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A BUDOUCNOST
THE WELSH LANGUAGE: PAST, PRESENT
AND FUTURE

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Metody: Text bude založen zčásti na literatuře zabývající se problematikou velštiny a Walesu. Zčásti bude text pracovat s informacemi získanými z rozhovorů s rodilými mluvčími.
Požadavky: Výzkum bude podložen názory a myšlenkami rodilých mluvčích, které budou dále porovnávány a rozebírány.

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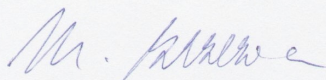
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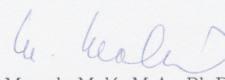
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Poděkování

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Anotace

Práce analyzuje historii, vývoj, současnou situaci a pravděpodobnou budoucnost velštiny. Velština je menšinový jazyk, který mnoho století usiloval o to, aby se stal plnohodnotným komunikačním nástrojem v celém Walesu. Velkým konkurentem pro tento jazyk byla dominantní angličtina, nicméně díky snahám lingvistů, nacionalistickým hnutím a zařazení velšského jazyka do vzdělávání je dnes velština právoplatným jazykem, který může svobodně používat kdokoli a v jakékoliv situaci. Praktická část práce vychází z dotazníků a popisuje současné názory a postoje k velštině jak ze strany Velšanů, tak z obecného pohledu obyvatel Velké Británie.

Klíčová slova: velština, angličtina, obrození jazyka, bilingvismus

Annotation

The paper analyses the history, evolution, current situation and possible future of the Welsh language. Welsh is a minority language which has strived for many centuries to become a fully-fledged tool of communication throughout Wales. In the past, the dominant English language has been a great rival for Welsh. However, thanks to the significant efforts of linguists, to the Welsh nationalist movements and the inclusion of the Welsh language in the Welsh education system, Welsh is nowadays a formally-recognised language which can be used by anyone and in any situation. The practical part of the paper is based on questionnaires and describes contemporary opinions and attitudes to the Welsh language both from the point of view of the Welsh people as well as the general view of non-Welsh-speaking British citizens.

Key words: Welsh, English, language resurrection, bilingualism

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Introduction

The existence of a language is highly fragile. There are more than 35 000 languages in the world, however only 8 000 languages of this huge group are considered to be self-contained. (Čermák 1997, 87) Many of the remaining languages are often on the edge of extinction and every new decade poses a threat to another dying tongue. Numerous endangered languages do not even fight for their preservation and other languages have already been defeated in their difficult struggles. There was a time when one of such threatened languages which seemed to be dying out was Welsh.

The Welsh language belongs to the Celtic branch of the Indo-European family of languages and is considered one of the oldest original languages in Europe. (Čermák 1997, 88) The long history of this language has been full of crises and struggles for existence. In the nineteenth century, Welsh even appeared to be nearly dead. However, the root of this language is very strong and nowadays Welsh is no longer only a tool of communication, it represents a vast cultural, traditional and linguistic wealth.

In the theoretical part of the thesis, the Welsh language typology and history are described. The inseparable part of Welsh language history is represented by a leading figure in the Welsh language resurrection, Saunders Lewis. This personality helped to lay foundations of the current Welsh bilingual society and education. It is probable that the Welsh language would have not been so revitalised had not it been for Saunders Lewis.

The practical part of the thesis is dedicated to an investigation into the current situation of the Welsh language, both from the internal and external point of view. The investigation consists of two questionnaires. The first questionnaire is focused on the Welsh people themselves and the second questionnaire inquires into the United Kingdom's opinion about the Welsh resurrection and bilingual society.

The main aim of the thesis is to inform the reader about the past, present and the possible future of the Welsh language. The whole text should provide an objective overall view into the Welsh language resurrection issue and also encourage the reader to think about some key points like, for example, bilingualism or national integration.

1 What is the Welsh Language?

1.1 Introduction to the Welsh Language

The Welsh language looks and sounds very different from English. The reason for this is that Welsh is a Celtic language, whereas English is a West Germanic language. Unlike the latter, Celtic languages are highly endangered; indeed there are only few living Celtic cultures in the present. However, they still survive in parts of Great Britain, that is to say, in Northern Ireland, Scotland and in Wales (Čermák 1997, 88).

The most significant evidence of a surviving Celtic culture is the Welsh language. Although this language had almost died out, at the end of the nineteenth century, people from Wales began to fight for its revitalization. This battle has been highly successful and nowadays there are about 500 000 Welsh speakers, that is approximately 20 per cent of the whole Welsh population (Čermák 1997, 444). Indeed, the number of Welsh speakers continues to increase every year.

The evolution of the Welsh language was a long and complicated process. At the beginning stands an ancient family of southern Celtic languages, Brittonic. Welsh was a version of this linguistic family and Brittonic languages had, naturally, the largest effect on the Welsh vocabulary. The transition from Brittonic to the separate Welsh language happened somewhere between AD 400 and 700 and Welsh commenced its individual evolution. The Welsh language itself is considered a great legacy to linguistic science. There is no doubt that Wales is the only part of Britain where an original language continues to be spoken even today. Consequently, Welsh has the oldest roots in the British Isles (Davies 2000, 4-8).

Apart from Brittonic, there are other languages that have had a huge impact on Welsh, principally Latin and Irish. The reasons for this are historical. The Roman invasion in the first centuries brought about a change in the Welsh vocabulary. Thus the Roman language gave Welsh words of Latin origin. For instance the word “pont”

originates from *pons* (in Latin) and means *bridge* (in English). The influence of Irish was also appreciable. After the fall of the Roman Empire, there were numerous Irish colonies in north-west Wales and Welsh adopted several Irish words and expressions. Indeed, the very frequent Welsh name “Gwynedd” is considered by linguists to be of Irish origin (Davies 2000, 4-8).

Eventually, by the year 500, the eastern British kingdoms had been created and it was then that there started an age of Anglo-Saxon, or rather Old English dominance. Englishmen called the people from the west the *Welsh*. The word “Welsh” is considered to mean “foreigner” and it can also mean people who have been “Romanized”. To show self-assurance, the Welsh people chose for themselves a word “Cymru” and named their language “Cymraeg”. The name Cymru comes from the Brittonic expression for fellow countryman. Today, however, the word Cymru represents a deepening awareness of Welsh identity (Davies 2000, 4-8).

