because pupils in the Scottish study frequently cited their parents when discussing decisions regarding language at the primary and secondary school stages, it was decided rather to consult the parents at the end of primary school, and this was piloted in the Welsh context, using a questionnaire. Questionnaires have been used as the main means of consulting parents of pupils in Celtic-medium education in previous research (Johnstone et al. 1999, Stockdale et al. 2003, McPake and Doughty 2006).

Respondent participation in the primary school stage of the pilot study is displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. Respondent participation in Primary school stage of pilot study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of participants</th>
<th>Primary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pupils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaelic medium</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English-medium (Scotland)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welsh-medium</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English-medium (Wales)</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Celtic medium</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English medium</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2.2 Modifications to main study as a result of the pilot study

3.2.2.1 Practical modifications

The key practical challenge encountered on the pilot study related to the length of the school visits. Although one school day was sufficient to conduct the
data collection in the Scottish context (involving 6 pupils and 2 teachers), it was not long enough to conduct individual interviews with the pupils in the Welsh schools – in which some 21 Welsh-medium and 19 English-medium pupils participated. It proved possible to conduct 8 interviews per school day.

3.2.2.2 Modifications to content and method
3.2.2.2.1 Pupils

The quality of response to the writing exercise was typically high, but exhibited some variation because of differences in pupil abilities and motivation to complete the task. As mentioned in Section 3.2.1.3, the writing exercise question and prompts purposefully omitted specific mention of pupils’ experience of language. Although several Celtic-medium pupils and English-medium pupils did spontaneously mention language, pupils typically focused on generic aspects of secondary school, such as excitement about meeting new friends and secondary school’s new subjects and apprehension about getting lost and about the academic demands of secondary school [Examples are provided in Appendix 2, G.1]. Such findings concord with other research on primary-secondary transition, for example Rudduck (1996).

Thus, although useful in the identification of key pupil concerns and views of secondary school at the upper primary school stage, the writing exercise did not focus enough on language for the present purpose, and did not facilitate in-depth consideration and reflection when pupils did mention language. Thus, an interview – in which the interviewer could ask about language [Appendix 3, C.1.2, Sections 1-3] before briefly discussing general aspects of primary-secondary transition [Appendix 3, C.1.2, Section 4] – was deemed to be more effective methodological approach.

With regard to the pilot study pupil interviews, the key methodological challenge encountered pertained to the conduct of pupil interviews as focus groups, which were employed for reasons of efficiency (Wilkinson 2004:180). The pilot focus groups exhibited many of the disadvantageous characteristics of group data outlined by Ritchie et al.: ‘group dynamics,’ ‘interactions,’ ‘uneven coverage,’ ‘less extensive coverage,’ and ‘the influence of other views’ (2003: 257-258) (outlined in more detail in Appendix 2, D.2; examples of ‘group dynamics’ and ‘uneven coverage’ are in Appendix 2, D.3). The individual interviews conducted as part of
the pilot study resulted in fuller, more in-depth data in which pupils were willing to express a range of emotions – doubts, concerns and fears, in addition to the mostly positive experiences expressed in focus groups [Examples in Appendix 2, D.4].

The secondary methodological challenge encountered in the interviews related to how to glean information that could be collated and systematically analyzed on language use [Appendix 2, A.2.2, Q2, Q6(a). A.3.2 Q6(a)], on the stage of commencing Celtic-medium education, on perceived linguistic ability and on preferred medium of instruction of secondary school subjects\textsuperscript{41} [Appendix 2, A.2.2, Q1, Q6(b), Q4(b)]. Moreover, there was also an issue of where to place the language use question in the English-medium pupil interview: in one instance, it became clear that an English-medium primary pupil was fluent in Welsh only when she was explicitly asked at the end of the interview [Appendix 2, D.6]. Having knowledge of matters relating language use prior to the interview would have enabled me to explore the pupil’s experience of being a fluent home-language Welsh speaker undertaking a Welsh second language course.

Such a need to obtain systematic, consistent data on pupils’ family and school language background, language use, and perceived linguistic ability prompted the development of a pupil questionnaire which was to be completed prior to the pupil interview [Appendix 3, C.1.1, C.2.1]. The language use tables [Appendix 3, C.1.1, C.2.1, D.2.1 Q4, Q5] are based on those employed by Baker (1992: 139) in his study of the language attitudes of 797 12-14 year old pupils from 3 schools in North and mid Wales, described in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.3.1, a model also used in international language use research (Lasagabaster & Huguet 2007) [For language use tables see Appendix 2, D.7]. The modifications made to Baker’s language use tables are the sub-division of the ‘teachers’ category into ‘teachers in the classroom’ and ‘teachers when outside of the Celtic language classroom’, the grouping of the domains of language use into four contexts (i) the home (ii) the classroom (iii) the school and (iv) outside of school and the alteration of the absolute points of the five-point scale ‘Always in Welsh’ and ‘Always in English’ to ‘Always or almost always in the Celtic language’ and ‘Always or almost always in English’. Such an alteration followed MacNeil and Stradling’s (2000:11) assumption that Gaelic-medium pupils

\textsuperscript{41} As explained in section 3.6.1.2.2.3, the data on preferred medium of instruction has not been presented in the thesis because of lack of space.
would be unlikely always to speak exclusively in the Celtic language in a given context (but, as explained in 3.4.2.1 a further change to a seven-point scale was made at the secondary school stage).

Data on language ability was gleaned by asking pupils to self-assess their linguistic abilities. The potential methodological limitations of self-assessment of linguistic competence were outlined in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.2. Celtic-medium pupils were asked to rate their abilities in the four language skills (speaking, understanding, reading and writing) in their Celtic language and in English separately and subsequently to compare their abilities in the four language skills across their two languages, whilst the English-medium pupils were asked to assess their abilities in English, the Celtic language and their Modern Foreign Language, and to compare their abilities in their Celtic language and their Modern Foreign Language [Appendix 3, C.1.1, C.2.1, Qus.7 & 8].

The interview was further streamlined by asking about pupils’ participation in Celtic language extra-curricular activities and their intentions regarding taking the Celtic language at secondary school in the questionnaire [Appendix 3, C.1.1, C.2.1, Q6, Q.10 & Q.11]. This ensured that the interview focused on pupils’ experience and perceptions. The questionnaire information guided aspects of the interview schedule [Appendix 3, C.1.2, C.2.2. Introductory question, Q4, Q5, Q7, Q8, Q16]. The main interview schedule was further influenced by comments made by pupils in the pilot regarding the Celtic language and employment and the Celtic language and identity [Appendix 2, D.8.1 and D8.2, Appendix 3, C.1.2, C.2.2 Q17].

3.2.2.2 Parents and teachers

The responses and comments to the open-ended questions incorporated into the pilot study parental questionnaires were insufficiently detailed for my purposes. A decision was thus made to consult parents by means of a semi-structured telephone interview. The interview technique has previously been employed in studies of parental choice in the Gaelic (MacNeil 1993) and Welsh contexts (Packer and Campbell 1997). The content of the parental interview schedule for the primary school stage of the main study was informed by the pilot parental questionnaires from the Welsh context [Appendix 2, D.9 & D.10].
The teacher interviews were revised between the pilot and main study in order that they may incorporate a focus on language issues at the primary-secondary school transition stage. The observation schedule employed in the pilot study was not used formally in the main study, but contributed to the case notes that were taken for each school.

### 3.2.3 Analysis of pilot study data

Pupil writing exercises, pupil interviews and teacher interviews were transcribed and imported into NVivo. The data was coded by eleven topics, each representing a key interview question [Appendix 2, D.11] mainly in order that the effectiveness of the interview approach might be assessed. The analytical techniques were as for the main study (as described in 3.6.2.2).

The pilot NVivo project trialled several of the data management techniques employed in the main study, such as the addition of respondent attributes (for example country and gender) [Appendix 2, D.12], and the creation of sets by respondent sub-group (formed by respondent type, medium of instruction and school stage) [Appendix 4.A.1].

SPSS was employed to analyze the quantitative data from the pilot parental questionnaires descriptively rather than analytically, and thematic content analysis was conducted with the pilot qualitative data.

### 3.3 Main Study: Sampling

It had originally been intended to select 4 case study schools from Scotland and 4 from Wales. However, to get comparable pupil numbers 6 primary schools were selected in Scotland and 4 in Wales. There is a higher average number of final year primary pupils per school with Celtic-medium provision in Wales than there is in Scotland (Robertson 2007: 4-5; WAG 2007b: Tables 5&9). Moreover, having more Scottish schools in the sample could reflect the greater range of school contexts of Celtic-medium primary education in Scotland, for instance dual stream schools
which do not teach Gaelic to the English-medium stream (which for statutory reasons described in Chapter 2, Section 2.1.1.2 has no counterpart in Wales)\footnote{The Education Reform Act 1988 stipulated that Welsh would be a ‘core’ subject of the National Curriculum in Wales in ‘Welsh speaking schools’ (section 3(1)(b)) and that it would be a ‘foundation’ subject in other schools.}

### 3.3.1 School Level Questionnaires

#### 3.3.1.1 Rationale for questionnaires

A School level questionnaire survey was employed to facilitate the school sampling process (Silverman 2006: 48). The definitions of ‘Celtic-medium’ education outlined in Sections 2.1.1.3 and 2.1.2.3 made it implausible to identify comparable cases without such prior information, and the paucity of previous research on continuity in Celtic-medium education at the primary-secondary school stage additionally necessitated the employment of a school level questionnaire to identify continuity rates and key school-level issues\footnote{Gaelic-medium pupil primary-secondary continuity rates in Scotland were also estimated using data from Robertson (2007).}. There was a particular lack of such research in Scotland, and thus a survey of all Gaelic-medium primary education providers was conducted. There did exist research on Celtic-language continuity rates in Wales (WLB 1999, Gruffudd et al. 2004), and so (as explained in 3.3.1.3) a survey was done of only a sample of Welsh-medium primary providers, guided by the findings of that research, so as to cover schools with similar patterns of continuity to those in Scotland.

The school level questionnaires for the Celtic-medium and English-medium streams (informed by existing policy and research) were piloted during the primary school pilot study [Appendix 2, A.1]. Modifications to their content was influenced by points and issues raised in the pilot teacher interviews and parental questionnaires.

#### 3.3.1.2 Nature of questionnaires

The School level questionnaires [Appendix 3, A.1.2, A.1.3] asked for information on: the available provision for Celtic-medium and Celtic language education at primary and secondary level, the school and local authority policies on continuation of the Celtic language into secondary school, and the primary-secondary transition strategies for Celtic-medium and English-medium pupils.
Teachers were also asked to rate the effectiveness of these strategies in relation to pupils’ personal, academic and linguistic transitions. English and Celtic language versions of the questionnaires were posted to schools in February 2007.

3.3.1.3 Sampling distribution of questionnaires

The questionnaires were distributed to all 62 primary school providers of Gaelic-medium education in Scotland (Robertson 2007: 5) and to the Welsh-medium primary providers in a selection of local authority areas in Wales. 62 schools were selected for the distribution of the Welsh school level questionnaires. Schools were selected on the basis of the number of Celtic language speakers in the local authority, the council’s language policies, the nature of the council’s provision for Celtic-medium education, the local authority’s primary to secondary continuity rates in Welsh-language provision (Gruffudd et al. 2004), and the type of area in which the schools are located – urban or rural. Three key categories were developed for sampling:

(1) Celtic-medium schools
(2) Bilingual schools in council areas which have bilingual policies
(3) Dual stream schools.

Welsh-medium schools in urban areas such as Swansea and Newport were sampled for Category 1: these are ‘designated’ Welsh-medium schools where at least half the pupils are in Welsh-medium classes (Category A schools in NafW (2005:131)). Councils with bilingual education policies, such as Gwynedd, were sampled for Category 2. Councils with dual stream Welsh-medium and English-medium provision; with varying bilingual policies, and varying amounts of Celtic-medium provision at the secondary school stage – such as Carmarthenshire and Powys – were sampled for Category 3. [Greater detail of these definitions is in Appendix 4, A.2].

3.3.2 Response Rate

In Scotland, 34 of 62 schools (55%) returned the questionnaires for their Gaelic-medium provision, from 11 of the 14 local authorities that provide Gaelic-medium education. 18 of these schools also provided responses to the Gaelic
learners questionnaire. In Wales, only 16 of 62 schools (26%) returned Welsh-medium questionnaires. Responses were received from schools in 6 of the 8 councils sampled. 7 of the 16 schools also returned responses to the Welsh learner (English-medium pupil) questionnaire. The questionnaire returns were representative of the full range of circumstances that I wished to investigate – as outlined in Section 3.3.3.2 – however.

3.3.3 Sampling procedure for case study schools
3.3.3.1 Restrictions on selecting cases

The experience of the pilot study, in which the English-medium Scotland pupils had had no exposure to Gaelic, led to the sampling criteria for English-medium pupils in the main study to be restricted to those pupils who had learnt the Celtic language at primary school. This ensured that the English-medium Scotland sample were broadly comparable with the English-medium Wales pupils, all of whom are required to learn Welsh at primary school. When Gaelic-medium schools were sampled, an English-medium school in the local area was not sought for sampling, as English-medium schools in Scotland rarely provide Gaelic learners classes. Moreover, the comparison between the Celtic-medium and English-medium pupils is more valid if pupils are in the same school, because school level variables are constant.

Questionnaire respondents had been asked on the final page of the questionnaire to state whether they were willing to be contacted further in connection with the project [Appendix 3, A.1.2., A.1.3]. Such a mechanism ensured that the sampling considerations were applied to schools which were likely to agree to and be enthusiastic about participation in the research.

3.3.3.2 Selection criteria for case study schools

Case study schools were selected on the basis of school level variables such as: whether the Celtic-medium provision was provided within a whole school or dual stream context, the nature of the primary school language model, the percentage of

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44 One of the seven Welsh Second Language questionnaires returned was from a Welsh-medium school. The Head Teacher had completed it for the pupils for whom Welsh was their Second Language. The questionnaire is incorporated here, as it formed part of the sampling process, and indeed was selected as a case study school, on the belief that it was a dual stream school.
teaching time conducted through the medium of the Celtic language in the final year of primary school and the number of pupils in the Celtic-medium Primary Seven/Year Six class. School level variables pertaining to the secondary school context were also considered: the available Celtic-medium options at secondary school, the primary teacher’s assessment of the relationship with the secondary school with regard to the Celtic language, and the perceived effectiveness of primary-secondary transition strategies in facilitating progression in the Celtic language and in other subjects for Celtic-medium pupils [Appendix 3, A.1.2. Q2, Q4, Q7, Q10(a), Q11, Q15, Q16.]. Pupil level variables were also considered: for example, pupils’ home language use, the teacher’s perception of the percentage of the Primary 7/Year 6 cohort who are equally competent in the Celtic language and English, and the reported level of continuity to Celtic-medium secondary school [Appendix 3, A.1.2.Q6, Q8, Q9b].

The sampling additionally took account of social and geographic contexts: the type of area in which the school is located (urban or rural), the number of Celtic language speakers at the 2001 census [Appendix 4, A.1, A.2],

the council language policies at a community level, and a wish to incorporate a range of Local authorities [Appendix 4, A.1, A.2].

Such theoretical sampling aimed to represent a range of Celtic-medium primary and secondary provision in Scotland and Wales, rather than being statistically representative of Celtic-medium provision in each national context (Silverman 2006: 306; Gomm et al. 2000: 105). The sampling process was iterative, and involved the use of the school, pupil and community variables to develop categories of schools into which Celtic language provision in both national contexts would fit, and to select comparable schools from within these categories. The tripartite categorization of Celtic-medium primary provision outlined in 3.3.1.3 was expanded to five categories in the process of identifying case study schools. Category 3 ‘Dual stream schools’ was sub-divided into two categories according to the demographic strength of the Celtic language in the area, and a fifth category was

45 In order to allow for the different demographic positions of the two languages, this sampling criterion additionally considered which regions are the most strongly Celtic language speaking areas of the respective nations and which are traditionally Celtic language speaking areas.
added to represent the existence in Scotland of dual stream schools that do not teach Gaelic to the English-medium stream [Appendix 4, B.1].

3.3.3.3 Characterisation of the cases

The characteristics of the case study schools are outlined in Appendix 4, B.2 and B.3. In order to preserve the anonymity of schools, the case summaries omit some data used in the sampling process, for example the number of Celtic-medium pupils in the final year of primary school, and the assessment of the strength of the relationship between the primary and secondary school concerning the Celtic language [Appendix 3, A.1.2.Q16, Data: Appendix 4, B.4; Appendix 3, A.1.2. Q15. Data: Appendix 4, B.5]. The summaries in Appendix 4, B.1 to B.5 demonstrate how the school sample met the community and school level criteria outlined in 3.3.3.2.47

Table 2: Primary schools providing Gaelic-medium education in 2006-07 by Local Authority groups, and characteristics of the Scottish school sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Council Area</th>
<th>Percentage of Gaelic speakers in Local Authority Area</th>
<th>Number of GM primary providers as % of the total of GM primary providers</th>
<th>Number of schools in Local Authority Area</th>
<th>Number of GM primary providers as % of the Council’s schools</th>
<th>Number of schools in sample</th>
<th>Ratio of schools in sample to total number of Gaelic providing schools</th>
<th>Number of GM providers with P7 pupils</th>
<th>Ratio of schools in sample to number of GM providers with P7 pupils</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CNES</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1:12.5</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highland</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1:20</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argyll and Bute</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1:6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anonymised Other</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>1876</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1:5.5</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>2183</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1:10.3</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures derived from: GROS 2001, Robertson 2007 & Scottish Executive 2007: Table 6.5:52

46 Only data from the Celtic-medium questionnaires are incorporated into these case study sampling outlines. The English-medium case study schools and pupils are not intended to be a representative sample, either of English-medium pupils in schools with a Celtic-medium stream or of English-medium pupils as a whole.

47 Pupil level sampling data is not illustrated in the case study school outlines to preserve anonymity, but is presented in aggregated form (by national context) in Sections 3.8.1.1 & 3.8.2.2.

48 This category consists of eleven local authority areas: Aberdeen City, Angus, East Ayrshire, East Dunbartonshire, Edinburgh City, Glasgow City, Inverclyde, North Lanarkshire, Perth & Kinross, South Lanarkshire and Stirling.
Table 3: Primary schools providing Welsh-medium education in 2006-07 by Local Authority, and characteristics of the Welsh school questionnaire and case study school sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Council Area</th>
<th>Percentage of Welsh speakers in Local Authority Area</th>
<th>Number of WM primary providers</th>
<th>Number of WM primary providers as % of the total of WM primary providers</th>
<th>Number of WM primary providers as % of the Council’s schools</th>
<th>Included in the School Level Questionnaire Sample?</th>
<th>Number of schools in my sample</th>
<th>Ratio of primary schools in sample to total number of Welsh medium providing schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gwynedd</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1:104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carmarthenshire</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1:83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powys</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1:17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swansea</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1:9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neath Port Talbot</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isle of Anglesey</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conwy</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denbighshire</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flintshire</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrexham</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceredigion</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pembrokeshire</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridgend</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Vale of Glamorgan</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhondda, Cynon, Taff</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merthyr Tydfil</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caerphilly</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blaenau Gwent</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torfaen</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monmouthshire</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newport</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardiff</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures derived from:
(Office for National Statistics 2001, WAG 2007:Table 10)
3.3.4 Ethics – Research permissions

The School of Education’s Ethics Committee approved the intended approach to the research. The nine relevant local authorities were then contacted for permission to approach schools within their area regarding participation in the study. The local authority requests were made by email and were accompanied by a project information document, the nature of the involvement being requested of the school, and the ethics surrounding the research [Appendix 3, B.1.1]. Such information was sufficient for most councils’ purposes, but some local authorities additionally requested that council research applications be completed. All councils approached gave permission that schools in their area be contacted in connection with the research. An unanticipated complication at the local authority permission stage was that, although I had a recent Enhanced Disclosure (Scotland) Certificate that had been issued through the University, one Scottish Local Authority required this also to be issued through their council. This was not possible in the time available, and thus the council required that there be a teacher in the room during the pupil interviews in Primary School 5.

Permission to visit schools was then sought from head teachers by means of an email which outlined the research purposes and conduct [Appendix 3, B.2.1]. All schools agreed to participate in the research. Parental permission was requested by means of a letter [Appendix 3, B.3.1] which schools distributed to all final year primary pupils. The parental permission letters outlined the purposes of the study, requested the parent’s permission that I speak to their child in a tape-recorded interview, and asked if the parent was willing to participate in a telephone interview. Such consent forms were distributed bilingually to parents of Celtic-medium pupils.

The same ethical procedures were followed with local authorities, head teachers and parents at the secondary school stage [Appendix 3, B.1.2, B.2.2, B.3.2.]. All secondary schools agreed to participate in the research.

3.3.5 Ethics – Research conduct

3.3.5.1 Key principles of research conduct

The research was conducted in accordance with the British Educational Research Association’s *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research* (2004), with particular attention to ‘Voluntary Informed Consent’, ‘Right to Withdraw’ and
‘Privacy’. These three principles were outlined to parents in the Parental Permission Letter [Appendix 3, B.3.1, B.3.2] and the introduction to the parental interview [Appendix 3, C.4.1, C.4.2], to teachers in the project information sent to the school [Appendix 3, B.2.1, B.2.2] and in the introduction to the teacher interview [Appendix 3, C.3.1, C.3.2., D.3.1], and to pupils in the introduction to their interview [Appendix 3, C.1.2, C.2.2, D.1.2, D.2.2]. The three principles are discussed below.

All respondents who participated in the research were offered a summary of the research findings. These will be distributed to participants after the completion of the thesis examination process. Versions of the research findings appropriate to the pupil and teacher participants respectively will be sent to each case study school, whilst the summary for parents will be emailed or posted to the address provided by the respondent during their telephone interview.

3.3.5.2 Ethics of research conduct with children

The ethics of research conduct pertaining to the pupils were the most complex. With regard to the principle of Voluntary Informed Consent, BERA advocate empowering children to give informed consent (BERA 2004: 7). However, Gallagher et al. argue that:

where children are deemed capable of decision-making, some writers argue that placing responsibility for consent on their shoulders may lead to feelings of obligation.

(Gallagher et al. 2010: 476)

In acknowledgement of such a possibility every attempt was made to ensure that pupil participation was entirely voluntary and that pupils understood their right to withdraw at any point. Pupils were informed about the research in person, on the day of the school visit, and were asked if they were willing to participate in the study, because:

Children say they prefer to be told about a project in person, because … written information sometimes ‘doesn’t go in’.

(Gallagher et al. 2010:476)

Individual pupils’ permission was also sought regarding the interview being tape recorded. Each pupil was informed that they could choose not to answer a particular
question and could stop the interview at any point. The children’s willingness to use such an option was testament to their agency, comfort and self-assurance in the interview context:

INT And what’s been the best thing about learning Welsh at primary school do you think?
RES Hmmm, [pause] Pass.
INT Pass. And is there anything that you would change about learning Welsh at primary school if you could?
RES Em – no.

The majority of pupils did not use this option in such an overt way. The child’s comfort during the interview was the key consideration at all times, and I rephrased questions, opted not to follow up with more in-depth questions or moved on in the interview schedule if the child was struggling with concepts or did not seem comfortable discussing a topic.49

In two cases, both in relation to pupils with additional support needs, such research principles were paramount. In one instance, the pupil was keen to participate but the extent of his learning challenges were such that the interview schedule was only loosely adhered to, and in another instance, the last section of an interview was re-scheduled to the next day as the respondent seemed to be tiring and losing focus [Transcript: Appendix 4, C.1]. No pupil asked to stop their interview, and the high pupil re-participation rate in the research at the secondary school stage (Section 3.5) reflects pupils’ comfort with the interview situation.

With regard to the adult respondents, all parents and teachers were happy to participate in the research after having been told about the project, about the anonymous treatment of data, and about their right not to answer a given question or to withdraw from the research at any time. However, two teachers and four parents did not grant permission that their interview be tape recorded. In such cases, written notes were taken instead, with the agreement of the respondent.

49 One example of such an attempt to ensure pupil comfort in the interview situation was the commencement of the interview with a question relating to factual information asked in the pupil questionnaire. The question, ‘You said on your questionnaire that you have brothers or sisters, what is it that you have?’ [Appendix 2 C.1.2, C.2.2] provided an accessible opening that all pupils could answer with ease.
3.3.5.3 Ethics of research conduct: Language

Language is an additional ethical consideration in this study, as research conducted entirely in English may be judged to be an example of ‘linguistic imperialism’ (Phillipson 1992), reinforcing ideas about the hegemony of English. I thus endeavoured to become sufficiently linguistically competent to be able to conduct part of the research in Gaelic and Welsh, by means of developing a receptive ability in the languages and achieving basic communicative competence. The receptive ability allowed me to offer respondents the opportunity to reply in their preferred language when writing school level questionnaires, the pupil writing exercises used in the pilot study, the pupil questionnaires employed in the main study, and the parental permission letters. The communicative competence enabled me to engage in informal discourse with pupils and teachers in the Celtic languages, to request that pupils be excused from class for their interview, and to help to facilitate mutual understanding during the otherwise English-medium interviews. Examples from a Welsh teacher and a Gaelic-medium pupil are provided below.

RES we split the intake into two… in Welsh we call it ffords, I don’t know what that is in English…
INT Streams…
RES Streams, there we are right, ok.

INT Can I just ask why you think this [referring to pupil responses on questionnaire] would be the best way for you to learn?
RES I don't know the – what’s Eolas Gnothaich again?
INT Business Studies.

My understanding of the syntactic structures of the languages also enabled me to have a better understanding of the respondents’ language learning experiences as expressed in their interviews, for instance when an English-medium pupil in Wales talked about ‘mutations and stuff’ [Pupil 15.SS02.EMW.Pilot].

Such linguistic competencies served to reduce the conceptual distance between the respondents and me, yet I was still seen to be ‘other’ in the sense that I wasn’t a fluent or native Gaelic or Welsh speaker. The language learning of Gaelic and Welsh allowed me to be within and without – to have an understanding of the
language and culture which made me more accepted by the linguistic community, yet not being part of the linguistic and cultural Celtic language community in either context. Although that is a limitation of the research, it pertained equally in Scotland and in Wales, and therefore the researcher effect should not have affected one respondent group more than the other.

3.3.6 Timetable of primary school data collection

The 6 Scottish primary schools involved in the research were visited in June 2007 and the 4 Welsh primary schools in July 2007 [Appendix 4, H.1]. The parental interviews were conducted in July and August 2007 – during the summer holidays after the respondents’ children had completed their primary education, and, in the majority of cases, before their child started secondary education. However, some parents requested that they be interviewed once their child re-commenced school when the parent had more time.

3.3.7 The sample

3.3.7.1 Recruitment of pupil sample

No sampling criteria were imposed when recruiting the pupil sample during the primary school visits; rather every pupil whose parent had returned a form granting the child permission to participate in the research, and who wished to participate, was invited to do so. Several reasons underpin such an approach:

(i) The school-level questionnaire had already incorporated some pupil-level sampling, in relation to pupils’ home language background [Appendix 3, A.1.2, Q6.]

(ii) A strict, pre-defined sampling procedure, for example a specified number from each school, is not always feasible in Celtic-medium education, where year group numbers in upper primary are small (Robertson 2007: 4-5).

(iii) As the study is longitudinal, including all pupils at the primary school stage of the research maximizes the probability of a good sample size, even if there is a drop in re-participation at the secondary school level.
(iv) It was not intended that the pupil data be analyzed quantitatively by means of variables such as gender, language background, linguistic ability and additional support needs, and thus it was not necessary that the sampling incorporate such considerations to ensure sufficient numbers within each sub-category. For the present purposes, ascertaining the pupils’ characteristics during the course of the research was sufficient, simply to ensure that the heterogeneity of the case study population was included (Gomm et al. 2000).

3.3.7.2 Pupil, parent and teacher participation in Primary school stage of research

The numbers of participants in the primary school stage of the main study is shown in Table 4. All of the pupils also completed a questionnaire.50

Table 4 Respondent Participation in Primary school stage of main study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of participants</th>
<th>Primary Pupils</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Parents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaelic-medium</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English-medium (Scotland)</td>
<td>1751</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welsh-medium</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English-medium (Wales)</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celtic-medium</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English-medium</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>87</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The overall participation rate of Gaelic-medium primary pupils was 67% (28 of a possible 42 final year primary pupils at the sample schools). The Welsh-medium primary pupil participation rate was 66% (57 of 87 pupils). Participation rates by school are not presented as the disclosure of the total number of final year Celtic-medium primary pupils may lead to the identification of individual schools.

‘Pupil participation by school’ figures are presented in Appendix 4, D.1.

50 53% of the Welsh-medium and 29% of the Gaelic-medium primary pupils completed the questionnaire in their Celtic language.

51 This includes the 10 pupils sampled during a follow up visit to Primary School 5 in May 2008. The English-medium Primary 7 had received Gaelic in middle primary, but not in upper primary, and thus fell out with my original sampling criterion of pupils receiving Gaelic in Primary 7 during the 2007 school visit, but I subsequently relaxed that criterion to allow this group to be included.
23 of a potential 28 (82%) parents of Gaelic-medium pupils, and 40 of a potential 57 (70%) parents of Welsh-medium pupils participated in the study. The majority of the respondents were the pupils’ mothers – 22 of 23 (96%) of the Scottish respondents, and 34 of 40 (85%) of the Welsh respondents. Celtic-medium parental participation rate by school is presented in Appendix 4, D.2.

Seven of a possible 17 (41%) parents of English-medium pupils in Scotland and 17 of a possible 34 parents of English-medium pupils in Wales (50%) participated in a telephone interview. The majority of the respondents were the pupils’ mothers – all 7 of the Scottish respondents, and 15 of 17 (88%) of the Welsh respondents. English-medium parental participation rate by school is presented in Appendix 4, D.3.

All final year Celtic-medium primary school teachers, and their English-medium counterparts in dual-stream schools (a total of 20 teachers) were willing to participate in the research. No additional information, for example, years of teaching experience, were sought from the teacher respondents.

3.4 Methods of Data Collection – Secondary school stage
3.4.1 Pilot Study

The pupils that participated in the primary school stage of the pilot study were invited to re-participate in the research during school visits to the pupils’ secondary schools which occurred in October and November 2007, when pupils were at the start of their second year of secondary school [Appendix 4, E.1].

3.4.1.1 Content of pilot study
3.4.1.1.1 Pupils

Pupils were asked to complete a pupil questionnaire [Appendix 2, B.1.1, B.2.1] based on the primary questionnaire developed for the main study, but with the addition of a consideration of Celtic-medium pupils’ perceptions of their linguistic abilities in their modern foreign language, and the addition of questions about language use with grandparents in the language use tables as these had been frequently mentioned at the primary school stage.

Pupils were also invited to participate in an individual interview which focused on their experience of the Celtic language at secondary school as compared
with primary school – their learning of the Celtic language as a subject (continuity of curricular content, methods of learning and teaching, progression of learning), the experience of continuity or discontinuity of medium of instruction of school subjects, pupils’ Celtic language use outside the classroom, and pupils’ perceptions of the school’s attitude to the Celtic language. Pupils were additionally asked to reflect upon their primary-secondary transition experience.

3.4.1.1.2 Teachers

The secondary school Celtic language teachers were asked to participate in an interview about (i) the available Celtic language provision in the first year of secondary school (Celtic-medium, Celtic language and pupils’ options within this), (ii) the primary-secondary transition policies, procedures and strategies for pupils, with particular regard to language (continuity of medium of instruction of subjects, continuity and progression in the Celtic language as a subject, and teachers’ evaluations of the effectiveness of such interventions), (iii) pupil attitudes and Celtic language use during the first year of secondary school and (iv) the teacher’s ideal Celtic-language provision at secondary school [Appendix 2, B.3.1, B.3.2].

3.4.1.1.3 Parents

Parents were asked if they would be willing to participate in a telephone interview in connection with language in their child’s education. The interview schedules were based on the primary school parental interview from the main study and incorporated key topics gleaned from parental questionnaire data from an independent school-level survey provided by Secondary school 2 [Described in Section 3.2.1.8] [Interview Schedules: Appendix 2, B.4.1 – B.4.3]. Interviews were conducted with a sample of parents from the pilot secondary schools.

3.4.1.2 Participation in secondary school stage of pilot study

There was a high re-participation rate in the secondary school stage of the pilot study, as shown in Table 5.
Table 5 Respondent participation in secondary school stage of pilot study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of participants</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pupils</td>
<td>Re-participation rate</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaelic-medium</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English-medium (Scotland)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welsh-medium</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English-medium (Wales)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celtic-medium</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English-medium</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4.2 Modifications to main study as a result of pilot study

3.4.2.1 Pupils

Four key modifications were made to the secondary school level pupil questionnaires as a result of pupil feedback in the pilot study. These are detailed below.

(1) Language use scale

One pupil found a language use scale which ranged from ‘always/almost always in the Celtic language’ to ‘always/almost always in English’ confusing due to the absence of absolute values at each end, as the pupil always spoke to their parents in English. The scale was modified by sub-dividing the ‘always/almost always in the Celtic language’ category into ‘always in Celtic language’ and ‘almost always in Celtic language,’ and analogously sub-dividing ‘always/almost always in English’.

An ‘other’ category was also added for pupils who spoke additional languages [Appendix 3, D.1.1, D.2.1. Qus. 3,4].

(2) Specification of secondary school subject domains

Several pupils questioned the ‘in the classroom’ category incorporated into the language use tables when used in relation to the secondary school context.

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52 Of the Welsh-medium primary pupils transferred to Secondary School 2, an English-medium secondary school where they study Welsh First Language.
53 There is no distinction drawn between Celtic-medium teachers and English-medium teachers at the secondary school level, as the teacher is often teaching both Gaelic/Welsh fluent speakers and Gaelic/Welsh learners if it is a school with Celtic-medium and English-medium pupils.
Appendix 2, B.1.1, B.2.1, Q4. Pupils asked to which classroom the questions about their language use to other pupils and to teachers ‘in the classroom’ referred. It was impractical to ask pupils about every subject in this regard, and thus a decision was made to ask about four subjects, namely English, Mathematics, the Celtic language and Science. These are the ‘core’ subjects for Celtic-medium pupils in Wales, and Mathematics and Science are subjects which exhibit much variation both with regard to the provision and uptake of Celtic-medium education.

(3) Extra-curricular activities

Some pupils were confused by the phrase ‘out of school’ in Question 6 of the questionnaire, wondering whether it meant out-with school hours, or out-with school premises. The wording of the question about pupils’ participation in Celtic language activities was thus modified to avoid such ambiguity:

Do you do any activities that involve Gaelic? For example do you watch television or read books in Gaelic? Do you do sports or music that involve Gaelic or are you part of a Gaelic youth club?

Appendix 3, D.1.1, D.2.1, Q5

Pupils’ participation in Celtic language activities was enquired about as Baker found a ‘definite, moderate connection’ (1992: 89) between participation in Welsh cultural activities and positive attitudes to bilingualism in the language attitudes study described in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.3.1.54

(4) Celtic-medium subject instruction

The final point of ambiguity regarding the secondary school questionnaire related to the question about the incorporation of the Celtic language into secondary school subjects. Pupils often said it was, in Welsh or Gaelic as a subject. The question was thus modified to indicate that the question refers to the teaching of subjects other than the Celtic language through Gaelic or Welsh, for example:

Is Welsh used in any of your subjects (apart from in your Welsh class) in Year 7?

Appendix 3, D.1.1, D.2.1, Q11

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54 Due to reasons of space (as further discussed in Section 3.7), data on pupil participation in extra-curricular activities is not presented in the thesis.
Three modifications were made to the pupil interview as a result of the pilot study. The first involved tightening the focus in order to give due consideration to language learning in primary-secondary transition. This involved the inclusion of questions about continuity of methods of learning and teaching in addition to the questions about continuity of curricular content and level of difficulty regarding the Celtic language as a subject [Appendix 2, B.1.2, Qu.11(b), B.2.2. Q6. & 8, Appendix 3, D.1.2. Q11] and the incorporation of a consideration of continuity or discontinuity of medium of instruction of subjects between primary and secondary school [Appendix 3, D.1.2. Q4]. The second modification involved re-wording the questions on identity, from for example:

‘To what extent do you identify with Gaelic?’ with the prompt ‘How much is Gaelic part of who you are?’ ‘Would you class yourself as a Gael?’

[Appendix 3, C.1.2.Q18(b)]

to:

To what extent do you identify with Gaelic? How much is speaking Gaelic part of who you are? i.e. Is it part of who you are, or is it just something that you do?

[Appendix 3, D.1.2.Q18]

The sub-question ‘Would you class yourself as a Gael’ was omitted during the primary school stage of the main study, as pupils typically found the question difficult to answer.

The final modification of the secondary pupil interview was the relocation of the pre-coded question (below) to the pupil questionnaire for the main study, because such a quantitative question was incongruous in the interview [Appendix 3, D.1.1, D.2.1.Q13].

Overall, how would you rate your experience of Gaelic in your secondary education?

Excellent □ Very Good □ Good □ Not very good □ Poor □

[Appendix 2, B.1.2, Q4(b), B.2.2. Q3]

55 The analogous primary school level question was incorporated into the pupil interview. It did not jar to the same extent in this instance as it was an introductory question, which provided a springboard to subsequent more open ended questions.
3.4.2.2 Teachers

Two key lessons were learnt from the experience of interviewing teachers in the secondary school pilot study, one substantive and one methodological. Section 3 of the secondary teacher interview schedule, on pupil attitudes and pupil language use during the first year of secondary school [Appendix 2, B.3.1, B.3.2], did not glean useful data, as the secondary teachers, who have typically only known the pupils at the secondary school stage, cannot validly comment on changes between the primary and secondary school stage. The pupils’ own accounts of their language attitudes and language use, measured at both primary and secondary school stages, provide much more valid data on such topics, because they are both more accurate of the pupils’ experience and measured in a genuinely longitudinal way. Section 3 of the teacher interview schedule was thus modified to a section on extra-curricular activities and school ethos [Appendix 3, D.3.1]. A question which asked about the aims of bilingual education at the secondary school stage was also added.

The pilot study experience moreover highlighted that the Celtic language teacher was not always able to represent the overall provision of Celtic-medium subjects in the school, and the school’s primary-secondary transition arrangements. Gleaning information on such topics often required the consultation of several teachers. Accordingly, I asked to speak to relevant members of staff regarding the Celtic language provision and primary-secondary school transition arrangements at the school, as well as requesting an interview with the Celtic language teacher.

3.4.2.3 Parents

The experience of conducting telephone interviews with parents of a sample of the pilot secondary school pupils returned similar data as had been given in their reasons for the choice of the medium of instruction at the primary school stage. The main difference was that parents were less engaged in the consideration of their child’s secondary school medium of instruction, and discussed the decision-making process in less depth and detail after their child’s primary-secondary transition. Such data thus evidenced the rationale for interviewing parents at the primary school stage rather than at the secondary school stage (Section 3.2.1.3.2).
3.4.2.4 Local Authority advisors and Head Teachers

The research design had initially incorporated a telephone interview with a representative from each of the 9 local authorities participating in the research regarding the council provision for Celtic language and Celtic-medium education, and council policies and strategies concerning primary to secondary school transition, with particular regard to the Celtic language [Appendix 3, B.1.1, B.1.2]. However, sufficient information was obtained from local authority and school policy documents without interviews. Likewise, interviews with head teachers proved unnecessary because of information provided by the Celtic language teachers and school policy documents.

3.5 Participation rates in secondary school stage of main study

The pupils who participated in the primary school stage of the main study project were invited to respond to a second questionnaire and interview a term after their transition to secondary school (about 8 months after they had first participated). The research was conducted at the pupils’ secondary school, and involved me visiting 6 secondary schools in Scotland and 9 in Wales between January and April 2008 [Appendix 4, B.3].

Table 6 shows respondent participation, with pupils categorised according to their primary school medium of instruction. Parents were not re-interviewed at the secondary school level, for the reasons outlined in Section 3.4.2.3.

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56 33% of Welsh-medium and 37% of Gaelic-medium secondary pupils chose to complete their questionnaire in the Celtic language, compared with 53% of the Welsh-medium and 29% of the Gaelic-medium primary pupils.
Table 6 Respondent participation in secondary school stage of main study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of participants</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pupils</td>
<td>Re-participation rate</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaelic-medium</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English-medium (Scotland)</td>
<td>13±7</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wales</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welsh-medium</td>
<td>53±8</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English-medium (Wales)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celtic-medium</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English-medium</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.6 Data Analysis

3.6.1 Pupil Questionnaires
3.6.1.1 Quantitative data management

Pupil questionnaire data was entered into SPSS in order that the statistical procedures outlined in Section 3.6.1.2 could be conducted.\(^59\)

The data was anonymized by assigning a number to each pupil and school. The local authority groups of ‘Comhairle nan Eilean Siar,’ ‘Highland,’ ‘Argyll and Bute,’ and ‘Other,’ were used in the Scottish databases for the same purpose, as the naming of the local authorities of the two schools in the sample which are the sole

\(^57\) 2 of the 13 English-medium Primary 7 pupils had previously been in Gaelic-medium education. These pupils attended Gàidhlig (fluent speaker) classes in Secondary 1. A further 7 of the 13 English-medium Secondary 1 pupils did not receive Gaelic learners’ lessons in secondary school, as Secondary School 5 does not provide any Gaelic provision to English-medium pupils. Indeed, only 4 of the 13 English-medium pupils who participated in the secondary school stage of the research continued to receive Gaelic learners lessons at secondary school.

\(^58\) 4 pupils swapped from Welsh-medium to English-medium education at the primary-secondary school stage, and thus although 53 of the Welsh-medium primary pupils re-participated in the research, 4 of these were studying Welsh Second Language in Year 7.

\(^59\) Pupils were classified by their Primary school medium of instruction for the purposes of the longitudinal statistical analysis. However, four pupils swapped from Welsh-medium primary education to English-medium secondary education, and thus completed an English-medium secondary questionnaire. The only difference between the Celtic-medium and English-medium pupil questionnaires with regard to variables that were analyzed over time was the direction of the response scales for the language use and the preferred medium of instruction of subjects questions. The scales used in the Celtic-medium pupil questionnaires started at ‘Always in the Celtic language’ and the scales used in the English-medium pupil questionnaires at ‘Always in English.’ This initial category was coded as Category 1 in the respective databases. The coding of these pupils’ English-medium secondary questionnaire responses was reversed for entering into the Welsh-medium pupil database.
providers of Gaelic-medium education in the local authority area could have led to the identification of individual schools.

3.6.1.2 Quantitative data analysis
3.6.1.2.1 Theory

The analysis of the quantitative data had two main dimensions:

(i) to investigate whether there were statistically significant differences in patterns of response by context (i.e. Scotland and Wales) between the Celtic-medium or English-medium pupil groups at the primary and secondary school levels.

(ii) to ascertain whether there were statistically significant differences between primary and secondary school in pupils’ responses to questions on language use and language ability.