In spite of all the historical changes and influences, Welsh is a stable language. The standard written form of the Welsh is very constant and has not changed much during its history. As a result its users can understand historical texts in Welsh without much difficulty. Thanks to this the Welsh people are in the enviable position of being closer to their traditions and history. This is unimaginable for languages like, for example, English, where the syntax, lexicology and morphology has considerably changed. For instance, reading ancient English texts in the original requires certain knowledge (Davies 2000, 4-8).

1.2 The Language Typology

One could argue that learning Welsh in the primary schools of Wales is not essential, since it is considered an extremely difficult language. This is, however, not the case. The reality is that learning Welsh is just very different from learning English. However, there are some phenomena English and Welsh have in common. Like English, the Welsh language is an analytic language (Davies 2000, 118-122). This means that the relation of one word to another is expressed by the use of prepositions or

by the word order in the sentence. a synthetic language functions in a different way, for the relations within a sentence are expressed by changes of morphemes.

Still, there are many basic differences between English and Welsh. Unlike English, Welsh has is largely phonetic. This means that the words are pronounced exactly as they are written. In addition every letter written is pronounced in Welsh; there are no silent letters. Therefore every grapheme appertains to a particular one phoneme. With the pronunciation, speakers have to remember that the stress in Welsh words falls predominantly on the penultimate syllable (Davies 2000, 118-122).

The Welsh alphabet also differs from the English one. The Welsh consists of twenty simple letters. Besides this, letters like *j*, *k*, *q*, *v*, *x*, and *z* are absent in the Welsh language's alphabet. Moreover, there are eight digraphs: *ch*, *dd*, *ff*, *ng*, *ll*, *ph*, *rh* and *th*. a digraph is a pair of letters representing a single speech sound. a digraph appears for example in the word *ynysoedd* (islands, isles), the plural form of the word *ynys* (island, isle) (Evans 1996, 11-16).

Another difference is in the basic pattern of the language. The most frequent pattern for European languages is SVO – subject, verb, object; meanwhile the Welsh pattern is VSO – verb, subject, object, indirect object. The position of adjective is also different, for adjectives are almost always placed after nouns in Welsh. As a matter of fact, for some foreign learners this can appear slightly unnatural (Davies 2000, 118-122).

Nevertheless, the main difficulty for Welsh learners is the system of initial mutations. These are the changes in the initial consonants of some words. The mutations are probably the result of a fusion of the Celtic languages. Beginners find this issue very complicated and often speak with complete ignorance of the mutations. However, this does not cause any serious misunderstandings because the Welsh speech can be understood by a native speaker without much difficulty even if it is free from the initial mutations (Evans 1996, 17-21).

Grammatical categories also differ. The noun can have only a masculine or feminine gender. The neutral “it” does not exist. The grammatical number can be singular, plural and Welsh even recognises that some things come in pairs (Davies

2000, 118-122). This is termed dual. a dual number is used for the paired nouns like hands, legs, eyes, ears and so on.

Making plural forms in Welsh can appear very complicated, indeed. There are seven ways to form it: adding a termination, a vowel change, adding a termination with a vowel change, dropping a singular ending with a vowel change, substituting a plural for a singular ending and substituting a plural ending for a singular with a vowel change (Davies 2000, 118-122).

It might be expected that learning Welsh is very unpopular because of many differences in comparison with English. However, the truth is that the Welsh language is growing in popularity, especially with youngsters, because it is a challenge for every learner. Furthermore, people from Wales appreciate the sound of the language, for it is strong and resonant. Nevertheless, the main reason for learning Welsh in Wales is the sense of patriotism which has been built during the whole history and also the will to sustain such an old heritage (Davies 2000, 118-122).

1.3 A Brief History of the Language

With regard to Welsh history, it is a kind of miracle that the Welsh language managed to survive. Nowadays, the number of the Welsh-speaking persons is more than two million and the popularity of Welsh continues to increase. However, there were times when the language balanced on the edge of its downfall. The main reason for the decline of the Welsh language was that its history has been full of struggles with English. The English language has always been the dominant one and did not ever miss any opportunity to bring Welsh under control. The number of Welsh speakers has always fluctuated depending upon the extent of the English influence. Fortunately, the tradition of Welsh was stronger than expected. Consequently, the people of Wales started to realize how important their native tongue was for their culture. As a result, the Welsh language survived and now is powerful enough to blossom.

The dawn of the Welsh language is covered with a dense fog. Only a few Welsh inscriptions and marginal notes or glosses have survived from the age of the Early

British Kingdoms. The evidence from the beginning of this language's history is slight. The extant texts are kept in the Cambridge University Library. These texts are preserved as marginal notes on the Juvenius manuscript and date at the period from the eighth to the twelfth century. The oldest continuous text is the Surexit Memorandum. This relic records the settlement of a land dispute between Tudfwlch son of Llywyd and Elgu son of Gelli (Davies 2000, 10-13).

It took several centuries for Welsh to become a rich and supple language. In the eleventh century, the literary language was the same in all parts of Wales. On the other hand, the spoken language was slightly different and there were a number of dialects. However, what was the most important was that Welsh was spoken everywhere. People used Welsh for the names of their churches and settlements, for their rivers and hills. Thus the original tongue was deeply rooted. Even though people borrowed numerous words from English and Latin, the Welsh language remained Celtic. Therefore the impact of English was not perceptible in the Early Middle Ages (Davies 2000, 15).

During the Norman Conquest, the situation changed. Welsh fell under the growing influence of the French and English language. The Normans invaded and took over not only the land but the language of communication. Some Welsh places were given French names. First names of Norman origin, like Richard, Robert and William became very popular. The power of English increased in Wales because of the newly-founded Norman towns where French and English were predominant. At that time, the influx of English settlers was increasing, too. Nevertheless, the Welsh-speaking population still remained considerable and the people of Wales always believed in their own tradition and culture (Davies 2000, 15-20).

In spite of English and French pressure, the Welshmen had never forgotten their roots and fought back. The evidence of the Welsh speakers' consciousness was that Welsh won its place side by side with Latin and English as a language of culture and learning. In the Late Middle Ages, Welsh became a medium for religious literature. It was used in legal texts and in works on medicine, heraldry and husbandry. Above all, people could find it in prose sagas and romances and in poetry. It was a great reversal in the history of the Welsh language (Davies 2000, 15-20).