Gamma tests were used to investigate dimension (i). Gamma tests were employed as they assess ‘the association between ordinal variables’ (Fielding and Gilbert 2006: 220), which is what the present study employs in relation to the Language use and Perceived linguistic ability response scales. The scale for ‘Language use’ ranges from ‘Always/almost always in the Celtic language’ to ‘Always/almost always in English’ [Appendix 3, C.1.1, C.2.1. Qus.4, 5 & 12] at the primary school level, whilst ‘Perceived linguistic ability’ is measured on a five point ordinal scale from ‘Very Good’ to ‘Not good’ for individual languages, and on a three point scale from ‘Better in the Celtic language than English’ to ‘Better in English than the Celtic language’ for pupils’ comparative assessment of two languages [Appendix 3, C.1.1. Qus.7 & 8]. The other dimension – for example, country – is always in effect ordinal because it has only two categories. The Gamma test statistic is denoted by $\gamma$.

In the case of categorical variables, where there is no intrinsic ordering of the categories, a Pearson Chi Square test for independence was employed to investigate whether patterns of response differ by group, as illustrated in Section 3.8.1.1. This is also used to assess variation among local authorities. The Chi Square test statistic is denoted by $\chi^2$.

Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests were used to investigate whether there were statistically significant differences between the final year of primary school and after
the first term of secondary school in pupil reports of their language use and linguistic ability. Wilcoxon Signed Rank tests are appropriate as the same respondents participated at each measurement occasion, enabling shifts in response over time to be analyzed at the individual pupil level. The results summarise these shifts by respondent group. The Wilcoxon test statistic is denoted by \( z \).

The non-parametric Wilcoxon test was used rather than the parametric repeated measures t-test, as histograms showed that the samples’ responses to the categorical dependent variables were skewed. The data thus violated two key assumptions of parametric tests – that ‘the dependent variable is measured … using a continuous scale’ (Pallant 2007: 203) and that ‘the data are from one or more normally distributed populations’ (Field 2005: 64). The Wilcoxon Signed Rank test requires a scale on which ‘the magnitude of the difference between the pairs of observations’ (Crichton 2009: 584) for each respondent may be ascertained, as the relative size of these shifts across respondents forms the basis of the Wilcoxon test calculation. The scales used in the Wilcoxon calculations in the research are versions of a Likert item – an ordinal rating scale with ‘discrete’ categories which ‘exhaust the range of possible responses’ to a ‘uni-dimensional’ question (Cohen et al. 2000: 253). However, whilst the Likert scale, which typically ranges from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’ on a five point scale, has ‘no assumption of equal intervals between the categories’ (Cohen et al. 2000: 254), the five point scale employed in the language use questionnaire is underpinned by an ordered scale in which the differences between categories are of broadly equal magnitude.\(^{60}\) The multi-level modeling technique described in Sections 2.2.3.2.1. and 2.2.3.2.2 could not be employed in the present study due to the small sample size which necessitated

\(^{60}\) Cohen et al argue in relation to a Likert scale that ‘a rating of 4 indicates neither that it is twice as powerful as 2 nor that it is twice as strongly felt; one cannot infer that the intensity of feeling in the Likert scale between “strongly disagree” and “disagree” somehow matches the intensity of feeling between “strongly agree” and “agree”’ (2000:254). However, in the case of the scale used in the research, the difference between Category 1 and Category 2 (‘Strongly disagree’ and ‘Disagree’ respectively on a Likert scale), and Category 4 and Category 5 (‘Agree’ and ‘Strongly Agree’ on a Likert scale) can be assumed to be comparable as they mark the difference between: ‘Always/almost always in Celtic language’ and ‘in the Celtic language more often than English’ and ‘in English more often than the Celtic Language’ and ‘Always/almost always in English’. These four categories are symmetric around a middle point that is ‘in Gaelic and English equally’ - a reference point of 50% usage to which the other categories relate.
the use of non-parametric tests. However, the longitudinal research design matches for school-level as well as pupil-level variables.

3.6.1.2.2 Data analysis of pupil questionnaires
3.6.1.2.2.1 Language use

Gamma tests were conducted between the Celtic-medium pupil groups, and between the English-medium pupil groups for the 9 aspects of language use incorporated into the primary school level questionnaire [Appendix 3, C.1.1, C.2.1, Q4], and the 17 areas of language use enquired about at the secondary school level [Appendix 3, D.1.1, D.2.1. Q3]. Tests were also performed in relation to the analogous language use domains for the ‘language input’ data, that is to say pupils’ reports of other peoples’ patterns of language use to them [Appendix 3, C.1.1, C.2.1. Q5 & D.1.1, D.2.1.Q4].

The expansion of the five-point scale employed at the primary school level to the seven-point scale used at the secondary school level (described in Section 3.4.2.1) had implications for the statistical analysis. The Gamma tests on the secondary school level data were conducted on the seven-point scale, and the bar charts displaying the distribution of pupil responses to a question by context were also presented on this scale in order that the most detailed picture of pupils’ language use be represented [Appendix 7]. However, the Wilcoxon tests were performed on the five-point scale used at the primary school stage to allow valid comparison (Pallant 2007: 224), combining the two points at each end of the seven point scale. Wilcoxon Tests were performed for the 9 language use variables common to the primary and secondary school questionnaires to investigate whether there were statistically significant shifts over time within the Gaelic-medium, Welsh-medium, English-medium Scotland or English-medium Wales pupil groups.

Wilcoxon tests were also performed on pupils’ reports of their ‘language output’ and ‘language input’ with regard to a particular domain of language use, for example their language use to their father and their father’s language use to them, at the primary school stage on the 5-point scale [Appendix 3, C.1.1, C.2.1. Qus 4 & 5]

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61 For example, ‘Always in the Celtic language’ (Category 1 of the secondary school 7 point scale) and ‘Almost always in the Celtic language’ (Category 2 of the secondary school scale) were combined and coded as ‘Category 1’ - ‘Always/Almost always in the Celtic language’ on the five point scale.
and at the secondary school stage on the 7-point scale [Appendix 3, D.1.1, D.2.1.Qus.3 & 4]. Wilcoxon Signed Rank Tests were employed for this purpose, as

The Wilcoxon signed rank test (Wilcoxon, 1945) is used in situations in which there are two sets of scores to compare, but these scores come from the same participants.

(Field 2005: 534)

Although the language use of two or more people are being represented (to father/from father), the data nevertheless constitutes two reports of information from the same pupil.

3.6.1.2.2.2 Perceived linguistic ability

Gamma tests were performed on Celtic-medium pupils’ assessments of their abilities in understanding, speaking, reading and writing their Celtic language and English (assessed on a five point scale) [3.6.1.2.1, and Appendix 3, C.1.1, Q7(a) & (b), D.1.1 Qu.6 & 7] and on pupils’ perceived comparative competence in such linguistic skills across these two languages (assessed on a three point scale) [3.6.1.2.1, and Appendix 3, C.1.1, Q8, D.1.1 Q8]. Wilcoxon tests were conducted to ascertain whether there were shifts over time amongst pupils in the Gaelic-medium or Welsh-medium pupil groups. Analogous tests were conducted for the English-medium pupils in relation to their perceived skills in English, the Celtic language and their modern foreign language [Appendix 3, C.2.1, Q7 (a)-(c), D.2.1.Qus.6-8], and with regard to their perceived comparative competence between their Modern foreign and Celtic languages [Appendix 3, C.2.1, Qu8. D.2.1.Qu.9]. A question concerning Celtic-medium pupils’ self-assessment of their abilities in their modern foreign language was incorporated into the secondary school level pupil questionnaire [Appendix 3, D.1.1 Qu.9] but this data could only be subject to Gamma tests as there was no primary school level data for the variable.

Data was also collected on respondents’ preferred medium of instruction of secondary-school subjects 62 [Appendix 3, C.1.1 & C.2.1. Q12, D.1.1 & D.2.1. Q14], which was analysed using Gamma tests in order to ascertain whether there were any

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statistically significant differences between the preferences of Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupils, or between English-medium pupils in Scotland and Wales. However, for reasons of space, this data and results could not be presented in the thesis.

3.6.1.2.3 Data organization and presentation

In order to simplify the presentation of the large number of tests, the results were organized into a taxonomy which incorporates a consideration of:

(a) whether there is a statistically significant difference between the Scottish and Welsh responses at the primary school stage;
(b) whether there are shifts in individual pupil responses between the primary and secondary school stage which are sufficient to cause a statistically significant change in patterns of response within a pupil group (e.g. Gaelic-medium pupils).

Statistical significance was judged at the 5% significance level. This resulted in six categories, displayed in Table 7.63

**Table 7 Analytical categories for the presentation of quantitative data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Statistically significant difference between the Gaelic and Welsh medium pupil groups at the primary school stage?</th>
<th>Statistically significant shift within the Gaelic-medium and/or Welsh-medium pupil groups between primary and secondary school?</th>
<th>Statistically significant difference between the Gaelic and Welsh medium pupil groups at the secondary school stage?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 3</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 4</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 5</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group 6</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Such statistical-trend groups are the key organizing principle for the presentation of the pupil questionnaire data in Chapter 5. Although the 5% level of statistical significance was used to define the Groups, comment is occasionally made on comparisons where the level of statistical significance was marginally higher than

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63 The categories presented are for Celtic-medium pupils. An analogous taxonomy was used for the English-medium pupils.
5% but lower than 10%, referred to as being ‘marginally not statistically significant’ or similar phrasing.

3.6.2 Interviews
3.6.2.1 Qualitative data management

All 383 interviews (as noted in Tables 4 and 6) were transcribed and imported into NVivo. Transcripts were anonymized using ‘codes’ constituted of (i) respondent type, (ii) respondent number, (iii) school number and (iv) medium of instruction of schooling. For example, the codes for the primary and secondary school interview transcripts for a Gaelic-medium pupil from School 4, their parent and teacher are: Pu.009.PS04.GM, Pu.009.SS04.GM, Pu.009.Par.PS04.GM and Te.003.PS04.GM respectively. Such codes are also used in the Presentation of Findings when excerpts of respondents’ interviews are cited.

In order that the dimensions of comparison relevant to the research questions be investigated, each transcript was created as a ‘case node’ in NVivo. This facilitated a comparison of individual pupil responses at the primary and secondary school stages and fine-grained comparisons within the data on areas of interest from the main data analysis, which had compared responses coded at ‘nodes’ or ‘categories’ by respondent sub-group. Respondent sub-groups are categories formed by a combination of respondent type, medium of instruction and school stage, for example Gaelic-medium primary pupils.

3.6.2.2 Qualitative data analysis
3.6.2.2.1 Methodological approach

The qualitative data was analyzed using Thematic Content Analysis. Content analysis is:

a systematic coding and categorizing approach which you can use to unobtrusively explore large amounts of textual information in order to ascertain the trends and patterns of words used, their frequency, their relationships and the structures and discourses of communication.

(Grbich 2007: 112)

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64 In the case of parents, the school number and medium of instruction of schooling refers to those of the child participating in the research. In the case of teachers, the school refers to the school in which they teach, and the medium of instruction of schooling to the main language in which they teach.

65 Examples of all respondent sub-groups (as employed in both the pilot study and the main study) are provided in Appendix 5.A.1.
In thematic content analysis:

themes are identified, with the researcher focusing on the way the theme is treated or presented and the frequency of its occurrence. The analysis is then linked to ‘outside variables’ such as the gender and role of the contributor. (Spencer et al. 2003: 200)

Such a focus on the conceptualization of the issue and the way in which this links to characteristics of the respondent is particularly appropriate for a comparative study in which the key areas of interest are similarities and differences in respondents’ representations of aspects of experience by context (e.g. Celtic-medium pupils in Scotland and in Wales) and by respondent type (e.g. pupils, parents, teachers).

3.6.2.2.2 Methods of qualitative data analysis

The thematic content analysis was guided by the Framework Approach, (Ritchie et al. 2003: 219), which involves five key stages (Green and Browne 2005: 82-83) [Appendix 5, B.1].

Stage 1 Familiarization

The process of familiarization aims to give the researcher ‘an overview of the data coverage and a thorough familiarity with the data set’ (Spencer et al. 2003: 221). Two Celtic-medium and two English-medium pupils were selected from each school, along with the associated interview data from their parents and teachers, resulting in the review of over 130 interviews. These interviews were mapped to identify key ideas [Appendix 5, B.2].

Stage 2 Identifying a Thematic Framework

An ‘Initial Conceptual Framework’ (Spencer et al. 2003: 224) with 8 topics was developed by identifying topics common to all respondent sub-groups [Appendix 5, C.1.1 – C.1.566], by considering the ‘recurring themes or ideas … attitudes, behaviours, motivations or views’ (Spencer et al. 2003: 221) within the dataset that had been identified by means of the familiarization process, and by attention to the purpose of the research (e.g. choice of medium of instruction of

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66 Examples of coded interview schedules are provided for Gaelic-medium pupils, parents and teachers at the primary school stage for the purposes of illustration.
education, pupil language use, pupil identifications with the Celtic language) [Appendix 5, C.2].

Stage 3  Indexing

The raw interview data were indexed by this ‘Initial Conceptual Framework.’ (Ritchie et al. 2003: 224), a process that was very valuable as:

engaging in some kind of indexing process…can help the researcher to distance themselves from the immediacy of the initially striking or memorable elements, and therefore to gain a more measured view of the whole.

(Mason 2002: 152)

The conceptual framework was modified during the process of indexing in order that the categories be ‘exhaustive,’ ‘mutually exclusive,’ and ‘operationalized’ to achieve ‘conceptual clarity’ (Robson 2002: 355). Such developments of the thematic framework were relatively minor. Only one additional topic – ‘Perceptions of linguistic ability’ – was incorporated into the revised framework, and the remaining refinements involved the rewording of categories either to include the perspectives of different respondent types, or to better represent the respondents’ conceptualisation of a topic. Such revisions are exemplified in the modification of Topic 4.3 ‘Challenges at primary-secondary provision’ to ‘Feelings regarding the transfer to secondary school, and expectations of secondary school’. Such a change enabled the category to encompass both positive and negative pupil perceptions relating to the transition to secondary school. Topic 4.6 – which was originally ‘Expectations of secondary school’ – was then subsumed into Topic 4.3 as the two topics were no longer ‘mutually exclusive’. Detailed notes of all alterations made to categories, and the rationale for such changes were kept. The interviews were coded under 9 topics:

Topic 1  Reasons for medium of instruction at primary school
Topic 2  Experience of primary school, and of language at primary school
Topic 3  Reasons for school and language choices at secondary school level
Topic 4  Primary-secondary transition
Topic 5  Experience of secondary school, and of language at secondary school
Topic 6  Language use
Topic 7  Preferred Celtic language provision in Secondary 1/Year 7
Topic 8  Language, identity and future
Topic 9  Perceptions of linguistic ability

[The Free Nodes used in the study are detailed in Appendix 5, D.1.]
The Celtic-medium and English-medium interview transcripts from all respondent groups were indexed under the same topic headings to facilitate comparative analysis.

Stage 4 Charting/Sorting

Stage 4 of Framework Analysis involves ‘sorting or ordering the data in some way so that material with similar content or properties are located together’ (Ritchie et al., 2003: 228). With such a large amount of data (383 interviews), it was necessary to use index categories to ‘bring material together in thematic “sets”’ (Ritchie et al. 2003: 229). Coding queries were thus run in NVivo to generate indexed data for a specific topic or sub-topic from a particular respondent sub-group [Appendix 5, E.167]. Thematic Framework sheets were created for each respondent group, recording whether a respondent had commented on a theme or sub-theme in their interview [Appendix 5, E.2]68. This produced a thematic overview of the dataset in terms of the most frequently mentioned topics.

Stage 5 Mapping and Interpretation

The final stage of Framework Analysis encompasses the ‘interpretative work’ (Spencer et al. 2003: 213) [Appendix 5, B.1]. First, each theme was examined at the respondent sub-group level (defined in Section 3.6.2.1), and a set of codes was developed inductively from the data. These codes were then grouped into categories which aimed to include the full range of representations of the phenomena as conceptualised by the respondent sub-group. Such categorizations were then compared with the codes and categories that had been created inductively from the comparator respondent sub-group. For example, for Topic 2, the categories derived from Gaelic-medium primary pupils’ experiences of learning languages at primary school were compared with those derived from the experiences of their Welsh-medium counterparts. In instances where the categories were conceptually equivalent, the wording of the category was standardized, and where points of

67 As an example, Appendix 4, E.1 illustrates indexed data on Gaelic-medium parents’ reasons for choosing Celtic-medium primary education.
68 Appendix 4, E.2 presents a thematic matrix using a sample of Welsh-medium parents for illustrative purposes.
conceptual difference existed between categories these were noted as differences between the sub-groups.

Spencer et al. (2003: 215) argue that ‘the ability to explain, or build explanations, lies at the heart of qualitative research’. The key approach to the development of explanatory accounts in the present research was the identification of patterns of association in the data ‘and then attempting to explain why these patterns occur’ (Spencer et al. 2003: 261). The manner in which patterns of similarity and difference were identified both within and across respondent sub-groups has already been outlined [Stages 4&5].

3.7 Approach to presentation and discussion of findings

Kvale identified three key ‘contexts of interpretation’ of qualitative research interviewing, namely ‘self-understanding, critical commonsense understanding and theoretical understanding’ (Kvale 1996: 214-5). Self understanding involves the researcher ‘formulating, in a condensed form, what the subjects themselves understand to be the meaning of their statements,’ critical common sense understanding involves the researcher using ‘general knowledge about the content of the statement … to amplify and enrich the interpretation of the statement’ and theoretical understanding is generated through the application of ‘a theoretical frame for interpreting the meaning of a statement’ (Kvale 1996: 214-215). Thematic Content Analysis using the Framework Approach enables me to address all three such contexts in the Presentation and Discussion of Findings by providing descriptive, interpretative and theoretical accounts of the data.

In addressing the research questions outlined in Chapter 2, the Presentation of Findings does not include data from all of the topics outlined in the Framework (Section 3.6.2.2.2). Due to limited space, ‘Experience of primary school, and of language at primary school’, ‘Primary-Secondary transition’, ‘Experience of secondary school and of language at secondary school’ and ‘Preferred language(s) of instruction of first year secondary subjects’ are not here presented, although aspects of this data are drawn upon where relevant (for example in the individual pupil vignettes outlined at the end of the Presentation of Findings in Chapter 5). On several other topics, the thesis presents only a sub-set of data. Data from parents of English-
medium pupils on the reasons for the choice of English-medium education (Topic 1),
and from Celtic language teachers and English-medium pupils on the experience of
teaching and learning the Celtic language as a subject for learners at the primary and
secondary school stages (Topics 2 and 4) are not included, nor is the qualitative data
from pupils and parents for Topics 5 and 6 on Celtic-medium and English-medium
pupils’ language use and perceived linguistic ability. However, English-medium
pupil data was always included where it provided a useful comparator to the Celtic-
medium pupil sample (as outlined in 3.8.1.2), for example in relation to language use
in the community in Topic 3, in relation to English language competencies in Topic
4 and in relation to place and language identifications in Topic 5 (Chapter 5).

In Chapter 4, Topics 1 and 3 of the analytical thematic framework (Section
3.6.2.2.2) appear as Topics 1 and 2, and respectively present data on choice of
medium of instruction of education at the primary and secondary school stages
(Research Question 1) [Appendix 1.A.1]. In Chapter 5, Topics 6, 8 and 9 of the
analytical Framework appear as Topics 3 to 5 and investigate continuity and change
between the primary and secondary school stages in pupils’ language use,
perceptions of their linguistic abilities and identification with the Celtic language
respectively (Research Question 2) [Appendix 1.A.1]. The Presentation of Findings
concludes with four pupil vignettes which present the data collected for this thesis at
a holistic individual pupil level, rather than as analytical themes.

3.8 Validity

This section considers the validity of the three aspects of comparison outlined
in Section 3.1.1. Campbell and Stanley define two types of validity:

Internal validity is the basic minimum without which any experiment is
uninterpretable: Did in fact the experimental treatments make a difference in this
specific experimental instance? External validity asks the question of
generalizability: To what populations, settings, treatment variables, and
measurement variables can this effect be generalized?

(Campbell and Stanley 1963: 175)
3.8.1 Internal validity

Campbell and Stanley (1963) identify eight ‘different classes of extraneous variables’ which ‘if not controlled in the experimental design, might produce effects confounded with the effect of the experimental stimulus’ (Campbell and Stanley 1963: 175). Such variables were termed ‘threats’ to internal validity in 1979 when Cook and Campbell extended the list to thirteen:

History, Maturation, Testing, Instrumentation, Statistical regression, Selection, Mortality, Interactions with Selection, Ambiguity about the direction of causal influence, Diffusion or imitation of treatments, Compensatory equalization of treatments, Compensatory rivalry by respondents receiving less desirable treatments and Resentful demoralization of respondents receiving less desirable treatments.

(Cook and Campbell 1979: 55; see Appendix 6, A.1)

Robson highlights that ‘not all threats are present for all designs’ (Robson 2002: 104), but Cook and Campbell (1979: 55) emphasise the requirement for the researcher to consider critically which validity threats pertain to their research. Of the thirteen threats, five potentially pertain to my research design: testing, instrumentation, selection, mortality and interactions with selection.69 Maxwell notes that:

validity threats are made implausible by evidence not methods; methods are only a way of getting evidence that can help you rule out those threats.

(Maxwell 1996: 86)

The evidence that counteracts three of the threats which potentially pertain to the present research has been outlined in previous sections. So far as testing is concerned, where the threat is that ‘familiarity with a test can sometimes enhance performance’ (Cook and Campbell 1979: 52), it is unlikely that pupils would

69 The other categories were not relevant to my research for two main reasons: (1) the chronological format of the research ensured that there would be no ambiguity about the direction of causal influence. (2) The research was a ‘quasi-experiment,’ the main point of comparison being between analogous groups of Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupils, and the separate comparison between English-medium Scotland and English-medium Wales pupils. These pupils were not grouped on the basis of any aspect relevant to the research, as would happen, for instance, if the pupils had been allocated to Celtic-medium education on the basis of a prior test of general intelligence. Threats to validity arising because respondents were aware of receiving less or more desirable treatments also do not pertain to this research, as there is no specific ‘experimental treatment’ involved.
remember the responses they gave on such multifarious questionnaire – completed 8 months previously – on the second research occasion; thus there would be little chance that their secondary school level reports would be influenced by an inclination to appear consistent with, or to distance themselves from, their primary school level responses. Indeed, familiarity with the testing instrument served to counter the second potential threat to internal validity, namely ‘instrumentation,’ where there had been a ‘change in the measuring instrument between pre-test and post-test’ (Cook and Campbell 1979: 52). The pupils’ familiarity with the questionnaire format from the primary school stage ensured that the completion of the more refined 7 point scale at the secondary school stage did not pose a challenge for respondents, whilst analytical validity was achieved by collapsing the two categories at each extreme of the scale in longitudinal analyses [Section 3.6.1.2.].

The threat of ‘mortality’ primarily pertained to the English-medium pupils. A much higher percentage of English-medium than Celtic-medium pupils did not re-participate in the secondary school stage of the study (33% compared with 6%, as shown in Table 6, Section 3.5). Such respondent attrition:

is a threat when an effect may be due to the different kinds of persons who dropped out of a particular treatment group during the course of an experiment. (Cook and Campbell 1979: 53)

The pattern of such ‘respondent mortality’ was likely due to the issue of Celtic language education being less central to the English-medium pupils’ educational experience than to that of their Celtic-medium counterparts, and to the brevity of one secondary school visit (Secondary School 9.1), where the participation of Celtic-medium pupils was thus prioritized. However, it is acknowledged that those English-medium pupils who chose to participate in the secondary school stage of the research may be more likely to represent those pupils who are engaged with their school learning generally. The attrition of English-medium pupil respondents also reduced the statistical power of tests which strove to assess patterns of language use and perceived linguistic ability both within English-medium respondent groups over time, and between the English-medium Scotland and English-medium Wales

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70 Such a comment is applicable to all school based research, and also potentially pertains to the pupils involved in the primary school stage of the study.
respondent groups at the secondary school stage. Such English-medium pupil attrition thus potentially affects both the internal and external validity of the English-medium pupil data, the internal validity as the attrition may alter the characteristics of the resulting English-medium pupil sample, and the external validity as the small sample size makes generalizing from conclusions less plausible with regard to the English-medium pupil data. The magnitude of such an external validity threat is not large with regard to my study, however, as the English-medium pupils are used as controls for the Celtic-medium pupil group within the same school, rather than as a means to generalizable conclusions about English-medium pupils as a whole.

The remaining two threats: ‘selection’ and ‘interactions with selection’ require the ‘evidence’ of which Maxwell speaks (1996: 86) to be explicitly outlined in order that one’s claims for the internal validity of one’s data – namely that the changes resulting from the experiment were due to the experimental condition rather than to pre-existing differences in the respondent groups – be proved to be warranted. The present research was a ‘quasi-experiment’ as it has ‘a comparison group … predetermined to be comparable to the treatment group in critical ways’ (Chambliss and Schutt 2003: 110). Chambliss and Schutt note:

These research designs are only ‘quasi’-experimental because subjects are not randomly assigned to the comparison and experimental groups. As a result, we cannot be as confident in the comparability of the groups as in true experimental designs. Nonetheless, in order to term a research design quasi-experimental, we have to be sure that the comparison groups meet specific criteria.

(Chambliss and Schutt 2003: 110)

The main point of comparison in my research is between analogous pupil groups across context, that is to say the comparison between Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupils, and the separate comparison between English-medium Scotland and English-medium Wales pupils. The comparability of the pupil participants on ‘specific criteria’ (Chambliss and Schutt 2003: 112) will be illustrated below, in relation to the three dimensions of comparison in the research outlined in Section 3.1.1. In the first two instances, the selection method is ‘aggregate matching’ (Chambliss and Schutt 2003: 112) where a comparison group is intended to: ‘match
the treatment group in the aggregate rather than trying to match individual cases\textsuperscript{71} (Chambliss and Schutt 2003: 112), whilst in the third, the pupils are compared with themselves, what Robson calls ‘the ultimate in matching’ (2002: 130).

3.8.1.1 Comparison between analogous respondent groups in Scotland and Wales

The comparison of Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupils, and of English-medium pupils in Scotland and Wales, is premised on the validity of ‘home international’ (Raffe et al. 1999) comparisons of nations within the UK context. Raffe et al. note:

In varying degrees, the nations of the UK have distinctive education and training systems, but all belong to the same state and share its homogenising influence. The economy and the labour market, their regulatory frameworks and their ways of working, are also relatively uniform across the UK. ... As a result, home international comparisons may provide more opportunities for theory development than the study of homogenous [education] systems with unique boundaries.

(Raffe et al. 1999: 19)

However, this argument holds only if it forms part of a well designed study in which the elements of the education systems being investigated are conceptually comparable. Øyen (1990: 3) argues that ‘whatever we do in the way of cross-national comparisons must be theoretically justified – and cutting into countries theoretically is a complex process’. In order to ensure that the basis of my comparison is valid, and that my findings may make a theoretical contribution, I have endeavoured to ‘justify theoretically’ (Teune 1990: 45) the rationale for the selection of the countries under investigation (See Chapter 1). The comparability of the schools, and of Celtic-medium provision in the Scottish and Welsh contexts at a school level, was addressed in Section 3.3. Tables 8 and 9 illustrate the representativeness of the achieved Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupil samples in relation to their respective national contexts.

\textsuperscript{71} ‘Individual matching’ would have involved ‘individual cases in the treatment group [being] matched with similar individuals in the comparison group.’ (Chambliss and Schutt:2003:112)
Table 8. Pupils in Gaelic-medium education by sample schools’ Local Authorities (2006-07)\textsuperscript{72} and Participation rate in present study by Local Authority area of Primary school attended

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Authority</th>
<th>Gaelic Medium Pupils (2006-07 school year)</th>
<th>Primary 1-7</th>
<th>Primary 7</th>
<th>Sample Primary 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>% of national</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>% of national</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNES</td>
<td>495</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highland</td>
<td>701</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argyll and Bute</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other\textsuperscript{73}</td>
<td>752</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2092</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Roberston, 2007)

Table 9. Pupils in Welsh-medium education by sample schools’ Local Authorities (2006-07)\textsuperscript{74} and Participation rate in present study by Local Authority area of Primary school attended

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Authority</th>
<th>Welsh Medium Pupils (2006-07 school year)</th>
<th>Reception to Year 6</th>
<th>Year 6</th>
<th>Sample Year 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>% of national</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>% of national</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwynedd</td>
<td>7271</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1202</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carmarthenshire</td>
<td>5916</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1006</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Powys</td>
<td>1242</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swansea</td>
<td>1521</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (in sample Local Authority schools)</td>
<td>15950</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2633</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (Nationally)</td>
<td>53342</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>6452</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Welsh Assembly Government, 2007: Table 5)

The comparability of the analogous pupil groups in Scotland and Wales
(Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupils, English-medium Scotland and English-

\textsuperscript{72} Due to the grouping of Local Authorities for anonymity purposes, this table represents the national sample of Gaelic-medium schools.

\textsuperscript{73} Local Authorities A and B are grouped under ‘Other’ for these purposes, both in order to protect the anonymity of schools, and in order that the characteristics of the pupil sample, as compared with the National Gaelic-medium pupil distribution, be more clearly evidenced.

\textsuperscript{74} Unlike the Gaelic-medium table in Table 8, the table representing the Welsh-medium pupils in the study does not also provide a summary of Welsh-medium primary pupils nationally. Rather, the national picture is outlined in Appendix 4.A.2.
medium Wales pupils) was assessed in relation to key respondent characteristics included in the primary school level pupil questionnaire [Appendix 3, C.1.1, C.2.1]. For the Celtic-medium pupils, there were six such variables: three pertaining to the home context – gender, first language and family language background – and three relating to the school context: stage of commencement of Celtic-medium education, continuity in Celtic-medium primary education, and distribution of pupils across school categories. For the English-medium pupils there were five key variables: gender, first language, family language background, stage of commencement at case study school and continuity with regard to medium of instruction in primary school. Chi-square tests for independence were used to ascertain whether there was a statistically significant difference between the analogous pupil group pairs on each ‘respondent characteristic’ variable. Statistical significance was judged at the 5% significance level.

The Celtic-medium pupil groups were comparable in all aforementioned respects: that is to say there was no statistically significant difference between the Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupil groups either for pupil background variables – gender, first language(s) and family language background – or for school variables – the pupils’ stage of commencement of Celtic-medium education, patterns of continuity in terms of their primary school Celtic-medium education provider, and distribution across the school categories outlined in Appendix 4, B.1 [Test results are presented in Appendix 6, B.1 – B.6]. One additional pupil level variable pertains to the comparability of the Celtic-medium pupil samples, namely the proportion of pupils with additional support needs. Two of 28 (7%) Gaelic-medium pupils and 4 of 57 (7%) Welsh-medium pupils expressed that they had

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75 The English-medium pupil groups were not compared in terms of the distribution of pupil respondents across school categories, as the taxonomy of schools [Appendix 4, B.1] was created on the basis of variables relating primarily to Celtic-medium education providers. The English-medium streams, and the English-medium pupils within them, were incorporated into the sample as part of the Celtic-medium primary provider sampling process outlined in Section 3.3.3.

76 The comparability of the pupils’ family language background was assessed in terms of two variables: whether the pupil had a Celtic language speaker in their family, and, of the pupils who did have a Celtic language speaker in their family, the relationship of the closest Celtic language speaker(s) to the pupil [Appendix 5: B.3.1 & B.3.2].

77 The distribution of pupils by school category across the two contexts is comparable, despite the under-representation of Highland Council (which constitutes Category 3) discussed in Section 3.8.2.2. The parents of the Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupils are also comparable in terms of their distribution across School Categories 1 to 5 [Appendix B.7].
additional learning needs, which indicates that the Celtic-medium pupil samples were also comparable in this regard.

The importance of having such matched pupil first and home language backgrounds in a national-based comparison is underlined by the previous research in Chapter 2, which shows home language to be a key factor in patterns of language use (Centre for European Research & Cwmni Iaith 2008, Roberts & Thomas 2010), linguistic ability (Sharp et al. 1973b, Baker 1995, Gathercole & Thomas 2009, Stradling & MacNeil 2000, MacNeil & Galloway 2004, Müller 2005) and the nature of identification with language (Baker 1992).

The English-medium pupil groups were comparable in most, but not all, respects. There were no statistically significant differences in the patterns returned from English-medium Scotland and English-medium Wales pupils in terms of the two school variables – stage at which the pupils started at the case study school and continuity of medium of instruction in primary school – or in relation to two of the three pupil background variables, gender and first language(s). However, a statistically significant difference between the pupil groups was returned in relation to the pupils’ family language backgrounds ($\chi^2 = 8.854$, df = 1, $p = 0.003$, n = 51), with the English-medium Wales pupils being more likely to have a Celtic language speaker in their family than their English-medium Scotland counterparts. The distribution of such Celtic language speakers in terms of the pupils’ closest Celtic language speaking relative is presented by national context in Appendix 6, C.5.2, but a chi-square test to ascertain whether there was a statistically significant difference between the samples was not conducted because of the small sample size of English-medium pupils with a Celtic language speaking family member in the Scottish sample [Test results for all other variables are presented in Appendix 6, C.1-C.5.1].

One of 17 (6%) pupils in the English-medium Scotland sample, and 3 of 34 (9%) pupils in the English-medium Wales sample reported themselves to have additional learning needs, and thus the English-medium samples are broadly comparable in this respect.
3.8.1.2 Comparison between English-medium and Celtic-medium pupils

The Celtic-medium and English-medium pupils are automatically matched on school level and other community contextual variables, by virtue of the local context being constant. The English-medium pupils could thus serve as a control group for their Celtic-medium educated counterparts in these regards. Chambliss and Schutt note of a comparison between two such pupil groups:

For this design to be considered quasi-experimental … individuals must not have been able to choose whether to be in the treatment group or the control group. (Chambliss and Schutt 2003: 112)

Such a criterion is met, as the pupil groups were based on the pre-existing categorisation of pupils by medium of instruction, the decision regarding which had been made seven or more years previously.

3.8.1.3 Longitudinal comparison of pupil response between the primary and secondary school stages

The comparison between a pupil’s response at the end of primary school and after the first term of secondary school is judged by Robson to be:

the ultimate in matching…their attraction lies not only in the near-perfection of the matching – the person undergoing the two or more treatments or whatever in the experiment has the same heredity, environment, age, personality, gender etc, but also in your getting more data from fewer subjects. (Robson 2002: 130)

Such an internally valid comparison ensures that any change in the dependent variables measured by such a ‘repeated measures’ design is likely to be due to the independent variable in question – the move from primary to secondary school.

3.8.2 External validity

In relation to external validity, Campbell and Stanley note:

External validity asks the question of generalizability: To what populations, settings, treatment variables, and measurement variables can this effect be generalized? (Campbell and Stanley 1963: 175)
There are three potential threats to external validity in quasi-experimental research, namely the interactions of ‘selection’ ‘setting’ or ‘history’ with the experimental ‘treatment’ (Cook and Campbell 1979: 73-74). Such considerations pertain to the people, contexts and time periods to which research findings can be generalized, and are outlined in detail in Appendix 6, A.2. Two key means were employed to maximise the external validity of the research, outlined in 3.8.2.1 and 3.8.2.2.

3.8.2.1 Sampling for heterogeneity

Cook and Campbell argue that ‘the model of deliberate sampling for heterogeneity’ is a means of ‘increasing external validity’ (Cook & Campbell 1979: 75). Such a process involves the definition of

> target classes of persons, settings, and times and ensuring that a wide range of instances from within each class is represented.

(Cook and Campbell 1979: 75)

The sampling criteria pertaining to schools involved in the study has been outlined in Sections 3.3.3.1-3.3.3.3, and the heterogeneity of the achieved school sample on key dimensions of research interest is illustrated in Appendix 4, B.1-B.5. In this study, the heterogeneous sampling model was employed primarily at the school, rather than at the pupil level. An exception to this pertained to the incorporation of sampling relating to pupils’ home language background within the school-level questionnaire (as outlined in Section 3.3.7.1). Heterogeneity of language background was especially marked in relation to the Celtic-medium pupil groups, and is a consequence of there being no criteria for entry into Celtic-medium education in Scotland or Wales. Although the pupils were divided into respondent groups by medium of instruction and national context, the pupils themselves were not sampled for heterogeneity beyond this – indeed, no specific criteria were imposed in the recruitment of the final year primary pupil sample (Section 3.3.7.1). Pupil level heterogeneity is outlined in Section 3.8.1.1 but was not utilized to form pupil groups for data analysis.

In relation to generalizing from heterogeneous samples, Cook and Campbell warn that:
one cannot – technically speaking – generalize from the achieved samples to any formally meaningful populations. All one has are purposive quotas of persons with specified attributes. These quotas permit one to conclude that an effect has or has not been obtained across the particular variety of persons, settings and times that were under study.

(Cook and Campbell 1979: 76)

However, Gomm et al. argue that it is possible to generalize from case study research, if one defines generalizability as:

what Stake refers to as ‘naturalistic generalization’ or what Lincoln and Guba call ‘transferability.’ What these ideas imply is that readers of case study reports must themselves determine whether the findings are applicable to other cases than those which the researcher studied.

(Gomm et al. 2000: 100)

Such a definition provides an alternative perspective to the scientific definition of generalizability characterized by LeCompte and Goetz as ‘from the subjects sampled to some wider population’ where ‘such generalization is warranted only where subjects have been sampled randomly from the entire population to which the findings are applied’ (LeCompte and Goetz 1982: 34).

3.8.2.2 Comparability and translatability

Such concepts of ‘naturalistic generalization’ or of ‘transferability’ are rather akin to the concepts of ‘comparability’ and ‘translatability’ outlined by LeCompte and Goetz:

Comparability requires that the ethnographer delineate the characteristics of the group studied or constructs generated so clearly that they can serve as a basis for comparison with other like and unlike groups. … Translatability assumes that research methods, analytic categories, and characteristics of phenomena and groups are identified so explicitly that comparisons can be conducted confidently.

(LeCompte and Goetz 1982: 34)

In relation to comparability, the characteristics of the schools in the present study are outlined in Appendix 4, B.1 – B.5. The characteristics of the pupil samples are provided in the graphs in Appendix 6, B.1-B.7 for the Celtic-medium pupils and in Appendix 6, C.1- C.5.3 for the English-medium respondents, and these pupil-level variables have been analysed statistically for comparability (Section 3.8.1.1). Such a
detailed representation of ‘the profile of the achieved sample … highlighting any potential gaps or overemphasis in the data set, and also in the diversity of participants’ characteristics and circumstances’ (Ritchie, Spencer and O’Connor 2003: 221), is provided to fulfil the ‘comparability’ criteria outlined by LeCompte and Goetz (1982). It is intended that other researchers may thus compare their results with those of the present study.

The achievement of the ‘translatability’ criterion – namely that the research methods, sample, and analysis and presentation of findings are sufficiently clear and detailed to facilitate comparisons with other research studies – can be assessed on the strength of the outline of the methods employed in the research (Section 3.2 and 3.4), the profile of the achieved school and pupil sample (Appendix 4, B.2, B.3 & Section 3.8 respectively), and the analytic approach (Section 3.6) previously outlined, as well as on the basis of the presentation of findings which follow (Chapters 4 & 5).

### 3.8.3 Concluding comments

This chapter has outlined the methodological approaches, sampling and methods of data collection and analysis employed in the present research. The particular strength of the design is its use of multiple methods, adding to validity by allowing multiple aspects of the pupils’ lives to be brought together. However, if ‘validation’ is taken to be ‘the social construction of a discourse through which the results of a study come to be viewed as sufficiently trustworthy for other investigators to rely upon in their own work’ (Mishler 1990: 429), then the assessment of the validity of the research findings – on choice of medium of instruction of education in Chapter 4, and on aspects of pupil language relevant to language planning in Chapter 5 – lies in the hands of the reader.
Chapter Four  
Choice of medium of instruction of schooling – primary and secondary school perspectives

This chapter presents data regarding the choice of medium of instruction of schooling at the primary and secondary school stages (Topics 1 and 2 respectively) (Research Question 1, Appendix 1. A.1). Here and in Chapter 5, the data is presented in terms of the analytical framework outlined in Section 3.6, and, for the interview data, so far as possible in the respondents’ own words. These findings are discussed in relation to the literature and policy reviewed in Chapter 2, and also in relation to recent policy (that has been put in place since the fieldwork was carried out), in Chapter 6.\(^78\)

Topic 1 presents data from parental interviews, whilst Topic 2 focuses on data provided by Celtic-medium pupils at the end of primary school, the key point for decisions about the medium of instruction of secondary schooling. Within each topic, data is presented by respondent sub-group – that is to say, for example, that the data from Celtic-medium pupils in Scotland are presented before the analogous data from Celtic-medium pupils in Wales (Appendix 5.A.1). Within this, data is presented by themes and sub-themes, as outlined in Chapter 3, Section 3.6.2.2.2.

Throughout Chapters 4 and 5, for ease of reading, the chapter number is not incorporated into the numbering system of sections. Rather, the Presentation of Findings is numbered in accordance with the 5 topics into which it is organized.

**Topic 1  Parental reasons for choice of Celtic-medium education**

This topic presents the rationale given by parents for the choice of Celtic-medium education at the primary school stage in response to the question ‘why did you choose Gaelic/Welsh-medium education for your child?’ (Appendix 3, C.4.1, Q3).\(^79\)

\(^78\) In the presentation of the data in this chapter, the word ‘motivation’ or ‘motivations’ is used to refer to pupil and parental reasons for decisions regarding the linguistic medium of educational instruction, as expressed in response to open-ended questions in the interview (Appendix 3, C.1.2. Q4, Q10; C.4.1 Q3). The word is not here associated with any specialised meaning in terms of the socio-linguistic academic literature, as employed by Gardner (1985) or Dörnyei (2009).

\(^79\) The 12 parents of Welsh-medium pupils from Gwynedd who participated in the research did not have a choice regarding the medium of educational instruction for their child, as Welsh-medium or bilingual education is county policy. The question about choice of medium of instruction of schooling was thus phrased ‘I understand that in Gwynedd all pupils have to do Welsh medium education ...
1.1 Reasons for choice of Celtic-medium primary education

1.1.1 Parents of Gaelic-medium pupils

1.1.1.1 Family heritage

Family Linguistic heritage

Many parents cite their family’s linguistic heritage as the main reason for the choice of Gaelic-medium education for their child. In some cases, parents wish to continue an existing pattern of Gaelic speaking in their family, whilst other respondents form part of a ‘lost generation’ within a Gaelic-speaking family, who wish to reclaim the family tradition of Gaelic speaking. The respondents who wish to continue Gaelic in their family either give their family’s linguistic heritage as the key reason for their choice of Gaelic-medium education:

because the Gaelic language is important to us as a family  
[Pu.027.Par.PS03.GM]

or they combine it with an ancillary rationale concerning the benefits of bilingualism:

firstly, I think most importantly that I wanted them to hold onto their own Gaelic language, secondly that I’m totally convinced they’re going to benefit from being bilingual ... I would have had no other thoughts about anything else other than putting them into Gaelic medium ... because we both, both parents are native Gaelic speakers.  
[Pu.025.Par.PS03.GM]

With regard to the respondents who form part of a ‘lost generation’ of Gaelic speakers, one of the parents explicitly identifies herself as such:

we chose Gaelic-medium ... because my parents both spoke Gaelic and we had missed it, sort of lost it in my generation ... so we were very keen to get it back.  
[Pu.010.Par.PS04]

Other ‘lost generation’ parents allude to their family heritage of Gaelic, their or their partner’s regret that they do not speak Gaelic, and their wish that their child do so. The wish to reclaim a lost family Gaelic-language heritage can also relate to the parents’ grandparental generation:
my family, my dad’s gran she was from Stornoway, and my gran spoke Gaelic as well and it’s always something that I would like to have learnt and I decided to send them to that because I thought it would be quite interesting for them to learn it.