The struggle against English gained momentum when the first Welsh book was published in year 1547 by Sir John Price of Brecon. It had no title but was generally known as “Yn y lhyvyr hwnn” (in English it means: In this book), after its introductory words. It included the Lord’s Prayer, the Creed and the Ten Commandments. There was a primer on how to read Welsh, too. The first publication encouraged the new intentions to print other original texts and books in Welsh (Davies 2000, 23).

The most significant linguistic efforts were made to translate the Bible and religious Christian extracts. It was an important step to prove that the Welsh language is as fully-fledged as English. The Welsh translations of the New Testament and of the Prayer Book were published in 1567 by William Salesbury. The texts, however, had to be accompanied by English translations in order to spread English as a predominant language among all people in Wales. The whole Bible translation into Welsh was produced by William Morgan in 1588. It was an important event in the history of the Welsh language. The language of the Welsh Bible was considerably different from spoken Welsh. The Bible provided the people in Wales a model of correct Welsh and they soon became aware of a certain image of their language. Welsh was the first non-state language of Europe to become the medium for a published Bible (Davies 2000, 23-25).

Nevertheless, English was still more and more dominant and came increasingly to be the medium of legal transactions. The fight against the Welsh language continued. The Welsh gentry, even in the more remote parts of the country, came to feel a need to be fluent in English. Thus English had already gained a role in official life in Wales and the Welsh language was overshadowed again (Davies 2000, 21-28).

With the Act of Union in 1536 (Davies 2000, 21), Wales was incorporated into England and the Welsh inhabitants were made subjects of the English crown. It was a victory of English because it was to be the language of the courts of Wales and those using the Welsh language were unable to hold public office. As a result, the gentry eventually abandoned the Welsh language. This in turn led to linguistic differences enforcing class differences. Welsh culture, which had before this been essentially

aristocratic, became typical of peasantry, craftsmen and the lower clergy. The Welsh language itself became endangered (Davies 2000, 22).

Still, in the seventeenth century, the majority of the working and lower class in Wales remained monolingually Welsh and used this language in all aspects of life. Since the language was spoken only by ordinary people, there was a development of Welsh vernacular poetry and folk literature. These literary pieces became popular and were demanded even in print. The first permanent printing press in Wales was founded in year 1718 at Atpar near Newcastle Emlyn by Isaac Carter (Davies 2000, 27). Print helped the Welsh language to assert itself again.

With the advent of print came the revival of the word “eisteddfod”. The Eisteddfod is a festival and competition of arts, it has a great tradition and dates back to the 12th century. There were competitions in singing, recitation, drama, dancing, choral singing and playing instruments, especially the harp. Today the Eisteddfod thrives and has had a great impact on the cultural scene in Britain and even further afield. Many famous Welsh actors and singers started their career through the agency of this festival (Mrs. Strefford, pers. comm.).

The historical progress was on the side of Welsh, for a while. With Methodism, the Welsh language gained a better position. The Church of England became a minority in Wales. Methodists were obliged to cultivate the language of the common people and were the pioneers of Sunday Schools. They helped the population to maintain levels of literacy. Ministers and laymen had opportunities to publicly use their mother tongue. In about 1750 Welsh was the only language of church services in over 80 per cent of the country (Davies 2000, 32-33).

In the nineteenth century the growth of industry allowed Wales to give work to far more people than before. Many Englishmen and Irishmen immigrated to Wales and started to learn the Welsh language. This meant that the Welsh language was not only spoken in the countryside but in the towns and cities too. Welsh became stronger and stronger. Monolingualism in Welsh persisted well into the twentieth century and made this language absolutely self-sufficient (Davies 2000, 42-49).

This development did not continue for long. During the First World War, the percentage of the Welsh speakers declined rapidly. The population in Wales was much smaller after the war and it had serious consequences for the Welsh language. Young people emigrated to England because Wales was hit by depression. English kept on gaining a dominant position in the country. London daily newspapers were highly demanded in Wales. Films, for instance, were equally popular, but wherever they came from they were not Welsh. Radio broadcasting from Cardiff was overwhelmingly English, too. As a result, the Welsh language withdrew from the leading position very fast (Davies 2000, 49-66).

The twentieth century symbolises the hardest period for the Welsh language. The impact of the Second World War was so dramatic that people believed that the depression would cause Welsh to disappear completely. For this reason, in 1939 The Committee for the Defence of the Culture of Wales, later known as The New Wales Union, was founded. However, the union was not very successful. People from England feared the bombing and escaped to Wales where they also spread their language and culture. At the same time, the activities of the War office were converting the Welsh speaking communities to a military training ground and so were pushing the Welsh-speaking boundary in Wales more and more westwards. The Welsh language faced its death (Davies 2000, 59-68).

1.4 Saunders Lewis

In 1925, The National Party of Wales (Plaid Genedlaethol Cymru) was established. The leading person of the party insisted that the Welsh language should be defended. He was a man with a good sense of the Welsh nationality and he focused all his efforts on helping his native language survive and prosper. His name was Saunders Lewis and he became a symbol of the Welsh language resurrection. This man was a hope for the Welsh language, culture and tradition (BBC 2012c).

The afore mentioned National Party concentrated its intentions primarily in Welsh speaking communities and the principal language used was Welsh.

Simultaneously, there were other popular political groups and the party did not get a large support. Nevertheless, its conception brought a new element into discussions and fights for the Welsh sovereignty (BBC 2012c).

The father of the conception fighting for the Welsh sovereignty was Saunders Lewis. He was born on 15 October 1893 and was brought up in a Welsh speaking family. After his studies at Liverpool University, he became a lecturer. He acted as president of The National Party until 1939. According to him, a nation without traditions and national cohesiveness is in danger of decay. In 1936, he called attention to himself when he and two other nationalists, Lewis Valentine and D. J. Williams, were arrested for setting fire to a bombing school in Llyn. The bombing school was a project focused on training English soldiers in the use of bombs. The government of United Kingdom did not accept the large protests against the bombing school establishments in Wales and the Welsh people were very angry to see their country change into a tool of violence and warfare. The three men went down in history as heroes and idols of Welsh national pride, for they gave themselves up to the police. This trio was greeted by the Welsh people with admiration after its release. Their act was a strike against English predominance (BBC 2012c).

There were more plans to avoid the English predominance in Wales. In the year 1938, the National Eisteddfod, Wales's culture leading festival, brought in a petition. This petition demanded that Welsh should have equal status to English. It was signed by almost a million people and led to other changes for the Welsh language power. Among the considerable changes was the Welsh Courts Act of 1942 which said that Welsh could be used in any court in Wales (Davies 2000, 65-66).

Saunders Lewis produced similar ideas. He never gave up and continued with his intentions to save the Welsh language. He wrote and published many novels, poems, essays, critical studies and also dramas in Welsh. In 1962, he read a lecture on BBC radio on the topic *The Fate of the Language (Tynged yr Iath)*. He appealed to people from Wales not to let their language disappear and not to let English destroy their tradition and national identity. He declared that people should state that they were monoglot Welsh. He persuaded the people of Wales to fight against the fact that Wales

would be totally administrated in English. He encouraged the listeners of radio to resuscitate the Welsh language and culture. The acts of Saunders Lewis started a wave of patriotic feeling in Wales. As a result, the Welsh Language Society was founded and The National Party became more and more popular (Davies 2000, 100-104).

This year 2012, on 13 February, the 50th anniversary of The Fate of the Language broadcasted by the BBC was marked. It was a very important moment for Welsh history and the Welsh consider it a day of remembrance of Saunders Lewis's great legacy to the Welsh language. He started a bilingual period in Wales and a period when Welsh achieved equal status to English and other state languages. He believed that his language and national identity were in danger and he was right. But he made every effort to fight for his beliefs. It is possible that nothing would have improved had it not been for this one courageous and determined person (BBC 2012d).

2 The Welsh Language from the Outside

2.1 Attitudes to Welsh in the Past

The history of Welsh is extremely complicated even from the external point of view. Still there is a persisting conflict between Welsh and English. English became a symbol of a superior status in Wales. There were no upper-class Welsh-speaking families during the nineteenth century. Education was provided mainly through the medium of English and Welsh could be learned at home and in the chapel. English was useful and profitable for the people and was considered the language of secular things (Davies 2000, 45-46).

There was always a struggle between Welsh nationalism and the power of English influence. Wales was usually opened to English, especially in the nineteenth and twentieth century, when many cruel wars broke out. In those times, it seemed the sustaining of the linguistic distinctiveness was no longer possible. Britain saved its face of the greatest and most envied country in Europe and Wales was to be a part of that glory (Davies 2000, 45-46).

As a great power, English followed many new European ideologies and social thoughts. For Welsh, it was very difficult to resist the effects of these new philosophies. Darwin's Theory from the year 1859 soon adapted its principles to the social field. Society was full of competition and capitalism was strengthening its position. Many Welshmen believed that their tongue was on the edge of extinction. Utilitarianism and the Anglicized Nonconformists nearly sentenced the Welsh language to death. They were convinced that Welsh stood in the way of British progress. The Welsh language was doomed (Davies 2000, 45-46).

Moreover, English continued fighting against the Welsh language. England insisted that the moral and material condition of the Welsh people could not be improved without the general introduction of the English language. The maintenance of Welsh was considered nonsense. The Welsh language seemed as a vast drawback to

Englishmen. It stood in the way of the English policy. These disputes divided Wales into the almost totally English-speaking wealthier classes and the largely monoglot-Welsh poorer classes (Davies 2000, 45-46).

In all its aspects, Wales was placed in a position of continuing inferiority and serious underestimation. There were many other conflicts between England and Wales throughout history. To Englishmen, Wales often seemed on the edge of the earth. The country still lives in reaction to its only neighbour and always responds to the presence in the east, in England (Davies 2000, 45-46).

The most visible resentments of the long conflict between the two nationalities are still alive along the border of the countries. There are people who strongly disclaim all trace of Welshness or Englishness. It is a perpetual antipathy and spiritual confusion. The North of Wales has never been exactly Welsh or English, however, it is known as predominantly English (Naomi-Jayne Lowery, pers. comm.).

History and geography have made the Welsh one of Europe's most absolute minorities. Nobody else in the world speaks their language or shares their historical events. The Welshmen were permanently, often against their will, in protest. They did not protest personally or actively. They just spoke their language, which was inappropriate for their great and powerful neighbour.

2.2 Attitudes to Welsh Nowadays

The position of Wales in United Kingdom has been always complicated. In Wales, there is a national pride, typical original language, separate history and separate culture. All these things can characterise an independent country. However, Wales might not be strong enough to become a self-sufficient state. It has been a part of Great Britain all the time and people from Wales appreciate and admire the monarchy and the crown. It is true that the will of Wales is often a mystery for Britain and also for the Welshmen themselves, since the Welsh people want to sustain their own authentic traditions and culture, but do not want to lose the protection of United Kingdom (Davies 2000, 69-79).

These facts cause scepticism about the Welsh language resurrection among people from England. In spite of that, the main problem in the England-Wales relationship is the inability of Englishmen to identify themselves with the difficult language situation of Wales. Since English has always been a dominant powerful language, Englishmen have never experienced fear of the loss of their linguistic heritage. At present, the confidence is even more intense, for English is considered the most progressive and effective language in the world (Naomi-Jayne Lowery, pers. comm.).

Compared to Englishmen, much more empathy with the Welsh language situation can be marked among the nations like Scotland, Ireland and also in various European countries. A model country, where the issue of different idioms is still alive, is Spain. For instance, Spaniards from the provinces of Basque or Catalonia still keep on fighting for their independence and protect their dialects and idioms. At the same time, the Scottish and Irish native speakers are frequently more inclined to support Welsh than people from England. This empathising is likely to follow from the awareness of the same Celtic roots. Just like Wales, Scotland and Ireland are distinguished by the proper Celtic dialects. It is generally known that the relationship among these three countries has been much better than the one with England (Davies 2000, 111-117).

To compare, Welsh is not a single language posing a problem of language resurrection. To give an example, the Czech language was once in a similar situation as Welsh. It suffered under a German supremacy for a long time and it was on the edge of extinction, too. The resurrection of Czech came much earlier than the Welsh, in the eighteenth century. However, the fight for the original language is still vivid in the Czech people's minds. This could well be a reason why the Bohemians and Moravians who are aware of Welsh are often enthusiastic about the old Celtic language revival. In addition, it is quite possible that the Welsh resurrection issue sometimes appear in the Czech media, especially in newspapers or linguistic magazines. The Czech resurrection experience shows that the long struggle for linguistic independence can be successful and that it is not necessarily hopeless.