[Pu.002.Par.PS01.GM]

*Family cultural/geographical heritage*

One parent cites their family’s geographical heritage, and implicitly that area’s association with Gaelic, as the primary reason for her choice of Gaelic-medium education: ‘Because my mother’s from the Highlands’ [Pu.012.Par.PS04.GM]. The notion that there can exist a Gaelic family cultural heritage which derives from one’s geographic roots is substantiated by another respondent who distinguishes her geo-cultural and linguistic heritage when explaining the choice of Gaelic-medium education for her child: ‘Because my family are from the Islands and it was my first language’ [Pu.013.Par.PS04.GM].

1.1.1.2 Bilingualism

Several parents state a wish that their child be bilingual as the main reason motivating their choice of Gaelic-medium education. In some cases, it is important to the parents that their child be bilingual in *Gaelic* and in English:

when we went on holiday in [Hebridean island] and everything, we used to see the kids speaking Gaelic and then we always said to ourselves ‘isn’t that just amazing for a child, you know, to be able to converse in Gaelic then switch to English’ ... and with [husband’s name] being a fluent Gaelic speaker anyway he was really keen to give them that chance.

[Pu.017.Par.PS04.GM]

To another parent (in a Gaelic-speaking area), bilingualism in Gaelic and English is prioritised, but is also viewed as a springboard to their child learning other languages:

I think it’s very important for them to have the indigenous language plus other languages and I think it’s a good way of getting into other languages.

[Pu.003.Par.PS02.GM]

And to other parents, it is the bilingualism itself that is paramount, rather than the fact that it is *Gaelic-English* bilingualism. One parent notes:
if French education or even Chinese or Arabic education had been available to the state system of Scotland or in the UK I would have gone for that ... but anyway, this is what’s available through the state system.

1.1.1.3 Bilingual Education

Several parents believe that bilingual education is a good quality education because of the pedagogical context. Positive aspects of such a learning environment cited by parents included small class sizes, the quality of teaching and class or school ethos. Parents often highlighted the perceived benefits of the pedagogical context in explaining why Gaelic-medium education was chosen for their particular child.

One parent cited the small class sizes in the Gaelic-medium stream of her local school, and the belief in a resultant pedagogical ‘focus’, as the main reason for the choice of Gaelic-medium education for her child:

the class sizes would be no more than 15 pupils to one teacher which we liked the idea of because it was in keeping you know she’s a country-born child … and wasn’t used to large numbers of children, so we thought the focus would have been better for her ... but it was within a larger school so therefore she had the experience of being in a small group within a larger group.

Other parents invoke a belief that the pedagogical context of Gaelic-medium education fosters confident individuals, in conjunction with the advantages of bilingualism (Section 1.1.1.2), as the main rationale for their choice of Gaelic-medium education for their children. One parent notes:

originally we were told it was smaller class sizes ... and it would help them with their ability to speak out, and also if they wanted to learn other languages when they are older, it keeps that part of the brain active apparently, that was the main choices [laughs] … plus, my husband is from [a town in a Gaelic-speaking area].

Interestingly, this parent (like several others) made reference to a family heritage rationale as a subsidiary rationale. This is informative of what are perceived to be justifiable reasons for choosing Gaelic-medium education. In such cases it is as if parents perceive that instrumental reasons – for example small class sizes, bilingualism and the easier acquisition of a third language – are insufficient.
1.1.1.4 Employment opportunities

Only one parent of the Gaelic-medium pupils mentioned Gaelic-related job opportunities when outlining the reasons for their choice of Gaelic-medium primary education for their child. This employment-related rationale was not the sole reason, however, but was accompanied by rationales relating to cultural heritage and the benefits of bilingualism. The parent explains:

main reasons [for the choice of Gaelic-medium education] were to give [pupil name] a, an extra string to her bow basically, you know when she, maybe give her an extra opportunity maybe when she leaves school or wants to come back to [local area], job-wise as well. And also to give her a better understanding of Gaelic culture, the background of, you know ... even reading poetry or trying to understand music and where things have come from. So that was the two main reasons. But also as well, you know, hearing from different people that, you know, how an extra language helps them to go on to, you know, learn further languages. It makes it easier in that respect as well.  

[Pu.024.PS06.GM]

1.1.1.5 Parents who did not ‘choose’ Gaelic-medium education

In three cases, the parent says that it had not been their explicit intention that their child go to Gaelic-medium education, but rather that their child chose it after being exposed to it by circumstance. In one instance, the child did not settle at her English-medium nursery, and thus the parents tried her in two other nurseries, one of which was a Cròileagan. The atmosphere of the Gaelic-medium pre-school suited Pupil 007, as her mother explains:

there were two grannies at that point in the Cròileagan with the playleader. And that’s where she settled and that’s why we went into Gaelic medium. And that’s the true story [laughs]. I’m afraid there was no, there was no sort of ‘oh we have to put her into Gaelic or anything like that.’  

[Pu.007.Par.PS02.GM]

In the second instance, the parent answered ‘I didn’t [laughs], [child name] did!’ in response to the question as to why she chose Gaelic-medium education for her child. The parent explains that her daughter and four of her friends:

signed up to do the afternoon [the Gaelic-medium nursery provision] and she loved it. And [child name] said she wanted to continue with it.  

[Pu.009.Par.PS04.GM]
In the third instance the parent reports:

he went to the normal [English-medium] pre-school and the normal pre-school mix with the Gaelic pre-school. And he picked up bits and pieces from the Gaelic children in the pre-school and it was him that came home and said he wanted to do it.

[Pu.086.PS05.Par.GM]

In these instances, the key theme is that the pedagogical context of Gaelic-medium education, whether this be related to the methods of teaching and learning or the ethos of the learning environment, appealed to the children. Thus the underpinning rationale, even when the child chose, is akin to that of Section 1.1.1.3, namely the appeal of the pedagogical context of Gaelic-medium education.

1.1.2 Parents of Welsh-medium pupils
1.1.2.1 Family heritage

Family linguistic heritage

As with the Gaelic parents, many parents of Welsh-medium pupils cite their family’s linguistic heritage as the main reason for the choice of Celtic-medium education for their child. Some parents wish to continue an existing pattern of Welsh speaking in their family and others wish to reclaim such a tradition. Some respondents who wish to continue Welsh in their family give their family’s linguistic heritage as the sole reason for their choice of Welsh-medium education. In some instances both parents have a Welsh linguistic heritage:

because both our families are Welsh. My family and my husband ... we have spoken Welsh to her since she was a baby.

[Pu.060.Par.PS09.WM]

while in other instances, this is true only of one parent:

because all of my family are Welsh speaking. It’s my parents’ and grandparents’ first language basically.

[Pu.053.Par.PS08.WM]

Other respondents, in contrast, combine the family linguistic heritage with a secondary rationale concerning the benefits of bilingualism and of bilingual education. One parent notes of her child’s enrolment in Welsh-medium education:
I think it is important because we are Welsh and my family have always been Welsh speaking. And I think it helps his education to have two languages. I think even more languages would be better but the school we go to is just the Welsh and the English.

Significantly, the respondent’s first cited reason for choosing Welsh-medium education for her child, namely the perceived association of national identity and language (the choice of a distinctly Welsh education being an instance of this), is not mentioned by any of the parents of the Gaelic-medium pupils.

Some respondents formed part of a ‘lost generation’ of Welsh speakers, one parent explaining the rationale for the choice of Welsh-medium education for her children as sustaining Welsh in her family. She explains:

RES Because … I felt, I, – my, my mum is Welsh speaking ... we spoke Welsh when we were very little … but my dad is Irish … so we lost out from that because we couldn’t speak the Welsh to him, cause he couldn’t understand, so we almost let it drop.

INT Oh right, so you all started to speak English?
RES We did … and I felt we missed out on the Welsh language, I would loved to have learnt it, and I’m, I have learnt more now.

Interestingly, the other parent who could be classified as a ‘lost generation’ parent in the Welsh-medium sample explains the choice of Welsh-medium education for her children in terms of learning the language of the country one lives in, rather than specifically referring to a wish to regain the Welsh language in her family:

Well before my son, I have got an older son who is 15 now, and he, I also put him in the Welsh, because, how can I put this, my parents are both Welsh but never spoke Welsh in the house together, to each other, and I always felt as if I, you know, I’d missed out ... so I felt as if, if I’d gone to live in France I would have put them in a French school, or Spain a Spanish school and so on.

80 If the rationale for choosing Celtic-medium education for the study child was that he/she was following the route chosen for an older sibling, the parent was asked for the rationale for the choice of Celtic-medium education for that sibling, as here.
**Family cultural/geographical heritage**

One parent cites her geographical heritage, along with the perceived benefits of bilingualism, as reasons for her choice of Welsh-medium education:

because I was originally from Wales, but my oldest three were brought up in England, and when we came back to Wales I decided the youngest two were young enough and I thought it would be good for them to be bilingual.  

[Pu.049.PS07.WM]

1.1.2.2 Bilingualism

Several parents state a wish that their child be bilingual as the main reason motivating their choice of Welsh-medium education. In some cases, it is important to the parents that their child be bilingual in Welsh and in English:

Just for him to speak Welsh really, and it’s nice that they keep the language alive.  

[Pu.051.Par.PS07.WMEM]

I think it’s important that she speaks her native tongue.  

[Pu.056.Par.PS08.WM]

To other parents, bilingualism in Welsh and English is a means by which their child may more easily acquire subsequent languages. One parent notes:

RES I love languages myself anyway ... and I just thought [Welsh-medium education] was an opportunity – you’re sort of opening up more opportunities for them I would have thought.  

INT In what sense?  
RES In the sense that … well I just think learning, I’m into the idea that learning one language helps learn others and things … so I mean sort of opportunities outside of Wales. But I think within Wales as well, it would almost be crazy not to, because, you know, should they end up doing a job where, you know, it would be preferable to have both languages, then they’ve not had the effort of learning it … I know that it’s compulsory here anyway to learn Welsh, and how difficult from my own experience that that can be, whereas, you know, children at that age are like sponges, aren’t they … I like the idea of them absorbing it and not noticing it … by immersion.  

[Pu.057.Par.PS08.WM]

This parent’s perception that the acquisition of Welsh is most easily achieved through immersion teaching when the children are young is shared by another respondent [Pu.063.Par.PS09.WM], and constitutes an additional rationale for the choice of Welsh-medium primary education for their children.
1.1.2.3 Bilingual Education

Several parents perceive bilingual education to be a good quality education or even a ‘better education’ [Pu.029.Par.PS07.WM], mostly because of the particular learning and teaching context in the Welsh-medium stream or school in their area. One parent attributes to the Welsh-medium stream better behaviour, faster progression, and more manageable class numbers:

I felt that the children were doing more at a younger age, they were sat down and listening, whereas in the English they were tending to… there was too many children and they were all running around, and you know, seemed a lot wilder than the Welsh.

[Pu.052.Par.PS08.WM]

This sentiment was echoed by another parent:

a contributing factor to it [the choice of Welsh-medium education] was the size of the classes … they are not, they’re not oversized. Last term I think there was only something like 15, and like the amount of time the teacher can spend with that child, with individual children … I mean it’s second to none.

[Pu.056.Par.PS08.WM]

Other parents based their decision for Welsh-medium education on other people’s positive experience of it at a particular school, and the perception that the teacher was good. One parent notes:

I went along big time with the recommendation from one of the first mothers to put their child into the Welsh medium, and the other thing was mainly because of the teacher.

[Pu.054.Par.PS08.WM]

Another parent explains:

[teacher name] the, one of the principal teachers, when they first opened they just had two teachers, she has a very good reputation … and so it was chiefly based on that.

[Pu.058.Par.PS08.WM]

In one instance, the parent chose Welsh-medium education for her child because this provided them access to a ‘better’ school in terms of her daughter’s peer group:

the choice of schools which I had was either a Welsh school … or the other school which was a bit rough where all the sort of [area name] people, the rough people used to go to … and that’s why I chose the Welsh school

[Pu.033.Par.PS07.WM]
1.1.2.4 Employment opportunities

A key difference between the responses of the Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium parents is in the frequency with which job-related reasons are cited as a key motivation for choosing Celtic language medium education for a child at the primary school level. Whilst only one parent of the Gaelic-medium pupils in the sample of 23 mentioned Gaelic-related job opportunities, seven parents of Welsh-medium pupils in the sample of 40 could be said to have cited enhanced employment opportunities for bilinguals as a main motivating factor. Some parents express a general opinion that being bilingual increases one’s job prospects in Wales:

Because of the area [in which] we live, I said to her [my daughter], I said, ‘when you finish high school, I said you go for job interviews, and if you go with a local authority or you go to a solicitor or anything like that, based in Wales, you are what you call bilingual … and if you went for a job interview over somebody who has only got English, I said you get the job every time, like, because that’s what people want.’

[Pu.056.Par.PS08.WM]

Being in Wales I felt it [Welsh] was important for her [my daughter], because [for] a lot of the jobs around here Welsh speaking is a must.

[Pu.052.Par.PS08.WM]

Another parent cited specific socio-political events which occurred at the time when the parents were making the decision regarding the medium of education for their children as a factor which influenced her choice of Welsh-medium education:

I … thought that with the, I think Wales is becoming more Welsh to be honest with you because of the Welsh Assembly and what not, you know, so a lot of the jobs that, that are available now prefer you to be able to speak Welsh. So I thought it would be beneficial for her then.

[Pu.065.Par.PS09.WM]

Some parents have had direct experience that not being bilingual negatively affects employment prospects:

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Respondent 056 and Respondent 052 are most likely referring to Wales when they mention ‘area’ and ‘around here’ respectively. The parents were representing their context in a telephone interview between Wales and Scotland, and thus such references are likely to be national conceptions of place.
I used to work for the fire brigade and they started asking for people who could speak Welsh and that’s what really triggered me [to choose Welsh-medium education for my children], you know.

I went to college in Bangor in north Wales which is a very Welsh area, well the Welsh language is very important. And I found obviously after I qualified that getting a job, a position within the field that I wanted without having Welsh as a first or even second language was quite a drawback. So … I saw it [Welsh-medium education] as a, as a qualification for all the children … if they wanted to remain in Wales and progress … it would be for them as opposed to against.

1.1.2.5 Parents who did not ‘choose’ Welsh-medium education

In the case of parents of Welsh-medium pupils who had a choice between Welsh-medium and English-medium education within their local authority area, only one parent says that it had not been their explicit intention that their child go to Welsh-medium education. The parent reflects:

to be perfectly honest I didn’t choose Welsh school on purpose … I had her [my daughter] down in two other schools which are English-speaking schools. But the waiting list was, she was three in the December and they could, the two other schools couldn’t take her until the following September … and [school name] could take her in the January. And I just thought it’s best for her to start school then rather than by the time she was maybe four … it wasn’t the fact that it was a Welsh school to be honest.

The 12 parents of Welsh-medium pupils from Gwynedd who participated in the research did not have a choice regarding the medium of school instruction for their child, as Welsh-medium education is county policy. Such a policy resulted in a distinctive aspect of the Gwynedd parents’ responses, namely the allusion to a regional or local authority heritage of Welsh speaking and of Welsh-medium education. This is evidenced in the generic ‘we’ in ‘we speak Welsh from when they are born really’ in the first quotation and in the common regional goal of ‘wanting to preserve the Welsh language’ in the second quotation. The parents explain:

we speak Welsh … from when they are born really and they’re taught through Welsh in their local schools.
How do you feel about your child going through Welsh medium education?

I don’t suppose it bothers me because I’ve been brought up through Welsh-medium education … it’s the given norm because of the area, because of wanting to preserve the Welsh language.

The second respondent’s perception of ‘the norm’ is reflected through another parent’s perception that Welsh-medium education is ‘natural’:

It’s completely natural … it would be odd to have it [education] through the medium of English really.

Perhaps not surprisingly, such perceptions are from Welsh-speaking parents. Other parents do not always exhibit such a relaxed attitude to the county’s Welsh-medium primary provision. Some parents are uncomfortable about the intensity of the Welsh focus:

I would, personally I would like it if there was a little bit more English … I think it would be better if it was bilingual … rather than totally medium of Welsh.

Another parent, who moved to the area, and whose child entered the council’s schools as a ‘late starter’ in Year 2, expressed the reservations that she and her partner had about Welsh-medium education at the outset:

when we decided to move here as adults, our big concern was that we hoped that we weren’t injuring her education by putting her into a Welsh-medium school.

Other parents are happy with Welsh-medium education at the primary school level, but express concerns about it at the secondary school level. One notes:

I have to confess that I do [worry]; at a young age it [Welsh-medium education] is fine, but when they reach secondary level it would concern me, it does concern me.

‘Late starters’ are pupils who have moved into Gwynedd, and who join Welsh-medium education after Reception/Year 1. Such pupils often attend a Welsh language centre where they receive immersion Welsh provision for a term before joining mainstream Welsh-medium provision. Such a phenomenon provides another interesting point of variation, and thus comparison, which results from the council’s provision of Welsh-medium primary and secondary education as standard.
The Gwynedd parents’ perceptions of the county’s language of education policy thus displayed interesting heterogeneity. Themes that were common to the Gwynedd parents and parents of Celtic-medium pupils in other areas were a pride in their child’s bilingualism, and the perception that being bilingual would enhance job opportunities, each mentioned by one parent. However, as these factors did not result in a decision for Welsh-medium education in Gwynedd, such reasons can only be viewed as perceived benefits of Welsh-medium education, rather than as factors motivating the choice of medium of instruction of pupils’ primary schooling.

**Topic 2 Reasons for Celtic-medium pupils’ school and language pathways at the secondary school stage**

This topic presents pupils’ rationales for the choice of their secondary school destination and for decisions regarding the medium of instruction of education at the early secondary school stage. The foregrounding of pupil views does not assume that pupils are the sole, or key stakeholders in decisions regarding language in their secondary school education, however. Rather, the topic aims to represent the linguistic decision-making process through the eyes of the pupil. Topic 2 thus incorporates a consideration of pupil perceptions of whether there were constraints on their linguistic options (Sections 2.1.1 and 2.2.1) and of whether they received advice regarding their linguistic choices (Sections 2.1.2 and 2.2.2) in addition to presenting pupils’ reasons for decisions relating to language in their secondary schooling when the pupils did perceive themselves to be the primary stakeholder in the decision-making process (Sections 2.1.3 and 2.2.3). The topic draws on pupils’ primary school level interviews, as explanations of the reasons for choice collected shortly after decisions are made are more valid than those expressed in the secondary school interview, nine months after the decision-making process.

**2.1 Gaelic-medium pupils**

**2.1.1 Restrictions on choice of medium of instruction of secondary school subjects**

Gaelic-medium pupils cited two sources of restrictions on their choices regarding the medium of instruction of secondary school subjects: the school and their parents.
2.1.1.1 School

Despite the range of Gaelic-medium subject provision available at the early secondary school stage in the six Scottish secondary schools involved in the research (Appendix 4, B.3), Gaelic-medium primary educated pupils had only one linguistic option, namely whether or not to enter the Gaelic-medium stream. Further choices were restricted either by timetabling considerations, or by the secondary school’s wish to keep the Gaelic-medium pupils as a group. As one teacher commented of Gaelic-medium pupils’ early secondary schooling:

They are pretty much together … I think it’s to keep them, to keep their sort of sense of identity. And I think it’s quite important for them.

[Te.024.SS02.GM]

Some pupils agreed with this sentiment. However, others found such a linguistic grouping to be socially restrictive. One pupil explains:

we have the same people in our class for every single lesson … And that kind of bothers me cause in the English unit they have different people for every class … so they’d sit beside one of their friends in one class and sit beside another friend in another class … in our unit it’s just like the same people for every single class.

[Pu.006.PS02.GM]

2.1.1.2 Parents

Several pupils report that the decision for the continuation of Gaelic-medium education at the secondary school level was made by their parents. Some pupils do not give a rationale for their parents’ decision. One pupil notes of the choice of secondary school:

My mum wanted me to and I kind of wanted to keep on the Gaelic … it’s just like well, my parents were like they knew it was going to happen, so they were just like right you are going to that school and I was just like ‘fine,’ ‘ok.’

[Pu.015.PS04.GM]

Other pupils do provide a rationale for their parents’ decision for Gaelic-medium education. Two main reasons were pedagogical benefits and family heritage.

(1) Pedagogical benefits

Some parents are reported to make a choice for Gaelic-medium secondary education as they perceive that bilingual education will increase pupil attainment in other subjects. One pupil reports:
INT  Did anybody give you any advice about keeping going with Gaelic at secondary school?

RES  My mum said I had to (laughs) … and eh also she said Gaelic would help me through my O level and Standard Grades cause it’ll give me more understanding for French because it’s good – which I don’t think I’m taking but it’s good – and eh in music, I’m not sure, don’t ask me how, I don’t know!

[Pu.026.PS03.GM]

Other parents are reported to value the school context in which Gaelic-medium education is provided. One pupil notes:

My mum and my dad kinda have made me come in to the Gaelic [secondary] school … and they say it’s excellent.

[Pu.001.PS01.GM]

The parent’s account accords with that of the pupil. The parent notes in her interview that the ‘main reason’ for the decision to continue with Gaelic-medium education at secondary school was that Secondary School 1, to which the Gaelic-medium primary pupils get access if they continue with their Gaelic at secondary school, ‘is a far better school than the feeder school [laughs]’[Pu.001.Par.PS01.GM].

(2) Family heritage

Pupils also cited family heritage reasons when representing their parents’ decision for Gaelic-medium secondary education. One pupil notes a parental wish to continue an existing pattern of Gaelic speaking in the family:

INT  Why did you choose to go to [Secondary School 4] for secondary school?

RES  My mum chose because most of my family, well not most, but my mum’s family are from Harris and they all speak Gaelic.

[Pu.013.PS04.GM]

In other instances, a parent who forms part of a ‘lost generation’ of Gaelic speakers is reported to wish to reclaim the tradition of Gaelic speaking in their family. One pupil explains:

my dad’s family all knows Gaelic except from like my dad and his brothers and sisters because their mum and dad didn’t teach them Gaelic … we’re the only people from them that know Gaelic in our family now … so my dad wanted the family to still have Gaelic in it, that’s why we go to this school … my mum and dad decided.

[Pu.018.PS04.GM]
2.1.2 Advice about choice

Family and friends were the main sources of advice cited by pupils regarding continuing with Gaelic at secondary school. Gaelic-medium pupils reported little advice from teachers.

2.1.2.1 Family and friends’ advice

(i) Family and friends’ advice for the continuation of Gaelic-medium education

The most recurrent aspect of family advice for continuing with Gaelic-medium education at the secondary school stage related to job opportunities. One pupil explained:

My mum said that I should keep going [with Gaelic-medium education] because when I’m older you can get better jobs through the Gaelic.

Another pupil noted:

RES My mum says that I should stay [in Gaelic-medium for secondary school] and my dad says he doesn’t really care
INT [laughs] Do you know why your mum thinks that you should stay?
RES Because like there’s a lot of people that she knows that wish, that like want Gaelic and stuff cause my older cousin, her sister pulled out of Gaelic and she stayed in. And she got a better job than her sister because she had Gaelic.

Interestingly, both pupils supplement such family-based advice with advice from friends regarding the continuation of their Gaelic into secondary school. Pupil 024 cites older friends’ positive experiences of Gaelic at secondary school as a reason for continuing:

Some of my friends that are in secondary school already said that the Gaelic there was really good so I thought I’d try it.

Pupil 008 alludes to friends’ negative experiences of language attrition after opting out of Gaelic-medium education as the additional reason for continuing with Gaelic at the secondary school level:

Some of my friends that took English, they pulled out of Gaelic in…well they, they regret it … because like they’ve lost it.
(ii) Family and friends’ advice against the continuation of Gaelic-medium education

One pupil cited parental concern about small social groupings as advice against the choice of Gaelic-medium secondary education:

At first my mum thought about a private school and a couple of other schools … my mum really likes [the Gaelic-medium providing secondary] school and thinks it’s good but the only reason she thought that maybe I wanted to go to another school is because em of the numbers and there wasn’t many people.

[Pu.009.PS04.GM]

However, the pupil made a decision for Gaelic-medium secondary education, saying:

I just want, I think I just want to go to this school … I want to keep learning Gaelic, it’s good to have two languages and it would kind of be a big waste of time if I stopped now … I think I’d be fine there [at Secondary School 4].

[Pu.009.PS04.GM]

2.1.2.2 Teachers’ advice

Only one pupil mentioned teacher encouragement to continue with Gaelic at secondary school, which reinforced her grandmother’s views:

My gran is always going on about carrying on Gaelic and … obviously the teacher said that it’s a good language to carry on.

[Pu.006.PS02.GM]

The paucity of teacher advice cited by the Gaelic-medium pupils is an interesting finding. An examination of teacher interviews suggests that such a lack of advice is typically due to an expectation of continuity. One teacher explains:

I think when children have gone through Gaelic-medium primary there is – perhaps it’s an expectation, or perhaps it’s a natural progression that they do, automatically, for the most part, go straight into Gaelic-medium in the secondary without any consideration of another option at all.

[Te.046.SS06.GM]

In some contexts, Gaelic-medium primary pupils have to continue with Gaelic-medium education at the secondary school stage in order to ensure the sustainability of the secondary school Gaelic provision, even pupils who might struggle there. The teacher explains:
because the numbers are so small the secondary needs the feeder, so we wouldn’t discourage them, we wouldn’t discourage them from doing it [Gaelic-medium at secondary] … we are always looking for numbers to go up to secondary to justify the fact that we’ve got it … we have had children where to be frank em they shouldn’t have been doing it [Gaelic-medium education at secondary school], I would much rather that they stopped it, for their own benefit, because they’re not getting anywhere with Gaelic or whatever.

[Te.001.PS01.GM]

2.1.3 Reasons for decisions regarding secondary school and medium of instruction of secondary schooling

All of the Gaelic-medium primary pupils in the sample chose secondary schools which provided Gàidhlig (fluent speaker) classes for Gaelic as a subject and all opted to continue with the Gaelic provision available to them at their destination secondary school.

For some pupils, the provision of Gaelic was the main reason for the choice of a particular secondary school. One pupil chose Secondary School 1 ‘because they do Gaelic there’ [Pu.002.PS01.GM]. Another pupil similarly explains:

INT Why did you choose [Secondary School 3]?
RES Because it’s closer to me and it’s my village school.
INT Oh right I see, because it’s closer to you.
RES And they speak, and they’ve got Gaelic in it. If it didn’t have I would have gone to [Secondary School 2].

[Pu.027.PS03.GM]

Gaelic-medium pupils cited three key reasons for the choice of taking the available Gaelic-medium provision at secondary school: friends, continuity of primary school experience, and employment opportunities. Language maintenance and linguistic heritage were also each cited by one pupil.

2.1.3.1 Friends

Pupil 027 explains her decision to stay in Gaelic-medium education at secondary school in terms of the continuance of her tight-knit primary school friendship group, which consisted of pupils who ‘like being together and stuff and speaking Gaelic.’ She notes:

I wanted to do Gaelic-medium because my friends were there and we enjoy doing the Gaelic because it gives us the chance to be like alone and stuff.

[Pu.027.PS03.GM]
Several other pupils cited the secondary school destination of their primary school friendship group as the key factor in their decision to continue with Gaelic-medium education at secondary. One pupil explains:

I could go to the nearest one [secondary school] but I just decided because all my friends would be at [Secondary School 4], I decided to go to [Secondary School 4].

[Pu.011.PS04.GM]

For other pupils, Gaelic-medium secondary education was an opportunity to be educated with Gaelic-speaking friends from their own primary school and from other primary schools in the community. One primary pupil explains her decision for Gaelic-medium secondary education thus:

Because some of like my friends that are in Gaelic from other schools are in it, and I just like Gaelic.

[Pu.024.PS06.GM]

2.1.3.2 Continuity of primary school linguistic and cultural experience

Gaelic-medium pupils identified two aspects of their primary school experience that they wished to continue at the secondary school stage: language and culture. Several pupils cited a wish for continuity of their primary school linguistic experience as a key factor in their decision for secondary school level Gaelic-medium education. One pupil notes:

I think it’s better going up [to secondary school] through Gaelic if you’ve been in it in primary.

[Pu.016.PS04.GM]

Another pupil viewed continuity of linguistic experience at the primary to secondary school stage within a wider span from the nursery to tertiary education stages:

I’m going to stick with that [Gaelic-medium education] because I’ve done seven years or more now in Gaelic and I would like to try to study it when I’m older as well.

[Pu.021.PS05.GM]

Other pupils frame such a wish for continuity of Gaelic-medium education in terms of a desire to retain their Gaelic:
It will be kind of bad to lose it [Gaelic] if I went in [English], if I didn’t carry on Gaelic and go [went] into the English class.  

[Pu.006.PS02.GM]

As well as this wish for linguistic continuity between the primary and secondary school stages, there was also some desire for continuity of cultural experience. One pupil notes of her Gaelic-medium providing secondary school destination:

It’s good … you get like music, and not a lot of schools do music and Gaelic … I play the piano, clàrsach and harp and I sing and I go to the Mòd.  

[Pu.017.PS04.GM]

2.1.3.3   Employment opportunities

Other pupils’ rationales for the choice of Gaelic-medium secondary education related to employment opportunities. One pupil explains that he is continuing with Gaelic-medium education:

Because it could get you more jobs when you’re older, you’re strong for a job – you could probably get on a Gaelic media or TV show cause there’s not a lot of Gaelic speakers.  

[Pu.022.PS05.GM]

Another pupil similarly explains her motivation for continuing with Gaelic-medium secondary education:

I might want to do it [Gaelic] in the future or something and teach it.  

[Pu.010.PS04.GM]

2.1.3.4   Other reasons: language maintenance and linguistic heritage

One pupil cites a Gaelic language maintenance rationale as one reason for her choice of Gaelic-medium secondary education:

It [Secondary School 4] is a good school and plus it’s good for Gaelic and stuff cause Gaelic sort of went, sort of went away sort of … and cause it [Gaelic-medium education] is good.  

[Pu.014.PS04.GM]

Interestingly, only one pupil cited a linguistic heritage rationale for the choice of secondary school Gaelic-medium education – her own, her family’s, and that of the Highlands of Scotland. She notes:

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I’ve got so many relatives and I go up to the Highlands and that and everyone speaks Gaelic there and it’s just and like my first language is Gaelic … I wanted to go [into Gaelic-medium secondary education] because it would be good.

[Pu.017.PS04.GM]

2.2 Welsh-medium pupils

A difference between the linguistic options of the Welsh-medium and Gaelic-medium primary pupils is that the Welsh-medium pupils, like all pupils in Wales (as explained in Chapter 2, Section 2.1.1.2), must continue to study Welsh as a subject in early secondary school. The range of Welsh-medium subject provision available at the early secondary school stage in the ten schools which constituted the potential destination secondary schools for the Welsh-medium pupils in the research is outlined in Appendix 4, B.3. The nature of pupils’ linguistic options within such Welsh-medium subject provision varies by school context. Pupils in Primary Schools 7 and 8 have one linguistic decision to make, namely whether or not to continue with the available Welsh-medium provision at secondary school (the alternative being English-medium secondary education), pupils in Primary School 9 have the option of a Welsh-medium secondary school or a bilingual secondary in which they receive a core bilingual provision and subsequently have the choice of medium of instruction for four subjects (history, geography, religious education and mathematics), whilst pupils in Primary School 10 do not have options regarding the medium of instruction of their secondary schooling, this being instead determined by the school. The restrictions on pupil choice, advice received and reasons for pupil decisions regarding the medium of instruction of their early secondary schooling will be presented in Sections 2.2.1, 2.2.2 and 2.2.3 respectively. However, as pupils from Primary School 10 can not make decisions regarding the medium of instruction of their education at the early secondary school stage, they are considered only in Section 2.2.1, ‘restrictions on choice.’

2.2.1 Restrictions on choice regarding medium of instruction of secondary school subjects

As in the Scottish context, the school and parents were the two key stakeholders cited by pupils in relation to restrictions on the choice of medium of instruction of their secondary school subjects. However, the nature and frequency of
comments cited by the Welsh-medium pupils displayed interesting variation both between schools and from those of their Gaelic-medium counterparts.

2.2.1.1 School

The largest restriction on pupil choice regarding the medium of instruction of secondary schooling was experienced by pupils in Primary School 10. In order to fulfil Gwynedd Council’s Language Policy, which aims ‘to ensure that all pupils in the county are in possession of balanced, age related bilingualism, to enable them to be full members of the bilingual society of which they are part’ (Whittall 2004: 7), responsibility for decisions regarding the medium of instruction of individual pupils’ early secondary schooling is delegated to Regional language co-ordinators, who facilitate the process of bridging from primary to secondary. They are responsible for collecting information regarding the [linguistic] attainment of pupils at the end of KS2 [Key Stage 2] and advising secondary schools regarding a suitable programme of study for individual pupils.

(Whittall 2004: 12)

Such a process involves the classification of pupils into the three linguistic categories (outlined in Appendix 4, B.3) and the identification of the approach to the medium of curricular instruction at the early secondary school stage that will best facilitate both the pupil’s bilingual development and ‘continuity to what happened at primary level’ in terms of the pupil’s use of ‘English and Welsh as a learning medium’ (Whittall 2004: 7). The regional language co-ordinator for Primary School 10 explains the process:

RES My job is to go round the schools collecting data which put the children in categories, most children go into the category where their Welsh and English is equal, but some [pupils] their Welsh is better than their English, some the English is better than Welsh, and then they go into three categories, and then the school then, the language head of department in [Secondary school name] and the language co-ordinator, primary co-ordinator then discusses whether the children should go in through the medium of Welsh or would be more benefit for them to have some subjects through the medium of English

INT Oh right I see, so, the decision is made based on their linguistic ability?

RES Yes, on the data collected in the schools, and the parents as well, they can have an input as well.

[Te.010.PS10.WM]
Such an account highlights the key stakeholder role of the school in the decision regarding the medium of instruction of pupils’ early secondary education in Gwynedd, parents being attributed an ancillary role. The teacher notes that such primary-secondary continuity typically involves the continuation of a Welsh-dominant language model:

> usually they do learn everything through the medium of Welsh [at secondary] if they are able … usually they all learn through the medium of Welsh [at primary] anyway, so it just occurs naturally.

[Te.010.PS10.WM]

The majority of pupils at Primary School 10 are not aware that it might be possible to have a choice regarding the medium of instruction of schooling, but rather view both their Welsh-medium education, and the continuance of this into secondary school, as natural. One pupil links the lack of linguistic choice in education to the local socio-linguistic context. He notes:

> most of the [secondary school] subjects will be taught through Welsh … it’s mostly cause the council around here is, they encourage bilingualism, but also Welsh is more used, is used more frequently [in the region].

[Pu.084.PS10.WM]

In contrast, another pupil – a late starter to the Welsh-medium education system – explains the constraints on choice solely at the linguistic level. She notes of her secondary school education:

> if you don’t learn, if you don’t know Welsh then you can do it in English but if you know Welsh then you have to do it in Welsh.

[Pu.082.PS10.WM]

Welsh-medium pupils from Primary School 9 also experienced a school-based restriction on the choice of medium of instruction of some of their early secondary school subjects. A teacher from Secondary School 9 explains:

> if they come from a category A school[^3] or a Welsh-medium primary school they would automatically go into our Welsh stream and what that means is that they will go into a form where the form teacher speaks Welsh … They will also automatically do a number of subjects in a bilingual environment, and they tend

[^3]: A school which ‘contains classes where Welsh is the main medium and if at least half the pupils are in such classes’ (NaW 2005:131).
to be the more practical subjects, so music, drama, and some aspects of D and T [Design and Technology], games and PE.

However, the pupils at Secondary School 9.1 do have a choice of Welsh or English as the language of instruction for history, geography, religious education and maths.

Pupils from Primary School 8 experienced the same school-based restriction on language choice as was presented in relation to the Scottish context in Section 2.1.1.1, namely that the Welsh-medium pupils were timetabled into one class and received all of their lessons in the same grouping in order that they may access the available Celtic-medium subject provision.

Pupils at Primary School 7 have a choice of a Welsh-medium secondary school, where all subjects except for English are taught through Welsh, or an English-medium secondary school, where all subjects are taught through English. There are no policy restrictions on pupil choice, but several Welsh-medium pupils report a school-based expectation of linguistic continuity. One pupil explains:

Well, the primary school was like proposing us to go to a Welsh school taking us up there and showing us all the different stuff.

2.2.1.2 Parents

As in the Gaelic-medium pupil sample, several Welsh-medium pupils reported that the decision for the continuation of Welsh-medium education at the secondary school level was made by their parents. Some pupils do not give a rationale for their parents’ decision:

My mother and father just said ‘no you are not going to an English school, you are going to carry on Welsh.’

Another pupil reflects:

My mum wanted me to go to a Welsh school but I didn’t exactly get any advice on going to a Welsh school… It was just ‘you are going there, end of.’

Other pupils do provide a rationale for their parents’ decision. The two reasons cited in the Scottish context – family heritage and perceived pedagogical benefits of
Gaelic-medium education – are also reported in Wales. In addition, one parent is reported to have chosen Welsh-medium secondary education in order that the pupil maintain their Welsh language competence.

(1) Family heritage

One pupil perceived that her parents wished her to continue with Welsh-medium education at the secondary school stage in order that her Welsh be strong enough to maintain the family linguistic tradition. She explains of her parents’ wish that she attend a Welsh-medium school:

they wanted me to learn more Welsh, and cause my whole entire family is Welsh and em, and they wanted me to be Welsh. [Pu.030.PS07.WM]

Another pupil reports a parental wish that her children have the same secondary school linguistic experience as she had:

My mum … when she was my sister’s age, 13, she went to [Secondary School 9.1] and she done all of it [in Welsh] so she said that it would be easier for us to do that. [Pu.069.PS09.WM]

Two pupils cited elder siblings’ secondary school destinations as the motivating factor in parental decisions regarding the medium of instruction of secondary education. Following this family tradition of secondary schooling resulted in a choice for Welsh-medium secondary education in one instance [Pu.047.PS07.WM], and for English-medium secondary education in the other [Pu.043.PS07.WM].

(2) Pedagogical benefits

One aspect of difference between the Scottish and Welsh contexts is the existence of more than one Celtic-medium secondary school within a locality. This can lead to the introduction of non-linguistic considerations such as the perceived effectiveness of a school as a deciding factor between two Welsh-medium schools. One pupil reports:
My mother wanted me to go to a Welsh school but she doesn’t want me to go to [Secondary School 7.2] because [Secondary School 7.1] is new. It’s a better school apparently so she didn’t give me a choice. I would have wanted to go to [Secondary School 7.2] because my two best friends are going there.

(3) Maintenance of Welsh language abilities

One English-home language background pupil perceives that her parent wishes her to maintain her Welsh language abilities, and that Welsh-medium secondary education is a means of so doing. She explains:

RES  My mother said ‘go to a Welsh one.’
INT  And why did your mum want you to go to a Welsh one?
RES  To carry on speaking Welsh – in case I forget it.

2.2.2 Advice about choice

As in the Scottish context, family and friends were the main sources of advice cited by Celtic-medium pupils in Wales for the choice of medium of instruction of secondary schooling. However, pupils from Primary School 7 also reported receiving advice from their teachers, a difference between the two national contexts that will be detailed in Section 2.2.2.2 below.

2.2.2.1 Family and friends’ advice

(i) Family and friends’ advice for the continuation of Welsh-medium education

The three aspects of advice reported in the Scottish context, namely parental perceptions that there exist more or enhanced job opportunities for Celtic language speakers, a wish that pupils maintain their Celtic language abilities, and older pupils’ positive experiences of Celtic-medium secondary education, were all also cited in the Welsh context. However, the nature and frequency with which such advice is given varies across the national contexts.

The key aspect of parental advice for the continuation of Welsh-medium education at the secondary school stage was the development of more advanced linguistic competence in the Celtic language. One pupil notes:

My dad said I should [continue with Welsh-medium education] because I’d be able to learn more words maybe that we don’t learn in this school.
Another pupil similarly reflects:

My mum … she always wanted me to keep on going with the Welsh cause like sometimes my brother says like ‘oh I’m fed up of Welsh’ and she says ‘oh just keep at it and you will get really good at speaking it one day.’

[Pu.058.PS08.WM]

The parental emphasis on the development of pupils’ Celtic language abilities is an aspect of difference between the Scottish and the Welsh contexts.

Another aspect of parental advice related to the perception that continuing with Welsh-medium education at the secondary school stage would enhance future job opportunities, but this was less frequently cited in the Welsh context than in the Scottish context. One pupil noted:

My father and my mum … said … if you go up to [Secondary School 7.1] you will get a really good opportunity to go up to London and study drama. But I’m not saying like you can’t do that in an English school but it would be better if I could speak both languages.

[Pu.044.PS07.WM]

Some Welsh-medium pupils mention advice from older friends and siblings regarding the continuation of Celtic-medium education into secondary school. As in the Scottish context, this advice often pertained to older pupils’ positive experiences of secondary school Celtic-medium education. For example:

My sister said it [Welsh-medium secondary]’s really good.

[Pu.048.PS07.WM]

My best friend in my class, his sister goes to [Secondary School 7.1] and she loves it. All my friends who are up there loves it, thinks it’s great.

[Pu.042.PS07.WM]

the boy next door, he’s done everything in Welsh and he says it’s much easier.

[Pu.068.PS09.WM]

In the Welsh context, unlike the Scottish context, friends’ and siblings’ advice was frequently reported to relate to a perception that Celtic-medium education provided a beneficial pedagogical context. Several pupils are reported to cite small class sizes in this regard, for example:

My friend says it’s good and stuff cause when I go to high school now it will be a small class again.

[Pu.056.PS08.WM]
A girl across the road said the classes are much smaller in Welsh than English … you get more attention than you do in bigger classes.

Some people have said that Welsh is easier to do – that maths and that is easier to do in Welsh cause there’s less in the class and you get to learn more.

Such enjoyment of Welsh-medium education is reported by older pupils even when Welsh-medium education is perceived to be challenging. One pupil has been told that Welsh-medium secondary education is an enjoyable challenge that is preferable to English-medium instruction. She reports:

My sister said, because she’s speaking Welsh in school, she said that maths is hard in Welsh but it’s better than English. So I ticked Welsh because I thought it would be easier for me. And geography she said was interesting in Welsh and then she said in history it’s better than English in Welsh so I wanted to do them [in Welsh].

(ii) Family and friends’ advice against the continuation of Welsh-medium education

Parental advice against the continuation of Welsh-medium education was typically in response to pupils’ linguistic preferences and competencies. One English-dominant pupil reports of her parent’s advice:

Dad said to not do Welsh [medium education at secondary school] because I was always speaking English all the time … I speak more English at home than I do in school. I don’t really like speaking Welsh because some of the hard words I don’t understand.

A second pupil, who perceives herself to be a balanced bilingual, explains her mother’s advice to take subjects in English in which she struggles in English, in order that she might improve. She notes:

My mother gave me advice and she said if you can do it perfectly fine in English and you think you might be able to do it in Welsh then do it in Welsh. But if you are struggling a bit with learning the words in English, like geography which I struggled with the language, and then I decided to do it in English … so I’d know I’d be able to do it.
2.2.2.2 Teachers’ advice

The Welsh-medium pupil data displayed variation by school in relation to the amount and nature of teacher advice given to pupils regarding the medium of instruction of their secondary schooling. All pupils from Primary School 8 reported that their teachers had not given advice regarding this. Pupils from Primary School 9 reported the school to give encouragement, rather than advice, in relation to the continuation of pupils’ Welsh-medium education at the secondary school stage. One pupil reflects:

The teacher said it would be nice if you did it in Welsh cause you were in a Welsh class.

[Pu.068.PS09.WM]

Pupils from Primary School 7 reported a variety of advice. One pupil framed the teacher advice as general encouragement:

The teacher gave us some advice, he said, ‘your Welsh is good, keep going.’

[Pu.042.PS07.WM]

Another reported the advice to relate to continuity of medium of instruction:

The teachers … said it’s better to do Welsh because you’ve been doing Welsh in primary so it’s better to do Welsh … it’s better to do Welsh all your life.

[Pu.043.PS07.WM]

A third repeated a teacher perception of the benefits of being bilingual:

My teacher said ‘it’s nice to know Welsh … it’s not good just knowing one language. It’s good to know more than one so carry on going with the Welsh school and you’ll know it really good’.

[Pu.034.PS07.WM]

One Welsh-medium primary pupil reported a teacher account that linked continuity of medium of instruction of schooling to language maintenance:

[Our teacher] always says that we should carry on going with Welsh cause … it’s up to us to keep the Welsh language alive … And if we don’t then it will die out. But I don’t want it to die out cause like it’s like, it’s like French dying out, it, it doesn’t seem normal [laughs].

[Pu.049.PS07.WM]
The teacher from Primary School 7 reports that pupils are expected to continue with Welsh-medium education at the secondary school stage, and notes that no pupil is discouraged from so doing. He explains:

as one of their feeder schools we assume that our children are going to [Secondary School 7.1] unless parents have any, any eh doubts, any feelings against going to a, going onto Welsh medium school … I’ve got, most of my class come from English speaking backgrounds and you know their ability to converse in Welsh fluently and confidently varies but we don’t single out, then, well, ok, he’s struggling with the Welsh language maybe you should think [about English-medium education], no none of that happens.

Such an approach is similar to that outlined by Te.001.PS01.GM in the Scottish context in Section 2.1.2.

2.2.3 Reasons for the choice of Welsh-medium education

The reasons given by the Welsh-medium pupils for their choice of Celtic-medium secondary education varied from those of their Gaelic-medium counterparts. Two of the three key reasons reported by Gaelic-medium pupils, namely friends’ secondary school choices and a wish for continuity of the primary school linguistic experience, were also cited in the Welsh context. However, there was a difference in the third key reason, this being linguistic heritage in the Welsh context rather than the employment opportunities cited by Celtic-medium pupils in the Scottish context.

2.2.3.1 Continuity of primary school linguistic experience

Like their Gaelic-medium counterparts, several Welsh-medium pupils wanted continuity of their primary school linguistic experience. One pupil expressed this in relation to his enjoyment of his primary school experience and his confidence in his linguistic abilities:

INT At the secondary school they have got an English-medium group and a Welsh-medium group, why did you choose to keep going in the Welsh-medium group?
RES Because I enjoy it in the Welsh-medium group and I know the language easily – I’d like to carry on in Welsh.
Other Welsh-medium pupils wished for continuity of medium of instruction in order to build on their primary school linguistic experience. One pupil perceives that ‘being in a Welsh school in primary would just be a waste of time’ [Pu.042. PS07. WM] if she did not continue with it at the secondary school stage. Another pupil frames her wish to consolidate and develop her Welsh language abilities in terms of a fear of losing the language:

I want to like speak Welsh when I’m older and like so if I go to a Welsh secondary school I’ll be able to like learn more stuff about it. And if I didn’t I may forget the language and not be able to speak Welsh so …

[Pu.040.PS07.WM]

Two key aspects of difference exist between the Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupil data regarding linguistic rationales for the continuity of Celtic-medium education. The first is the Welsh-medium pupils’ perceptions that switching from Welsh-medium to English-medium education would be difficult. As one pupil explains about her choice of Welsh-medium secondary education:

I know most of the Welsh words and so if I got to the English unit I would probably be struggling a bit and like I’d be behind so I thought if I go to the Welsh I’ll be ok there.

[Pu.053.PS08.WM]

Such a view links to the second aspect of difference between the Welsh-medium and Gaelic-medium pupils’ linguistic rationales, namely that some Welsh-medium pupils perceive learning through the Celtic language to be easier than learning through English – a view not present in the Gaelic-medium pupil data. Such linguistic dominance is often believed to be the result of their Celtic-medium primary education. As one pupil, who did not speak Welsh before starting pre-school, reports:

Cause I have been to a primary school mostly all my life I’ve em understood it [Welsh] more than English and when someone talks in Welsh to me I understand it more clearly than English.

[Pu.034.PS07.WM]

Another English-first language pupil succinctly states the rationale for her choice for Welsh-medium secondary education:

I know more in Welsh than English so it’s better to go to the Welsh.

[Pu.056.PS08.WM]
The wish for continuity of primary school experience was strongly voiced by pupils at bilingual Primary School 9 who had a choice between continuing on to a bilingual school (Secondary Schools 9.1 and 9.2) or transferring to a Welsh-medium school (Secondary School 9.3) [Appendix 4, B.3]. All pupils continued to a bilingual secondary school. The pupils’ wish for continuity of the primary school language model is evidenced in relation to curricular subjects thus:

All through primary I’ve learnt those subjects [maths, history, geography] in Welsh so I just think there’s no point in me doing them in English while learning them in Welsh in primary school.

[Pu.064.PS09.WM]

Pupils’ wish for continuity of primary school linguistic experience also extended to school language use policies. One pupil explains of her wish to continue to bilingual secondary school 9.2 rather than Welsh-medium secondary school 9.3:

I didn’t want to go to [Secondary School 9.3] because it’s fully Welsh and you have to speak Welsh on the yard and everything and I don’t want to do that much Welsh.

[Pu.069.PS09.WM]

The majority of pupils from Primary School 9 believed that Welsh-medium secondary education would be too Welsh-intensive for them, and often perceived that switching to Welsh-medium secondary education would be difficult. One pupil explains:

It sounds kind of hard speaking Welsh all the time because I’m used to speaking both English and Welsh and I find it easier to speak both languages rather than just Welsh.

[Pu.060.PS09.WM]

Other pupils saw their family’s linguistic competencies to be the limiting factor on their entry to a Welsh-medium secondary school, one perceiving that without home-based Welsh-language support for their secondary school learning she would get ‘stuck’ [Pu.065.PS09.WM].

2.2.3.2 Friends

As with the Gaelic-medium pupils, several Welsh-medium pupils cited the wish to stay with their primary school friendship group as a key reason for the
decision to continue with Celtic-medium education at the secondary school stage. For some pupils, the friendship group rationale was the sole reason in the choice:

RES I chose [Secondary School 7.1] cause all my friends were going there.
INT Oh right I see – and why did you choose Welsh-medium rather than English-medium? Did you always know that you wanted to go to a Welsh-medium secondary?
RES Eh, no [laughs] cause I just went with all my friends. [Pu.031.PS07.WM]

Other pupils cited both friends’ and siblings’ secondary school destinations in relation to their choice of Welsh-medium secondary education:

INT And why did you pick [Secondary School 9.1]?
RES Because my sister and all my friends are going there. [Pu.066.PS09.WM]

However, more often, rationales relating to friends were accompanied by language-based rationales. One pupil notes:

INT Did you always know you wanted to go into the Welsh-medium?
RES Yeah, really, cause that’s where all my friends are going to and I prefer Welsh, learning in Welsh than English. [Pu.058.PS08.WM]

2.2.3.3 Linguistic heritage

Welsh-medium pupils cited three versions of linguistic heritage in relation to the choice of Welsh-medium secondary education – personal, family and national.

One pupil states that she chose Welsh-medium secondary education as she views it as a core part of her personal linguistic heritage and identity: ‘I speak fluently and that’s just my language really [Pu.052.PS08.WM]. Another pupil selects the medium of instruction of subjects to create a bilingual curriculum in order to reflect a bicultural identity. She explains:

I wanted to do some Welsh because like I came up [from England] and I wanted to study Welsh [in Welsh-medium education], and I want to do English as well because I’m from England. [Pu.066.PS09.WM]

Another pupil wishes to maintain both his own and his family’s linguistic heritage of Welsh-medium education through his choice of Celtic-medium secondary schooling:
I’ve been in Welsh for – like since I started school so … and most of my families have been in Welsh.  

Several pupils cite a rationale based on an association between language and nation in the choice of Welsh-medium secondary education. For some pupils, such a national linguistic heritage is associated with school subjects themselves:

I love history and there’s a lot of Welsh history so I wanted to do history in Welsh.  

Other pupils themselves identify with their national linguistic heritage. One pupil explains:

I’m born in Wales, I’m quite proud, and Welsh is … the only choice I’d love to do.

Another pupil similarly expresses an association between national identity and language in his choice of Welsh-medium secondary education:

INT And did you ever think about going to [Secondary School 7.3, English-medium secondary school] or did you always know that you wanted to go to a Welsh-medium secondary?  
RES Eh, Welsh-medium …  
INT And why is that? Why do you want to keep going with your Welsh?  
RES Em, well, since I am, I am Welsh [laughs], I’ll just carry on with it.

Only one pupil in the Scottish context (Pu.017.PS04.GM, Section 2.1.3.4) cited such a strong personal association with the Celtic language and a national heritage rationale in explanation of the choice of Celtic-medium secondary education. The existence of a family tradition of Celtic-medium education was not cited as a reason for the choice of the medium of instruction of secondary schooling in the Scottish context. Thus, the frequency of response of these factors is an aspect of difference between the Welsh-medium and the Gaelic-medium pupil data.

2.2.3.4 Other: sibling precedent and pedagogical context

Other rationales for the choice of Welsh-medium secondary education included sibling precedents and the perception that the destination Welsh-medium secondary school was a ‘really good school’ [Pu.044.PS07.WM], that is to say an
effective pedagogical context with good facilities. Aspects of positive pedagogical context associated with a choice for Welsh-medium education were – following family and friends’ advice noted in 2.2.2.1 above – small class sizes, and a perception that Welsh-medium education offered a welcome additional challenge.

One pupil notes of choosing Welsh-medium mathematics:

> there should be less in the class – because most people choose to take many subjects in English – and then you get to understand more, because there’s not so many people asking so much questions that you get confused.

[Pu.060.PS09.WM]

The pupil additionally noted in relation to social sciences:

> Geography might be a bit better in Welsh, history should as well, because in English most people just learn it and they know all the names, but if you try and learn it in Welsh it’s like another challenge.

[Pu.060.PS09.WM]

### 2.2.4 Reasons for the choice of English-medium education

The three Welsh-medium pupils from Primary School 7 who opted for English-medium secondary education provided varying rationales for their choice. One pupil cited her English language family heritage, and the consequent lack of home-based Welsh-language support for her learning as the key reason for the decision:

> if I went to [Secondary School 7.1], it’s a Welsh comp and because the work gets hard and then no other person in my family talks Welsh so if I needed help with anything they wouldn’t be able to help me.

[Pu.050.PS07.WM]

The other two pupils cited friends in their decision for English-medium secondary education. For one pupil, the secondary school destination of her friend (Pupil 050) was the sole consideration:

> My friend’s going so I thought I’d choose [Secondary School 7.3].

[Pu.043.PS07.WM]

For the second pupil, a desire to be educated with friends from home was accompanied by a wish for a change of medium of instruction of schooling and a desire to achieve good grades in Welsh Second Language. He explains:
I want to go [to an English-medium school] because I’ve got loads of people who I’ve grown up with who are going there. And it’s good cause you’ll go there and I’ll be one of the top in Welsh then … I just want to try English for a change because I’ve been in Welsh for … ten years. So now I want to have five years of English now.

Pupil 051’s wish for a change of medium of instruction at the primary-secondary school stage marks a stark contrast with the majority of Welsh-medium primary pupils who wanted linguistic continuity.

Some pupils from Primary School 9 opted to take the four subjects for which they had a choice of medium of instruction (history, geography, religious education and maths) through the medium of English. Several pupils cited their perceived linguistic competence when explaining their decision. One pupil notes:

I would rather be doing them [the subjects] in English because I know my English more … I know more words in English.

For some such pupils, the decision to learn subjects in their dominant language is motivated by pedagogical considerations. One pupil explains:

I’d learn more from the lesson in English than Welsh … because I’m not that well at Welsh.

Other pupils link their linguistic decision with the extent to which they enjoy the subject in question and to an experience of complex subject specific vocabulary in Welsh. One pupil notes:

I don’t really like RE so I think it would be harder in Welsh … like the different, you know, Christians and stuff – in Welsh their names are a bit complicated.

2.3 Concluding comments

This chapter has presented data relevant to the choice of the Celtic language in education at the primary and early secondary school stages. The conclusions will be discussed fully in Chapter 6, but may be briefly summarized here. There were four main sets of reasons for the choice of Celtic-medium primary education: family heritage, valuing bilingualism and its associated advantages, the perception that
Celtic-medium education is a good quality education and employment opportunities. There were two differences between the Scottish and Welsh contexts in relation to the choice of Celtic-medium primary education have emerged from the present study: language was typically associated with the national context in Wales, and with the Gàidhealtachd in Scotland; and parents of Welsh-medium pupils showed a greater tendency than parents of Gaelic-medium pupils to cite employment-related instrumental rationales as a key or additional reason for the choice of Celtic-medium primary education.

At secondary-school stage, two of the three reasons for the choice of Celtic-medium education at the secondary school level were common to both countries – a wish for continuity of primary school linguistic experience, and a wish to stay with primary school friends. Employment opportunities and linguistic heritage were the third reason cited by Celtic-medium pupils in Scotland and Wales respectively.

Chapter 5 will present data pertaining to aspects of pupil language relevant to language planning.
Chapter Five  Pupil language patterns and attitudes in primary-secondary transition – continuity and change between primary and secondary school

This chapter presents data from the primary and secondary pupil questionnaires on pupils’ language use and self-perceived linguistic ability and presents data from the pupil interviews regarding pupils’ perceptions of the extent and nature of their identification with the Celtic language and their perceptions of the usefulness of the Celtic language for their future [Research Question 2, Appendix 1. A.1]. The focus in the presentation of the data is whether there are differences in patterns of pupil response across the two national contexts and whether individual pupils change over time, between the primary and secondary school stages. The findings in Topics 3 and 4 are grouped according to the taxonomy of difference and change described in Chapter 3, Section 3.6.1.2.3. As noted in Chapter 3, Section 3.6.1.2.1, the Gamma test statistic is denoted by \( \gamma \), and the Wilcoxon test statistic by \( z \). Percentages are quoted only for illustrative purposes, and the inferences are all based on statistical tests. Statistical significance is judged at the 5% level.

The chapter focuses primarily on Celtic-medium pupils. However, English-medium pupil data is incorporated when it illuminates aspects of the Celtic-medium pupil data. As explained in Chapter 3, the Celtic-medium and English-medium pupils in dual stream schools share a school and community context, and thus the English-medium pupils can be used as a control group for the Celtic-medium pupils.

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Certain implicitly psychological terms in the thesis are used in a pragmatic way, with no connotations intended of any specialised meaning in terms of the academic literature in that subject area. Rather, the meaning attached to these terms in the thesis is set out below:

(i) **Perceptions**: These are the views of respondents towards such matters as their own linguistic ability as expressed in reply to questions formulated in the questionnaires (Appendix 3 C.1.1 Q7, Q8; D.1.1. Q6 - Q9). Thus the meaning of perceptions is defined by the response categories that were offered.

(ii) **Attitudes**: These are pupil views as expressed in response to interview questions, such as ‘What do you think about Gaelic/Welsh and how useful do you think it will be for your future?’ (Appendix 3, C.1.2 Q18a, D.1.2 Q21). The pragmatic meaning of ‘attitudes’ here employed is close to that in the sociological and political-science literature, for example Ó Riagáin 1997:168.

(iii) **Identifications**: These are pupil attachments or affiliations as expressed in response to interview questions, such as ‘To what extent do you identify with Gaelic/Welsh?’ [Prompt] Is speaking Gaelic/Welsh part of who you are or is it just something you can do? (Appendix 3 C.1.2 Q18b, D.1.2 Q22a). The pragmatic meaning of ‘identifications’ employed in the thesis in relation to language is close to that employed in the sociological and political-science literature in relation to nationality in McCrone (2002:307-8).
on certain linguistic variables such as community language use and perceived ability in English.

**Topic 3  Language Use**

This topic presents analysis of the statistical data pertaining to Celtic-medium pupils’ reports of language use (See Chapter 3, Section 3.6.1.2.2.1 for approach to analysis). Prominence is given to language output – pupils’ language use to a certain person in a specified context – but consideration is also given to key aspects of language input (other people’s reported language use to the pupil in a particular linguistic domain). Aspects of language use which displayed statistically significant differences between individual pupils’ reports of language output and input will also be summarized.

### 3.1 Language output

**3.1.1 Aspects of pupil language use which display a statistically significant difference between the Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium samples at the primary school level**

A statistically significant difference (at the 5% significance level) is returned between the Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupil groups with regard to four aspects of language use: to other pupils in the Celtic language classroom, to other pupils in school when outside the classroom, to teachers in school when outside the classroom, and to friends outside school. In each instance, the Welsh-medium primary pupils report using more of their Celtic language than do their Gaelic-medium counterparts.

**3.1.1.1 Aspects of language use which are stable over time (Group 1)**

Celtic-medium pupils’ language use with ‘friends outside of school’ exhibits a Group 1 pattern, namely a statistically significant difference between the national contexts at the primary school stage, and no statistically significant shift in either pupil group’s response between the primary and secondary school stages. The Welsh-medium pupils’ greater use of the Celtic language in this linguistic context

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85 The Groups referred to here are those defined in Section 3.6.1.2.3. A stable trend is one in which the patterns of response returned by each pupil group at the secondary school stage are not statistically significantly different from the patterns returned at the primary school stage.
(γ = -0.435, p = 0.016) is most clearly illustrated in reference to the amount of English language use reported – whilst 71% of Gaelic-medium Primary 7 pupils report speaking to their friends ‘Always or almost always in English,’ only 47% of Welsh-medium Year 6 pupils report so doing [Appendix 7, A.1.1]. There were no statistically significant shifts in the pupils’ reported pattern of language use between the primary and secondary school stages amongst either the Gaelic-medium or the Welsh-medium pupils in relation to this variable (Gaelic-medium: $z = -0.690$, $p = 0.490$, $n = 27$, Welsh-medium: $z = -1.487$, $p = 0.137$, $n = 54$). The Welsh-medium pupils’ greater use of the Celtic language to friends outside school is not being heavily influenced by the linguistic demographics of one particular local authority context. Indeed, there are no statistically significant differences in patterns of pupil response by local authority in Scotland at the primary or the secondary school level [Primary: $\chi^2 = 12.1$, $p = 0.435$; Secondary: $\chi^2 = 10.2$, $p = 0.595$]. In Wales there was no difference at the secondary stage [$\chi^2 = 16.7$, $p = 0.860$], and a just-significant difference at the primary stage [$\chi^2 = 25.2$, $p = 0.047$]. Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupils’ patterns of language use to friends when outside of the school are illustrated for the primary school stage in Figure 1. Data for the secondary school stage are presented in Figure 2.

Figure 1. Celtic-medium primary pupils’ language use to friends when outside of school (figures signify percentage distribution within each pupil group)
3.1.1.2 Aspects of language use which shift over time (Group 2)

Group 2 variables exhibit a statistically significant difference between the national contexts at the primary school stage, and return a statistically significant shift between the primary and secondary school stages within at least one of the two Celtic-medium pupil groups. The two aspects of language use relating to pupils’ interaction with other pupils – namely ‘language use with other pupils in the Celtic language classroom’ and ‘language use with other pupils in school (when outside of the classroom)’ display such a trend. The former language use pattern exhibited a shift over time towards the Celtic language in both contexts (Gaelic-medium: $p = 0.002$, Welsh-medium: $p = 0.024$) whilst the latter returned a statistically significant shift only in the Scottish context (Gaelic-medium: $p = 0.006$), with this shift being towards English.

On ‘language use to other pupils in the Celtic language classroom,’ the Welsh-medium primary pupils report a higher level of Celtic language use than do their Gaelic-medium counterparts ($\gamma = -0.336$, $p = 0.023$), with 61% of the Welsh-medium primary pupils using the Celtic language more than fifty percent of the time.

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86 In Figure 2, and in other graphs which display distributions of responses, percentages may not add up to 100 because of rounding.
when speaking to other pupils in the Celtic language classroom, compared with 25% of Gaelic-medium pupils [Appendix 7, A.2.1]. There are statistically significant shifts over time towards the Celtic language for both the Welsh-medium and Gaelic-medium pupils with regard to this context of language use, as detailed in Appendix 7, A.2.3. At the secondary school stage, 68% of the Welsh-medium pupils and 78% of the Gaelic-medium pupils report using their Celtic language more than fifty percent of the time to other pupils in the Celtic language classroom [Appendix 7, A.2.2]. The Gaelic-medium pupils thus displayed a larger shift towards the Celtic language than did their Welsh-medium counterparts (Gaelic-medium: z = -3.057, p = 0.002, n = 27, Welsh-medium: z = -2.259, p = 0.024, n = 53). As a result of such a shift, the Celtic-medium pupil groups’ language use is not statistically significantly different at the secondary school stage (γ = -0.098, p = 0.549).

In relation to Celtic-medium pupils’ language use with other pupils in school (when outside the classroom), the statistically significant difference between the Scottish and Welsh contexts at the primary school level (γ = -0.337, p = 0.024) is illustrated by the fact that 37% of Welsh-medium primary pupils report speaking predominantly in Welsh to other pupils in the corridors and playground, compared with 11% of Gaelic-medium primary pupils [Appendix 7, A.3.1]. The Welsh-medium pupils’ patterns of reported language use do not change significantly between the primary and secondary school stages (z = -1.196, p = 0.232, n = 54), but a statistically significant shift – towards English – is returned by the Gaelic-medium pupils (z = -2.765, p = 0.006, n = 27). The shift is detailed in Appendix 7, A.3.3. At the secondary school stage, 27% of Welsh-medium pupils report speaking ‘always in Welsh’, ‘almost always in Welsh’ or ‘in Welsh more often than English’ to other pupils in the school when outside of the classroom, but none of the Gaelic-medium pupils report so doing in relation to Gaelic [Appendix 7, A.3.2].

The final aspect of Celtic-medium primary pupils’ language use that displays a Group 2 pattern is language use to ‘teachers in the school when outside of the classroom’ (γ = -0.564, p = 0.002). 86% of Welsh-medium primary pupils report speaking predominantly in the Celtic language in this linguistic context, whilst only 52% of Gaelic-medium pupils report so doing [Appendix 7, A.4.1]. The Gaelic-
medium pupils’ patterns of reported language use to teachers in the corridors and playground do not change significantly between the primary and secondary school stages (z = -1.069, p = 0.285, n=26), but the Welsh-medium pupil data returns a borderline statistically significant shift towards English (z = -1.929, p =0.054, n =54), as detailed in Appendix 7, A.4.3. Such a shift does not eliminate the difference between the contexts in terms of Celtic-medium pupils’ reported language use to teachers when outside of the classroom at the secondary school, however (γ = -0.464, p = 0.002), where 66% of Welsh-medium pupils report speaking in the Celtic language to teachers in the school for the majority of the time, compared to 46% of Gaelic-medium pupils [Appendix 7, A.4.2].

3.1.2 Aspects of pupil language use which do not display a statistically significant difference between the Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium samples at the primary school level

The Welsh-medium and Gaelic-medium primary pupils return broadly similar patterns of Celtic language use – that is to say, patterns which do not return a statistically significant difference at the 5% significance level – with regard to five aspects of language use: to their fathers, their mothers, their siblings, teachers in the Celtic language classroom and adults outside of school.

3.1.2.1 Aspects of language use which are stable over time (Group 3)

Three aspects of pupils’ language use – to their fathers, their mothers, and adults outside of school – return a Group 3 pattern, namely no statistically significant difference between the Scottish and Welsh contexts at the primary school stage, and no statistically significant shift over time within either Celtic-medium pupil group. Pupils’ language use to their mothers and to adults outside of school are the clearest representations of this category.

The Gaelic and Welsh-medium primary pupils’ similar patterns of language use to their mothers (γ = 0.011, p = 0.951) is illustrated as 81% of Gaelic-medium and 72% of Welsh-medium pupils report predominantly using English in this linguistic domain [Appendix 7, A.5.1]. There were no statistically significant shifts in the pupils’ reported pattern of language use between the primary and secondary school stages amongst either the Gaelic-medium or the Welsh-medium pupils (GM:
$z = -1.032, p = 0.302, n = 26$, $WM: z = -0.037, p = 0.971, n = 54$). Thus, the patterns of language use reported at the secondary school stage are broadly similar to those at the primary school stage, with 74% of Gaelic-medium and 77% of Welsh-medium pupils reporting speaking to their mother in English for more than fifty percent of the time [Appendix 7, A.5.2]. Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupils’ patterns of language use to their mothers are illustrated for the primary school stage in Figure 3. Data for the secondary school stage are presented in Figure 4.

Figure 3. Celtic-medium primary pupils’ language use to their mothers in the home domain (figures signify percentage distribution within each pupil group)

![Figure 3](image1)

Figure 4. Celtic-medium secondary pupils’ language use to their mothers in the home domain (figures signify percentage distribution within each pupil group)

![Figure 4](image2)
The similarity of the Celtic-medium pupil groups’ reports of their language use to adults outside of school at the primary school stage ($\gamma = -0.265, p = 0.141$) is evidenced as 79% of Gaelic-medium and 67% of Welsh-medium pupils report speaking predominantly in English in this linguistic context [Appendix 7, A.6.1]. No statistically significant shifts were returned by either pupil group between the primary and secondary school stages (GM: $z = -1.417, p = 0.156, n=27$, WM: $z = -0.317, p = 0.752, n = 54$). Thus, the secondary school results are broadly analogous to those reported for the primary school stage with 75% of Gaelic-medium and 69% of Welsh-medium pupils speaking to adults outside of school in English for more than fifty percent of the time [Appendix 7, A.6.2].

Celtic-medium pupils’ reported language use to their fathers is a less clear instance of Group 3, as there is a marginally statistically significant difference between the Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupil groups at the primary school stage ($\gamma = -0.317, p = 0.076$) at the 5% significance level. However, this difference would not be statistically significant at the 10% significance level. Slightly more of the Welsh-medium primary pupils report using the Celtic language with their fathers than do their Gaelic-medium counterparts, most clearly illustrated by the fact that whilst 86% of the Gaelic-medium pupils report using English for the majority of the time with their fathers, only 67% of the Welsh-medium pupils reported so doing [Appendix 7, A.7.1]. There were no statistically significant shifts within either Celtic-medium pupil group between primary and secondary school (GM: $z = -0.632, p = 0.527, n = 27$, WM: $z = -0.079, p = 0.937, n = 52$), with 78% of Gaelic-medium and 69% of Welsh-medium secondary pupils reporting that they mostly spoke English with their fathers. There was no statistically significant difference between the patterns of language use returned by the Celtic-medium pupils regarding this variable at the secondary school stage ($\gamma = -0.127, p = 0.447$).

3.1.2.2 Aspects of language use which shift over time (Group 4)

Two aspects of Celtic-medium pupils’ language use – to teachers in the Celtic language classroom and to siblings – return a group 4 pattern, namely no statistically significant difference between the Celtic-medium primary pupil groups,
and a statistically significant shift in at least one pupil group between the primary and secondary school stages. The former language use pattern exhibited a shift over time towards the Celtic language in the Welsh context (Welsh-medium: p = 0.022) whilst the latter returned a statistically significant shift in the Scottish context (Gaelic-medium: p = 0.039), with this shift being towards English.

With regard to pupils’ language use to teachers in the Celtic language classroom, the similarity of the Celtic-medium primary pupil groups’ patterns of language use (γ = -0.070, p = 0.776) is evidenced by the fact that 89% of Gaelic-medium and 95% of Welsh-medium pupils report speaking to their teacher predominantly in the Celtic language in this context [Appendix 7, A.8.1]. There is no statistically significant difference in the Gaelic-medium pupils’ primary and secondary school reports of their language use in this regard (z = -0.866, p = 0.386, n = 27), but a statistically significant shift – towards Welsh – was returned by the Welsh-medium pupils (z = -2.289, p = 0.022, n = 54), as detailed in Appendix 7, A.8.3.

The similarity of Celtic-medium primary pupils’ language use to their siblings (γ = -0.130, p = 0.469) is illustrated as 74% of Gaelic-medium and 56% of Welsh-medium pupils report speaking to their siblings predominantly in English (Appendix 7, A.9.1). A statistically significant shift was returned by the Gaelic-medium pupils between the primary and secondary school stages in relation to this variable (z = -2.066, p = 0.039, n = 23), with pupils’ language use to their siblings moving further towards English, as detailed in Appendix 7, A.9.3. The Welsh-medium pupils did not exhibit a shift in their reported patterns of language use in this context between the primary and secondary school stages (z = -0.072, p = 0.942, n = 45). Despite such a shift over time amongst the Gaelic-medium pupils, the Celtic-medium pupil groups’ reported patterns of language use to their siblings remained not statistically significantly different at the secondary (γ = -0.248, p = 0.129) school stage, with both sets of pupils demonstrating a tendency to use predominantly English. This is illustrated as 83% of Gaelic-medium and 61% of Welsh-medium secondary pupils report speaking predominantly in English to their siblings [Appendix 7, A.9.1, A.9.2].
3.1.3 Secondary school only variables

Eight additional aspects of language use were incorporated into the secondary pupil questionnaire – language use to grandparents (separately grandmother and grandfather) and language use to other pupils and to the teacher in the English, Maths and Science classrooms.88

3.1.3.1 Secondary school only variables with statistically significant difference between the national contexts (Group 5)

The data on Celtic-medium pupils’ language use to other pupils and to teachers in the three classroom contexts provides evidence of variation both across and within national context. In terms of variation across the Scottish and Welsh contexts, statistically significant differences were returned in relation to the patterns of reported pupil language use to other pupils in the maths classroom ($\gamma = -0.333, p = 0.031$) and to pupils and teachers in the science classroom (Pupils: $\gamma = -0.474, p = 0.001$, Teachers: $\gamma = -0.407, p = 0.030$), with the Welsh-medium pupils using more of the Celtic language than their Gaelic-medium counterparts in each instance [Appendix 7.B.1.1, B.2.1, B.3.1]. Such differences may partly be due to differences in the approaches taken to the teaching of science and mathematics at the sample secondary schools (as outlined in Appendix 3.B.3) as statistically significant differences in pupil response by local authority were returned in both the Scottish and Welsh contexts in relation to each of these variables.89

3.1.3.2 Secondary school only variables with no statistically significant difference between the national contexts (Group 6)

There is no statistically significant difference between the Scottish and Welsh contexts in relation to Celtic-medium pupils’ reported language use to teachers in the maths classroom ($\gamma = -0.292, p = 0.106$). Such a similarity between the contexts –

88 The rationale for these additions is detailed in Chapter 3, Section 3.4.2.1.
89 Celtic-medium pupils’ reported language use to other pupils in the maths classroom by local authority area: GM: $\chi^2 = 46.1$, $p = 0.004$. WM: $\chi^2 = 55.4$, $p = 0.000$. Celtic-medium pupils’ reported patterns of language use to other pupils in the science classroom by local authority area: GM: $\chi^2 = 34.6$, $p = 0.074$. WM: $\chi^2 = 55.1$, $p = 0.000$. Celtic-medium pupils’ reported patterns of language use to teachers in the science classroom by local authority area: GM: $\chi^2 = 29.9$, $p = 0.019$. WM: $\chi^2 = 59.3$, $p = 0.000$. 
despite heterogeneity within each context\textsuperscript{90} – may relate to the pupils’ tendency to use more of the Celtic language with their teachers than they do with their peers at the secondary school stage. This is illustrated in relation to science as 77\% of Welsh-medium pupils report speaking predominantly in the Celtic language to teachers, compared to 51\% reporting doing so when addressing other pupils. The analogous figures for the Gaelic-medium pupils are 50\% and 28\% respectively [Appendix 7, B.2, B.3].\textsuperscript{91} Such differences in language use to teachers and to pupils within the same science classrooms – and thus any context effect being eliminated – reflect different patterns of Celtic-medium pupils’ language use to teachers and to pupils from the primary school stage. This will be further considered in the Discussion of Findings (Chapter 6, Section 6.2.1).

The data returned in relation to Celtic-medium pupils’ reported language use to grandparents displayed no statistically significant differences between the Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupil groups (grandmother: $\gamma = 0.105$, $p = 0.533$, grandfather: $\gamma = -0.252$, $p = 0.213$) [Appendix 7, B.7.1.1 & B.8.1.1]. This reproduced the similarities found between the national contexts in relation to the other interlocutors in the ‘home’ domain [Appendix 3.C.1.1], discussed in Section 3.1.2.1.

3.2 Language input

The statistical patterns that result from Celtic-medium pupils’ reports of language input – that is to say, their reports of the language(s) other people use to them in the linguistic domains specified in the primary and secondary school questionnaires – are mostly analogous to the statistical patterns regarding language output outlined in Section 3.1. That is, in almost all cases, the language input patterns reported by the Gaelic and Welsh-medium pupil groups result in the categorization of the language use variable into the same analytical group (Section 3.6.1.2.3) as it was classified into for language output. To avoid repetition, the language input patterns that mirror those detailed for language output above are not presented here, but rather the relevant data and statistical test results are provided in

\textsuperscript{90} Statistically significant differences by local authority in both Scotland and Wales were returned in relation to pupil language use to teachers in the science classroom (previous footnote) and in the maths classroom. GM: $\chi^2 = 37.7$, $p = 0.002$. WM: $\chi^2 = 57.9$, $p = 0.000$.

\textsuperscript{91} A similar pattern is found in relation to mathematics [Appendix 7, Pupils: B.1 & Teachers: B.4].
Appendix 7, Sections C and D, using the same numbering system as the language output data presented in Appendix 7, Sections A and B.

Two aspects of the language input data differ from the language output data to an extent that is worthy of note: language use from teachers in the Celtic language classroom and from adults when outside school.

With regard to language use from teachers in the Celtic language classroom, the Celtic-medium pupils’ reports of language input are similar across the two contexts ($\gamma = -0.367, p = 0.109$), with 82% of Gaelic-medium and 93% of Welsh-medium pupils reporting their teachers to speak to them predominantly in the Celtic language [Appendix 7, C.8.1]. A statistically significant shift between the primary and secondary school stages – towards the Celtic language – was returned in relation to Gaelic-medium pupils’ reports of teachers’ language use to them in the Celtic language classroom ($z = -2.697, p = 0.007, n = 27$), but no such shift was exhibited within the Welsh-medium pupil data ($z = -0.522, p = 0.602, n = 52$). This contrasts with the shifts reported in relation to the language output data in which no statistically significant shift was returned in relation to Gaelic-medium pupils’ language output to teachers in the Celtic language classroom over time ($z = -0.866, p = 0.386, n = 27$) but where Welsh-medium pupils’ reports of their own language use to teachers in the Celtic language classroom moved towards the Celtic language between the primary and secondary school stages ($z = -2.289, p = 0.022, n = 54$).

The second aspect of language use to display a difference in pattern of language output and language input is Celtic-medium pupils’ language use with adults when outside of school. A statistically significant difference is returned between the Celtic-medium pupil groups with regard to adults’ language use to them at the primary school stage ($\gamma = -0.500, p = 0.003$) despite there being no statistically significant difference in Celtic-medium primary pupils’ reports of their own language use to adults in this context ($\gamma = -0.265, p = 0.141$). There is a larger difference between the pupil groups in terms of reported language use from adults in the community – with 89% of Gaelic-medium pupils and 67% of Welsh-medium pupils reporting adults to speak to them predominantly in English when outside of school [Appendix 7, C.6.1] – than in terms of pupils’ reports of their own language

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92 Pupil reports of their own language use to their primary class teacher had also been similar across the two national contexts ($\gamma = -0.070, p = 0.776$) [Appendix 7, A.8.1].
use in this context, with 79% of Gaelic-medium pupils and 67% of Welsh-medium pupils reporting predominantly using English [Appendix 7, A.6.1]. The contrast is particularly stark in relation to the percentage of primary pupils who report adults speaking ‘always or almost always in English’ – 67% of Gaelic-medium pupils, compared to 39% of Welsh-medium pupils [Appendix 7, C.6.1]. Such a contrast indicates a higher incidence of at least some Celtic language use from adults in the community to Celtic-medium pupils in Wales than in Scotland. The Gaelic-medium pupil cohort additionally returned a significant shift – towards the Celtic language – with regard to the language input dimension of this variable between the primary and secondary school stages ($z = -1.997, p = 0.046, n =27$) which had not been evident in the language output data.

The English-medium pupil data also returns a statistically significant difference between the primary school level pupil groups ($\gamma = -0.722, p = 0.011$) in terms of adults’ language use to the pupils when outside of school, with English-medium pupils in Wales reporting a higher level of Celtic language input than do their English-medium Scotland counterparts. Whilst 94% of English-medium Scotland primary pupils report adults addressing them ‘always or almost always in English’, only 65% of English-medium Wales pupils report this to be the case [Appendix 7, E.1.1]. The English-medium Scotland pupils’ report of the language in which adults speak to them outside of school does not exhibit a statistically significant shift between the primary and secondary school stages ($z = -1.000, p = 0.317, n =13$), but a marginally not significant shift is returned by the English-medium Wales cohort ($z = -1.667, p = 0.096, n = 21$), with their perceptions of the language in which they are addressed shifting towards English [Appendix 7, E.1.2]. The fact that both the Celtic-medium and English-medium data returned a statistically significant difference between the Scottish and the Welsh contexts in terms of adults’ language use to pupils when outside of the school at the primary school stage, with the pupils in Wales reporting a higher level of Celtic language input than their counterparts in Scotland in each case, supports the notion that pupils have greater exposure to the Celtic language in the Welsh communities studied than in those in Scotland.
3.3 Differences between language output and language input

Wilcoxon tests employed to investigate whether there were statistically significant differences between pupil reports of the language(s) which they used to address certain people and the language(s) these people used to address them in a particular linguistic domain returned no statistically significant differences (at the 5% significance level) at the primary school stage for either the Gaelic-medium or the Welsh-medium pupil groups. At the secondary school stage, statistically significant differences were returned in relation to the Welsh-medium pupils’ language use with their siblings (z = -2.140, p = 0.032, n = 44) and in relation to Gaelic-medium pupils’ language use with other pupils in the school when outside of the classroom (z = -2.588, p = 0.010, n = 26), with other pupils in the Celtic language classroom (z = -2.288, p = 0.022, n = 27), with teachers in the Celtic language classroom (z = -2.111, p = 0.035, n = 27) and with siblings (z = -1.941, p = 0.052, n = 24). In all but one instance, the Celtic-medium pupils report using more of the Celtic language than they report their interlocutor using. The exception is Gaelic-medium pupils’ reports of their language use with teachers in the Celtic language classroom, where the teachers are reported to speak more of the Celtic language than are the pupils.

Topic 4 Perceived Linguistic Ability

This topic presents the results of the analysis of Celtic-medium pupils’ perceived linguistic ability (described in Chapter 3, Section 3.6.1.2.2.2) by analytical group (Chapter 3, Section 3.6.1.2.3). Aspects of the English-medium pupil data will be presented where this is relevant to findings within the Celtic-medium data. As in Topic 3, statistical significance is judged at the 5% level.

4.1 Aspects of pupil perceived linguistic ability which display a statistically significant difference between the Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium samples at the primary school level

4.1.1 Aspects of language use which are stable over time (Group 1)

Only one aspect of Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupils’ assessment of their linguistic ability (whether comparative or in relation to one of their languages) returned a statistically significant difference between the pupil groups at the primary
school stage – pupils’ perceived comparative ability in writing their Celtic language and English ($\gamma = -0.462, p = 0.010$). Welsh-medium primary pupils were more confident in their Celtic language writing abilities than were their Gaelic-medium counterparts. Such a pattern is most clearly evidenced in relation to the percentage of pupils reporting themselves to be English dominant in writing, with 50% of Gaelic-medium primary pupils reporting this to be the case, compared with 25% of Welsh-medium pupils [Appendix 8, A.1.1]. There were no statistically significant shifts in the pattern of pupils’ perceived comparative linguistic ability in writing between the primary and secondary school stages amongst either pupil group (GM: $z = -0.577, p = 0.564, n = 27$, WM: $z = -1.331, p = 0.183, n = 54$).

4.2 Aspects of pupil perceived linguistic ability which do not display a statistically significant difference between the Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium samples at the primary school level

The Welsh-medium and Gaelic-medium primary pupils return broadly similar patterns of perceived linguistic ability with regard to the remaining eleven aspects of linguistic competence asked about in the primary pupil questionnaire [Appendix 3, C.1.1, Qs.7-8]. In nine of these eleven instances, there were no statistically significant shifts within either pupil group between the primary and secondary school stages (Group 3 trends, see Section 4.2.2). However, two aspects of Celtic-medium pupils’ perceived linguistic ability exhibited a statistically significant shift over time, in which Welsh-medium pupils’ perceptions of their abilities in speaking and reading English decreased between primary and secondary school (Group 4 trends, Section 4.2.1).

4.2.1 Aspects of perceived linguistic ability which shift over time (Group 4)

With regard to English speaking, the similarity of Gaelic and Welsh-medium primary pupils’ patterns of perceived linguistic competence ($\gamma = 0.469, p = 0.140$) is illustrated as 93% of Gaelic-medium and 82% of Welsh-medium pupils report themselves to be ‘very good’ in this aspect of language ability [Appendix 8, A.2.1]. There was no statistically significant shift in the Gaelic-medium pupil group’s reported pattern of perceived linguistic competence in relation to this variable between the primary and secondary school stages ($z = -0.447, p = 0.655, n = 27$).
However, a statistically significant shift was returned by the Welsh-medium pupils \( (z = -3.273, p = 0.001, n = 54) \), with the pupils losing confidence in their English speaking abilities over time [Appendix 8, A.2.3]. As a result of such a shift, there is a statistically significant difference in the Celtic-medium pupil groups’ patterns of perceived ability in English speaking at the secondary school stage \( (\gamma = 0.662, p = 0.003) \), with 89% of Gaelic-medium pupils perceiving themselves to be ‘very good’ in this regard, compared with 62% of their Welsh-medium counterparts [Appendix 8, A.2.2].

In relation to English reading, the similarity of the Celtic-medium primary pupil groups’ perceived competence \( (\gamma = 0.087, p = 0.712) \) is reflected by the fact that 71% of Gaelic-medium and 68% of Welsh-medium pupils report themselves to be ‘very good’ in this regard [Appendix 8, A.3.1]. The Gaelic-medium pupils’ reported competence in English reading did not exhibit a statistically significant shift between the primary and secondary school stages \( (z = -0.250, p = 0.803, n = 27) \). However, a statistically significant shift was returned in relation to the Welsh-medium pupil group \( (z = -2.134, p = 0.033, n = 54) \), with the Welsh-medium pupils’ perceptions of their ability in English reading decreasing [Appendix 8, A.3.3].