3 Education Is the Key

Not only the history of the language itself but even the history of its education has been very complicated. There were some times when the Welsh learning was almost banned. The teaching of the Welsh language has gone a long way and the way was truly difficult. Nevertheless, nowadays Welsh education flourishes and the Welsh people hope that there will be no more hard times for their language.

Education is certainly the most important element in the Welsh language resurrection. No matter how hard the various nationalist activists tried, the most significant step was made when the Welsh language was determined a compulsory language in the Welsh schools. At that moment a real revival of Welsh was begun and many Welshmen realised that education is the only key to open the door to a better future for their original tongue.

3.1 Welsh and Education in the Nineteenth Century

During the nineteenth century, the first crisis of the Welsh language was marked in the field of elementary education. The number of elementary schools was rising and the state became involved in financing them. a grant of twelve shillings per child per year was provided to schools in Wales by the government. In exchange for this allowance, teachers in those schools had to teach the pupils at least a mechanical knowledge of English and therefore they started to boycott Welsh language education. Welsh completely disappeared from the schools' timetable. Some teachers even punished children who spoke Welsh. From there comes a myth of the so called "Welsh Not", which was a tally stick worn by the pupils who had erred. Welsh really faced its death then (BBC 2012g).

The situation did not change even when the general public started to be involved in the primary education of the Welsh children. In 1880, school attendance became compulsory and the elementary education was available throughout the whole of Wales. Still, the education provided was almost entirely through the medium of English. Welsh

suffered like never before. In Wales, there was a strong intention coming from the government to replace Welsh with English. English became more and more powerful in the Welsh country. Nevertheless, the only method used, to spread English in schools, was not sufficient enough to erase Welsh from the awareness of the Welsh people (Davies 2000, 79-84).

At the end of the nineteenth century, the chance for Welsh education appeared. In 1885, the Society for the Utilization of Welsh in Education was established at the National Eisteddfod. The original purpose of this society was the better teaching of English done through the medium of the mother tongue, Welsh. There was an intention to create an enlightened educational policy in order to guarantee the Welsh a useful bilingualism. The use of Welsh in schools was submitted in 1886 during the Royal Commission on Elementary Education. The person most responsible in this affair was Dan Isaac Davies, a school inspector from Glamorgan. He made a contribution to the Welsh language revival, especially with the collection of his articles “Tair Miliwn o Gymry Dwy-ieithawg” (Three million bilingual Welsh people). In this text Davies predicts that there will be three million bilingual persons by the year 1985 in Wales. These ideas were very important and encouraging for the next Welsh language evolution and for the Welsh speakers themselves (Davies 2000, 79-84).

3.2 Welsh Education in the Twentieth Century

Another very important person for the Welsh education in the twentieth century was William John Gruffydd. He was a Welsh writer and academic and he occupied himself with Celtic languages, especially with Welsh. Gruffydd had a significant power in academic circles since he was a professor of Celtic at Cardiff University. He promoted the Welsh speech and was always ready to defend it. The Gruffydd’s most famous contribution to the Welsh language was a report called *Welsh in Education and Life*. The report was published in the year 1927 and after its publishing the position of Welsh in the educational system of Wales was investigated and the Welsh language began to be more promoted (Davies 2000, 63-64).

As a result of the report, the research workers noted that the policy of the Welsh language education was insufficient and the training of the teachers of Welsh was inadequate. The recommendations for a better education policy were to set out new plans for Welsh language education, create new teaching materials and improve training for teachers. Since not every school in Wales was a Welsh-medium school, the programme focused predominantly on the children from Welsh-speaking families in the larger towns. Consequently, the spreading of the Welsh language did not record a high increase at that moment (Davies 2000, 63-64).

During the second half of the twentieth century, the situation started to change slowly. People from Wales really missed their native tongue and realized that the education was the key to the well-being of the Welsh language. Suddenly, Welsh began to work its way into schools and even to higher and adult education, referring to the advanced ideas from the report of 1927 (*Welsh in Education and Life*) (Davies 2000, 79).

Significant changes were noted in primary schools. Although the education of the Welsh language was already submitted in 1886, the schools providing Welsh teaching were overwhelmingly in the Welsh speaking areas and they were very few. An important step was taken in 1947 when the first “Welsh school” was designated in the town of Llanelli in the south of Wales. As the Welsh school was very successful, many others were opened during the following several years. Though the Welsh schools originally focused on children from Welsh-speaking families, the new education system attracted even non-Welsh-speaking families. Parents preferred to provide their children a bilingual education when available (Davies 2000, 80-81).

Consequently, the number of Welsh schools had grown to 61 with nearly nine thousand pupils by the year 1974. And what was most positive was the fact that the majority of the pupils came from non-Welsh-speaking families. This development of the Welsh primary school caused progress in Welsh nursery education. In 1971, the nursery schools movement was founded and was called *Mudiad Ysgolion Meithrin*. This movement contributed largely to the expansion of Welsh-medium nursery schools in the country (Davies 2000, 80-81).

With such a great development in Welsh-medium education, the fear that Welsh was not able to attract enough speakers and survive seemed to be allayed. In the cities, the number of Welsh language learners was considerable. Even in the Anglicized districts the use of Welsh continued to become more and more popular. However, these facts did not mean victory. The expansion of the Welsh language was at the very beginning. English remained the dominant language in the country and the language surveys still pointed out to the fact that Welsh learners rarely make use of the language outside school (Davies 2000, 80-81). According to the linguistic professors Carter and Aitchison “*Welsh was a plant which has been growing energetically but which has not as yet produced a deep and extensive root system*” (Davies 2000, 81).

After an initial euphoria, there came a finding that careful planning in the field of education was needed. The Welsh-medium schools still remained a minority of the total number of schools in the country. The methodology of Welsh teaching had to be improved. For this reason the materials for teachers multiplied and several booklets focused on Welsh teaching methods were published. Among the most important were for instance “*The Place of Welsh and English in the Schools of Wales*” (1952). This national government publication dedicated to the situation of potentially bilingual Wales and recommended some possible improvements in the education of languages (Davies 2000, 82-83).

In spite of the general enthusiasm for the sustaining the Welsh language, a controversial movement was founded. The organization was called the Language Freedom Movement and consisted of groups of academics who were active in resisting all moves to make Welsh an integral part of the schools’ syllabuses. The members of the movement opposed the idea that every child had to be taught Welsh. To tell the truth, some counties of Wales were almost obsessive about providing a high-level Welsh language education for children. Reorganization was needed and really came at the end of the twentieth century. Eventually, the local government decided that all pupils from Wales should have some Welsh lessons. Thus, in 1996, begins a time of compulsory Welsh at the schools in Wales (Davies 2000, 82-87).