The English-medium pupils in Wales demonstrated a similar tendency towards a loss of confidence in their English speaking and English reading abilities between primary and secondary school, trends which were not mirrored by the English-medium pupils in Scotland. With regard to speaking, the English-medium primary pupil groups’ patterns of perceived linguistic ability were similar across contexts \( (\gamma = 0.170, p = 0.623) \) [Appendix 8, B.1.1]. There was no statistically significant shift over time in the English-medium Scotland pupil group’s perceptions of their abilities in English speaking \( (z = -1.633, p= 0.102, n = 12) \). However, a marginally not significant shift was returned by the English-medium Wales pupil group \( (z = -1.739, p = 0.073, n = 21) \), with the pupils’ confidence in their abilities in English speaking decreasing. The shift is detailed in Appendix 8, B.1.3.

In relation to English reading, a statistically significant difference was returned between the primary English-medium pupil groups in Scotland and Wales \( (\gamma = -0.573, p = 0.003) \), with the English-medium Wales pupils being more confident
of their ability [Appendix 8, B.2.1].\(^{93}\) No statistically significant shift was returned by the English-medium Scotland pupil group between the primary and secondary school stages \((z = -0.577, p = 0.564, n = 13)\). However, a statistically significant shift was returned by the English-medium Wales pupil group, with the pupils’ perceptions of their English reading ability decreasing \((z = -2.164, p = 0.030, n = 21)\) [Appendix 8, B.2.3]. Such a shift results in a statistically significant difference between the two pupil groups at the secondary school level, with the English-medium Scotland pupils being more confident of their English reading abilities than their English-medium Wales counterparts \((\gamma = -0.818, p = 0.000)\) [Appendix 8, B.2.2].

This evidence suggests that the loss of confidence in English speaking and reading exhibited by the Welsh-medium pupils may thus be related to context, rather than to medium of instruction of schooling. The comparison with the control group of English-medium pupils is discussed further in Chapter 6.

### 4.2.2 Aspects of perceived linguistic ability which are stable over time (Group 3)

The nine aspects of perceived linguistic competence which display similar patterns across the Celtic-medium primary pupil groups and which remain stable within both pupil groups between the primary and secondary school stages are presented in three sub-sections pertaining to: comparative competence across the Celtic language and English, competence in English and competence in the Celtic language.

#### 4.2.2.1 Pupils’ perceptions of their comparative competencies in their Celtic language and English

Gaelic and Welsh-medium primary pupils’ returned similar perceptions of their comparative competencies in reading their Celtic language and English \((\gamma = -0.043, p = 0.837)\). This is evidenced as the majority of both pupil groups assess themselves to be English dominant in reading, with 57% of Gaelic-medium and 56% of Welsh-medium primary pupils reporting this to be the case [Appendix 8, A.4.1]. There are no statistically significant differences within either the Gaelic-medium \((z =\)

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\(^{93}\) Such a national contextual difference between the primary pupil groups did not exist in the Celtic-medium pupil data (Section 4.2.1.)
or the Welsh-medium (z = -0.304, p = 0.761, n = 54) pupil groups between the primary and secondary school stages. Thus, the secondary school stage results are analogous to those at the primary school stage (γ = -0.039, p = 0.857) [Appendix 8, A.4.2].

The similarity of the Gaelic and Welsh-medium primary pupils’ perceptions of their comparative competence in understanding the Celtic language and English (γ = -0.103, p = 0.656) is illustrated by the fact that 64% of Gaelic-medium pupils and 68% of Welsh-medium pupils report themselves to be equally competent in their two languages in this respect [Appendix 8, A.5.1]. There are no statistically significant shifts with regard to this variable within either pupil group between the primary and secondary school stages (GM: z = -0.707, p = 0.480, n = 27, WM: z = -0.200, p = 0.842, n = 54).

The Celtic-medium pupil groups’ perceived comparative competencies in speaking their Celtic language and English are similarly analogous across the Scottish and Welsh contexts at the primary school level (γ = -0.188, p = 0.335). However, there is no dominant pattern in this regard, with some 46% of Welsh-medium and 39% of Gaelic-medium primary pupils perceiving themselves to be equally competent in speaking their two languages, but 30% of Welsh-medium and 43% of Gaelic-medium pupils perceiving themselves to be English dominant in this regard [Appendix 8, A.6.1]. There are no statistically significant shifts over time within either Celtic-medium pupil group (GM: z = -1.355, p = 0.175, n = 27, WM: z = -0.029, p = 0.977, n = 54).

4.2.2.2 Pupils’ perceptions of their abilities in English

Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium primary pupils returned similar patterns of perceived linguistic ability in relation to understanding and writing English. These self-assessments of linguistic ability were stable within each pupil group over time.

With regard to understanding English, the Celtic-medium primary pupil groups’ similar pattern of perceived ability (γ = 0.226, p = 0.486) is illustrated as all Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupils assessed themselves to be ‘good’ or ‘very good’ in this respect [Appendix 8, A.11.1]. There were no statistically significant
differences within either Celtic-medium pupil group over time (GM: $z = -1.265$, $p = 0.206$, $n = 27$, WM: $z = -1.387$, $p = 0.166$, $n = 54$).

In relation to English writing, the similarity of the Celtic-medium primary pupil groups’ patterns of response ($\gamma = 0.273$, $p = 0.169$) is illustrated as 97% of Gaelic-medium and 86% of Welsh-medium pupils perceived themselves to be ‘very good’ or ‘good’ in this respect [Appendix 8, A.12.1]. There was no statistically significant shift in the Gaelic-medium pupil group’s responses in relation to their assessment of their English writing ability ($z = -1.414$, $p = 0.157$, $n = 27$), but a marginally not significant shift was returned by the Welsh-medium pupil group ($z = -1.665$, $p = 0.096$, $n = 54$). Such a shift was in the direction of a loss of Welsh-medium pupil confidence in their English writing ability, as detailed in Appendix 8, A.12.3.

4.2.2.3 Pupils’ perceptions of their abilities in their Celtic language

The Gaelic and Welsh-medium primary pupil groups reported similar patterns of perceived linguistic ability with regard to understanding, speaking, reading and writing their Celtic language. No statistically significant shifts were returned between the primary and secondary school stages in relation to any aspect of such perceived linguistic competence in either the Gaelic or Welsh-medium pupil groups [Statistical results are in Appendix 8, A.7 – A.10].

In summary of primary pupils’ assessment of their oracy in their Celtic language, 93% of Gaelic-medium and 89% of Welsh-medium pupils reported themselves to be ‘very good’ or ‘good’ at understanding their Celtic language and 97% of Gaelic-medium and 91% of Welsh-medium pupils perceived this to be the case for speaking their Celtic language. With regard to literacy, 64% of Gaelic-medium and 67% of Welsh-medium primary pupils assessed their abilities in reading their Celtic language as ‘good’ or ‘very good’, whilst 68% of Gaelic-medium and 74% of Welsh-medium pupils categorized their writing abilities as such [Appendix 8, A.7.1 – A.10.1].

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94 An examination of the analogous English-medium pupil data for English writing does not return such a negative shift amongst the English-medium pupils in Wales ($z = -1.050$, $p = 0.294$, $n = 21$). [Appendix 8, C.3]
Topic 5  Language, Identity and Future

The consideration of Celtic-medium pupils’ attitudes towards their Celtic language is presented in terms of pupils’ expressed identifications with the language and their perceptions of its usefulness for their future. The data is presented by theme, with pupil response categorized on the basis of their primary school response. Within this, pupil views are typically presented in pairs to demonstrate continuity or change of attitude between primary and secondary school. English-medium pupils’ perceptions of the extent to which they identify with the Celtic language are incorporated into Section 5.1.1.2, primarily to ascertain whether there is a conceptual difference between the Scottish and Welsh contexts in the association of language and nation.

5.1  Identification with the Celtic language

5.1.1  Gaelic-medium pupils

5.1.1.1  Family and language identification

The Gaelic-medium pupils who expressed their identity with Gaelic in terms of their family’s linguistic background at primary school tend to express a more individual identification with the language at secondary school. In one instance, the primary pupil said:

my mum’s from Ireland and my dad’s from [Scottish Island] and like all my mum’s side speak Irish Gaelic and my dad’s side speak Gaelic but it’s good cause I can kind of understand Irish Gaelic so and like it’s just that I hear Gaelic all round.

[Pu.017.PS04.GM]

At secondary school, the pupil’s elucidation of her Gaelic identity also incorporated her participation in Gaelic-related cultural activities:

It [Gaelic]’s probably part [of me] – yeah, it is because like I Highland dance and it’s Scottish and like my mum and dad own a hotel and it’s all Gaelic people that come in. And I speak Gaelic to them. And it’s good cause like for the people that come in they are like ‘wow you can speak fluent,’ like it’s, and at the Mòds and that I usually do quite well.

[Pu.017.SS04.GM]

In another instance, the pupil’s family based identification with the Gaelic language at the primary school stage became a more individual expression of identity,
influenced by a language and nation perspective, at the secondary school stage. At primary the pupil explained that she identified with Gaelic:

Quite a bit cause my mum’s been learning Gaelic and we try to talk Gaelic – just Gaelic – at tea time and things like that.  

[Pu.023.PS05.GM]

At the secondary school stage the pupil identifies Gaelic as a key aspect in the formation of her identity:

INT And to what extent do you identify with Gaelic? Like how much do you think speaking Gaelic is part of who you are or is it just something that you do?
RES Well it’s Scottish and I like, I love my country of course. And eh I think it’s just really good for knowing who I am and I’m part of Scotland and it’s my natural, well Gaelic, Scottish language and stuff … it’s the proper Scottish language.

[Pu.023.SS05.GM]

5.1.1.2 Place and language identification

One pupil posited a link between language and nation when explaining his identification with the Celtic language at the primary school stage. He noted:

I think it [Gaelic]’s quite, part of me, because it’s like Scot, Scotland’s sort of language as well.

[Pu.087.PS06.GMEM]

The pupil expressed a similar perception at the secondary school stage:

INT And to what extent do you identify with Gaelic? Like how much do you think that speaking Gaelic is a part of who you are?
RES Well – because I’m Scottish and … Gaelic is our native language.

[Pu.087.SS06.GMEM]

5.1.1.3 School and language identification

Gaelic-medium primary pupils’ citation of the influence of schooling on their identification with the Celtic language takes two forms: a general identification with Gaelic (illustrated by Pu.009.PS04.GM below), and a context-based identification whereby the pupil mainly identifies with Gaelic when they are in school (illustrated by Pu.014.PS04.GM below). Pupils’ school based identifications often lessen as
pupils get older, becoming more personal identifications in a manner parallel to that outlined in relation to family based sources of identification in Section 5.1.1.1.

In the primary school interview, Pupil 009 related her identification with Gaelic to having attending Gaelic-medium education:

I’ve been learning it for about seven years now, so it’s … pretty important [to my identity].

[Pu.009.PS04.GM]

By the secondary school stage, the pupil presents Gaelic as a personal characteristic that both she and other people associate with her at the secondary school stage. The pupil explains that Gaelic is:

Quite a lot of me – everyone knows I speak Gaelic and I just think it’s quite important to me.

[Pu.009.SS04.GM]

Other pupils represent the extent to which they identify with Gaelic as being context dependent. One pupil explains that she identifies with Gaelic:

at school and stuff quite a lot, but em at home not as much as at school but sometimes if I go to the Highlands or something you’ll hear people speaking Gaelic and you’ll know what they are saying and stuff so you’ll feel quite like with Gaelic then.

[Pu.014.PS04.GM]

At the secondary school stage the pupil expresses a more individual identification with Gaelic by linking a family geo-linguistic heritage with a wish to maintain Gaelic in her family. She notes:

my gran is from the Highlands and stuff so like it’s maybe quite important to keep my family talking Gaelic because … my dad doesn’t really and my cousins don’t really … and my mum doesn’t cause … she’s not from like Gaelic people.

[Pu.014.SS04.GM]

Another respondent similarly modified her Primary 7 level school based identification with the Gaelic language – ‘sometimes part of me quite a lot because I’ve been doing it since I started school’ [Pu.020.PS05.GM] – to a secondary school identification with the language based on a family association with the Gaelic language and culture:
it’s part of who I am ... and something that I like doing as well ... one of my uncles, and my grandfather ... speak Gaelic ... one of them was more fluent and he could help me like when we did the Mòd and he won, well he helped me win it and em he’s won it before ... like when I was doing my poem it would be like sort of older Gaelic ... and he gave me Gaelic books to read.

5.1.1.4 Culture and language identification

A small number of Gaelic-medium primary pupils express a personal identification with Gaelic which relates to the musical opportunities that being in Gaelic-medium education has afforded. One notes:

INT to what extent do you identify with Gaelic, like how much do you think Gaelic is a sort of a part of who you are?

RES em quite a lot cause if I didn’t speak Gaelic … some of the instruments I play, I wouldn’t play them because it was all cause of some people in the Gaelic unit played them and that’s why I started them. So I might have not even knew they’d played them if I wasn’t in the Gaelic unit.

However, after transferring to a secondary school which solely provides Gaelic as a subject for Gaelic-medium primary educated pupils (Appendix 4, B.3), this pupil notes Gaelic to be ‘just something that I do’ [Pu.086.SS05.GM]. Interestingly, the pupil no longer associates the Gaelic language and participation in musical activities. He reflects:

when I was little I went to the Mòd and did Gaelic. But now I just go to the Mòd to do music … I do a lot [of music]. I do pipe, drums, accordion, fiddle.

5.1.1.5 General (unspecified) identification with the Gaelic language at the primary school stage

Despite the clarity of the expressions of identity that have been presented at the primary school stage in Sections 5.1.1.1 – 5.1.1.4, several primary pupils are not very clear regarding their identification with language. Such pupils tend to express the extent to which they identify with their Celtic language, but do not elaborate, as in this example:

INT And how much do you identify with Gaelic? Like how much is speaking Gaelic part of who you are do you think?
RES  I don’t know, about a quarter maybe [laughs].  

[Pu.006.PS02.GM]

However, by the secondary school stage, Pupil 006 does elaborate on her partial identification with Gaelic, explaining that it is a personal characteristic by which she is identified by others:

INT  And then to what extent do you identify with Gaelic?  Like how much do you think that speaking Gaelic is part of who you are?  Or is it just something that you do?
RES  I think it’s a wee bit of who I am cause like some people say ‘who is [pupil name]?’ and like ‘it’s the girl with the curly hair in the Gaelic [medium] … ’ and it’s like ‘oh yeah, I know her!’ [laughs]

[Pu.006.SS02.GM]

This example thus replicates the pattern shown in Sections 5.1.1.1 to 5.1.1.4 whereby pupils’ expressions of their linguistic identifications typically become clearer between the primary and secondary school stages.  Such identity negotiation will be further discussed in Chapter 6 in relation to the literature presented in Chapter 2.

Not all change in expressed identification between the primary and secondary school stages was towards greater clarity of expressed identity, however.  One pupil [Pu.007.PS02.GM] went from identifying with Gaelic without reservation at the end of Primary 7 to not knowing at the end of the first term of Secondary 1, while others remained uncertain between primary and secondary school.  The latter is exemplified by Pupil 024 who responded to the question ‘To what extent do you identify with Gaelic – is it part of who you are do you think, or is it just something you can do?’ with ‘I don’t know, I think it’s just like em … I don’t know’ [Pu.024.PS06.GM] at the primary school stage and with ‘I think it’s like – it’s not just something I do, it’s like … I don’t know [laughs]’ at the secondary school stage [Pu.024.SS06.GM].

5.1.1.6  Pupils who do not identify with the Gaelic language

Some pupils do not explain their lack of identification with the Gaelic language – ‘it’s just something I do’ [Pu.008.SS02.GM].  Others are more specific.  One pupil does not view Gaelic as being central to his identity as:

I like a lot of stuff better than it and it’s not that important to me – sports and stuff are more important to me.

[Pu.022.PS05.GM]
This does not change at secondary, where the pupil stated that Gaelic was ‘not a big part’ of who he is [Pu.022.SS05.GM].

5.1.2 Welsh-medium pupils

5.1.2.1 Family and language identification

Several primary pupils cite their family linguistic heritage as the main reason for their identification with Welsh. For some pupils, this consistently relates directly to their own linguistic experience. One pupil notes of Welsh at the primary school stage:

I think it’s a big part [of me] because it was my first language.  

[Pu.040.PS07.WM]

At the secondary school stage, the pupil similarly reflects:

I couldn’t imagine myself not speaking Welsh because it is something that I have known since I could talk.  

[Pu.040.SS07.WM]

For other pupils, the family-related identification with Welsh is consistently expressed in terms of family heritage. At the primary school stage Pupil 073 states of Welsh:

it’s my heritage … it’s just a family thing because we’ve been Welsh for generations.  

[Pu.073.PS10.WM]

The pupil reiterates and elaborates upon this perception of Welsh at secondary school, using remarkably similar vocabulary to that at primary school:

I think it’s part of who I am. It’s like my heritage, and it’s part of my blood because my taid [grandfather] and nain [grandmother] are Welsh and my dad.  

[Pu.073.SS10.1.WM]

Other primary pupils’ family-based identifications with Welsh shift between the primary and secondary school stages. For one pupil, there is a move from a family to a more personal identification with the language, which mirrors the shifts in the Gaelic-medium pupil data (Section 5.1.1.1). At the primary school stage the pupil notes of Welsh:
I’d say it’s mostly part of my family so I … I enjoy it cause my dad when I go home he talks to me in Welsh.

[Pu.048.PS07.WM]

At the secondary school stage she states:

It [Welsh]’s just like who I am and what I can do.

[Pu.048.SS07.WM]

For another pupil, the shift is conceptual – from current family language use to future family language use, with the secondary school level quote displaying an awareness of the status of Welsh as a lesser-used language.

It [Welsh]’s quite important [to me] so then I can carry on speaking Welsh to my grandma and my brother.

[Pu.035.PS07.WM]

I like Welsh, cause it’s special. And then … it’s good to speak Welsh because people might, well if you want to speak Welsh and the Welsh language is like dying off or something. And you still know it. And when you’ve got grandchildren or something … they might think of speaking Welsh.

[Pu.035.SS07.WM]

Pupils’ awareness of the Celtic language as a lesser used language will be illustrated in Section 5.2.

5.1.2.2 Place and language identification

Several Welsh-medium pupils posit a link between language and nation when explaining the position of the Celtic language in their personal identity. Such an association was voiced by only one Gaelic-medium pupil (Section 5.1.1.2). That such a difference is a national-level contextual difference, rather than simply a difference between the Celtic-medium pupil groups, is evidenced by the expression of a nation and language association as an aspect of personal identification with the Celtic language in the English-medium Wales pupil data [Pu.118.PS08.EMW, Pu.133.PS09.EMW, Pu.128.SS09.EMW], but not in the English-medium Scotland data. The Welsh-medium pupils’ sentiment is represented by Pupil 060, for whom the link between language and nation is key to personal identity at both the primary and secondary stages. At the primary school stage she notes:
I am Welsh so speaking Welsh is a big part of me … I quite like Welsh because it shows that I can speak the same language as my country really.

At the secondary school stage, the pupil’s explanation is more elaborate and emotive:

I think it [Welsh] is a big part of me because I am Welsh so it makes me feel … more at home in Wales that I know how to speak the language rather than if I was like speaking English all the time and everyone else was speaking Welsh, it would make me feel like I’m supposed to be somewhere else – speaking Welsh makes me feel that this is my place.

For one pupil, the significance of being born in Wales to his personal identity changed between the primary and secondary school stage. In primary, he explained:

I was born in Wales … but everyone else in my family like brothers and sisters … was [were] born in England … so it’s quite a big part of me cause I was born in the country.

However, by the secondary school stage, the same considerations resulted in a different conclusion. The pupil notes:

I was born in Wales – my brother and sister were born in England – so it’s sort of a like something that I do really.

For such a child, the societal identifications with place and the relational identifications with family are competing and complex. The identities of Celtic-medium pupils from English cultural or linguistic backgrounds will be further discussed in relation to the literature (Sections 2.2.3.3.1 & 2.2.3.3.2) in Chapter 6.

5.1.2.3 School and language identification

The Gaelic-medium pupils’ distinction between a general school identification with the Celtic language (derived from having been in Celtic-medium primary education), and a context-based identification with the Celtic language (whereby pupils identify with the Celtic language when in school) was also evident in the Welsh-medium pupil data.

Several English first language primary pupils attribute their identification with Welsh to having attended a Welsh-medium school. One such pupil notes:
I think it [Welsh]’s quite a big part of me because I have always gone to a Welsh school.

[Pu.038.PS07.WM]

Other pupils voice a context-based identification, illustrated by Pupil 036:

INT And to what extent do you identify with Welsh, like how much do you think that Welsh is a part of who you are?
RES It’s really in the middle really. Because … in school I learn Welsh and I mostly speak English in the house.

[Pu.036.PS07.WM]

As in the Scottish context, such primary school level school-based linguistic identifications typically become more personalized at the secondary school stage. For both of these pupils, the identification with Welsh becomes a self-defined part of identity at the secondary school stage: ‘It is part of who I am … I just like speaking Welsh’ [Pu.038.SS7.2.WM] and ‘Welsh, like is me if you know what I mean’ [Pu.036.SS07.WM].

However, not all pupils who expressed a school-based association with the Welsh language at the primary school stage shifted to a more integrative personal identification with the language at the secondary school stage. Pupil 057 expressed a school context-based identification with Welsh at primary school:

INT To what extent do you identify with Welsh?
RES Quite a lot in school because we speak Welsh and we learn Welsh in school.
INT And out of school is it quite a big part of who you are or…?
RES No, not really. I don’t really speak Welsh.

[Pu.057.PS08.WM]

At the secondary school stage, the pupil continues to draw a distinction between his school and home life, but expresses a more subtle personal identification with the Welsh language based on instrumental needs:

INT And the last thing just is how much do you identify with Welsh? Like how much do you think that speaking Welsh is part of who you are?
RES Oh quite a lot because it’s mainly my school, like my whole school life is usually speaking Welsh. So it’s important to me that I know how to speak it.

[Pu.057.SS08.WM]

Such partial or context-based identifications with the Welsh language on account of school experience underline the multiple identities of bilingual pupils, and will be further discussed in Chapter 6.
5.1.2.4 Culture and language identification

As in Scotland, several Celtic-medium primary pupils in Wales linked their personal identification with the Celtic language to participation in cultural activities. Pupil 065 notes:

I do a lot of folk dancing and that’s traditional Welsh dancing. And I speak a lot of Welsh when I’m doing that. I do that in the Urdd, I do a lot of things in the Urdd which is all Welsh.

[ Pu.065.PS09.WM ]

The pupil also identifies with Welsh cultural activities at the secondary school stage, citing folk dancing and the Eisteddfod [ Pu.065.SS9.1.WM ].

An aspect of difference between the national contexts in relation to Celtic-medium pupils’ culture and language identifications is the allusion to the metaphor of ‘blood’ to denote association with the Celtic language. One Welsh-medium pupil refers to this at both the primary and secondary school stages:

It [ Welsh ]’s in my blood sort of ... it’s my culture really.

[ Pu.044.PS07.WM ]

It’s like it [ Welsh ]’s part of me because like I’ve got like Irish blood in me and I’ve got French blood in me so I think Welsh is cool because it’s just me. Welsh.

[ Pu.044.SS07.WM ]

5.1.2.5 General (unspecified) identification with the Welsh language at the primary school stage

As in the Scottish context, some Celtic-medium primary pupils in Wales exhibited a tendency to be vague in expressing their identification with the Celtic language. This is demonstrated by Pupil 031:

INT And to what extent do you identify with Welsh? Like how much do you think Welsh is part of who you are?
RES Hmm – I’m not sure really. Half per cent? [ laughs ]

[ Pu.031.PS07.WM ]

The pupil provides a much more considered response at the secondary school stage:

INT And how much do you identify with Welsh. How much do you think that speaking Welsh is part of who you are or is it just something that you do?
It is something that I do. But it is probably a big part [of me] … everything is just Welsh in my house basically so I think it is good … the whole family. My mother’s mother speaks Welsh. My mother speaks a little bit.

[ Pu.031.SS07.WM ]

However, as in the Scottish context, not all Welsh-medium pupils’ responses became clearer or more elaborate over time. One pupil reduced their identification with Welsh between the primary and secondary school stages – from ‘it’s important to me’ [ Pu.034.PS07.WM ] to ‘I think it’s something … that I do’ [ Pu.034.SS07.WM ], but did not specify a rationale for his response on either occasion.

5.1.2.6 Pupils who do not identify with the Welsh language

As with the Gaelic-medium pupils, not all Welsh-medium pupils were willing to explain their lack of identification with the Welsh language, at either the primary or secondary school stages (e.g. ‘[Welsh is] not really that important [to me]’ [ Pu.055.PS08.WM ], ‘[Welsh is] just something that I do’ [ Pu.055.SS08.WM ]). Other pupils do outline the reason for their lack of identification with Welsh. For some, being ‘brought up in English’ can lead to the investment of most of their identity in English. One pupil explains:

I like Welsh … but I like English more than Welsh … because when I’m outside playing, like outside school now, all my friends talk English … so I like – because I’ve brought up in English I like English more than Welsh.

[ Pu.050.PS07.WM ]

The pupil perceives herself to be ‘about forty five percent [Welsh] … and fifty five percent English’ [ Pu.050.PS07.WM ] at the upper primary school stage. At the lower secondary school stage, following a transfer to an English-medium secondary school, the pupil reports that speaking Welsh is ‘just something I can do’ [ Pu.050.SS7.3.EM ]. Such interactions of home-based, community-based and school-based language identifications will be considered in Chapter 6.

5.2 Perceived usefulness of the Celtic language for the future
5.2.1 Gaelic-medium pupils
5.2.1.1 Employment

Several primary school pupils mentioned employment-related benefits when asked how useful they thought their Celtic language would be in their future. A
common perception was that having Gaelic led to specific jobs, for example in teaching, the media and in the Scottish Parliament. One pupil says:

I think Gaelic will be very useful because not so many people speak Gaelic so there’s kind of jobs that only people that can speak Gaelic can get like for television and like dramas and things and teachers and you can work for the Parliament and that.

[Pu.002.PS01.GM]

Another pupil notes:

I think it [Gaelic] will be useful cause there are probably quite a lot of jobs and stuff for like TV or just general being a teacher or anything and I think Gaelic’s sort of growing.

[Pu.014.PS04.GM]

At the secondary school stage, the former pupil reiterates his instrumental perception that Gaelic would be useful for gaining access to Gaelic-specific jobs. However, the latter pupil’s perception of the usefulness of Gaelic widens to also include an integrative account which emphasises Gaelic language use in the family domain:

I think that it’s important for me to remember Gaelic cause … well I can teach my children it or I can just, I could even be a Gaelic teacher or something.

[Pu.014.SS04.GM]

Such pupil intentions to intergenerationally transmit the Gaelic language will be discussed in Chapter 6.

Other Gaelic-medium primary pupils perceived that Gaelic would enhance job opportunities generally. One pupil noted:

It [Gaelic] will be pretty useful, because yeah there’s a lot more opportunities in work and stuff.

[Pu.022.PS05.GM]

Another pupil said:

I have better choices because I can speak Gaelic cause if like you want a job and then loads of other people would do it but then I speak Gaelic so I have a better chance of getting it than those other people.

[Pu.018.PS04.GM]

By the secondary school stage, the former pupil still perceives the Gaelic economy to offer opportunities. The pupil notes of Gaelic:
[It will be] quite useful. If you can’t get an important job in English you could probably get a job in Gaelic because there’s not that many Gaelic speakers.  

[Pu.022.SS05.GM]

However, the latter pupil’s perception of the range of Gaelic-employment domains has narrowed by the secondary school stage. She notes:

INT  Do you think Gaelic will be useful to you in the future?
RES  Hmmm, don’t know, depends. If I wanted to be a Gaelic teacher then [yes], if I wanted to come back to the school and teach here then you’d have to probably be able to speak Gaelic.

[Pu.018.SS04.GM]

A smaller number of Gaelic-medium primary pupils expressed a perception that Gaelic enables access to higher status or higher quality employment. One notes:

My mum got a Gaelic job … which she likes a lot, and if you can’t speak Gaelic you’ll only become a receptionist then and it’ll be, it’s a wee bit better to have a job that you enjoy.

[Pu.026.PS03.GM]

However, the pupil’s secondary school account illustrates that pupil awareness of Gaelic-related job opportunities does not necessarily reflect a wish to seek Gaelic-medium employment. He states:

If I don’t get a job that I really want then I can see what jobs are in Gaelic.

[Pu.026.SS03.GM]

5.2.1.2 Communication with Gaelic speakers in Gaelic-speaking contexts

Several primary pupils believed that Gaelic would be useful in their future for everyday communication with Gaelic speakers in Gaelic-speaking areas. One pupil, who lives in a Gaelic-speaking area, notes of Gaelic:

it’ll be useful for my future because I think you know I’m just going to stay on this island and this island like you get just Gaelic and like you know I can chat to people if they don’t know any English and they’ve got Gaelic.

[Pu.028.PS03.GM]

Another pupil similarly envisages Gaelic being useful for:

talking to people around the Islands…nearly everyone speaks Gaelic! [laughs]

[Pu.006.PS02.GM]
By the secondary school stage, the former pupil perceives that Gaelic will be useful for employment in the Gaelic-speaking area:

I want to become a nurse so like [Gaelic will be useful] in hospitals and stuff. [Pu.028.SS02.GM]

However, the latter pupil is less convinced about the utility of Gaelic for high-status employment within the island community. She notes of the usefulness of Gaelic for her future at the secondary school stage:

Em, it will probably be a wee bit useful but not like very. Well it will be useful because it’s, well it’s an extra language and that’s always useful. But still – I don't think it will be that useful for my job and stuff. Unless I get, I dunno, a job in the [name of local café] or something [laughs]. [Pu.006.SS02.GM]

Other pupils who voice the perception that Gaelic will be useful for use in Gaelic-speaking communities live in Anglicized areas. One such pupil explains the utility of Gaelic to his future thus:

When I go up North, I could speak it to other people up there. [Pu.011.PS04.GM]

At the secondary school stage, the pupil voices a range of integrative and instrumental uses for Gaelic in his future, with communication with Gaelic speakers predicted both within his existing social networks in an Anglicized area and in traditional Gaelic speaking areas. He notes:

Well, it would be good because you could speak it to your friends when you are older and stuff. And then when you go up [north] and you speak to your grannies and your aunties and stuff, then you could speak to them in Gaelic and stuff as well so I think it’s quite … I enjoy it, I enjoy speaking it so it’s quite good … there’s more job offers if you’re, if you’ve got Gaelic as well that means you can get a job in Gaelic or if it’s not in Gaelic then you can get it in English. [Pu.011.SS04.GM]

The intended maintenance of Gaelic-medium pupils’ peer Gaelic language use into adulthood in Anglicized areas is a finding that will be discussed in Chapter 6.
5.2.1.3 Tertiary Education

A small proportion of Gaelic-medium primary pupils mention Gaelic as being useful for tertiary education. One pupil perceives that speaking Gaelic may increase her chances of securing a place at university:

It’s going to be very useful – when you are going to university you can say that you’ve done it.

[Pu.010.PS04.GM]

Another pupil perceives that her language competencies would be useful for teaching other students some Gaelic:

it’s going to be quite useful … because if you went to college … then you could tell people that you could speak Gaelic and then you could maybe teach them some if they didn’t know and they wanted to learn.

[Pu.020.PS05.GM]

At the secondary school stage, the former pupil expresses a wish to study a tertiary level course through the medium of Gaelic, a decision made after transferring to secondary school. She asserts:

INT How useful do you think Gaelic is going to be for your future?
RES With my future I want to go to university and maybe do Gaelic as part of a teaching course or something like that or Gaelic music or something … yeah – I want to do something with Gaelic now I think.
INT Super, and when do you think you decided that you wanted to do something with Gaelic?
RES When I came here into First Year.

[Pu.010.SS04.GM]

The latter pupil has also moved towards a greater commitment to a Gaelic-language related future by the secondary school stage, in this case in relation to employment. She notes of the usefulness of Gaelic to her future:

I think it’s going to be very helpful for my future because it’ll help me get a better job and it will help me with what job I’ll be doing and stuff.

[Pu.020.SS05.GM]

5.2.1.4 Gaelic language cultural activities

A small number of primary pupils mentioned that Gaelic might be useful for access to, or participation in, Gaelic-medium cultural activities in response to the question about the usefulness of Gaelic to their future. One pupil notes:
I think it [Gaelic] will be quite useful … cause just now there’s – I’m in a play my sister wrote. Because she wants to be, she wants to be an actress, but my mum has just told her that you can’t like, you can’t be an actress like just being acting. You have to do stuff as well so she wrote her play and it got chosen to be performed so I’m in that and it’s a Gaelic one.

INT So do you think that you might be in Gaelic plays when you’re older or?
RES Yeah

At the secondary school stage this pupil expresses a community and family based integrative future use for Gaelic in the Gaelic-speaking area in which she lives:

you could, probably just [use it with], some people, if say I meet someone who does … and with my family.

Another pupil mentions that she plays the Gaelic harp in relation to the usefulness of Gaelic for her future at both the primary and secondary school stages.

5.2.1.5 Primary pupils who are unsure about the usefulness of Gaelic for their future

Some primary pupils are unsure about the extent to which Gaelic will be useful for their future. One primary pupil simply stated ‘I don’t know’ whilst another elaborated:

I don’t know how useful it [Gaelic] is going to be in the future but I quite like speaking Gaelic, it’s quite fun.

At the secondary school stage, the former pupil expressed a more positive response regarding the usefulness of Gaelic for her future, but could not elaborate:

INT Do you think it will be useful for you in the future?
RES Yeah
INT What do you think you’ll use it for?
RES I don’t know.

The latter pupil simply said ‘I don’t know’ in relation to this question at the secondary school stage.
5.2.1.6 Secondary school pupils’ awareness of Gaelic as a lesser used language

Gaelic-medium pupils’ awareness that their Celtic language is a lesser used or threatened language is a characteristic of the secondary school interviews, and a marked shift from the primary school interviews. For some pupils this knowledge increased the perceived usefulness of the language for their future, due to assumed ease of gaining employment on account of decreased competition. One pupil explains:

If you can’t get an important job in English you could probably get a job in Gaelic because there’s not that many Gaelic speakers.

[Pu.022.SS05.GM]

For other pupils, knowledge of the national linguistic situation did not affect the perceived usefulness of Gaelic for their future as they have a known local social network of Gaelic speakers (Sections 5.2.1.2& 5.2.1.4).

However, the knowledge of the vitality of Gaelic did affect many pupils’ perception of its future usefulness. Some pupils refer to the current national linguistic situation when citing a perception that Gaelic is not particularly useful for the future. One pupil notes Gaelic to be:

A little bit useful … if maybe you met somebody, but not a lot of people speak Gaelic anymore.

[Pu.001.SS01.GM]

Other pupils refer to the paucity of Gaelic use in their local community:

Not much people are speaking Gaelic now and there’s not really much activities and stuff like where we can go to.

[Pu.027.SS03.GM]

Other pupils situate the linguistic situation of Gaelic within an ongoing language shift towards English, and perceive that the opportunities to use Gaelic will further decrease in the future. One pupil notes:

Gaelic is kind of getting more rare, just like Latin is. Because less people are speaking it. Cause less people are being taught it and all of that. Cause it’s older people that have, know all the Gaelic stuff … Cause you can see in olden times almost everyone spoke Gaelic but now they – probably no-one speaks Gaelic in the future.

[Pu.004.SS02.GM]
Another pupil similarly says:

I’m not sure how useful it will be for my future because they’re saying that Gaelic might die out soon. Which means that … there might not be many people speaking Gaelic by the time I’m older … people are going to stop using Gaelic.

[Pu.005.SS02.GM]

5.2.2 Welsh-medium pupils

5.2.2.1 Employment

The Welsh-medium primary pupils expressed the three manifestations of Celtic language employment-related benefits voiced by their Gaelic-medium counterparts (Section 5.2.1.1), namely the perception that the Celtic language increases opportunities for specific jobs, for employment generally, and for access to high-status employment. However, the pattern of responses returned in relation to these three categories varied between Wales and Scotland.

A key difference between the Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium primary pupil responses is the frequency with which the Celtic language is perceived to increase opportunities for employment generally, this being much more frequently cited in the Welsh context. Interestingly, the perception that Welsh is generally beneficial for employment is voiced by pupils in both Welsh-speaking and English-speaking areas of Wales. A primary pupil from a Welsh-speaking area notes of Welsh:

I think it is going to be useful whatever job I do … if I live in Wales, which I want to.

[Pu.064.PS09.WM]

A primary pupil from an Anglicized area similarly comments:

I think it will be very useful [for my future] actually. Because they are like … the first thing they ask you when you go for an interview for a job is ‘can you speak Welsh?’

[Pu.032.PS07.WM]

The suggestion that the first pupil perceives the Welsh-language economy to be national in scope is confirmed by the pupil’s secondary school response. The pupil comments of the usefulness of Welsh for her future:
A lot of people speak Welsh in Wales ... so ... yeah I think it will be useful. Whatever job I have, I think people will speak to you in Welsh.

The second pupil rather perceives that the Welsh language economy will become national in scope, and that Welsh-medium education will contribute to this development. At the secondary school stage, the pupil notes:

Welsh is going to be useful for ... getting a job and stuff like that ... I think in a couple of years’ time – because most parents are sending their kids to Welsh primary school – I think it’s going to be, everyone is just going to end up speaking Welsh in the end.

Such positive pupil perceptions of the future of the Welsh language will be discussed in Chapter 6.

A smaller proportion of primary pupils in the Welsh context than in the Scottish context alluded to ‘Celtic language-specific’ job opportunities. The Welsh-medium pupils that did mention these cited Welsh-medium teaching, translating, and work in the Welsh-language media [Pu.038.PS07.SS7.2.WM, Pu.035.PS07.SS7.1.WM, Pu.039.PS07.SS7.1.WM]. Interestingly, Welsh-medium primary pupils often perceived Welsh-language specific job opportunities to be part of a range of employment options which encompassed both Welsh-specific jobs and employment that could be Welsh language, English language or bilingual. One pupil notes in her primary school account of the usefulness of Welsh for the future:

I think it [Welsh] is going to be very useful cause like it, now you can get jobs to teach grown-ups Welsh and you could become a Welsh teacher. Or like, I want to become a nurse when I’m older cause then if I become a nurse then like maybe the patients only speak Welsh and I can speak to them … But if they speak like English and Welsh I could speak in both languages.

At the secondary school stage, the pupil additionally emphasizes the community, integrative and affective aspects of Welsh-language employment. She notes:

when I’m older I want to be a doctor … and it could help – if there’s a patient that could speak Welsh and likes to speak Welsh then it would help if a nurse was there or a doctor or somebody that could speak it … if there’s someone that can speak Welsh to them it might lift their spirits a bit.
As in Scotland, a small number of pupils expressed the perception that the Celtic language gives access to higher status or higher quality employment. One primary pupil notes:

It’s better to speak Welsh cause you get a better job. Cause if you are working in Wales you can speak two languages and it’s handy. Very handy.

[Pu.042.PS07.WM]

Another primary pupil additionally associates Celtic language or bilingual employment with a higher income:

If I can speak two languages I can get a better job and I get more money for my family.

[Pu.044.PS07.WM]

At the secondary school stage, the latter pupil reiterates her primary school perception:

INT  How useful do you think Welsh is going to be for your future?
RES  I think it’s going to be [useful] for my future cause like when I’m older I’d like to be an actress ... so if I could speak Welsh I’d probably get a better job and better money.

[Pu.044.SS7.1.WM]

The former pupil’s perception of the usefulness of the Celtic language for his future widens to include family language use between the primary and secondary school stage. He notes of Welsh:

It will be very very useful [for my future]. Cause getting jobs it will be useful and passing on then to a family.

[Pu.042.SS7.1.WM]

Such a pattern of response mirrors that of Pupil 014 in the Scottish context (Section 5.2.1.1).

5.2.2.2 Communication with Welsh speakers in Welsh-speaking contexts

Several Welsh-medium primary pupils express the perception that Welsh will be useful for communicating with Welsh speakers in the future. However the ‘Celtic language-speaking contexts’ to which Welsh-medium primary pupils refer are more varied and wide-ranging than those cited by Gaelic-medium pupils – who typically cited a Highlands and Islands based regional linguistic domain (Section 5.2.1.2).
Welsh-medium primary pupils from both Welsh-speaking and English-speaking areas predict future home and community-based Welsh language use. In relation to home-based language use, one pupil from a Welsh-speaking area notes:

**INT** how useful do you think it [Welsh] is going to be for your future?
**RES** very useful
**INT** and what do you think you’re going to use it for?
**RES** em, I’m going to use it for every day communication, em, at home, em – just everyday use.

[Pu.084.PS10.WM]

A pupil from an Anglicized area of Wales similarly predicts future home-based Welsh language use:

It’s going to be quite good in my future because my, most of my family is Welsh and that was their first language when they were little … so it’s quite good for me so I can speak to them all the time really.

[Pu.053.PS08.WM]

The latter pupil expresses a similar perception of the usefulness of Welsh for her future at the secondary school stage:

It will be like quite useful cause like my family is pretty much all Welsh and I could have conversations and all that with them. So it’s easier.

[Pu.053.SS08.WM]

However, the former pupil’s perception of the usefulness of Welsh for his future has broadened to encompass Welsh language use for both integrative and instrumental purposes in the Welsh-speaking community at the secondary school stage. He notes Welsh to be useful:

for the, sort of the community around here, if I am looking for a job locally I could speak Welsh with them, and not get criticised [laughs].

[Pu.084.SS10.1.WM]

Welsh-medium pupils’ perception that there is a social expectation or a social requirement to speak the Celtic language in the community in the future is a key aspect of difference between the Scottish and the Welsh datasets. Such a perception is voiced of Welsh-speaking areas by primary pupils in both English-speaking and Welsh-speaking areas of Wales. Pupil 046, from Anglicized South Wales, notes of his future:
I think it [Welsh] is going to be very useful cause some places people, like if you go to a shop or something they might only speak Welsh there, like in North Wales.

[Pu.046.PS07.WM]95

Pupil 083, from the Welsh-speaking area of Gwynedd, notes:

I think I’ll keep using Welsh when I’m old because many people in Wales speak Welsh and not English so I’ll need to be able to speak to them.

[Pu.083.PS10.WM]

Several other Welsh-medium primary pupils in Welsh-speaking areas express a perception that there exist Welsh monolinguals (even though, as shown by the 2001 Census, all Welsh speakers are bilingual). One such pupil believes that Welsh will be ‘very useful’ for his future in order ‘to talk to people that can’t talk English’ [Pu.062.PS09.WM]. The perception that there exist Celtic language monolinguals is only voiced by one Gaelic-medium pupil (Pu.028.PS03.GM, Section 5.2.1.2).

Whilst some such expressions of perceived usefulness stay constant between the primary and secondary school stages, for example Pupil 062 who perceives (at the secondary school stage) that Welsh ‘will be useful talking to people that don’t speak English’ [Pu.062.SS9.1.WM], other pupils’ perceptions of the future usefulness of Welsh shift over time. For example, Pupil 083 rather prioritises home-based language use and intergenerational transmission at the secondary school stage, perceiving Welsh to be:

Very useful … like if I have children and they are Welsh then I can help them a lot … I’d probably bring them up like me with English but teach them Welsh at the same time so they know what they are in English and Welsh.

[Pu.083.SS10.1.WM]

Such shifts towards secondary Welsh-medium pupils prioritising and predicting future intergenerational language transmission will be discussed in Chapter 6.

Other Welsh-medium primary pupils perceive that Welsh will be useful for day to day language use in Anglicized communities. One pupil notes:

It [Welsh] will be quite useful because maybe you’re out and about or something and someone speaks, starts speaking Welsh to you and you can easily answer them back.

[Pu.040.PS07.WM]

95 Pupil 046 did not re-participate in the research at the secondary school stage.
Another pupil states:

I am going to carry on saying it [Welsh] for the rest of my life now. I enjoy speaking Welsh and just carry on with it.

[Pu.034.PS07.WM]

Interestingly, both such pupils’ perceptions shift between the primary and secondary school stages. The former pupil rather predicts an institution based use for her Welsh language competencies in Welsh-medium teaching at the secondary school stage [Pu.040.SS7.1.WM], whilst the latter pupil expresses a realization of the more restricted Welsh language use options in Anglicized urban areas than in Welsh-speaking rural areas of Wales. Of the usefulness of Welsh for his future he notes:

I don’t know really cause … cause I think in some place in Wales they only speak Welsh so that could help me a bit. But … it’s kind of odd to go to a Welsh school sometimes. Sometimes it’s a bit stupid kind of learning Welsh cause … we are not going to use it much when we are older … cause our main language is English. English [is useful] … for whatever job I get down here.

[Pu.034.SS7.1.WM]

There also exists a group of pupils in Anglicized areas who perceive that Welsh will be useful both for general use, and for having private conversations in the future. Such an expected pattern of future language use reflects pupils’ existence within networks of Welsh and English language speakers. One pupil notes of Welsh:

I think it’s going to be quite useful … when you are in the shops and stuff you can talk to people in Welsh, just have a conversation. And … like in football … if you’ve got team mates who speak Welsh, when you are playing against the other team you can talk in Welsh and then the other team doesn’t understand what you are going to do.

[Pu.051.PS07.WM]

At the secondary school stage, the pupil notes of the usefulness of Welsh for his future:

I dunno really, there’s probably some jobs you can get easier with Welsh, can’t think of much though [laughs]. When I’m older, like if I can’t be a professional footballer or tennis player I’d like to, like maybe a sports teacher or like something like that.

[Pu.051.SS7.1.WM]
One final aspect of difference between the Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupils’ accounts of future community Celtic language use is the citation of non-UK based contexts for Celtic language use by several Welsh-medium pupils. One pupil notes of Welsh:

It’s going to be really useful I think cause there’s lots of, well a few countries that speak it as well like Patagonia … so like if I went there in the future it would be easy to understand everyone in Patagonia and other places that speak Welsh.

[Pu.058.PS08.WM]

At the secondary school stage, the pupil similarly notes of Welsh:

I think it is a good language to know because it is quite a unique language to know … if you go on holiday somewhere and you stay with a Welsh family or something, if you go on a … exchange trip or something to Patagonia or something like that, you would know it then and you could have proper conversations … if Welsh becomes more popular it would be good to have Welsh as one of your languages. Yeah, Welsh would probably be quite important in the future.

[Pu.058.SS08.WM]

5.2.2.3 Tertiary education

Only one Welsh-medium primary pupil in the sample mentioned Welsh being useful for their tertiary education. This pupil associates Welsh with learning, and wishes to continue their studies through the medium of Welsh:

I’m going to use it when I’m older probably … like for stuff in school and college and stuff like that.

[Pu.056.PS08.WM]

The pupil re-iterates her perception that Welsh will be useful in tertiary education at the secondary school stage:

INT how useful do you think Welsh is going to be for you in the future?
RES To get a job or for university.

[Pu.056.SS08.WM]

5.2.2.4 Welsh language cultural activities

A few primary pupils said that speaking Welsh will grant them continued access to Welsh-medium cultural activities in the future. One pupil perceived that Welsh would be ‘really helpful’ for her future as it would enable her to participate in
'drama' [Pu.076.PS10.WM]. At the secondary school stage, such a wish to participate in Welsh drama activities combines with an employment related motivation:

I think it [Welsh] is going to be useful if I am going to have a job in Wales. I want to be an actress so if I get hired to do something in Welsh I would be able to know how to do it in Welsh if you speak the language.  

[Pu.076.SS10.1.WM]

Another pupil similarly combines enjoyment of Welsh-language cultural activities with potential employment in her perception of the usefulness of Welsh for her future. She notes:

I think it [Welsh] is going to be quite useful because you can do a lot of things in Welsh. Like become an author in Welsh … you can go on Welsh TV shows … and read Welsh books.  

[Pu.037.PS07.WM]

At the secondary school stage, the pupil’s view has shifted towards general Welsh language use in community and home domains. The pupil notes Welsh to be ‘quite useful’ for the future:

Just to be able to speak it. To pass it onto your kids.  

[Pu.037.SS7.2.WM]

Such intended intergenerational transmission is notable, as the pupil comes from a home in which her mother does not speak Welsh and her father only speaks a little Welsh. Pupil intentions for intergenerational transmission will be further discussed in Chapter 6.

5.2.2.5 Primary pupils who are unsure about the usefulness of Welsh for their future

As in the Scottish context, some Welsh-medium primary pupils did not know how useful their Celtic language would be for their future. One such pupil explains:

INT How useful do you think Welsh is going to be for your future?  
RES I don’t know. But em … I’ve liked Welsh and I want to remember it.  

[Pu.043.PS07.WM]

By the secondary school stage the pupil has identified a context in which she perceives her Welsh will be used:
I might do something in College that would do with languages and everything ... I’m not sure yet but I would like to do it on something like Welsh.

Notably, none of the Welsh-medium pupil sample perceived that Welsh would not be useful for some aspect of their future. Some pupils drew a distinction between integrative and instrumental usage in their answer, and did not perceive that Welsh would be ‘useful’ in contributing to the achievement of an instrumental goal in their adult lives. Rather, such pupils view their Welsh as a ‘personal thing’ that can be used within the family sphere. This pupil elaborates at the secondary school stage:

I don’t really think it [Welsh] is going to be that useful but I’d just like to be able to keep it because my dad’s side of the family are all Welsh.

5.2.2.6 Pupils’ awareness of Welsh as a lesser used language

Unlike in Scotland, several primary-school level Welsh-medium pupils voice an awareness of the linguistic situation of Welsh. Pupil 072 reports in relation to the usefulness of Welsh for his future:

it’s going to be very good [for] like, different things. It’s a completely different language and not, not many people know it and apparently like if pupils, the Welsh just started talking English it’s just going to get extinct so I’d quite like to keep the language going cause it’s a strange language.

Pupil 048 similarly reports of Welsh:

I think it will be very useful cause it, the language won’t die out then so it will keep on going over the years.

At the secondary school stage the former pupil voices an employment-related use for his Celtic language, believing that it would be ‘hard’ to find a job in Wales without having the Welsh language. The latter pupil expresses a wish that her family heritage of Welsh speaking be continued with her own children in the future [Pu.048.SS7.1.WM] in her secondary school interview.

However, other primary pupils are more pessimistic about the future of Welsh. Despite intending to continue to use Welsh in the future, Pupil 030 notes:
I think the country is losing the language cause I don’t hear lots of people talking Welsh.

At the secondary school stage, the pupil similarly expresses an intention to use Welsh in the future but is frustrated about the status of Welsh as a lesser used language. She notes:

INT  how useful do you think Welsh is going to be for you in the future?
RES  It’s helpful because maybe you can talk Welsh to the other person and things like that. Cause English, it’s just like disappointing that some people don’t know well, Welsh and things like that.

5.3. Concluding comments on pupils’ language use, ability and attitudes

In summary of the evidence presented in this chapter, Gaelic-medium primary pupils’ patterns of Celtic language use was weaker than those of their Welsh-medium counterparts in relation to their peers (with friends in the classroom, in the school and when in the community) and with teachers in school when outside of the classroom. The data has additionally shown that, in the move to secondary school, Gaelic-medium pupils’ patterns of language use shift further towards English with other pupils when in informal areas of the school, and with their siblings in the home context.

The findings on linguistic ability show Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupils’ patterns of perceived linguistic ability in the Celtic language and in English to be similar in relation to all aspects of linguistic competence except perceived comparative competence (between their Celtic language and English) in writing, with a larger proportion of the Gaelic-medium pupils reporting themselves to be English-dominant in this regard.

The investigation of linguistic identifications showed Celtic-medium primary school pupils typically to voice an institution-related (family, school, cultural institution) identification with their Celtic language at the primary school stage, with Welsh-medium pupils additionally identifying with nation in this regard. Such linguistic identifications tend either to remain consistent between the primary and secondary school stages, or to change, with such change typically involving the
pupils voicing a personal identification with the Celtic language at the secondary school stage. The strength of the linguistic identification does not tend to lessen or to become more negative between the primary and secondary school stages, however.

In relation to the findings on the perceived usefulness of Gaelic or Welsh for the future, Celtic-medium primary pupils in both Scotland and Wales most frequently cited employment opportunities in this regard. However, whilst Gaelic-medium pupils typically associated Gaelic-language employment with Gaelic-specific jobs, such as the media or teaching, Welsh-medium pupils were more likely to see such Celtic-language-specific employment as only part of a range of available Welsh-language employment. Both Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupils also cited language use with other Celtic language speakers as a future use for their Celtic language and a small number of each group cited participation in cultural activities and tertiary education. In addition, a small proportion of Welsh-medium primary pupils cited language maintenance as a reason to use their Celtic language in the future. This rationale was not cited by the Gaelic-medium pupils in the Scottish context. When pupils’ perceptions of the future usefulness of the Celtic language shifted between the primary and secondary school stages, patterns common to the Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium contexts were (i) use in tertiary education shifting to employment-related uses, (ii) use in cultural activities shifting to home and community based language use and (iii) a small number of primary pupils who cited future intended Celtic language use in employment instead expressing an intention, at the secondary school stage, to intergenerationally transmit the Celtic language to their own children in the future.

**Topic 6  Celtic-medium pupils’ experience of language in primary-secondary transition: a holistic approach**

The analysis thus far has used a topic-based approach to explore the choice of medium of instruction of education at the primary and secondary school stages, and to investigate the effect of the move between these stages on aspects of pupils’ language relevant to language planning. The topic-based approach enabled the cross-national comparison between Scotland and Wales by facilitating the presentation of
themes from interview data and of patterns and trends from questionnaire data in a manner that enabled similarities and differences between the contexts to be illustrated (Chapter 3, Sections 3.6.1.2.3 & 3.6.2.2.2).

However, such an analytical approach does not facilitate a holistic presentation of individual pupils’ linguistic experiences in the transition from primary to secondary school (in which the various aspects of language inter-relate). The presentation of findings thus concludes with the portrayal of four vignettes – two from each national context – which represent the data at an individual pupil level. This section will additionally incorporate pupil reflections on the impact of the move from primary to secondary school on their experience of learning through the Celtic language, and of learning the Celtic language itself, even though such a subject was not systematically presented in the thesis, due to reasons of space (Section 3.7). Similarly, evidence on pupils’ preferred medium of instruction of secondary school subjects will be cited, where relevant.

The vignettes represent the two kinds of Celtic-medium pupils’ experience, namely those for whom the linguistic transition from primary to secondary school is part of a positive cycle with regard to the Celtic language, and those for whom the transition involves a negative cycle. The pupils presented are the extremes of the positive and negative cycles, and the majority of pupils’ experiences lie between those of the pupils here presented.

6.1 Positive cycles
6.1.1 Gaelic-medium pupil (Pu.010.PS04.SS04.GM) – positive cycle

This pupil lives in an urban area in the Lowlands, which is not a strongly Celtic language speaking area. 1% of people in the council area in which the school is situated are Gaelic speakers as are 5% of people in the locality of the school (more details of the community and school contexts are in Appendix 4, B.1 - B.3).

The mother of Pupil 010 chose Gaelic-medium primary education for her child on account of a family heritage of Gaelic speaking. She explains:

We chose Gaelic-medium because my parents both spoke Gaelic and we had missed it, sort of lost it in my generation so we were very keen to get it back. [Par.Pu.010.PS04.GM]
Pupil 010 reported that she made the decision to continue with Gaelic-medium education at the secondary school stage as she wished to continue an enjoyable Gaelic-medium primary school pedagogical experience, and sees Gaelic being part of her future employment trajectory:

I love going here, it’s good. I just, it’s so much better than English [medium] ... I don’t actually know how to describe it, but it’s just … I’m just doing that … and I might want to do it in the future or something and teach it.

[Pu.014.PS04.GM]

Pupil 010 reported the transfer from Primary school 4 to Secondary school 4 to have had a positive impact on her perception of her Gaelic language abilities, on her preferred medium of instruction of subjects, on her language use and on her intentions regarding the incorporation of Gaelic into her future plans.

In relation to linguistic ability, the pupil perceives her Gaelic to have improved as a result of exposure to the secondary school language model, and she now believes herself to be a ‘fluent’ speaker. She explains:

I think I’ve got much more fluent in Gaelic [since the start of secondary school] cause we’re doing it in [many] subjects … I enjoy going to the classes in Gaelic every time now, and I think it’s a bit of confidence that I know I’m fluent so I can say anything.

[Pu.014.SS04.GM]

The pupil perceives herself to be stronger in Gaelic than in English in all four linguistic skills at the Secondary 1 stage, a new-found linguistic dominance which she attributes to the secondary school’s language model and Gaelic-medium homework.96

The pupil also notes a change in her preferences regarding the medium of instruction of subjects following the move to secondary school. She notes:

I would have rather – in the primary – to do English all the time, but now that I’ve come here I feel that I’m learning so much more … I just prefer it [Gaelic] now that I am up here.

[Pu.014.SS04.GM]

96 At the Primary 7 stage, the pupil had perceived herself to be Gaelic-dominant in relation to talking, but equally competent in Gaelic and in English in understanding, reading and writing.
The pupil explains that such a shift in linguistic preference has been prompted by being at a secondary school with a significant amount of Gaelic-medium subject provision and by the impact that such a model has had, and continues to have, upon her Gaelic linguistic ability. The pupil both finds it easier to learn through the medium of Gaelic at secondary school than she did at primary school, and perceives that it is ‘probably’ easier for her to learn in Gaelic than in English at the secondary school stage.

Thus, Pupil 010’s experience of studying through the medium of Gaelic at the early secondary school stage seems to have fostered a positive cycle of increased linguistic ability, easier access of Gaelic-medium subject content, and a more positive attitude towards Gaelic-medium learning.

The pupil additionally links her secondary school Gaelic-medium experiences to increased participation in Gaelic-language school-based clubs and activities and to increased Gaelic language use out-with the school environment. This increased out of school Gaelic language use was reported both in existing domains of the pupil’s Gaelic language use and in new domains. The former is illustrated thus:

I didn’t used to like talking to my granny in Gaelic when I was in the primary but now I phone her up and I talk in Gaelic the whole way through the phone call. [Pu.014.SS04.GM]

In relation to Gaelic language use in new social domains, the pupil reports speaking Gaelic to peers when outside of school at the secondary school stage. She explains:

I’ve been talking it [Gaelic] to my friends when we are out and stuff [laughs] – I just, like I can’t really switch off any more when I’m out! [laughs]  [Pu.014.SS04.GM]

The potential for Gaelic-medium education to foster peer Gaelic language use out with the school domain is a key finding that will be further discussed in Chapter 6. The pupil’s identification with the Gaelic language is linked to the school context at the secondary school stage. She notes herself to identify with Gaelic quite a lot now cause I am going to school I’m talking it to most people.  [Pu.014.SS04.GM]
Such a strong personal identification with the Gaelic language is consistent with the pupil’s primary school identification where she noted that her Gaelic-medium primary school experience had made her feel:

together with it [Gaelic], like I’m a part of it.

Finally, the longitudinal data enables us to posit that the pupil’s positive linguistic transition from Gaelic-medium primary to Gaelic-medium secondary subjects crystallized her intentions regarding the incorporation of Gaelic into her future plans. Such an intention was first outlined at the primary school stage in relation to the choice of medium of instruction of secondary schooling – ‘I might want to do it in the future or something and teach it’. At the secondary school stage, the pupil notes:

With my future like I want to go to university and maybe do Gaelic as part of a teaching course or something like that or Gaelic music or something. Yeah … I want to do something with Gaelic now I think ... When I came here into first year yeah, it’s opened up my eyes.

6.1.2 Welsh-medium pupil (Pu.040.PS07.SS7.1.WM) – positive cycle

This pupil lives in an urban area of South Wales, which is not a strongly Celtic language speaking area. 13% of people in the council area in which the school is situated and 22% of people in the locality of the school are Welsh speakers (Appendix 4, B.1-B.3). The primary school is a ‘designated’ Welsh-medium school in which the Celtic language is the language of the curriculum and the language of the school.

Pupil 040’s rationale for continuing with Welsh-medium education at the secondary school stage was a combination of a wish to continue in Welsh-medium education, to stay with existing school-based friendship groups, and to maintain and develop her Welsh language competencies. The pupil notes:

I wanted to go to a Welsh school … and most of my friends are going up to [Secondary School 7.1] so … [and] I want to like speak Welsh when I’m older and like so if I go to a Welsh secondary school I’ll be able to like learn more
stuff about it. And if I didn’t I may forget the language and not be able to speak Welsh.

[Pu.040.PS07.WM]

The pupil reported the transfer from Primary School 7 to Secondary school 7.1 to have been smooth, and to have had a positive impact upon her perception of her Welsh language abilities and on her language use. The pupil reports that the secondary school Welsh lessons have enabled her to improve her spelling and vocabulary and to expand her genres of written Welsh:

when you were in primary you were a bit younger and they were teaching you how to speak it [Welsh]. But now that you are in secondary school they teach you … more advanced words and they help you how to use your imagination more and like … spelling and stuff like that.

[Pu.040.SS7.1.WM]

The pupil perceives herself to be Welsh-dominant with regard to reading, writing and understanding, with equal competence in speaking her two languages at the secondary school stage. That this is a consequence of her Welsh-medium secondary school experience is indicated by the pupil’s secondary school assessment of her linguistic ability being different from that given at the end of primary school, when the pupil perceived herself to be Welsh dominant with regard to reading, but equally competent in her two languages in relation to the other three linguistic competencies. However, although positive in relation to Welsh, the pupil expresses a wish to be a ‘balanced’ bilingual at the secondary school stage:

I want to improve on English, because I am better at Welsh. I want to be good at the two so I can have a balance … in English I want to get to a standard.

[Pu.040.SS7.1.WM]

With regard to language use, the pupil notes that her use of Welsh has increased both within and out-with the school context as a result of the secondary school’s Welsh-language use policy. She notes of her secondary school Welsh language use:

I use it a lot more here. I use it more in the school. When I was in [Primary School 7], I had friends outside school that would come into [transfer to] [Secondary School 7.1] as well. And I always used to speak English to them but now it has changed because in school you have to speak Welsh. So I speak

97 This pupil’s parent did not participate in an interview.
Welsh to them in school. But now it’s gone different outside school I start speaking Welsh to them as well.

The influence of such school-based Welsh language use on pupils’ social language use in the community will be further discussed in Chapter 6 in relation to the language planning theory outlined in Chapter 2. The pupil explains that such informal peer Welsh language use in social contexts is fostered by the secondary school’s provision of ‘fun’ school based Welsh-language activities:

On a Wednesday, everybody stays for an extra hour and you get to choose a variety of clubs … It probably helps you speak Welsh as well because you … not play but you enjoy through the Welsh as well. So it shows that Welsh can be fun as well as the commitment side.

The pupil is positive about the future in terms of the development of her linguistic abilities and in relation to her projected Welsh language use in adulthood. The pupil is confident that her Welsh will further improve at secondary school in the same way as has that of the older pupils she knew at primary school. She explains that the all-secondary school Eisteddfod was:

a chance for everybody, all different ages, to get together and talk – and you can see the difference. Like when we were in [Primary School 7] say when we were in Year 3, the Year 6s – probably that are now in Year 10 or something – you can see that their Welsh has come on really good.

In relation to future Welsh language use, the pupil states her intention to be a Welsh-medium teacher. The strength of the pupil’s attachment to the Welsh language is evidenced in the assertion:

If I taught in an English school it wouldn’t seem right, but if I taught in a Welsh school it would seem like, not home, but I would be used to it because I’ve come through a Welsh school.

The pupil strongly identifies with Welsh, viewing the language as an integral part of who she is:
I think I couldn't imagine myself not speaking Welsh because it is just something that I have known since well not since I have been born but since I could talk like yeah.

The pupil expressed a similarly strong home-based language identification at the primary school stage:

I think it [Welsh] is a big part [of who I am] because it was my first language and stuff like that.

6.2 Negative Cycles

Such positive linguistic transitions contrast with the experience of Pupil 001 from the Scottish context and Pupil 061 from the Welsh context.

6.2.1 Gaelic-medium pupil (Pu.001.PS01.SS01.GM) – negative cycle

This pupil lives in an urban area of the lowlands which is predominantly English-speaking. Only 0.31% of people in the council area in which the school is situated are Gaelic speakers and no Gaelic speakers are recorded by the 2001 census as residing in the local area surrounding the school. The primary school is a dual stream school, in which no Gaelic is taught to the English-medium stream. Thus, although Gaelic is the language of the majority of the curriculum in the Gaelic-medium stream, the main language of the school is English.

The mother of Pupil 001 reported the choice of Gaelic-medium primary education for her daughter to be on account of a perception of a positive pedagogical environment, the benefits of bilingualism and a family connection with Gaelic. The parent notes of the decision:

originally we were told it was smaller class sizes and it would help them with their ability to speak out, and also if they wanted to learn other languages when they are older, it keeps that part of the brain active apparently, that was the main choices [laughs] and plus my husband is from [a Gaelic-speaking area].

Pupil 001 reports her decision for the available Gaelic-medium secondary education to be due to a wish to continue speaking Gaelic and a wish to stay with her primary school peer group. She notes:
I [want to] carry it [Gaelic] on all through my life I think, so that I’ve got a second language … we had a choice of [school name], [school name] and [Secondary School 1] and [Secondary School 1] is the only one that has Gaelic so I thought I would do that one. And everybody in the class is going to [Secondary School 1].

As detailed in Appendix 4, B.1 & B.2, whilst pupils received 60% of their education through the medium of Gaelic at the upper primary school stage, this reduced to six periods per week at the secondary school stage, 15-20% of curricular time. Secondary School 1 provides Gaelic and several other subjects through the medium of Gaelic, but the Gaelic-medium social science provision is provided on a ‘rotational’ basis, with pupils changing subject each term [Te.021.SS01.GM]. Thus pupils receive 3 periods per week of Gaelic as a subject, and three periods per week of one of the social sciences.

Pupil 001 reported the transfer from Primary school 1 to Secondary school 1 to have had a negative impact upon her perception of her linguistic abilities, on her preferred medium of instruction of subjects and upon her intentions regarding the incorporation of Gaelic into her future plans.

In relation to linguistic ability, the pupil perceives the transfer from the primary to secondary school language models to have had a negative impact upon her confidence in both Gaelic and English. In relation to Gaelic, she reports an increase in difficulty between the primary and secondary school stages:

Gaelic was much easier [in primary] because you started off from the beginning and you worked your way through, but then you just took a big, big jump into secondary and it was hard [respondent hits her hand on the desk on 'hard'].

The pupil attributes this challenge with Gaelic to the diversification of curricular content involved in studying a range of secondary school subjects through the medium of Gaelic, together with the terminological difficulty of the accompanying resources. She explains of the Gaelic-medium curricular resources:

we’ve got this book, it’s about Vikings … and all the words that are in it you’re like, ‘I’ve never heard of that before!’
The pupil does not perceive that she can bridge the gap in linguistic difficulty between primary and secondary school Gaelic-medium instruction, however, and thus would prefer English-language subject instruction with Gaelic as a subject.

In relation to English language competencies, the pupil reports experiencing challenges switching from Gaelic-medium to English-medium instruction at the primary to secondary school stage in mathematics and art due to an unfamiliarity with English language subject vocabulary. In relation to mathematics the pupil notes:

It was different words, because, I mean, you feel embarrassed to talk about it, but you know how like minus and subtract I kind of, I was like ‘what do they words mean’ because I knew them as, like in the Gaelic word and stuff.

[Pu.001.SS01.GM]

The pupil also reported English as a subject to be challenging at the secondary school stage. She notes:

It [English] was hard because you learn more in English than I thought there was to it, like metaphors and similes – I never knew anything about them until I came here and most people [English-medium pupils] did.

[Pu.001.SS01.GM]

Five months into secondary school education the pupil perceives that she is ‘still a little bit behind’ in English as compared with her English-medium counterparts. She perceives that she is ‘catching up’, but reports that the school does not give her any additional help with improving her English. The pupil attributes her experienced difficulties in English to her Gaelic-medium primary education:

Gaelic kind of, I’m not meaning it in a horrible way, but it kind of got in the way of my English a little bit. In primary, we didn’t really get a lot of English, and like I never got taught a lot of English.

[Pu.001.SS01.GM]

The pupil summarizes her linguistic transition from the primary to secondary school language model in relation to Gaelic and English thus:

It’s harder to grasp everything in English, but saying that Gaelic is hard as well … Gaelic is hard to understand because it’s harder in secondary, but English is much harder for me to grasp in because I’ve been doing Gaelic in primary.

[Pu.001.SS01.GM]
Such a negative linguistic experience at the primary to secondary transition stage influences the pupil’s intentions in relation to the use of Gaelic in the future. The pupil anticipates that she will use Gaelic occasionally in informal domains rather than in the formal tertiary level academic context:

[in the future] I would probably just use it [Gaelic] now and again at different places – I wouldn’t go like to university and study it and stuff, I’d rather just keep it to myself and maybe even talk to people if I met somebody.  

[Pu.001.SS01.GM]

Pupil 001’s negative linguistic experience at the primary to secondary school stage thus seems to have fostered a negative cycle of more challenging Gaelic-medium subject content, decreased linguistic confidence, and a more negative attitude towards Gaelic-medium learning in both secondary and tertiary education. However, the pupil still identifies with speaking Gaelic ‘quite a lot’ at the secondary school stage. She explains:

INT and to what extent do you identify with Gaelic like how much do you think that speaking Gaelic is part of who you are?  
RES quite a lot because it’s like a talent to do it  
INT mh hmm  
RES and my mum and dad are like proud of me  
INT uh huh  
RES for doing the Gaelic and stuff.

[Pu.001.SS01.GM]

6.2.2 Welsh-medium pupil (Pu.061.PS09.SS9.1.WM) – negative cycle

This pupil lives in a semi-rural bilingual area of South-West Wales. 49% of the inhabitants of the council area in which the school is situated are Welsh speakers as are 54% of people who reside in the local area surrounding the school. The primary school is a dual stream school, in which Welsh is taught as a subject to the English-medium stream. Welsh is the language of the majority of the curriculum in the Welsh-medium stream, with Welsh and English as languages of the school.

Pupil 061 explained her decision to switch to English-medium education at the secondary school stage in terms of her perceived English-dominance in linguistic ability and language use. She notes of Welsh:

when I learned it, it was like a bit hard but then when I got the hang of it, it was easy but I’m not going to go on with it in secondary school … because I speak
more English at home and in school when I’m playing and I’d rather speak English cause I know more words in English.

The pupil cites English being ‘easier to understand’ as the reason for her choosing to do History, Geography, Religious Education and Mathematics – the four subjects for which she had a choice of Welsh or English medium of instruction – in English at secondary school. However, as a Welsh-medium primary educated pupil, Pupil 061 must study drama, music, and information communication technology bilingually at the early secondary school stage (Appendix 4, B.3).

Pupil 061 reported the transfer from Primary school 9 (where she was taught half of her curriculum through the medium of Welsh) to Secondary school 9.1 to have been linguistically challenging with regard to Welsh, despite the medium of instruction decisions detailed above. The pupil reported her secondary school Celtic language experience to have had a negative impact upon her perception of her linguistic abilities, upon her language use and upon her participation in extra-curricular Welsh language activities.

In relation to secondary school learning using Welsh, the pupil finds bilingual instruction to be challenging, and would prefer drama, music and information communication technology to be in English. Of drama, she notes:

I’d rather the drama in English to act stuff cause you can’t really do, well I can, but it’s alright, but I can’t understand it as good as English.

The pupil also perceives Welsh as a subject to be challenging at the secondary school stage, and reflects that Welsh at primary school was ‘quite easy, but it gets harder when you come up [to secondary school]’. The pupil’s disillusionment with Welsh at the secondary school stage is such that she would stop learning Welsh as a subject if she could.

The pupil perceives herself to be English-dominant in all four aspects of linguistic competence at the secondary school stage, as at the primary school stage,

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Pupil 061’s parent does not give a clear rationale for the choice of Welsh-medium primary education, rather explaining that it was her husband’s wish and that her husband is a Welsh speaker. It could thus be inferred that it was a family linguistic heritage rationale.
and is cognisant that her patterns of language use and the linguistic medium of her leisure activities contribute towards and perpetuate such linguistic dominance. The pupil perceives herself to be stronger in English

because I speak more English and I know more English and I watch more English on TV.

[Pu.061.SS9.1.WM]

However, the pupil is ‘happy [to be] better in English’ and expresses no desire to be a ‘balanced’ bilingual like Pupil 040, the ‘positive cycle’ Welsh pupil. Such a lack of motivation to improve her Welsh language abilities is evidenced in the decrease in the pupil’s language use and participation in extra-curricular Celtic language activities at the secondary school stage (described below).

In relation to language use Pupil 061 notes that she used Welsh ‘more in primary’ [Pu.061.SS9.1.WM]. The pupil attributes the decrease in her Welsh language use at the secondary school stage to her participation in fewer Welsh-medium classes at secondary school and a decrease in Welsh language use to teachers when outside of the classroom. The pupil reports that she still speaks English to her friends, as in primary school, and speaks to her father solely in English, even if the language of address is Welsh:

I answer him in English, but sometimes he asks me in Welsh.

[Pu.061.SS9.1.WM]

The pupil attributes such self-conscious English language use with her father to her perception that Welsh is difficult. She states: ‘I’d rather speak English because Welsh is harder’ [Pu.061.SS9.1.WM].

The pupil does not participate in the Welsh-language activities for the Welsh fluent speaker stream (the secondary school grouping for pupils who attended Welsh-medium primary education or who are fluent in Welsh from home). The pupil characterises such activities as ‘the Welsh group things’ and disassociates herself from such a group when she notes: ‘I don’t really like speaking Welsh.’ Such a disinclination to use Welsh at the secondary school stage has also resulted in the pupil not participating in the Urdd or the Eisteddfod activities in Year 7 when she had participated in Year 6. However, the pupil identifies with Welsh, perceiving Welsh to be part of who she is at the secondary school stage. Such a view is
consistent with the pupil’s primary school response: ‘it’s like a big part of me but I don’t really like speaking it’ [Pu.061.PS09.WM].

In relation to language use in the future, Pupil 061 perceives that she will use English in employment, believing this to be the main language of this social domain. She argues:

> if I did work I’d be able to talk English more cause that’s what usually people talk.

[Pu.061.SS9.1.WM]

The pupil perceives that her future Welsh language use would primarily be to reply to being addressed in Welsh, and explains:

> maybe some people [will] talk Welsh to me so I can talk back to them.

[Pu.061.SS9.1.WM]

Thus, in the transition from primary to secondary school Pupil 061 has further distanced herself from Welsh and has moved towards an almost complete disengagement from Welsh-medium education, Welsh-language use and participation in Welsh language activities.

6.3 Concluding comments

The vignettes exemplify the complex relationships between decisions regarding the medium of instruction of education, language learning experiences and aspects of language relevant to language use, such as linguistic ability, opportunities to use the language and language attitudes (Ó Flatharta et al. 2009:4, Section 2.3.1.1) at an individual pupil level.

The data presented in Chapters 4 and 5 outlined patterns of similarity and difference between Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupils regarding language use, perceived linguistic ability, linguistic identifications and perceived usefulness of Gaelic or Welsh for the future at the primary school stage, and further identified aspects of continuity and change in these areas between the primary and secondary school stages. The concluding chapter (Chapter 6) discusses the results presented in Chapters 4 and 5 in relation to the contextual factors, theoretical frameworks and research outlined in Chapters 1 and 2.
Chapter Six  Celtic-medium education in Scotland and Wales at the primary-secondary school transition stage: choice and language planning

Section 6.1 discusses the first set of research questions [Appendix 1, A.1] concerning the choice of medium of instruction of education at the primary and early secondary school stages. Section 6.2 focuses on the second set of research questions [Appendix 1, A.1] regarding aspects of pupils’ language of relevance to language planning. In each section, the focus is on similarities and differences in patterns of response between the Scottish and Welsh contexts, and over time, in accordance with the comparative, longitudinal methodological approach outlined in Chapter 3. The implications of the findings in the current policy context are discussed after each section, in Sections 6.1.4 and 6.2.4 respectively.

6.1 Choice of medium of instruction of education

Section 6.1.1 considers the reasons parents give for choosing Celtic-medium primary education. Section 6.1.2 considers Celtic-medium primary educated pupils’ rationales for their linguistic decisions at the early secondary school stage, whilst Section 6.1.3 compares the rationales between these two stages.

6.1.1 Choice of medium of instruction at the primary school stage: Scottish and Welsh comparisons

There were four main sets of reasons for the choice of Celtic-medium primary education: family heritage, valuing bilingualism and its associated advantages, the perception that Celtic-medium education is a good quality education and employment opportunities.

6.1.1.1 Family heritage

Parents often cited a family heritage of Gaelic or Welsh-speaking as having motivated the choice of Celtic-medium primary education. The two distinct versions of this – family linguistic heritage and family cultural heritage (Chapter 4, Topic 1, Sections 1.1.1.1. and 1.1.2.1 respectively) – were common to the Scottish and Welsh contexts. However, there were differences as well as similarities in the representations of these categories.
The expressions of family linguistic heritage reasons were similar across the two countries, with parents choosing Celtic-medium education either to continue or to re-establish a family linguistic tradition. This rationale sometimes combined with another reason for choice, for example, the benefits of bilingualism or the perceived quality of Celtic-medium education (Sections 6.1.1.2 and 6.1.1.3 below). Such a combination of family-based integrative and educational-based instrumental reasons is found in previous literature on choice from both Wales and Scotland (Wales: Williams et al. 1978, Bellin et al. 1999, Packer & Campbell 1997, Hodges 2011. Scotland: Grant 1983, Roberts 1991, MacNeil 1993, Johnstone et al. 1999, Stockdale et al. 2003, Stephen et al. 2010, O’Hanlon et al. 2010).

However, in the Welsh context, family linguistic heritage was additionally combined with national identity as rationales for the choice of Celtic-medium primary education (Chapter 4, Section 1.1.1.2), a link between the Celtic language and national identity which was not cited as a reason for the choice of Celtic-medium education by the Scottish parents. National identity rationales for the choice of Celtic-medium education were cited in previous research on both Wales and Scotland, however, and thus whilst the present findings concord with the studies of Williams et al. (1978) and Hodges (2011) on Wales, the links between national identity and the choice of Gaelic-medium education found by Grant (1983), MacNeil (1993), Stockdale et al. (2003) and O’Hanlon et al. (2010) were not replicated here.

No clear explanation for this difference is evident – and that national identification was given as a rationale in the Welsh sample shows that the explanation cannot lie in the research design – but one possibility is a combination of two factors. One is that surveys such as Stockdale et al (2003) asked respondents directly about language and national identity, for example asking respondents whether they thought that ‘Gaelic is an important part of Scottish identity’ (2003: 33). A second is that there is a much stronger historical, public and policy association of the Welsh language with Welsh nationhood than there is between Gaelic and Scottish identity (see Section 2.1).

A national difference also emerged in parental respondents’ representations of family cultural heritage as a reason for the choice of Celtic-medium primary education, however, which adds further evidence to these question of the cultural associations of the languages. The data showed the family cultural heritage to be
associated with links to the regional geographic context of the Gàidhealtachd in the Scottish sample but to the national geographic context in the Welsh sample. Such a finding concords with the historical differences in the association of language and nation (Sections 2.1.1.1 and 2.1.1.2) and with previous research that found the choice of Gaelic-medium education to be associated with a regional Highland or Island identity (Roberts 1991, Johnstone et al. 1999, O’Hanlon et al. 2010).

6.1.1.2 Bilingualism

Several parents from both countries stated the wish that their child be bilingual as the main reason motivating the choice of Celtic-medium primary education. Two main manifestations of this rationale were voiced: a general valuing of bilingualism and its associated advantages and a specific valuing of Celtic-language-English bilingualism due to the linguistic heritage of place (Chapter 4, Sections 1.1.1.2 & 1.1.2.2).

The latter rationale was framed within the same geographical contexts as was the ‘family cultural heritage’ rationale discussed in 6.1.1.1 above, namely that the valuing of Gaelic-English bilingualism was typically associated with the regional context of the Highlands and Islands, whilst the valuing of Welsh-English bilingualism was associated with a national identity rationale and with a desire to preserve a national language, even by respondents who lived in Anglicized areas of Wales (Section 1.1.2.1). The citation of a wish for language maintenance in the choice of Celtic-medium education in Wales concords with the findings of Hodges (2011: 311). Such parental knowledge of the role of Celtic-medium education in language maintenance may be the result of the policy and awareness raising work of the Welsh Assembly Government and Welsh Language Board respectively. The wish for language maintenance was not cited in the present study as a main reason for the choice of Gaelic-medium education. This finding concords with the results of Johnstone et al. (1999), but such a rationale had been mentioned in other previous studies in Scotland (MacNeil 1993, Stockdale et al. 2003, Stephen et al. 2010, O’Hanlon et al. 2010). The absence of quantitative studies showing the relative importance and frequency of parental reasons for the choice of Gaelic-medium education makes comparisons of the results between the present and previous studies difficult.
The former rationale for the choice of Celtic-medium primary education – a valuing of bilingualism and its associated advantages – was represented similarly in Scotland and Wales, with both Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium parents citing enhanced cognitive and academic performance and the easier acquisition of subsequent languages as advantages of bilingualism. The acquisition of an additional European or World language was subsequently connected to employment advantages by parents in both countries. Such parental knowledge of the advantages of bilingualism may be the result of familiarity with well-known research projects, such as Johnstone et al. (1999) in Scotland or Reynolds et al. (1998) in Wales, or the parents’ having become familiar with the relevant bilingualism research (Section 2.1.2.2). Parental citations of the benefits of bilingualism in the choice of Celtic-medium education concords with previous research by Williams et al. (1978) and Packer & Campbell (1997) in the Welsh context, and with research by Grant (1983), MacNeil (1993), Johnstone et al. (1999), Stockdale et al. (2003), Stephen et al. (2010) and O’Hanlon et al. (2010) in the Scottish context.

However, such a valuing of bilingualism and its associated advantages tended to co-exist with another reason for the choice of Celtic-medium education and there were differences by nation in this regard. The bilingualism rationale typically paired with a cultural motivation in the Scottish sample and with an instrumental motivation in the Welsh sample. Whilst Scottish parents often cited a wish that pupils use Gaelic-English bilingualism to integrate into family or community, parents from the Welsh context frequently cited future Welsh-language employment opportunities as a reason for choosing Welsh-medium primary education. Such findings from Scotland concord with Roberts’ (1991) study which reported parents to perceive Gaelic-medium education to be useful for integration into the Western Isles community, rather than for employment. The national difference in the citation of employment rationales in the choice of Celtic-medium education is discussed in Section 6.1.1.4.

6.1.1.3 Bilingual Education

Parents often cited the perception that Celtic-medium education was a positive pedagogical context as the main rationale for choosing it. The most
frequently cited version of this perception was the small class sizes in Celtic-medium education. Class size was perceived by parents in both Scotland and Wales to indicate a positive pedagogical environment in terms of such complex matters as the number and quality of interactions between teacher and child, and children’s access to classroom resources.

A perception that the quantity of teacher-pupil interactions in small classes enhances pedagogical quality is not substantiated by research, which argues that it is the *quality* of the interactions between teacher and pupil that matter (Hanushek 2002, Blatchford 2003). That the quality of interactions between Celtic-medium teachers and pupils is high is borne out by research in both Wales and Scotland. The study of four Welsh-medium and four English-medium secondary schools in South East Wales by Reynolds et al. (1998) – presented in relation to pupils’ national identifications in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.3.1 – also collected information on the pedagogical processes and ethos of schools. It found the Welsh-medium schools to be better than the English-medium schools in maintaining orderly discipline and in the quality of teaching and assessment, indexed by variables such as there being a higher average percentage of time on task and more interactive whole class teaching in the Welsh-medium schools, both of which are examples of good pedagogical practice that have been found more generally to strengthen attainment (Reynolds et al. 1998:18). Analysis by O’Hanlon et al. (2010: 33-36) of attainment data in the 2007 Scottish Survey of Achievement from 35 Gaelic-medium and 737 English-medium schools indicates, in relation to science, that teachers in schools with a Gaelic-medium stream have a higher opinion of their pupils than do teachers in other schools, and that the Gaelic-medium pupils report their teachers to be more engaged with them than do their English-medium counterparts.

More broadly, parents from both Scotland and Wales in the present research cited the perception that Celtic-medium education had a good ethos as a reason for choice. The parental belief that Celtic-medium education is a good quality education is found in previous studies in Wales and Scotland (Wales: Williams et al. 1978, Bush et al. 1984, Bellin et al. 1999, Packer & Campbell 1997, Hodges 2011. Scotland: MacNeil 1993, Johnstone et al. 1999, Stockdale et al. 2003, Stephen et al. 2010, O’Hanlon et al. 2010). However, a key aspect of the data from the present
project was a parental focus on pedagogical processes, rather than on the educational outcomes cited in relation to the choice of Celtic-medium education by Stockdale et al. (2003) research and Hodges (2011).

6.1.1.4 Employment Opportunities

Enhanced employment opportunities were the final set of reasons that parents gave for the choice of Celtic-medium primary education. There was a marked difference between Scotland and Wales in relation to both the frequency with which such a rationale was cited and the primacy it was given.

The usefulness of Welsh-English bilingualism for employment was frequently cited by parents in the Welsh sample as a reason for the choice of Celtic-medium primary education, and indeed was often the main motivation given (Chapter 4, Section 1.1.2.4). Parents typically perceived that Welsh-English bilingualism would improve one’s employment prospects across Wales, another instance of the link between nation and language (Sections 6.1.1.1 and 6.1.1.2). Parents’ reports (in the year 2007) thus indicated that they had perceived the Welsh language economy to be national in scope in 2000, the time at which they were making the decision for Welsh-medium primary education. By then, the Welsh Language Act 1993 had required that Welsh and English be treated equally in the public sector and in the legal system (Section 2.2.2.1). The potential link between such institutionalization of the Welsh language and the choice of Welsh-medium education is reflected in the tendency for the examples of specific Welsh-language jobs given by parents to be in sectors covered by that Act, such as local authority officer, fire-fighter or solicitor (Chapter 4, Section 1.1.2.4).