During the twentieth century, the situation of the secondary schools in Wales changed, too. Normally the Welsh language was taught in the same manner as any other foreign language. For advanced speakers the Senior and Higher Certificates were provided. In the second half of the century it was realised that many secondary school teachers are fluent Welsh speakers. Therefore some subjects such as for example Welsh history and religious instruction started to be taught through the medium of Welsh. Welsh secondary schools contributed to the further expansion of the Welsh language (Davies 2000, 84-85).

The evolution of the Welsh language continued and in the 1999 all secondary schools were obliged to offer Welsh as a second language to pupils up to the age of sixteen. Consequently, the Welsh language teachers were more demanded and a special education system was established for those wishing to train to teach Welsh. Behind this progress in the Welsh secondary education stands predominantly the Committee for the Development of Welsh Medium Education which coordinated almost all the activities connected to this issue (BBC 2012a).

Higher education was also an object of the national efforts to sustain Welsh. The idea of development was born in the 1950's when the Welsh nationalists argued that there should be at least one Welsh medium college in Wales. In 1980, an External Degree through the medium of Welsh was launched for the first time. Thereafter, Welsh-medium courses became more and more available in different colleges. Among the most popular Welsh studies counted a secretarial course (Davies 2000, 85-86).

The evolution in Welsh-medium education encouraged even adults to start learning Welsh. Over the centuries there was a widespread belief that Welsh could not be learned by people who were not brought up to speak this language. However, the increasing use of Welsh required more employees who spoke the language fluently. For this reason many adults were attracted by the possibility to learn Welsh. These adults were predominantly the parents of children attending the Welsh-medium schools. The growing number of learners achieving fluency in Welsh has provided a great increase to the Welsh language community and ensured the Welsh language promising expectations for the future (Davies 2000, 86-87).

3.3 Current Welsh Education

Nowadays, the Welsh-medium education is very stable. People from Wales have realised that compulsory Welsh classes are the most effective way to attract more and more new Welsh learners. Many arrangements are made to sustain the native language of Wales and the government actively develops modern regulations and improvements (Mrs. Strefford, pers. comm.).

To give an example of the model education regulations in the Welsh counties, the Caerphilly County Borough Council's Welsh Education Scheme for the period from 2009 to 2014 was chosen. The scheme was published in accordance with the Welsh Language Act from 1993 and is briefly analysed in the next paragraphs. The model analysis should portray the current running of Welsh education in the whole country (Aspinall 2009).

Every education scheme is a voluminous text which provides an overall view into the educational system of a particular area. The scheme should be available to every person interested. The text includes all the internal regulations, aims and information about the education. The education scheme is a binding document and should serve as a model to every school in the area (Aspinall 2009, 2-4).

Generally speaking, the most significant chapter in the scheme is represented by the aims and objectives of the Welsh Education Scheme. As the most significant target, the availability of Welsh education to every child in Wales is mentioned. For example, the main aim of the Welsh-medium primary school is to ensure that all children attending the institution are bilingual by the age of eleven. At the same time, the scheme dedicates to the accessibility of higher levels of the Welsh education, especially through the Welsh-medium secondary schools. It is also very important that Welsh is taught in every county borough's school. The children with special educational needs should not be discriminated against regarding the availability of the Welsh-medium education (Aspinall 2009, 4-7).

Other significant targets are mentioned in the scheme. The individual chapters predominantly deal with the visions and strategies for the future of Welsh education. In

addition, the text compares the synchronic and diachronic points of view and investigates the numbers of Welsh-speaking and non-Welsh-speaking persons. a special place is dedicated to funding and transport policy, to training and services, language centers, staffing and also to information for parents. Everything has to be clearly and carefully organized (Aspinall 2009).

As very similar education schemes are published in every single county of Wales, there is no doubt that an extremely high level of attention is paid to the Welsh language situation in the country. The hope for a better future of Welsh is no longer just a wish of ordinary people. The legislative and executive powers of Wales also support the idea of the Welsh language resurrection. As a result, Welsh thrives and attracts new interested persons and learners. It must be said that the major part of the success belongs to unrelenting Welsh education (Aspinall 2009).

4 We Are the Welsh So Let Us Speak

4.1 Current Situation of the Language in the Country

The education of Saunders Lewis and the raising of public awareness helped the Welsh language to take roots again. Many people realised they did not want Welsh to die. Thus the situation of the Welsh language started to improve very slowly in the second half of the twentieth century. Nowadays, the intentions to save Welsh finally show the results.

To capture the results of the Welsh language improvement, much research has been carried out. In the year 1991, a very important linguistic survey called “Census 1991” was taken in Cardiff. The outcomes revealed that a half a million people in Wales spoke Welsh. Half a million people is approximately twenty per cent of the whole population in Wales. This information was very optimistic for the future of the Welsh language. a very positive fact was the increase of the younger learners of the language, too (Davies 2000, 69-73).

Nevertheless, the Welsh language did not spread equally into every part of Wales. There were some regions where the Welsh language was heard more frequently. For this reason, such parts of Wales were called the “most Welsh regions”. The “most Welsh regions” were, for instance, the county of Gwynedd and the Llyn peninsula. On the other hand, in the Anglicised districts, especially near the border with England, the percentage of Welsh speakers was rising. These districts were called “the winter of a nation” in the past. The reason for this was that the Welsh inhabitants of this area were highly influenced by English. This is no longer true. English is still dominant here, but Welsh is more and more accepted. Therefore another positive change among people in Wales is a change in attitudes towards this speech and towards Welsh national pride (Davies 2000, 69-73).

The Welsh language was no longer just a tool of communication. People started to perceive Welsh as a supreme heritage of the Welsh mind. Nowadays, Welsh

functions as a connecting element for the people in Wales. It is normal that Welsh is a medium for literature, radio, television, music lyrics, journalism and even for the ordinary life. Many people work through this language. Furthermore, the bilingual warnings, signposts, traffic signs and other writing in the streets give notice that Wales is still a separate and self-sufficient place. Everything points to the truth that Welsh is not going to die (Davies 2000, 87-100).