The finding that parents perceive there to be increased employment opportunities for Welsh-English bilinguals concords with research by Williams et al. (1978), Packer & Campbell (1997) and Hodges (2011). However, unlike Williams et al. (1978) and Hodges (2011) who found employment-related rationales for the choice of Welsh-medium education typically to be given by parents who are ‘burghers’ (Watson 1964) – seeing their child’s future in Wales – the parents in the present study often gave both ‘burgher’ and ‘spiralist’ rationales, on the basis that Welsh-English bilingualism would increase pupils’ employment opportunities in Wales, and that the benefits of bilingualism in more easily facilitating the acquisition
of a third language would additionally widen pupils’ employment opportunities outside Wales (Chapter 4, Section 1.1.2.2).

In Scotland, the notion that there are increased employment opportunities for Gaelic-English bilinguals was only cited by one respondent, when it was mentioned as a contributory reason to the choice of Gaelic-medium education alongside facilitating an understanding of Gaelic culture and the benefits associated with bilingualism. Such a finding may be related to the absence of national-level Gaelic language legislation in 2000, when the parents in the present study were choosing Gaelic-medium primary education. In relation to the Gaelic-related employment opportunities at that time, McLeod notes – on the basis of a study of the language requirements of the jobs advertised in the Stornoway Gazette, the Oban Times and the West Highland Free Press between January 2000 and June 2001 – that:

> even in Scotland’s most strongly Gaelic areas, it is apparent that although a niche ‘Gaelic sector’ has developed, Gaelic remains excluded from the mainstream and has made only limited inroads into the strategic thinking of employers in the public, voluntary and commercial sectors.

(McLeod 2001: 1)

Thus, at that time, Gaelic was not institutionalized into the work sphere to the same extent as Welsh was in Wales. There has since been legislative and policy developments in Scotland which have resulted in the greater incorporation of Gaelic into the employment sector, as outlined in Section 6.1.3.

The finding that employment-related matters are not typically a parental reason for the choice of Gaelic-medium education concords with the previous literature outlined in Section 2.1.2.2, where employment was not mentioned as a rationale by Grant (1983), Roberts (1991), MacNeil (1993), Stockdale et al. (2003) or Stephen et al. (2010) and was mentioned by only a very small number of respondents in Johnstone et al. (1999) and O’Hanlon et al. (2010).

A final difference between Wales and Scotland is worthy of note, namely the difference in the availability of ‘choice’ in relation to Celtic-medium education. Parents in Primary School 10 (in Gwynedd) in this study did not have a choice regarding Welsh-medium/bilingual education (Chapter 4, Section 1.1.2.5), because the local authority promotes Welsh-medium education as part of the cultural and linguistic heritage of the area. Compulsory Welsh-medium provision results in both
the institutionalization of the Welsh language in education in the area and in innovations in pedagogy – centres for late starters to Welsh-medium education, for example (See footnote 72, Chapter 4, Section 1.1.2.5). Such a policy did not pertain to Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, the most strongly Gaelic-speaking local authority area of Scotland. However, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar are considering a similar Gaelic-medium education policy in their Gaelic Language Plan 2012-2017 in order that they reflect and protect the linguistic and cultural heritage of the area.

6.1.1.5 Concluding comments

Two key differences between the Scottish and Welsh contexts in relation to the choice of Celtic-medium primary education have emerged from the present study. The first is the distinction in the association of language and place and language and identity, with language typically being associated with the national context in Wales, and with the Gàidhealtachd in Scotland, and the second is the greater tendency of parents of Welsh-medium pupils to cite employment-related instrumental rationales as a key or additional reason for the choice of Celtic-medium primary education. The former tendency relates to the historical and policy background in 2000, when this parental group were making the decision for Celtic-medium education, whilst the latter tendency reflects the institutionalization of the Celtic languages in the two nations in that year.

6.1.2 Choice of medium of instruction at the secondary school stage: Scottish and Welsh comparisons

Final year Celtic-medium primary school pupils from both Scotland and Wales typically cited themselves as the key stakeholder in the decision regarding the medium of instruction of their secondary schooling. Two of the three reasons for the choice of Celtic-medium education at the secondary school level were common to both countries – a wish for continuity of primary school linguistic experience, and a wish to stay with primary school friends. Employment opportunities and linguistic heritage were the third reason cited by Celtic-medium pupils in Scotland and Wales respectively.
6.1.2.1 Continuity of primary school linguistic experience

Celtic-medium pupils in both Scotland and Wales often cited the wish for continuity of their primary school linguistic experience as a key reason for the choice of Celtic-medium secondary education. However, the reasons underpinning this wish displayed interesting similarities and differences between the two countries.

Two rationales – enjoyment of the primary school Celtic-medium experience and a wish to maintain or develop Celtic language competencies – were voiced by both Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupils (Chapter 4, Sections 2.1.3.2 and 2.2.3.1). The former finding concords with previous research in which pupils report their experience of Celtic-medium primary education to have been positive, such as MacNeil and Stradling (2000) in the Scottish context and Laugharne (2005) in the Welsh context. The latter finding concords with previous research with parents of Gaelic-medium pupils in the Scottish context (O'Hanlon et al. 2010), in which the reason for continuity to Celtic-medium secondary school tended to be a combination of the original reason for the choice for Gaelic-medium education and a wish not to ‘waste’ the Gaelic that had been learnt at primary school (Section 2.1.2.2). The finding is also consistent with previous research on Wales (Gruffudd et al. 2004), in which parents of Welsh-medium primary pupils in Anglicized areas were found to value the development of their child’s Welsh language competencies by means of Welsh-medium secondary education. The present study found no local-authority related differences in pupils’ wish to maintain and develop their Celtic language by means of Celtic-medium secondary education, in contrast to the finding by Gruffudd et al. (2004) that parents of pupils in Welsh-speaking areas were more likely to perceive that Welsh-medium primary education was sufficient Welsh language input for their children (Section 2.1.1.2).

The Welsh-medium pupils additionally voiced two factors motivating continuity to Celtic-medium secondary education that were not cited in the Scottish context. The first was a perception that switching from Welsh-medium to English-medium education would be difficult whether for particular subjects or generally, and the second was the belief that learning through the Celtic language is easier than learning through English (Chapter 4, Section 2.2.3.1). Such a Wales-Scotland difference based on the ease of learning through the medium of the Celtic language
concords with the country difference in pupils’ perceptions of their linguistic abilities (Chapter 5, Section 4.1.1): final-year Welsh-medium pupils reported themselves to be more confident in their writing abilities in their Celtic language (compared to English) than did their Gaelic-medium counterparts.

However, as the Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupils have similar first and home language backgrounds (Chapter 3, Section 3.8.1.1), the difference in stated ease of learning through the Celtic language is likely due to a characteristic of the Celtic languages themselves (such as Welsh being more phonetically spelt than is Gaelic), to some aspect of the pedagogical approach to teaching and learning language, or to the amount of Celtic language use in the community, rather than being related to first and second language performance. Settling these questions would require research which investigates the linguistic outcomes of Celtic-medium education in relation to classroom processes of teaching and learning language and in relation to the pupils’ experiences of learning through their Celtic language at primary school.

6.1.2.2 Friends

Two manifestations of the friendship group rationale for decisions regarding language of education at the secondary school stage were shared across countries – a wish to stay with friends from one’s own primary school and a wish to be educated with friends from one’s community.

In each country, for some pupils, being educated with existing friends was the sole rationale for the decision regarding secondary school destination; this happened always to result in a choice for the Gaelic-medium stream in the pupil sample from Scotland and variously resulted in a choice of Welsh-medium education and English-medium education in the Welsh pupil sample (Chapter 4, Sections 2.1.3.1 & 2.2.3.2). Such evidence extends Gruffudd et al.’s (2004: 22) finding that ‘there is a tendency for pupils to follow friends’ in relation to the choice of Welsh First Language or Welsh Second Language at the early secondary school stage to the choice of medium of instruction of education.

In other instances, pupils’ decisions regarding secondary school medium of instruction were influenced by a combination of the friends’ rationale for secondary
school destination and pupils’ own linguistic considerations. When the decision was for Celtic-medium secondary education, the additional reason typically related to a wish for continuity of linguistic experience (with the Scottish-Welsh differences outlined in 6.1.2.1 in evidence). When the decision was for English-medium secondary education, the obverse of the continuity rationale was cited as an additional reason (a desire for change) together with a more instrumental motivation relating to attainment in Welsh Second Language as a subject. A rationale of this latter kind for the choice of English-medium education – for better grades in Welsh – aligns with Gruffudd et al.’s (2004) findings regarding the motivations for the choice of Welsh Second Language rather than Welsh First Language as a subject amongst Welsh-medium primary educated pupils (Chapter 2, Section 2.1.1.2).

6.1.2.3 Employment opportunities

A difference between the countries was returned in the frequency with which Celtic-medium pupils cited employment-related rationales as a motivating factor in the choice of Celtic-medium secondary education. Whilst several Gaelic-medium primary pupils cited increased employment opportunities or a wish to have Gaelic-medium employment as the key reason in their decision to continue with Gaelic-medium education at the secondary school stage, the Welsh-medium primary pupils did not cite employment rationales as a key factor in the choice of Welsh-medium secondary education (Chapter 4, Section 2.1.3.3). However, this difference regarding employment rationales does not mean that Welsh-language employment is not important to the Welsh-medium pupils. Rather, it is typically cited in relation to the usefulness of the Celtic language to their future (Chapter 5, Section 5.2.2.1), and there is no Scotland-Wales differences between the Celtic-medium pupil groups in this regard (Chapter 5, Section 5.2.1.1, discussed in Section 6.2.4 below).

One possible explanation for such a national difference in Celtic-medium primary school pupils’ citation of employment rationales in the decision for Celtic-medium secondary education may be found in the advice that pupils report receiving regarding their choice of medium of instruction at the secondary school stage. Parental citations of job opportunities as a rationale for the pupils’ staying in Gaelic-medium education was the most recurrent aspect of family advice regarding
continuing with Gaelic-medium secondary education (Chapter 4, Section 2.1.2). In contrast, only one Welsh-medium pupil reports having received employment related parental advice regarding their linguistic choices at the primary-secondary school stage (Chapter 4, Section 2.2.2). Parents of Welsh-medium pupils are rather cited as encouraging their children to continue in Welsh-medium education in order to develop their Welsh language competencies (Chapter 4, Section 2.2.2), an aspect of advice which may be a different manifestation of an employment rationale, in terms of choosing Welsh-medium secondary education in order to gain the linguistic skills which will subsequently enable Welsh-medium employment. Such parental advice is not cited in the Scottish context. The development of Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium parental views regarding the utility of Celtic-medium education for employment between 2000 and 2007 – the years for the choice of medium of instruction of their child’s primary and secondary schooling – is discussed in Section 6.1.3.

6.1.2.4 Linguistic heritage

A difference between Scotland and Wales was also returned in relation to the frequency with which Celtic-medium primary pupils cited linguistic heritage as a key factor in decisions regarding the medium of instruction of secondary schooling. Whilst several Welsh-medium pupils framed their choice within a linguistic heritage rationale, only one Gaelic-medium pupil cited this as a key reason for their decision (Chapter 4, Sections 2.2.3.3 & 2.1.3.4).

Moreover, the manifestations of such a linguistic heritage rationale exhibit interesting similarities and differences across the countries. Whilst the personal linguistic heritage rationale for the choice of Celtic-medium secondary education typically relates to pupils’ home and school language backgrounds in both the Scottish and Welsh contexts (personal linguistic identifications that are further explored in Section 6.2.3), national differences are returned in relation to linguistic heritage identifications relating to place and to family educational experience. With regard to the linguistic heritage of place, the Scotland-Wales regional-national difference illustrated in parents’ accounts of the choice of Celtic-medium primary education (Sections 6.1.1.1. and 6.1.1.2) is replicated in pupils’ accounts of the choice of Celtic-medium secondary education: whilst the Welsh-medium pupils
associate Welsh with the geographical area of Wales, the Gaelic-medium pupils associate Gaelic with the Highlands and Islands (Chapter 4, Sections 2.2.3.3 & 2.1.3.4). The Welsh-medium pupils additionally cite a national identity rationale for the choice of Welsh-medium secondary education, an extension of the association between language and place which is not voiced as a motive for the choice of Gaelic-medium secondary education in the Scottish context (Chapter 4, Section 2.2.3.3). Such a country difference in the relationship of language and national identity is paralleled in the parental data (Chapter 4, Sections 1.1.1. & 1.1.2), and has been discussed in Section 6.1.1.1.

With regard to country-level differences in family linguistic heritage rationales for the choice of Celtic-medium secondary education, one Welsh-medium primary pupil attributed their decision to a family linguistic heritage of Welsh-medium education (Chapter 4, Section 2.2.3.3) and another cited parental advice that she continue in Welsh-medium education at the secondary school stage as this was the pedagogical experience that her parent had had (Chapter 4, Section 2.2.1.2). Such a parental wish to reproduce their own school experience for their children is not cited in previous literature on the choice of Welsh-medium education, but relates to previous literature on school choice regarding private schooling (Deardon et al. 2010).

Family educational linguistic heritage was not cited in the Scottish pupil sample. Such a national contextual difference most likely relates to the historical development of Celtic-medium education in Wales and Scotland (outlined in Chapter 2). As Welsh-medium primary education was established in 1939 and Welsh-medium secondary education in 1956, compared with the analogous development of Gaelic-medium education in 1985 and 1992 respectively (Sections 2.1.1.1 & 2.1.2.1), it would be unlikely that there were any Gaelic-medium pupils on the cusp of transfer to secondary school in 2007 whose parents had attended Gaelic-medium education.

6.1.3 Choice of medium of instruction at the primary and secondary school stages

This section discusses the similarities and differences between the accounts of the reasons for the choice of primary and secondary school medium of instruction of education by national context. The purpose of such a comparison is to investigate
whether the differences in response are likely due to change from parent to pupil in the stakeholder making the decision, or to changes in the context over time.

Section 6.1.2.4 outlined the similarities in representations of place linguistic identifications (that is, with nation in Wales and with region in Scotland) between the rationales given by parents at the primary school stage and by pupils at the secondary school stage. The other rationales for the choice of language of education differed between the primary and secondary school stages, as illustrated in Table 10.

Table 10. Reasons for the choice of Celtic-medium education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Scotland</th>
<th>Wales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identification with nation</td>
<td>√ (Primary)</td>
<td>√ (Secondary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification with region</td>
<td>√ (Primary)</td>
<td>√ (Secondary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family heritage</td>
<td>√ (Primary)</td>
<td>√ (Secondary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benefits of bilingualism</td>
<td>√ (Primary)</td>
<td>√ (Secondary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedagogical context of bilingual education</td>
<td>√ (Primary)</td>
<td>√ (Secondary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity of primary school linguistic experience</td>
<td>√ (Primary)</td>
<td>√ (Secondary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>√ (Primary)</td>
<td>√ (Secondary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment opportunities</td>
<td>√ (Primary)</td>
<td>√ (Secondary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linguistic Heritage</td>
<td></td>
<td>√ (Secondary)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Scotland, identification with region, family heritage, the benefits of bilingualism and pedagogical context were cited as the key factors in the choice of Gaelic-medium primary education, whilst continuity of primary school linguistic experience, friends, employment opportunities and regional linguistic heritage were the main reasons given at the secondary school stage. In Wales, identification with nation, family heritage, the benefits of bilingualism, pedagogical context and employment opportunities were cited as key reasons for the choice of Welsh-medium...
primary education and continuity of primary school experience, a wish to be educated with friends and linguistic heritage were cited at the secondary school stage.

The differences in the rationales for the choice of Celtic-medium education at the primary and secondary school stages are likely due to the change in the key stakeholder (from parent to pupil) typically making the decision, with an associated difference in the level of cognition and breadth of life experiences (as described in relation to pupils in Sections 2.2.3.1.1, 2.2.3.2 and 2.2.3.3). This is substantiated by the similarity between the Scottish and Welsh contexts in the parental responses and in the pupil responses (Table 10), and by some pupils’ inability to fully understand their parents’ rationales due to the complexity of the theories of bilingualism and cognition underpinning them. The latter point is illustrated when a pupil explains the rationale for his continuance with Gaelic-medium secondary education:

My mum said I had to (laughs) … she said Gaelic would help me through my O level and Standard Grades cause it’ll give me more understanding for French because it’s good and eh in music, I’m not sure, don’t ask me how, I don’t know! [Pu.026.PS03.GM]

The primary pupils’ rationales for decisions regarding the medium of instruction of schooling thus seem to be qualitatively different from those of their parents.

Although the present study did not compare parental reasons for the choice of Celtic-medium education at the primary and secondary school stages, pupil reports of their parents’ rationales in cases where parents were cited as the key stakeholder in the decision regarding the language of secondary education may be compared to the parents’ reports of their reasons for the choice of Celtic-medium primary education. Such a comparison reveals a similarity of response – family linguistic and cultural heritage, the perception that Celtic-medium education is a positive pedagogical context, and the benefits of bilingualism (Chapter 4, Sections 2.1.1.2 and 2.2.1.2) – which suggests a similarity of parental rationale across the two school stages. Such a hypothesis is substantiated by the findings of research with parents of Gaelic-medium pupils by O’Hanlon et al. (2010), as noted in Section 6.1.2.1. The primary-secondary difference highlighted in Section 6.1.2.3 relating to employment-based rationales for the choice of Gaelic-medium education – a factor not cited by
parents in relation to the primary school stage, but cited as a key aspect of parental advice by pupils at the secondary school stage – is likely to be due to a perceived increase in the status and institutionalization of Gaelic in the employment sphere between 2000 and 2007, as no parallel shift was evidenced in the Welsh-medium data. Such a difference in the status and institutionalization of Gaelic in the employment sphere is likely to be the result of the *Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005*, which requires public bodies to create Gaelic Language Plans when requested to do so by Bòrd na Gàidhlig. Such Gaelic Language Plans aim to ensure that Gaelic is treated with ‘equal respect’ to English in relation to the public body’s corporate identity, communications, publications and staffing (BnG 2007b: 19). The Gaelic-medium pupils’ citations of Gaelic-language employment opportunities in the Parliament, in the Gaelic media and in teaching (Chapter 4, Section 2.1.3.3 & Chapter 5, Section 5.2.1.1) highlight the importance of such developments for the status of Gaelic and the perceived vitality of the Gaelic language economy.

### 6.1.4 Concluding comments – choice of Celtic-medium education

This study has shown the motivations for the choice of Celtic-medium education to differ both between the primary and secondary school stages and across the Scottish and Welsh contexts. In relation to continuity of Celtic-medium education at the primary to secondary school stage, an issue highlighted in both Wales and Scotland (Chapter 1, Baker & Jones 2000, Nisbet 2006), this study indicates that Celtic-medium primary pupils typically wish to continue into Celtic-medium secondary education in order to replicate their positive primary school experience and to stay with existing friendship groups. The choice of Celtic-medium secondary education is additionally linked to a wish to reflect a linguistic heritage in the Welsh context and to employment opportunities in the Scottish context. Thus the main obstacle to continuity of primary school Celtic-medium education at the secondary school stage is the availability of Celtic-medium secondary subject provision.

Recent policy initiatives aim to increase Gaelic-medium secondary subject provision, which, as explained in Section 2.1.2.3, was limited at the time of the

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99 As argued in 6.1.2.3, parental employment rationales for the choice of Welsh-medium education were indirectly evidenced at the secondary stage.
present research; that this was still the case in 2011 was confirmed by HMIE (2011: 7-8). In 2010 Bòrd na Gàidhlig published proposals to establish a ‘minimum core secondary Gaelic-medium education curriculum entitlement for all [Gaelic-medium primary] pupils’ (BnG 2010: 7). Such provision would consist of Gaelic-medium instruction in at least four of the eight curricular areas of the *Curriculum for Excellence*\(^{100}\) during the first two years of secondary school. It was suggested that History, Geography, Modern Studies, Mathematics and the Sciences be the initial focus in order that the appropriate pedagogical infrastructure (teacher training, national assessments, resources) for these subjects be developed. The Bòrd’s draft *National Gaelic Language Plan 2012-17* similarly pledges to ‘increase the proportion of the curriculum delivered through the medium of Gaelic’ at the secondary school stage (BnG 2011:33) and additionally notes that ‘there will also be a special focus on maintaining continuity and progression at key transition points, such as 3>pre-school, pre-school>primary, primary>secondary and secondary> FE/HE [Further Education/Higher Education]’ (BnG 2011:15). Continuity in the medium of instruction of school subjects at the primary to secondary school stage and progression in the Celtic language were key aspects of Celtic-medium pupil experience of primary-secondary school transition, which, as shown in the pupil vignettes (Chapter 5, Topic 6) can have a profound impact on pupil perceptions of their linguistic ability, on their language use and on their attitudes towards the Celtic language. As explained in Chapter 3, Section 3.7, although data on pupil experience of continuity of medium of instruction and of learning the Celtic language as a subject at the primary-secondary transition stage was collected as part of the research, it has not been considered in detail in the thesis, for reasons of lack of space. The evidence will be further explored in a future paper.

Recent policy developments in Wales also aim to strengthen primary to secondary school linguistic continuity and the provision of Welsh-medium secondary education. In 2006, the *Transition from Primary to Secondary School (Wales)* *Regulations* required secondary schools and their feeder primary schools to prepare a transition plan which encompasses strategies for ‘continuity of curriculum planning … continuity in teaching and learning methods … and consistency in the

\(^{100}\) The eight areas of the Curriculum for Excellence are Expressive Arts, Languages, Health and wellbeing, Mathematics, Religious and moral education, Sciences, Social Studies and Technologies.
assessment, monitoring and tracking of pupils’ progress’ (Regulation 5(7)). Such transition plans facilitate, but do not ensure, the prioritization of the Celtic language for Welsh-medium primary educated pupils in the transition to secondary school. The Welsh Assembly Government assists with planning the continuity of Welsh-medium instruction at the primary to secondary school stage by providing a taxonomy of Welsh-language provision defined according to classroom and school language use based on:

the medium of teaching at each stage, ie. the percentage of the curriculum (primary) and percentages of subjects (secondary) taught through the medium of Welsh and English [and] the language/languages used to communicate with pupils outside the curriculum, the ethos of the school, the language used in day to day business, and the language/languages used to communicate with parents.

(WAG 2007c :6)

A future study would usefully investigate whether the extent of such Celtic language provision and use impacts upon pupils’ language use, perceptions of their linguistic ability and language attitudes.101 In 2010, the Welsh Assembly Government published a national Welsh-medium Education Strategy which aims to increase provision of Welsh-medium secondary subjects. However, unlike the Scottish proposals, which aim to make Gaelic-medium provision at the early secondary school stage, the Welsh Government’s focus is rather on Welsh-medium provision at the 14-19 age range due to the existing institutionalization of Welsh-medium education at the early secondary school stage (Section 2.1.1.3).

6.2 Aspects of language relevant to language planning

Section 6.2.1 considers Celtic-medium pupils’ reported patterns of language use in relation to the contextual factors, theoretical frameworks and research outlined in Chapters 1 and 2. Section 6.2.2 does so in relation to pupils’ perceived linguistic ability and 6.2.3 in relation to pupils’ identifications with their Celtic language and their perceptions of its usefulness for the future (Chapter 5, Topics 3-5). Within each section, similarity and difference between the two countries at the primary school stage are discussed, before consideration is given to continuity and change in pupil

101 A study to create a taxonomy of Celtic-medium education is being conducted in the Scottish context (O’Hanlon, Paterson & McLeod, forthcoming).
response between the primary and secondary school stages, and whether the same patterns of consistency and change are exhibited in the two countries. The thesis will close with a consideration of the question of whether the Celtic language is indeed ‘lost in transition’ from a language planning perspective in the Scottish or Welsh context.

6.2.1 Language use

6.2.1.1 Language use at the primary school stage: Scottish and Welsh comparisons

6.2.1.1.1 Similarities across the two national contexts

The Celtic-medium pupils in Scotland and Wales reported similar patterns of language use in the home domain. In both contexts, the majority of pupils reported English-dominant language use to mother, father and siblings (Chapter 5, Sections 3.1.2.1 & 3.1.2.2). Such similar patterns of home language use are to be expected from pupil samples which have similar home language backgrounds (Section 3.8.1.1): around a half of both groups reported English as a first language (Appendix 5, B.2.1), and only a quarter reported both parents as Celtic language speakers (Appendix 5, B.3.2).

Such patterns of family language background may additionally explain the superficially surprising finding that the two Celtic-medium primary pupil groups report similar patterns of Celtic language use to adults outside of school, despite the Welsh-medium schools existing in more densely Celtic language speaking areas than do their Gaelic-medium counterparts (Appendix 4, B.1). 79% of Gaelic-medium and 67% of Welsh-medium pupils reported speaking to adults in the community predominantly in English, perhaps reflecting their parents’ social networks. This finding relates to previous research in Wales in which Thomas and Roberts highlight the often ‘monolingual nature of the wider social experiences’ of English-first language Welsh-medium pupils (2011: 92) and to research by Morris (2007) which found the main indicator of people’s social network language to be their home language.

The finding that Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupils nearly always use the Celtic language to teachers in the Celtic language classroom concords with the high levels of such Celtic language use reported in previous research (MacNeil & Stradling 2000, Müller 2005, Roberts & Thomas 2010). The present research
additionally replicates these authors’ findings that Celtic-medium pupils use more of the Celtic language to adults than to peers in the same linguistic domain (Chapter 2, Sections 2.2.3.1.1 & 2.2.3.1.2). The difference in Celtic language use with teachers and with other pupils in the classroom is also evidenced in relation to the secondary school stage (Chapter 5, Section 3.1.3).

6.2.1.1.2 Differences across the two national contexts

There was a statistically significant difference between the Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupil groups’ reported language use with peers in every context investigated – in the primary school classroom, in the school and outside of school; Welsh-medium pupils reporting higher levels of Celtic language use in each instance (Chapter 5, Section 3.1.1 and Appendix 7, A.2.1, A.3.1, A.1.1). Such findings also replicate the differences in Celtic language use in formal and informal contexts of the school with the same interlocutor outlined by MacNeil & Stradling (2000), Müller (2005) and Roberts & Thomas (2010) (Chapter 2, Sections 2.2.3.1.1 & 2.2.3.1.2).

Such differences between the pupil groups are likely to be related to contextual factors – such as school, community or national level differences. This is evidenced as:

(i) the two pupil groups are matched for first and home language backgrounds (Chapter 3, Section 3.8.1.1) and report similar levels of Celtic language use for all variables in the home (Chapter 5, Section 5.1.2). Therefore, the differences between the pupil groups are not due to home language background, a variable found to be a key factor in patterns of language use in research by the Centre for European Research (Wales) & Cwmni Iaith (2008) and by Roberts & Thomas (2010) (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.1.1).

(ii) the proportions of peer Celtic language use in the various linguistic domains largely concord with previous research in Wales and Scotland (Classroom: Thomas & Roberts (2011), Müller (2005). School: Gruffudd (2000), MacNeil & Stradling (2000), Stockdale et al. (2003) and Morrison (2006)). The reported Celtic language use with peers in the community is lower in the Scottish context than that reported in previous research (MacNeil & Stradling 2000, Stockdale et al. 2003 and Morrison, 2006), probably because of the national sampling used in the present research, rather
than regional sampling of Highland and Island areas. There is no primary-school level data available from the Welsh context with which to compare the findings.

The source of such contextual differences in language use would be interesting to investigate further. Potential pupil-level variables include the nature of pupils’ identification with the Celtic language (MacNeil & Stradling, 2000: see Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.1.2) and their confidence in formal and informal Celtic language use (Jones 1995: see Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.1.1). Potential school-level variables include teacher approach to class-based peer-group work (Chavez 2007), the nature of language policies in the classroom and school contexts, whether the Celtic-medium provision is in a freestanding or dual-stream school context (as this will determine whether all pupils are Celtic language speakers) and the provision of extra-curricular activities through the medium of the Celtic language. With regard to the latter, Ó Riagáin et al. (2008: 2) suggest for Ireland that ‘structured after-school activities … have a role linking the school to the out of school context, thus strengthening the Irish-speaking peer networks formed in school’. Potential community-level variables include the relationship between community language use and pupil language use in informal school domains (Jones 1995), whilst national-level variables include language policies, status planning or the institutionalization of the Celtic language, which may contribute to granting legitimacy to the language in the classroom, school and community domains.

There was additionally a difference between the Celtic-medium primary groups in pupils’ reported language use to teachers in the school when outside of the classroom, with the Welsh-medium pupils reporting more Celtic language use than did their Gaelic-medium counterparts (Chapter 5, Section 3.1.1.2 and Appendix 7, A.4.1). Such a finding concords with Roberts & Thomas’ research (2010), which found 56% of Year 4 to Year 6 pupils to speak to their teachers always in Welsh in the playground, but there is no primary-school level data available from the Scottish context with which to compare the findings.102 Such a difference between the national contexts is potentially explicable in terms of two related variables. The first is the greater proportion of Celtic-language speakers in Wales than in Scotland.

102 Müller’s (2005) findings (Section 2.2.3.1.2) pertain to language use with the secondary school Gaelic subject teacher, a linguistic relationship and linguistic context different to that at primary school (Section 6.2.1.2).
which makes it more likely that teachers in dual stream primary schools (who do not teach in the Celtic-medium stream) also speak the Celtic language, and the second is school language policy on the use of the Celtic-language within the school context. Such hypotheses are amenable to empirical investigation, and so could be the subject of future research.

6.2.1.2 Continuity and change in patterns of language use at the primary to secondary school stage: Scottish and Welsh comparisons

6.2.1.2.1 Continuity in patterns of language use

Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupils’ patterns of language use with their parents remained stable between the upper primary and lower secondary school stages (Chapter 5, Section 3.1.2.1). Such consistency aligns with research findings on parental language use with children in the Welsh context, where Gathercole & Thomas note that ‘patterns of language choice in parental speech seem to be established early and remain fairly consistent as the child gets older’ (2009:216). Celtic-medium primary pupils’ patterns of language use similarly remained stable with adults and with friends when outside of school in the approximately eight months between the two measurement occasions (Chapter 5, Sections 3.1.2.1 & 3.1.1.1). Thus the move from primary to secondary school does not significantly affect pupils’ Celtic language use in non-school based domains.

6.2.1.2.2 Change in patterns of language use

6.2.1.2.2.1 Towards the Celtic language

Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupils’ reported language use to other pupils in the Celtic language classroom and Welsh-medium pupils’ language use to teachers in the Celtic language classroom exhibited statistically significant shifts towards the Celtic language in the move from primary to secondary school (Chapter 5, Section 3.1.1.2 & 3.1.2.2 and Appendix 7, A.2.1 & A.2.2, A.8.1 & A.8.2). The findings on Gaelic-medium pupils’ language use with pupils in the secondary school Gaelic classroom concord with those reported by MacNeil & Stradling (2000) and Müller (2005) in relation to Secondary 2 pupils (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.1.2), and thus give validity to the results of the present study. There is no secondary-school level data available from the Welsh context with which to compare the findings.
Such shifts in language use are most likely explicable in relation to differences in the structures of schooling at the primary and secondary school stages which have an impact upon the definition of the ‘Celtic language classroom’. At primary school, the Celtic language classroom was where pupils learnt all curricular subjects (including English). At the secondary school stage, the Celtic language classroom is the context solely for learning the Celtic language. The shifts towards greater Celtic language use reported by the present research would thus be expected, but do not necessarily reflect an increase in the amount of Celtic language use in the learning of the Celtic language as a subject itself. The investigation of such a question would require a more detailed questionnaire or school-based observational research.

6.2.1.2.2.2 Towards English

Gaelic-medium pupils’ language use to siblings and to other pupils in the school when outside of the classroom shifted towards English between the primary and secondary school stages (Chapter 5, Sections 3.1.1.2 & 3.1.2.2). The shift amongst the Gaelic-medium pupils resulted in no pupil reporting speaking predominantly in Gaelic with their siblings or with pupils in informal areas of the school at the secondary school stage (Appendix 7, A.9.1 & A.9.2, A.3.1 & A.3.2).

The shift in Gaelic-medium pupils’ language use with friends in informal areas of the school replicates MacNeil & Stradling’s finding (on the Secondary 2 to Secondary 4 stages) that Gaelic-medium pupils’ language use with friends shifts towards English over time (2000:12; see Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.1.2). However, the current research does not provide evidence to substantiate Müller’s hypothesis (on the Secondary 2 to Secondary 3 stage) that there is an increase in Gaelic-medium pupils’ English language use in all non-home based contexts, namely to teachers and other pupils in the classroom and the school and to friends in the community (Müller 2005:383; see Section 2.2.3.1.2). Rather, the present research found a shift towards greater use of Gaelic with pupils in the Celtic language classroom, and stability in relation to pupils’ language use with teachers in the Celtic language classroom, and with friends in the community at the primary to secondary school stage. The longitudinal approach employed in the present research additionally enabled pupils’
home-based language use to be investigated, and found a decrease in Gaelic-medium pupils’ Celtic language use over time with siblings.

The pupil and school level variables outlined in relation to the primary school stage in Section 6.2.1.1.2 potentially explain why there is a contrast between the national contexts in the shift towards English in Celtic-medium pupils’ language use to friends when outside of the classroom; Gaelic-medium pupils shifting but Welsh-medium pupils not shifting. These explanatory variables are pupils’ identification with the Celtic language, their confidence in formal and informal Celtic language use, the nature of school language policies, and school structure – whether the Celtic-medium provision is in freestanding or dual-stream school context. However, the last variable exhibits greater difference between countries at the secondary than primary school stage, in terms of the average relative size of Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium first year secondary cohorts. Due to the more recent development of the Gaelic-medium sector and to the relative scales of the Celtic-medium sectors in the two nations (Chapter 2, Sections 2.1.1.3 & 2.1.2.3), there is often a much smaller number of Gaelic-medium pupils than Welsh-medium pupils per secondary school (WAG 2008: 78, Robertson 2008b:7). Such a difference may hold implications for the proportion of time Celtic-medium pupils will spend talking to Celtic language-speaking pupils when in school outside the classroom in dual stream secondary schools.

The shift towards English in relation to Gaelic-medium pupils’ language use to their siblings between the primary and secondary school stages is likely to be due to changing patterns of language use in the school context as just described or to changing identifications with the Celtic language (which will be discussed in Section 6.2.3) since there is unlikely to be much change in family composition in the eight months separating the two phases of the fieldwork.

Welsh-medium pupils’ language use to teachers outside of the classroom also returned a shift towards English between the primary and secondary school stages (Chapter 5, Section 3.1.1.2 and Appendix 7, A.4.1 & A.4.2). However, the shift was only marginally significant. Despite this shift towards English by the Welsh-medium pupils, the statistically significant difference between the two national contexts which existed in relation to this variable at the primary school stage – in which the
Welsh-medium pupils reported using more of their Celtic language than did their Gaelic-medium counterparts – remained at the secondary school stage.

6.2.1.3 Consistency in reports of language output and language input: Scottish and Welsh comparisons

In relation to the comparison between pupils’ reports of their linguistic output and input at the individual pupil level, the data highlights potentially interesting areas for future research in language use at the early secondary school stage. Differences were returned for both Scotland and Wales in relation to Celtic-medium pupils’ language use with their siblings, the Celtic-medium pupils reporting speaking more of their Celtic language than they report their interlocutor as using. The same pattern was returned by Gaelic-medium pupils on language use with other pupils in the Celtic language classroom and with other pupils in the school when outside of the classroom (Chapter 5, Section 3.3). Future research could ascertain whether such results are over-representation of own language use or, if they reflect a real difference, the reasons for such asymmetric language use. Possible reasons suggested in the interviews for the present research (but not reported on systematically in the thesis) are the Celtic-medium pupils speaking to a younger sibling (whose patterns of language use have not yet shifted towards English with upper childhood and adolescence) and the Celtic-medium pupils trying to teach the English-medium pupils some Gaelic when in the corridors or playground.\(^{103}\)

6.2.1.4 Concluding comments

The present research has found Gaelic-medium primary pupils’ patterns of Celtic language use to be weaker than those of their Welsh-medium counterparts in relation to their peers (with friends in the classroom, in the school and when in the community) and with teachers in school when outside of the classroom. The research has additionally shown that, in the move to secondary school, Gaelic-medium pupils’ patterns of language use shift further towards English with other pupils when in informal areas of the school, and with their siblings in the home context. The findings on Gaelic-medium pupils’ language use are relevant to

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\(^{103}\) As explained in Chapter 3 (Section 3.7), constraints of space prevented the reporting of interview data in connection with this question, and so the interview comments are offered here not as firm conclusions, but only as suggestions for future research.
language planning. When one considers that the majority of the Gaelic-medium pupils reported using English with their parents, and with friends and adults outside of school (Chapter 5, Sections 5.1.1.1 & 5.1.2.1), the decrease in Gaelic language use with peers in the school and with siblings in the home potentially reduces the social domains in which Gaelic-medium pupils predominantly use Gaelic to the classroom itself, for many pupils. Such evidence is relevant to national policy which intends that Gaelic-medium education create a new generation of Gaelic speakers who will contribute towards the ‘restoration [of] … the Gaelic language to a state of natural growth … by 2031’ (BnG 2007a: 15) through their future home and community-based language use. Further research is thus required both in order to ascertain the cause of such differences in language use between the Scottish and Welsh contexts at the primary and early secondary school stages – whether these are due to differences in the opportunities to use the Celtic language in the school and community context, differences in pupil confidence in their Celtic language abilities, or differences in their attitudes towards the Celtic language (Ó Flatharta et al. 2009) – and to ascertain whether such language use patterns are stable throughout the secondary school stages and into adulthood. Ideally, such a study would, like the present research, be longitudinal, for the methodological reasons outlined in Chapter 3, Section 3.8.1.3.

Such knowledge is required in order to develop the ‘harm-reducing strategies for Gaelic-language use’ that MacNeil & Stradling recommend be ‘in place at the stage of transition from primary to secondary school’ (MacNeil 2000: 52). Strategies could involve greater Celtic-medium subject provision at the secondary school stage, school language policies which legitimate the use of Gaelic in the school domain, or the provision of more Celtic language extra-curricular activities in the community. In relation to the last, the findings of the present research do not return a great deal of Gaelic language use for pupils in the ‘family-neighbourhood-community’ arena (Fishman 1991: 373). However, recent curricular developments in Scotland may increase Gaelic-medium pupils’ Gaelic language use with members of the community, as there is a greater emphasis on the use of Gaelic literacy skills both ‘within and beyond’ the school context in the Curriculum for Excellence (Scottish Government et al. 2010: 3). The policy thus encourages links between the school and the Gaelic community, whether at a local or a national level. Such school-based
community language initiatives concord with Williams’ notion in the Welsh context that Welsh-medium schools serve as ‘growth poles’ of Welsh language and culture (Williams 1994: 138) in terms both of numerical growth of Celtic language speakers, and of the creation of other Celtic-language institutions in the community. Such cultural energy in Wales, comparative to the Scottish context, is evidenced in the language use findings of the present research. However, the findings on pupils’ language use, where only 61% of Welsh-medium pupils report speaking to other pupils predominantly in Welsh in the Celtic language classroom, and only 37% of Welsh-medium primary pupils report so doing when outside of the classroom, are still a source of concern from a language planning perspective in the Welsh context. Thomas and Roberts note:

whilst there are gains in children’s proficiency in Welsh via Welsh-medium education, what is not clear is why these children are unwilling to allow Welsh to become their natural language of conversation when speaking to another Welsh-speaker … such practices may or may not lead to fulfilling the desired outcomes of a bilingual education programme.

(Thomas & Roberts 2011:92)

6.2.2 Perceived linguistic ability

6.2.2.1 Perceived linguistic ability at the primary school stage: Scottish and Welsh comparisons

6.2.2.1.1 Similarities across the two national contexts

The Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium primary pupils returned similar assessments of their linguistic abilities with regard to understanding, speaking, reading and writing in each of their two languages (Chapter 5, Section 4.2, illustrated synoptically in Tables 11 and 12).

Table 11  Celtic-medium primary pupils’ perceived linguistic competence in their Celtic language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Celtic Language</th>
<th>% of pupils reporting ‘very good’ or ‘good’ ability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gaelic-medium pupils</td>
<td>Welsh-medium pupils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Data: Appendix 8, A.7 – A.10)
The finding that final year Celtic-medium pupils were less confident of their literacy than oracy in each of their two languages, particularly in relation to writing, concords with previous research in Scotland and with national attainment data in Wales. In Scotland, such a finding is consistent both with teacher-judged criterion-referenced tests (Johnstone et al. 1999, O’Hanlon et al. 2010) and with previous research on pupils’ self-perceived linguistic abilities (Cochran 2008). In Wales, the national attainment results for Welsh language competence for the pupil cohorts’ school year (2006-07) similarly reported a lower proportion of pupils passing the expected level in relation to writing than in the other linguistic skills (WAG 2007d). As noted in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.2.2 the lower attainment in writing has also been found in English for English-medium pupils (Johnstone et al. 1999: 33, O’Hanlon et al. 2010: 21).

The Scottish and Welsh Celtic-medium primary pupils also had similar perceptions of their comparative abilities in understanding, speaking and reading their Celtic language and English, with pupils typically reporting broadly equal competencies across their two languages in oracy, and English-language dominance in reading, as illustrated in Table 13.

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Table 12  Celtic-medium primary pupils’ perceived linguistic competence in English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Gaelic-medium pupils</th>
<th>Welsh-medium pupils</th>
<th>Gaelic-medium pupils</th>
<th>Welsh-medium pupils</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Data: Appendix 8, A.2, A.3, A.11 & A.12)

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\[^{104}\] There is no relevant primary school level data available on Welsh-medium primary pupils’ English language attainment with which to compare the findings of the present research, as the Key Stage 2 English language attainments of pupils in Wales are published without distinguishing between Welsh-medium and English-medium pupils (WAG 2007d).
Table 13  Celtic-medium primary pupils’ comparative linguistic competence in understanding, speaking and reading the Celtic language and English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Comparative competence in Celtic language and English</th>
<th></th>
<th>% of pupils reporting equal competence in Celtic language and English</th>
<th>% of pupils reporting English-language dominance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gaelic-medium pupils</td>
<td>Welsh-medium pupils</td>
<td>Gaelic-medium pupils</td>
<td>Welsh-medium pupils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Data: Appendix 8, A.4 – A.6)

Such perceived English-language dominance in reading replicates the findings of Sharp et al. (1973b), Johnstone et al. (1999), O’Hanlon et al. (2010) and Cochran (2008), and aligns with international research on the linguistic competencies resulting from immersion models of education in a minority language (Johnstone 2002: 2; see Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.2.1).

Such similarities in perceived linguistic abilities across the Celtic-medium primary pupil groups may relate to the Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupil sample having similar first and home language backgrounds, factors found in previous research to affect linguistic competence in the Celtic language (Sharp et al. 1973b, Baker 1995, Gathercole & Thomas 2009, Stradling & MacNeil 2000, MacNeil & Galloway 2004, Müller 2005).

6.2.2.1.2  Differences across the two national contexts

Only one aspect of perceived linguistic ability investigated in the present research displayed a difference between the Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium primary pupil groups – comparative competence in the Celtic language and English in writing. A higher proportion of Gaelic-medium primary pupils than Welsh-medium primary pupils perceived themselves to be English-dominant in writing, as illustrated in Table 14.
Table 14  Celtic-medium primary pupils’ comparative linguistic competence in writing the Celtic language and English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Comparative competence in Celtic language and English</th>
<th></th>
<th>% of pupils reporting English-language dominance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of pupils reporting equal competence in Celtic language and English</td>
<td>% of pupils reporting English-language dominance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaelic-medium pupils</td>
<td>Welsh-medium pupils</td>
<td>Gaelic-medium pupils</td>
<td>Welsh-medium pupils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Data: Appendix 8, A.1.1)

The English-language dominance in writing amongst Gaelic-medium pupils concords with previous research in which linguistic competence was similarly self-assessed (Cochran 2008) and with research in which linguistic ability was assessed by criterion-referenced tests (Johnstone et al. 1999, Müller 2005, O’Hanlon et al. 2010).

As the Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupils have similar first and home language backgrounds (Chapter 3, Section 3.8.1.1), the difference in the Celtic-medium pupil groups’ perceptions of their competence in writing the Celtic language as compared with English most likely relates to affective aspects of language learning (such as attitudes), to aspects of methods of learning and teaching language in the two contexts, or to facets of the languages themselves. Several Welsh-medium pupils mentioned in their interviews the ease of learning that was a consequence of Welsh having a phonetic writing system. Future research might establish how relevant perceived linguistic competence at the upper primary school stage is to language planning, for example to what extent it influences future decisions regarding the study or uses of the Celtic language.

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105 As mentioned in relation to reading in Section 6.2.2.1.1, there is no recent national attainment data which facilitates the comparison of Welsh-medium pupils’ Welsh and English literacy competencies.

106 As explained in Chapter 3, constraints of space prevented the reporting of interview data in connection with this question, and so the interview comments are offered here not as firm conclusions, but only as suggestions for future research.
All aspects of Gaelic-medium pupils’ perceptions of their linguistic abilities (in their Celtic language, in English, and their comparative competencies across the two languages) remained stable in the move from primary to secondary school (Chapter 5, Section 4.2.2). The present study thus does not substantiate at the primary to secondary school stage either MacNeil & Stradling’s (2000) finding that Gaelic-medium pupils’ confidence in their Gaelic fluency increased with age (using cross-sectional data from Secondary 2 and Secondary 3 pupils) or Müller’s (2005: 394) hypothesis in relation to improvements in Gaelic-medium pupils’ Gaelic writing competencies between the Secondary 2 and Secondary 3 stage.

All aspects of Welsh-medium pupils’ perceptions of their linguistic abilities pertaining to Welsh, and to their comparative competence in Welsh and English, remained consistent over time (Chapter 5, Section 4.2.2). However, in relation to English, only Welsh-medium pupils’ reports of understanding and writing remained consistent between the primary and secondary school stages (Chapter 5, Section 4.2.2.3).

The Welsh-medium pupils decreased in confidence in their English speaking and English reading abilities between the primary and secondary school stages (Chapter 5, Section 4.2.1). There was no such change in these variables over time amongst the Gaelic-medium pupils in the Scottish context.

A comparison of the Celtic-medium and English-medium pupil data in each context shows such differences between the Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupil groups to be likely to be due to school-based differences, rather than to differences in the national level contexts. This is evidenced by the existence of parallel findings amongst the English-medium pupil groups, namely a loss of confidence in English speaking and reading abilities amongst the English-medium Wales pupil sample between the primary and secondary school stages, and consistency of self-assessed competencies in these linguistic aspects amongst the English-medium Scotland sample (Chapter 5, Section 4.2.1). Using English-medium
comparator groups from the same school contexts as the Celtic-medium pupils allows us to say that the drop in linguistic confidence is probably not due to Welsh-medium education as such, and thus highlights the benefit of the incorporation of an English-medium group into the present research.

6.2.2.3 Concluding comments

Such similar Celtic-medium primary and secondary pupil assessments of their oral linguistic capacities are relevant to the findings on the pupils’ patterns of actual language use previously presented (Section 6.2.1), as if the Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupils have similar capacities in their Celtic language, then, according to the theory that language use is the product of the ‘co-presence’ of linguistic capacity, opportunities to use the language and positive attitudes towards the language’ (Ó Flatharta et al. 2009: 4), such differences in language use must pertain either to the availability of opportunities for Celtic language use, or to differences in pupils’ identifications with and attitudes towards their Celtic language. Aspects of the sociology of the Celtic languages in Scotland and Wales in relation to opportunities for language use have been presented in Section 6.2.1 whilst pupils’ identifications with and attitudes towards their Celtic language will be discussed in Section 6.2.3.

One limitation of the findings on self-perceived linguistic competence in terms of implications for pedagogy, policy and language planning is the lack of investigation of language registers in the present research. Potential differences in pupil command of the Celtic language for formal and informal purposes is highlighted by Jones (1995; see Chapter 2, Section 2.2.1.3), who argues Welsh-medium education to be effective in developing ‘descriptive’ language competence for use in formal domains but to be less effective in developing ‘interpersonal’ language for informal social purposes (Jones 1995:102). A similar point is made in relation to Gaelic-medium education by MacLeod (2009), who argues that the Gaelic of English-first-language Gaelic-medium pupils typically lacks a variety of vocabulary and a range of Gaelic idiom (MacLeod 2009: 233). Such linguistic competencies may affect Celtic-medium pupils’ willingness to use their Celtic language in non-school based contexts.
The investigation of Celtic-medium pupil perceptions of their linguistic competencies in formal and informal language, together with a consideration of the opportunities pupils have within their school and community to develop various linguistic registers in their Celtic language, would be an interesting area for future research. A longitudinal study of Celtic-medium primary pupils’ perceived and actual Celtic language abilities and language use throughout the secondary school stages and into early adulthood would be particularly valuable, due to the intention, as expressed in language planning policy (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2.1), that Celtic-medium educated primary pupils use their Celtic language competencies in social domains (WAG 2003: 48, BnG 2007a: 55) and that they continue to develop and maintain their Celtic language competencies into adulthood (WAG 2003: 11). The importance of personal, community and national level Celtic-language social networks and Celtic language institutions in the achievement of such a policy goal are underlined by Gathercole & Thomas’ (2009) research which found the maintenance of individual level Welsh language ability to be contingent on continued Welsh language input throughout the lifespan (2009: 234; see Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.2.1).

In relation to policy developments since the present research was conducted, Bòrd na Gàidhlig’s draft National Gaelic Language Plan 2012-17 (2011) also emphasizes the importance of social Gaelic language use for Gaelic-medium pupils. It proposes to provide ‘support to parents with children in GME [Gaelic-medium education] … so that they can increase the use made of Gaelic in the home’, and to develop ‘leisure and recreational activities in Gaelic, locally and at national level’ (BnG 2011: 17). The plan notes the importance of such home and community use of Gaelic for Gaelic-medium educated pupils in order to:

- ensure that they do not associate Gaelic solely with school, but rather that they see it as a language of relevance to their everyday lives, now and in the future, which they will want to use and to pass on to their own families.

(BnG 2011:17-18)

Such a policy statement links to Fishman’s intention that education in a threatened language ‘initiate’ language use in the home and community domains (Fishman 1991: 372; see Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2.2). Pupils’ identifications with, and
perceptions of the usefulness of, the Celtic language will be discussed in Section 6.2.3.

6.2.3 Pupils’ identifications with the Celtic language

6.2.3.1 Pupil identification with their Celtic language at the primary school stage: Scottish and Welsh comparisons
6.2.3.1.1 Similarities across the two national contexts in primary pupils’ identifications with the Celtic language

The Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupils both cited family-based, school-based and culture-based identifications with their Celtic language in a similar manner and to a similar extent at the primary school stage (Chapter 5, Sections 5.1.1.1 & 5.1.2.1, 5.1.1.3 & 5.1.2.3 and 5.1.1.4 & 5.1.2.4 respectively).

The similarity in relation to family-based linguistic identification is likely due to the comparability of the Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupil samples in relation to their first language and their family language background (Chapter 3, Section 3.8.1.1, Appendix 6, B.2 & B.3). This hypothesis is substantiated as Baker’s (1992) research in Wales and Oliver’s (2002) research in Scotland showed home language background to influence the strength and nature of pupils’ identification with and attitudes towards their Celtic language (Chapter 2, Sections 2.2.3.3.1 & 2.2.3.3.2).

With regard to school-based identifications with the Celtic language, several pupils in both countries cite having attended Celtic-medium primary education as the source of their identification with Gaelic or Welsh. This school-derived identification is a key finding in relation to the role of institutions in maintaining minority languages. That the school can be a source of identification with the Celtic language is illustrated by previous research from both Scotland and Wales, which found Celtic-medium pupils to identify with and value the Celtic language more strongly than did their English-medium counterparts (Wales: Sharp et al 1973a, Baker 1992, Scotland: Müller 2005). MacNeil and Stradling (2000) also note the role of the school in fostering identification with and allegiance to a language and culture.

The similarity between the Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupil groups’ school-derived identifications, despite differences in community level Celtic language use surrounding the schools (Appendix 4, B.1), also finds precedent in
previous research. For example, Baker (1992) found pupils in Welsh-medium education in Welsh-speaking and in Anglicized areas to have similarly positive integrative, general and instrumental attitudes towards Welsh (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.3.1). The present research, using qualitative methods, has replicated the finding that school medium of instruction can influence pupil affilations with the Celtic language, showing Celtic-medium pupils either to identify generally with the Celtic language on account of a Celtic-medium school experience, or to identify with the Celtic language when in school (typically when this constitutes their Celtic-language community). The latter group are of particular interest in a study of Celtic-medium pupils’ linguistic identifications. Such partial or context-based identifications with the Celtic language reflect the English-language and Celtic-language social contexts in which bilingual pupils operate and highlight the multiple identities of bilinguals (Scourfield et al. 2006, Coupland et al. 2005). As noted in Chapter 5 (Sections 5.1.1.3 & 5.1.2.3) some pupils in both Scotland and Wales feel a tension between their school-derived and home-derived identifications (Pu.014.PS04.GM, Pu.036.PS07.WM, Pu.057.PS08.WM), which concords with Scourfield et al.’s (2006) hypothesis that Welsh-medium pupils with English-home language backgrounds or pupils from Anglicized areas may have a potentially more complex, negotiation of identity than do their Welsh language background counterparts (2006:133) (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.3.1).

Both Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium primary pupils also sometimes attribute their identification with the Celtic language to their participation in cultural activities (Chapter 5, Sections 5.1.1.4 & 5.1.2.4). These are typically traditional cultural activities, such as dancing, music, literature and drama and participation in cultural festivals (the Mòd and the Feis in Scotland and the Urdd and the Eisteddfod in Wales). Baker (1992: 65) found participation in such activities to be connected to positive integrative attitudes towards the Welsh language amongst 11-14 year olds, and it is likely that such findings are here replicated in both contexts.

A low proportion of pupils from both the Gaelic-medium and the Welsh-medium primary pupil sample did not personally identify with the Celtic language. Such pupils typically viewed the Celtic language as a skill, and based their identity around other activities such as sport, or identified more strongly with the English
language, being from an English-language home or community background (Chapter 5, Sections 5.1.1.6. & 5.1.2.6). This latter finding concords with previous research from both Scotland and Wales (Scotland: MacNeil & Stradling (2000), Wales: Iaith (2011)).

As exemplified in Chapter 5, Sections 5.1.1.5 and 5.1.2.5, final year primary pupils (who are typically 11 years of age) are often not very clear in their expression of their identification with the Celtic language. This links to the literature on the development of identity in upper childhood (11-12 years of age) outlined in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.3, and adds weight to the earlier criticisms of the research by Scourfield et al (2006) and Murphy and Laugharne (2011) regarding the validity of their findings on account of the age of their respondents (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.3.1).

6.2.3.1.2 Differences across the two national contexts in primary pupils’ identifications with the Celtic language

A key difference between Scotland and Wales was that the Welsh-medium primary pupils more frequently associated nation and language in expressions of personal identity than did their Gaelic-medium counterparts (Chapter 5, Sections 5.1.1.2 and 5.1.2.2). That such a finding was a national-contextual difference was evidenced by English-medium pupils in Wales similarly citing such a language and national identity rationale for identification with the Celtic language, whilst this was not cited in English-medium pupil accounts in Scotland.

This finding replicates the traditional historical association of Welsh national identity with ‘ethnic markers’ such as language and the association of Scottish national identity with ‘civic characteristics’ such as national institutions (Paterson & Jones 1999). It also relates to the different relationship between the Celtic language and place whereby Welsh is typically associated with a national and Gaelic with a regional geographical area (Aitchison & Carter 2000, McLeod 2010) (Sections 2.1.1.1 and 2.1.2.1).

The findings from Wales align with research by Iaith: Welsh Centre for Language Planning (2011)\textsuperscript{107} which reported 98% of Welsh-medium Year 5 pupils to believe the Welsh language to be important to Wales (n = 55), and with research by

\textsuperscript{107} Hereafter referred to as ‘Iaith’.
Reynolds et al (1998) which found Year 11 Welsh-medium pupils to be more likely than English-medium pupils to feel more Welsh than British, an association between language and national identity. However, the findings from the present study do not concord with those of Scourfield (2006) and Murphy and Laugharne (2011), which respectively argue that language is not a factor in Welsh children’s personal or national identifications (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.3.1). However, the methodological issues related to the age of the pupil sample used in these two studies (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.3.1) raise questions about the capacity of the 8-11 year olds in the Scourfield study and the 7-8 year olds in the Murphy & Laugharne study to understand and express such personal and national identifications (Piaget & Weil 1951, Davies 1968, Archer 1982).

The findings from the present study also concord with research from Scotland. Morrison (2006) reported that only a third of secondary school pupils felt that their Gaelic-medium primary education had made them ‘feel more Scottish’, demonstrating a weak perceived link between language and national identity (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.3.2). Oliver (2002) similarly found pupils to associate Gaelic with the Gàidhealtachd, and argued that 15-17 year old Gaelic-speaking pupils in the Highlands & Island regions were more likely to cite a personal identification with the Gaelic language associated with the linguistic and cultural traditions of place than were their Gaelic-speaking counterparts in the lowlands.

One potential explanation for the country-level difference in national identity associations with the Celtic language may be differences in the incorporation of national culture in the curriculum in Scotland and Wales. In Wales there exists a Cwricwlwm Cymreig [Welsh Curriculum], established in 1993, which aims to incorporate Welsh elements into the statutory school curriculum in order to develop in pupils, amongst other things, an awareness ‘of the important part which language and literature have always played, and continue to play, in Welsh life’ (CCW 1993: 4). However, the development of a distinctively and explicitly Scottish element of the curriculum in Scotland, encompassing aspects such as Scottish history and an awareness of the Gaelic and Scots languages, is only now in 2011 being considered by the Scottish Government. A future study on the source and nature of such Celtic-
medium pupil language and place associations (whether through school, home or community activities) would thus be of value.

6.2.3.1.3 Concluding comments: Celtic-medium primary pupils’ linguistic identifications

The Celtic-medium primary school pupils tend to voice an institution-related (family, school, cultural institution) identification with their Celtic language at the primary school stage, with Welsh-medium pupils additionally identifying with nation in this regard. Such a conclusion concords with Scourfield et al.’s (2006a) finding that primary school pupils do not tend to identify with the Celtic language on a ‘personal’ level, as part of their self-defined individual identity (2006: 129, Section 2.2.3.3.1).

6.2.3.2 Continuity and change in pupil identification with the Celtic language at the primary to secondary school stage: Scottish and Welsh comparisons

6.2.3.2.1 Continuity in pupil identification with the Celtic language

Place and language identifications with the Celtic language tend to remain consistent between the primary and secondary school stages in both Scotland and Wales (Chapter 5, Sections 5.1.1.2 & 5.1.2.2). However, on the basis of the data from the current research, there is an indication that such identifications are more likely to shift if the pupil is from an English-speaking home, or (as with Pupil 072 from the Welsh context) is from England. Such a finding concords with Scourfield et al.’s (2006: 133) finding that identity negotiation is more complex for Welsh-medium pupils from English-language homes or from Anglicized areas.

Family-based personal identifications with the Celtic language also often remained consistent between the primary and secondary school stages in the Welsh context (Chapter 5, Section 5.1.2.1), typically in instances in which pupils identified the Welsh language as their home or family language. In some cases, such a family-based personal identification with the Celtic language also exhibited projected continuity through time, with some secondary school pupils stating an intention to replicate their family linguistic heritage with their own children. Such consistency of family-based personal identification may relate to the consistency of family Celtic language use discussed in Section 6.2.1.2.1 (Gathercole & Thomas 2009). Cultural-
activity-based identification with the Celtic language similarly remained consistent between the primary and secondary school stages amongst the Welsh-medium pupils.

The pupils who exhibit such continuity of place, family or cultural personal identifications with the Celtic language at the primary to secondary school stage may be exhibiting the developmentally sophisticated ‘identity achievement’, an identity ‘commitment’ (Meeus et al 1999:420) which typically follows a process of considering one’s identity. Alternatively, the pupils could be exhibiting ‘foreclosure’, that is to say ‘a commitment without exploration’ (ibid 1999: 420), a ‘developmentally unsophisticated’ (Archer 1982: 1554) response which may change over time (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.3). Gaelic-medium pupil 024 (Chapter 5, Section 5.1.1.5) who does not know the extent to which she identifies with the Gaelic language at either the primary or secondary school stage exhibits ‘diffusion’ – no identity commitment (Meeus et al 1999:420), a developmentally unsophisticated response which may develop during the pupil’s adolescence.

6.2.3.2.2 Change in pupil identifications with the Celtic language

Other pupils’ stated identifications with their Celtic language do change between the primary and secondary school stages, with such change typically involving the pupils voicing a personal identification with the Celtic language at the secondary school stage. Such identity development at the age of 11-12 concords with the social-psychology literature outlined in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.3.

Pupils’ primary-level school-based identifications with their Celtic language often become more individual linguistic associations in the transition from primary to secondary school for both Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupils. Secondary school level linguistic identifications typically either involve Gaelic or Welsh being a characteristic of the pupil (as a self-defined part of their identity or an aspect by which other people identify them), or relate to the pupils’ participation in Celtic language cultural activities.

Although primary school level family-based identifications with Welsh tended to remain consistent at the secondary school stage (as outlined in Section 6.2.3.2.1), such family-based identifications exhibited a shift towards a more individual identification with the language amongst some Welsh-medium pupils in
Wales. In contrast, almost all Gaelic-medium pupils who reported a family-based identification with Gaelic at the primary school stage reported a more individual identification with their Celtic language at the secondary school stage (Chapter 5, Sections 5.1.1.1. & 5.1.2.1). Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium secondary school pupils who reported such an individual identification with their Celtic language tended to view the language as an important aspect of their identity, an association which was sometimes linked with participation in Celtic language cultural activities or with national identity. Such pupils may have been through a period of ‘moratorium’ – ‘a state of active [identity] exploration (Meeus et al. 1999: 420) prior to such changes in stated identifications with their Celtic language.

From a language planning perspective, shifts from a school-based to more individual-level identifications with the Celtic languages are positive, particularly amongst English-home language pupils, as they indicate that the school has successfully developed the ‘extra communicational (affect-identity-societally binding) functions of language’ which Fishman (1991: 373) deems essential for the use of a threatened language in non-school-based domains. Similarly, the shifts towards individual level identification with Gaelic or Welsh amongst Celtic-medium pupils who do have a family background of Celtic language speaking indicate the positive attitudes towards the language essential for language use of a threatened language (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.1.1).

Only a small number of pupils identified less with their Celtic language at the secondary school stage than they had at the primary school stage (Chapter 5, Sections 5.1.1.5 & 5.1.2.5). The clearest example of such a linguistic disassociation is Pupil 086 (Section 5.1.1.4) – ‘when I was little I went to the Mòd and did Gaelic. But now I just go to the Mòd to do music’. As such a pupil transferred to a secondary school with minimal Gaelic language provision (solely Gaelic as a subject for fluent speakers), the relationship between personal linguistic identifications and the extent of school-based Celtic language provision may be interesting to investigate in a future study.
6.2.3.2.3 Concluding comments: Celtic-medium pupils’ linguistic identifications at the primary to secondary school stage

Celtic-medium pupils’ identifications with their Celtic language tend either to remain consistent between the primary and secondary school stages, or to change, but they do not tend to lessen or to become more negative. Thus, the findings do not replicate those of Sharp et al (1973a) and Baker (1992) who found a weakening in pupils’ attitudes towards Welsh over time. The research does, however, substantiate the findings of MacNeil & Stradling (2000) who found Gaelic-medium-primary-educated pupils’ identifications with Gaelic to be similar at the Secondary 2 and Secondary 4 stages (Chapter 2, Sections 2.2.3.3.1 & 2.2.3.3.2).

6.2.3.3 Concluding comments

The present research has shown Celtic-medium primary pupils typically to cite home-based, school-based, cultural-activity-based and place-based identifications with their Celtic language. The data has additionally shown that pupils’ linguistic identifications often change in the move from primary to secondary school. Further longitudinal investigation of the nature, sources and development of Celtic-medium pupils’ identifications with their Celtic language over time, which additionally takes the pupil’s chosen language-in-education trajectory into consideration, would thus be a valuable area for future research.

6.2.4 Pupil perceptions of the usefulness of the Celtic language for the future

6.2.4.1 Pupil perception of the usefulness of the Celtic language for the future at the primary school stage: Scottish and Welsh comparisons

Celtic-medium primary pupils in both Scotland and Wales cited employment, language use with Celtic language speakers, tertiary education and participation in cultural activities as future uses for their Celtic language skills (Chapter 5, Sections 5.2.1.1 – 5.2.1.4 & 5.2.2.1 – 5.2.2.4). However, the frequency with which such categories of response were cited, and the pattern of response within such categories, differed across the two national contexts. In addition, the Welsh-medium primary pupils cited language maintenance as a reason to use their Celtic language in the future.
6.2.4.1.1 Employment

In both Scotland and Wales, Celtic-medium primary pupils most frequently cited employment opportunities in relation to the usefulness of their Celtic language for their future (Chapter 5, Sections 5.2.1.1 & 5.2.2.1). Such frequent citations of a ‘commodity’ (Heller 1999) or instrumental use of the Celtic language in the future concords with previous literature on both Scotland and Wales (Wales: Iaith 2001, Scourfield et al 2006a, Gruffudd 2000; Scotland: Morrison 2006, Cochran 2008, Oliver 2002) (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.3.1).

A small proportion of Celtic-medium pupils in both Scotland and Wales perceived that their Celtic language would enable them to obtain higher-status jobs (Pu.026.PS03.GM, Pu.042.PS07.WM, Pu.044.PS07.WM). Such a perception is substantiated by research in the Scottish context. A report on the Gaelic labour market by Zendoia Sainz (2011) found 38.2% of employed Gaelic speakers in Scotland to be employed in high-status jobs, compared with 32.6% of their monolingual English-speaking counterparts (2011: 3). The research on the connection between upward social mobility and Welsh speaking was presented in Chapter 2, Section 2.1.1.2.

The key difference between the Scottish and Welsh Celtic-medium primary-school pupil samples in terms of the perceived usefulness of the Celtic language for employment related to the range of employment opportunities cited. Gaelic-medium pupils typically associated Gaelic-language employment with Gaelic-specific jobs, such as the media or teaching. Welsh-medium pupils were more likely to see such Celtic-language-specific employment as only part of a range of available Welsh-language employment, which additionally encompassed general job opportunities, such as nursing or hairdressing. Such a tendency for Gaelic-medium pupils to cite Gaelic-specific jobs in relation to future Gaelic-language employment opportunities was also found in Cochran’s research (2008) (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.3.2). The difference in the range of perceived Celtic language employment opportunities across the two national contexts likely pertains to the existence of different levels of institutionalisation of the Celtic language in employment in Scotland and Wales in 2007. The requirement that Welsh and English be treated equally by public bodies was introduced in 1993 with the Welsh Language Act in Wales, but the principle that
Gaelic and English be treated with equal respect by public authorities in Scotland was not introduced until 2005 with the *Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act* (Section 2.2.1.1 & Section 6.1.3). In relation to recent policy, the *Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011* modernises the legislative and structural framework by which equal treatment of Welsh by public bodies is ensured.

6.2.4.1.2 Language use with other Celtic language speakers

Celtic-medium pupils from both Celtic-language speaking and Anglicized areas of Wales and Scotland perceived that they would use their Celtic language with other Welsh or Gaelic speakers when in strongly Celtic language speaking areas (typically defined by the pupils as North Wales in the Welsh context and the Highlands and Islands in the Scottish context). In both national contexts, such a perception was more frequently cited by pupils who lived in the traditionally Celtic-language speaking areas, a finding that concords with that of Oliver (2002) in the Scottish context (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.3.2). However, a key difference between the Celtic-medium pupil groups was the perception, amongst the Welsh-medium pupils, that there is a social requirement or expectation to speak Welsh in Welsh-speaking areas, whether for instrumental reasons (such as to communicate with Welsh-speaking monolinguals or to purchase items in a shop) or for integrative reasons (to accommodate speaker linguistic preferences or community values). Such strong community linguistic policies or individual linguistic preferences in the Welsh context probably relate to the importance of the local authority in determining community language policies in education and other public services and the links between language and people’s personal, local and national identities described in Chapter 2, Sections 2.1.1.2, 2.1.2.1, 2.2.3.3.1 & 2.2.3.3.2. The strongest Gaelic-speaking local authority area (Comhairle nan Eilean Siar) does not have as strong a Celtic language policy as Gwynedd (the council sampled to be the equivalent of CNES in the Welsh context, Appendix 4, B.1) despite both having bilingual policies (Chapter 2, Section 2.1.2.1).

Another key difference between Scotland and Wales in relation to this theme is the range of Celtic-language speaking contexts that pupils perceive to exist for such future Celtic language use. Whereas the Gaelic-medium primary pupils solely
cite the Gaelic-speaking areas of the Highlands and Islands in this regard, the Welsh-medium pupils additionally allude to Welsh language use in the home and in networks of Welsh-language speakers in Anglicized and overseas communities. Cochran (2008) similarly found only a small proportion of Gaelic-medium pupils to perceive that they would use Gaelic at home in the future (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.3.2). The frequency of reference to future home-based Celtic language use in the Welsh context as compared with the Scottish context despite the Celtic-medium pupil samples having similar home language backgrounds (Section 3.8.1.1, Appendix 6, B.2 & B.3) may suggest a difference in the frequency or density of such language use, which was not investigated in the present study. That the frequency of Gaelic-medium pupils’ language use in Gaelic-speaking family domains was low was shown by Müller (2005) (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.1.2). Alternatively, a higher proportion of Welsh-medium than Gaelic-medium pupils may intend to foster home-based Celtic-language use with their own children in future. The Welsh-medium primary pupils’ perception that they would use Welsh with networks of Welsh speakers in Anglicized areas of Wales and in Patagonia, and the absence of such perceptions amongst the Gaelic-medium pupils in relation to Anglicized areas of Scotland and Cape Breton, may reflect the different proportions of Celtic-language speakers in the two nations (Chapter 2, Sections 2.1.1.2 & 2.1.2.1) or may reflect differences in ‘language awareness’ courses in the curriculum (Section 6.2.3.1.2).

6.2.4.1.3 Participation in cultural activities

A small number of Celtic-medium primary pupils in each of the Scottish and the Welsh samples said their Celtic language would enable their participation in cultural activities in the future. For all such pupils this was the continuance of current activities, such as drama, musical and literary activities (Chapter 5, Sections 5.2.1.4 & 5.2.2.4). Such a finding concords with the small proportion of pupils in Cochran’s (2008: 172) study who cited participation in such activities as a future use for their Celtic language skills. However, the finding does not align with the high proportion of Gaelic-medium secondary pupils who identified themselves as ‘someone involved in the Gaelic arts’ in MacNeil & Stradling’s (2000) study (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.3.2), a difference likely due to different methodological approaches (open-ended interviewing here, self-identification with a statement in
MacNeil and Stradling) and to differences between present identification and perceived future usefulness. Such pupil intentions to continue non-school based Celtic-language activities into adulthood is positive from the perspective of the language maintenance theory presented in Chapter 2, Section 2.2.1.1, which emphasises the use of the threatened language in informal or community domains.

6.2.4.1.4 Tertiary Education

Only a small proportion of each of the Scottish and Welsh Celtic-medium pupil samples mention tertiary education as a future use for their Celtic language. Such a finding aligns with the low proportion of Gaelic-medium pupils citing university or further education as a future use for their Celtic language in Cochran’s (2008) study (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.3.2). The similarity of the frequency of response across the two national contexts may relate to a lack of awareness of tertiary education amongst upper primary pupils, or may relate to a pupil awareness of the restricted scope of Celtic language tertiary education in both countries. Such limited Celtic-medium provision was acknowledged both by the Welsh Assembly Government’s (2007: 6) and Bòrd na Gàidhlig’s (2007: 63) national education strategies, and both policies pledge to increase such provision.

6.2.4.1.5 Pupils who do not know how useful their Celtic language will be for their future

A minority of Celtic-medium primary pupils in each country did not know how useful their Celtic language would be for their future. Such a finding does not concord with Cochran’s (2008) study, which reported 19% of Gaelic-medium pupils (n = 362) not to know to what purposes their Celtic language skills might be put in the future. Such different findings may result from a difference in the phrasing of the question employed in Cochran’s study and in the present research (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3.3.2).

6.2.4.1.6 Language use and language maintenance

A small proportion of Welsh-medium primary pupils expressed an awareness of the inter-relationship between individuals’ Celtic language use and language maintenance, and intended to contribute towards language maintenance through future personal Welsh language use (Chapter 5, Section 5.2.2.6). Such a rationale
for future use of the Celtic language was not cited by any of the Gaelic-medium primary pupils. The difference between the national contexts may relate to the differences in curricular content concerning Celtic language awareness in Scotland and Wales (Section 6.2.3.1.2) or may relate to differences in individual teachers’ approaches to encouraging pupils’ Celtic language use (Chapter 4 Sections 2.1.2 & 2.2.2). The latter is illustrated as whilst Teacher 7 from Primary School 7 in the Welsh context was reported to give pupils advice about the school and community use of their Celtic language in relation to language maintenance, no teachers in the Scottish context were reported to do so.

6.2.4.2 Continuity and change in pupil perceptions of the usefulness of the Celtic language at the primary to secondary school stage: Scottish and Welsh comparisons

6.2.4.2.1 Continuity in pupil perceptions of the future usefulness of the Celtic language

In relation to continuity of pupil perceptions regarding the usefulness of the Celtic language for the future, some pupils from each of the six thematic categories outlined in Section 6.2.4.1 reiterated their perception at the secondary school stage (Chapter 5, Sections 5.2.1.1 – 5.2.2.6). As with the change over time in pupil identifications with the Celtic language, such perceptions were typically more individual at the secondary school stage than at the primary school stage. For example, in relation to employment, the secondary school pupils often draw a distinction between their awareness of the potential usefulness of their Celtic language for future employment and their personal intentions in pursuing such Celtic-language employment opportunities. Such a difference was also highlighted by Cochran (2008: 171) in relation to pupils’ views of Gaelic language employment. The distinction between an awareness of possible social domains for future Celtic language use and intended future language use in such domains could usefully be explored in future research.

6.2.4.2.2 Change in pupil perceptions of the future usefulness of the Celtic language

In relation to changes in pupil perceptions of the usefulness of the Celtic language for their future between the primary and secondary school stages, shifts
were returned in all six categories outlined in Section 6.2.4.1. Four such shifts were similar across Scotland and Wales and two differed.

In both Scotland and Wales, primary pupils who did not know how useful their Celtic language would be for their future clarified their views at the secondary school stage (Chapter 5, Sections 5.2.1.5 & 5.2.2.5). Primary pupils who cited tertiary education typically cited employment at the secondary school stage (Chapter 5, Sections 5.2.1.3 & 5.2.2.3), primary pupils who cited cultural activities typically cited home and community-based language use at the secondary school stage (Chapter 5, Sections 5.2.1.4 & 5.2.2.4) and a minority of primary pupils who cited employment opportunities at the primary school stage stated an intention, at the secondary school stage, to intergenerationally transmit the Celtic language to their children in the future (Chapter 5, Sections 5.2.1.1 & 5.2.2.1). The latter two findings, that Celtic-medium pupils shifted towards more home and community-based intended future uses of their Celtic language at the secondary school stage, is positive from a language planning perspective in which it is hoped that Celtic-medium education will foster Celtic language use in informal non-school based domains in the pupils’ adulthood (Chapter 2, Sections 2.2.2.1 & 2.2.2.2).

Two longitudinal shifts in the perceived future usefulness of the Celtic language differed by national context. Gaelic-medium pupils in Anglicized urban areas who had solely cited strongly Gaelic-speaking geographical domains for future communication with Celtic language speakers at the primary school stage additionally cited local networks of Celtic-language speaking friends for future Celtic language use at the secondary school stage (for example Pupil 011, Chapter 5 Section 5.2.1.2 and Pupil 010, Chapter 5, Section 6.1.1). Such a finding was not paralleled in the Welsh-medium pupil data. Rather, the Welsh-medium primary pupils who perceived that Welsh would be useful in day to day activities in their urban Anglicized context (Chapter 5, Section 5.2.2.2) perceived the school to be the main social domain for Welsh language use in their area at the secondary school stage. The shift in Gaelic-medium pupils’ perceptions to incorporate future Gaelic language use with peers in urban areas is a positive development from a language planning perspective (Chapter 2, Section 2.2.1). Such a finding is worthy of future
research in terms of investigating the pupil-level, school-level and community-level
variables that foster such intended patterns of future language use.

Celtic-medium pupil perceptions of the future usefulness of their Celtic
language in relation to their awareness of its status as a lesser-used language is the
second theme that exhibits variation between the Scottish and Welsh contexts over
time. In Wales, the primary pupils who cited a wish to use their Celtic language in
the future in order to maintain the language shifted to cite either an employment or
home domain for their future language use at the secondary school stage (Chapter 5,
Section 5.2.2.6). In Scotland, Gaelic-medium pupils only cited an awareness of
Gaelic as a lesser-used language at the secondary school stage and pupils’ reactions
to this in relation to the usefulness of Gaelic for their future varied (Chapter 5,
Section 5.2.1.6). However, the majority of pupils who expressed such an awareness
felt that the Gaelic language was in decline and there would consequently be few
future opportunities for Gaelic language use either locally or nationally. Such
pessimism about the future vitality of the Celtic language was not voiced by Celtic-
medium pupils in Wales, who typically rather adopted an integrative approach and
perceived that the status of Welsh as a minority language added to its cultural
importance and to the value of their use of the language in the future. Such a
difference in pupil perceptions across the Scottish and Welsh contexts may be
attributable to the different levels of linguistic vitality of the Celtic languages in the
two countries, to differences in public perceptions of the linguistic trajectories of the
languages (with the number of Welsh speakers increasing considerably between
1991 and 2001), or to differences in the visibility and institutionalization of the
languages in the two nations (Chapter 2, Sections 2.1.1.2 & 2.1.2.1).

6.3 Concluding comments: Lost in transition? Celtic language revitalization in
Scotland and Wales at the primary to secondary school stage

The present study aimed to explore the effect of the move from primary to
secondary school on aspects of language relevant to language planning in Scotland
and Wales. The investigation of choice of medium of instruction of education,
language use, perceived language ability, linguistic identifications and perceived
usefulness of the Celtic language for the future at the primary and secondary school
stages enabled the identification of patterns which suggest the relevance of Celtic-
medium education to language maintenance at the upper primary and lower secondary school stages in the two nations.

The longitudinal design of the present study enables cross-national differences between the Celtic-medium groups in Scotland and Wales which existed at the upper primary school stage to be distinguished from national differences in the changes associated with the transition from primary to secondary school. Such an approach highlighted differences in the Celtic-medium primary pupil groups in relation to various aspects of their Celtic language use, most notably with their peers (discussed in Section 6.1), in their perceptions of their comparative competence in writing their Celtic language and in English (discussed in Section 6.2), and in relation to aspects of linguistic identifications and pupil perceptions of the usefulness of the Celtic language for their future (discussed in Sections 6.3 & 6.4). In all cases, the Welsh-medium pupils return a more positive response. Such differences between the Scottish and Welsh contexts are of potential interest for future research regarding the outcomes of Celtic-medium primary education. The differences also underline the importance of base-line measures in cross-national comparative research so that change can be validly measured and compared.

The longitudinal comparison of Gaelic-medium and Welsh-medium pupil responses at the upper primary and lower secondary school stages additionally highlights national trends of interest to the question of the role of secondary school level Celtic-medium education in language maintenance. The weakening of Gaelic-medium pupils’ Celtic language use with friends in informal areas of the school and with siblings in the home at the secondary school stage is of concern from a language planning perspective, which rather aims that Celtic-medium education foster or develop Celtic language use in such informal domains. Such a decrease in Celtic language use is not evidenced by the Welsh-medium pupil sample. However, other aspects of the present study suggest longitudinal trends that reflect positively on the role of Celtic-medium education in Celtic language maintenance in both national contexts. The evidence that an individual level personal identification with the Celtic language can develop out of a school-based association with Gaelic or Welsh is one such trend.
In relation to choice of medium of instruction of education, the present study has shown that Celtic-medium primary pupils in both the Scottish and the Welsh contexts typically wish to continue with the available Celtic-medium educational provision at the early secondary school stage. Such a finding indicates that the main obstacle to continuity in Celtic-medium education at the primary-secondary school stage is the availability of Celtic-medium secondary subject provision.

The potential interaction of the availability of secondary school Celtic-medium subject provision, the development of linguistic ability, opportunities for Celtic language use, and language attitudes underlines the importance of the provision of a range of Celtic-medium secondary school subjects. The finding that primary and secondary Celtic-medium pupils intend to use their Celtic language in a myriad of formal and informal social domains in their futures additionally emphasises the importance of the creation of a wide range of contexts for Celtic language use – in extra-curricular activities, in communities, and in employment – in order that pupils may have the opportunity to develop their ‘ideal’ linguistic self (Dörnyei 2009: 29) during their teenage years.

On the basis of the evidence presented in this thesis, the role of the school in Celtic language maintenance is stronger in Wales than in Scotland, both at the upper primary school stage, and in the transition to secondary school. However, such a statement comes with two key caveats pertaining to sample size and to the relatively short period (one year) involved in this longitudinal study. The investigation of the role of the school in Celtic language maintenance, and of the extent to which the primary to secondary school stage is indeed a ‘critical juncture’ in this regard, requires a large-scale longitudinal study of the impact of individual-level, school-level and community-level factors on language attitudes, language use and linguistic identifications from late childhood, throughout adolescence and into adulthood.

6.4 Recommendations for policy, provision and practice

6.4.1 Choice of medium of instruction of secondary education at the early secondary school stage

- Increase the provision of secondary school subjects being taught through the medium of Gaelic or Welsh at the early secondary school stage. This is
particularly urgent in the Scottish context, where Celtic-medium educational provision is typically weaker at the secondary school stage (Chapter 2, Sections 2.1.1.3 & 2.1.2.3).

- Provide information to pupils and parents about the advantages and disadvantages of continuing with Celtic-medium education at the secondary school stage. Advantages for pupils include the development of age-related competence in Gaelic or Welsh and the continued cognitive, social, linguistic and employment benefits of bilingualism (Baker 2006:255, as outlined in Chapter 1, Section 1.1), and may potentially include small class sizes.
  Advantages for the language include the normalization of Celtic language use in the secondary school domain (a prestigious social domain) and the development of highly-competent bilingual and biliterate Gaelic or Welsh and English language speakers. Parents and pupils should be informed of the literature on Gaelic and Welsh-medium pupil attainment in Gaelic-medium primary and early secondary school education (O’Hanlon et al. 2010, Baker 2007), and be made aware of immersion education pupils’ capacity to learn complex secondary school material through the medium of their immersion language by means of Content and Language Integrated Teaching (see, for example, Dalton-Puffer 2008, Whittaker & Llinares 2009). Disadvantages for pupils may include small class sizes (and thus a small social grouping), and, in some dual stream schools, Gaelic or Welsh-medium pupils not being streamed with their English-medium counterparts for subjects (such as mathematics) but rather all abilities existing within one Gaelic or Welsh-medium class. A disadvantage of Gaelic or Welsh-medium secondary education for the language would exist if parents, pupils and Gaelic organizations placed emphasis on the school as the agent of language maintenance at the expense of additionally encouraging and fostering Gaelic or Welsh in the home, in informal community domains and in local and national social institutions and employment. Fishman argues that such an emphasis on the school would be insufficient to facilitate language revitalization (1991, Chapter 2, Section 2.2) and the national level language Plans of Scotland and Wales both focus on education as part of a holistic
language plan (WAG 2003, BnG 2007a, Chapter 2, Sections 2.2.2.1 & 2.2.2.2, BnG 2011, Chapter 6, Section 6.2.2.3). The provision of such information about the advantages and disadvantages of continuing with Celtic-medium education at the secondary school stage would enable pupils and parents to make an informed choice about the medium of education of subjects at the early secondary school stage.

6.4.2 Continuity and change in medium of instruction of education at the primary to secondary school stage

- Where possible, ensure linguistic continuity and progression between the primary and secondary school stages in relation to the Celtic language as a medium of instruction. The achievement of such an aim would require an increase in the availability of Gaelic or Welsh-medium secondary subjects and strong liaison and collaboration between the receiver secondary school and its feeder primary schools.

- If continuity of medium of instruction is not possible for all subjects at the primary to secondary school stage, primary and secondary schools should develop strategies to prepare pupils for the linguistic transitions that they will encounter in the move from primary to secondary school and to support them in their experience of such transitions.

6.4.3 Aspects of pupil language of relevance to language planning

- Strengthen Celtic-medium primary pupils’ language use at the upper primary school stages where possible, particularly in relation to Gaelic-medium pupils’ language use with their peers (with friends in the classroom, in the school and when in the community). Such an aim may be achieved by means of (i) school language use policies, (ii) language awareness sessions in which pupils are informed of the importance of Celtic language use for their own

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linguistic development and for the Gaelic language itself and (iii) through the provision of more Gaelic-medium extra curricular activities in the school or in the community.

- Secondary schools and other stakeholders in Gaelic education should work with primary schools to provide opportunities for the maintenance of Gaelic-medium pupils’ Gaelic language use at the primary to secondary school stages. The achievement of such an aim may involve (i) greater availability of Gaelic-medium subjects at the early secondary school stage to maintain and develop pupils’ formal Gaelic language skills and language use (ii) greater availability of Gaelic-language extra curricular activities in the school or in the community to develop and encourage pupils’ informal Gaelic language skills and use (iii) an inclusive school ethos in which the corridors and playground of the secondary school are perceived to be legitimate contexts of Gaelic language use. Secondary schools which receive Celtic-medium primary educated pupils should have a bilingual or multilingual ethos and a language policy which maximizes pupils’ opportunities to use their Celtic language out with the classroom environment.

- Language planners should be cognizant both of the relationship between language use and linguistic identity and the role that the school can play in the development of such linguistic identifications. Language planners should work with schools and other stakeholders in Gaelic education to develop strategies to enable Gaelic-medium pupils to develop their identities as Gaelic speakers out with the school context: whether synchronously (for example, in the community whilst they are of school age) or chronologically (for example, once they have left school, in further education or employment).

Such recommendations emphasize that the strengthening of Gaelic language provision within the secondary school context should be conducted as part of a holistic language plan, in which opportunities are developed for pupils to use their Gaelic language both out with the school context and beyond school (in their adult lives). The example of Wales provides a good point of policy comparison from which Scotland may learn.
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