The survival of the Welsh language can seem surprising. Welsh is one of the oldest living languages in Europe. This fact is indicative of the strength of the nation, since most of the Celtic languages were heard for the last time hundreds years ago. In addition, Welsh is also the only surviving Celtic language that can insist on being a contemporary tongue. No wonder that the Welsh people are knowledgeable about these facts and are proud of them.

In the course of time the situation of education has changed, too. Since September 1999, every child has to be provided a Welsh education at school up to age 16. The bilingual secondary schools, high schools and universities were founded in Wales, too. As a result, the language is considered to be experiencing a revival. The areas where English is still predominant still exist, but Welsh is not ignored there any more. Children, however, enjoy learning Welsh, which is very positive for the language progress (BBC 2012a).

However, nothing is possible without intensive effort. People from Wales are aware of the dangerous situation which is posing a threat to their language. As a result of these concerns, many of them fight for better conditions of their national heritage. For example, the Welsh Language Society still exists and still works, campaigns and protests in the name of Welsh (Cymdeithas yr Iaith 2012). Moreover, public bodies, like the main utilities, the health service, social security offices and the universities, support bilingualism and function by means of both official languages, Welsh and English. There has also been an advance in the commercial field, in banks, societies, companies and in supermarket chains. All of them provide information in Welsh. Consequently, Welsh is gaining a better position step by step (Naomi-Jayne Lowery, pers. comm.).

4.2 Way to Legality

The legal position of the Welsh language had not always been clear. Non-Welsh speaking officials, for example, refused the papers completed in Welsh. The English speakers were sometimes even annoyed with Welsh. Still, the Welsh people wanted to use their language every time they needed. However, they could not, for there was no law on their side. The state of affairs was even more tense (Davies 2000, 53-54).

The effect of the tensions was a report called “The Legal Status of The Welsh Language” written by Hughes Parry in 1965. Sir David Hughes Parry was a Welsh jurist, lawyer and university administrator. His report recommended that English and Welsh should be equally important and significant, in both writing and speech, in the court system. The piece of work by Parry enjoyed positive responses. After reading the famous article, many people in Wales changed their opinions towards the Welsh language (BBC 2012b).

As a result, in the year 1967, the Welsh Language Act was brought in. This act said that “anything done in Welsh should be as valid in the eyes of the law as if it had been done in English” (The Welsh Language Act 1967 in Davies 2000, 105). The act was passed and became law on 27 July 1967. It was one of the most important days in the Welsh history. Nowadays, anyone who wishes to use Welsh in any situation has an absolute right to do so, besides other things, thanks to the Welsh language Act (BBC 2012b).

However, people of Wales wanted to be totally free regarding the use of the Welsh language. Therefore, another important change for Welsh came to pass in the year 1993. The new Welsh Language Act was brought in by the Parliament of The United Kingdom. With this act, Welsh and English have been treated equally as for the public sector and business (BBC 2012b). The citizens of Wales were encouraged to use the Welsh language wherever they wanted, especially in their professions and studies. Some organizations have been concerned to involve people in activities through the medium of Welsh. There have been even Welsh-speaking associations for doctors,

economists, scientists and so forth. Everything has been done to show that Welsh can be as independent as English (Davies 2000, 105).

With the legal status of Welsh, people from Wales have realized that their language, culture and traditions are admirable. Many associations were founded to present, protect and develop the heritage of Wales. There still exist many groups and organizations supporting the manifestation of Welshness in the country. One of the most important and influential is the Eisteddfod. Almost every town and often also village continues to hold its own “eisteddfodau”. For its popularity it is considered the largest youth festival in Europe. The Welsh language has a leading role here and the Welsh are very proud of it (Mrs. Strefford, pers. comm.).

During the last decades, the position of the Welsh language has developed considerably. It has offered hope for those concerned with the future of this tongue. The slow increase of the percentage of the Welsh-speaking persons gives grounds for optimism. According to numerous surveys, Welsh seems to have general support and is as vital as never before.

4.3 “Tynged yr Iaith” – Faith of the Language Survey

To gain a better overall picture of the Welsh language position in Wales, language surveys are conducted. The last important independent research was conducted in Cardiff in January 2012. This research is called after the famous lectures by Saunders Lewis. Its name is “Tynged yr Iaith”, which means “Faith of the Language”. The research collects the views on the Welsh language of people across Wales. It deals with a representative sample of the Welsh people. It means that the survey studies Welsh speakers and also non-Welsh speakers from the different social classes, of different status and of different ages (BBC 2012).

The principal aim of the survey is to investigate how many people, more exactly what percentage of people, actually speak Welsh. The results can seem quite disappointing, only about sixteen percent of Welsh people speak Welsh at all. The percentage differs, depending mainly on the region (North Wales, Mid and West Wales,

South East Wales), age (16-24, 25-44, 45-64, 65+) and gender. There are districts in Wales which are highly Welsh and there are also areas which are predominantly English. The significant percentage of the Welsh-speaking persons is mainly among the young people and children (BBC 2012).

Although the knowledge of the Welsh language in Wales is quite limited, people are, by an overwhelming majority, interested in the so called “Welsh language resurrection”. There is a predominate opinion that the Welsh language needs to strengthen its status because the use is very low. However, people think that the Welsh speakers in Wales do not have a disadvantage over non-Welsh speakers. The respondents also claim that the ability to speak Welsh does not make an individual more Welsh (BBC 2012).

With regard to the education of the Welsh language, the respondents countenance the teaching of this speech in schools. According to them, the most important conception of protecting the Welsh language is that the Welsh language education is available for children in Wales. Another important aspect is that parents choose Welsh language education for their children. However, people want to feel free in making their own decisions. Therefore they would like to have the choice to opt out of studying Welsh as a subject in school. At the same time they believe that every parent who can speak Welsh should speak it with their children (BBC 2012).

People from Wales would like to see slightly larger initiative and activity from public administration. Ninety percent of people would use public money to promote Welsh culture and consider this fact appropriate. There is a general agreement that the Government in Wales and the National Assembly for Wales should provide Welsh translations of official public documents. Half of the respondents are of the opinion that there should be more emphasis on Welsh language correctness in general, which means even in mass media and in the administrative language (BBC 2012).

Within most homes in Wales, only English is still spoken. a few people use Welsh in their everyday life. More than one half do not communicate in Welsh with companies, organizations and with the sectors like banks, financial and phone companies, gas, electricity and water boards, retail shops and supermarkets, councils or

Government. English is considered the language of administration and economy and it is easier to use it when solving official issues. These facts are slightly alarming for the position of the Welsh language (BBC 2012).

Nobody can say what will be the future of Welsh will be. The people asked are not able to foresee whether the use of the language will increase, decrease or stay the same. The popular approach to the language is positive and it experiences an improvement. Nevertheless, the way to an independent and self-confident language is very long and complicated and the results will be visible in the next centuries.

5 Questionnaires Reflection

5.1 Welsh-Questionnaire Reflection

The “Faith of the Language” survey was an inspiration to conduct a questionnaire focused on a public opinion about the Welsh language resurrection. The case of the Welsh language is very interesting regarding to both its diachronic and synchronic points of view. One of the concerns of this thesis was to map the current Welsh language situation in the country, among the Welsh people. The numbers and facts related to the Welsh language are very often inconsistent. It is difficult to achieve a general point of view. The main aim of this thesis is to discover whether Welsh is still alive in the country or not.

The questionnaire consisted of 6 simple questions which were focused on the frequency of use of Welsh, on education in Welsh and on the public knowledge about the Welsh language resurrection. The queries were made as WH questions in order to make the person asked think and avoid yes/no responses.

The experience of conducting a survey was very impressive and pleasant. Cooperation was friendly and everything passed without many complications. The only difficulty, however, arose with the delivery of the questionnaire. The document containing the questions was sent to different parts of Wales, to various people of different ages and also many different primary schools in Wales. However, there were no answers at all. Therefore the delivery had to be carried out by a person from Wales, since there were several problems with the electronic mail communication between the Czech Republic and Wales. The primary schools ignored the questionnaire completely. Thus the questions had to be asked individually via electronic mail and the cooperation with schools had to be dismissed. This possibility functioned well and the aim was fulfilled.

It was expected that the use of Welsh was quite low. Nevertheless, the results were surprising. The Welsh language is really experiencing its own resurrection and is

more and more popular among the people of Wales. Moreover, the reactions of people were largely positive, since the respondents were very helpful and ready to answer any questions regarding to Welsh. In addition, most of the respondents showed their own interest in the issue.

5.1.1 Answers Assessment

This chapter presents the results of the questionnaires focused on the Welsh people. Every single question from the questionnaire is analysed and the responses are summarised to create a general view of the subject. The whole data is represented in the appendix.

Do you speak Welsh?

The majority of the persons asked speak Welsh. However, the main reason for their knowledge of Welsh is that they live in the area where the Welsh language is spoken. For instance, in north east Wales almost no one speaks Welsh and it seems almost dead. At the same time, in the north west Wales, for example, the situation is completely different. Practically everyone speaks Welsh there. One respondent even mentions that it is the non-Welsh speaker who feels like an outsider in the north west of Wales.

There are, of course, the respondents who do not speak this language at all or speak just basic Welsh. Predominantly this concerns older people, mainly over the age of fifty. Education in Welsh was not available a few decades ago. Some retired people spoke Welsh only up to the age of eight when they had to start to go to school and learn English. However, this is not the only reasons for not speaking Welsh.

Some people in Wales are even a bit “Welsh-language sceptic”. It means that they do not think that Welsh really needs to be forced on everyone all the time like it tends to be at the present time. For example, every official letter people get in Wales has to be in English and also in Welsh. It is not economical and people consider it a waste

of money. Not everyone speaks Welsh, but all Welsh speakers can speak English anyway.

The arguments regarding the forcing and the wasting of money seem not to have any resolutions. The individual conditions do not exist and cannot exist. People in Wales can have either everything or nothing. Since the Welsh language has a legal status, it is necessary to provide important information through the medium of English and Welsh. However, this situation was created by the Welsh themselves and people do not express complaints about bilingualism very often.

Does someone in your family speak Welsh?

The answers to this question were very encouraging as for the development of the Welsh language. Every person, even those who do not speak Welsh, has at least one relative who is able to speak Welsh. These are mainly the younger relatives – children, grandchildren and siblings. The results indicate that many people can actually speak Welsh, nevertheless, there are not so many opportunities to do so.

Was it obligatory for you to learn the Welsh language at school?

Here the responses point to the fact that almost all respondents went to a bilingual or Welsh medium school because they had to learn Welsh. One respondent went to a Welsh school where every subject was taught through the medium of Welsh from the age of 4 to the age of 18. Pupils were not allowed to speak English, which can seem a bit constrictive. Nevertheless, it served its purpose. Children spoke Welsh on a high level and could study or even work through it. It was an advantage for their development and for job opportunities.

Some people can raise an objection that it is inadequate to force children to learn Welsh while English is easier and more useful. However, there is a need of general support, since Welsh is an official language. Children themselves enjoy the language and do not mind learning it. The only problem is that many children do not see a reason to use it in their ordinary life.

Nevertheless, in the majority of Welsh schools both Welsh and English are taught. Bilingual education can be a substantial advantage. The first Welsh medium schools, where teaching was conducted in English and in Welsh, were set up during the Second World War. However, they were just a few. Since the year 1999, lessons in Welsh are compulsory for all children until the age of 16. Therefore youngsters are frequently familiar with the language and Wales has been becoming more and more bilingual during the last decades. The alumnus can take opportunities and work through the medium of both tongues. For example, one person who filled the questionnaire is a student and was skilled in both languages equally. He carried on studying English and Welsh and is proud of it. Such people are considered to be at a disadvantage if they have a bilingual education, however, they themselves think that it is beneficial, especially in Wales.

Do people in your region usually speak Welsh and how do you feel about using this language?

For the majority it is not very common to hear much Welsh spoken. Children often only really speak Welsh in school because not many others understand the language. At the same time, many people wish that Welsh was spoken more. Students and children would especially appreciate it. Some Welshmen do not mind that the language is not used, however, some feel it is a shame as they are Welsh people and should be able to speak the local language.

In west Wales, the use of the language is more common (in Carmarthenshire for example). It is an area where some speakers can feel even embarrassed if their Welsh is at a lower standard than others. The language is highly popular there and so are Welsh language schools. People in the districts like Carmarthenshire are as comfortable speaking Welsh as they are speaking English.

Do you or someone you know support the Welsh language resurrection, if so - how?

The issue of the Welsh language revival is more and more famous in the country. Welsh speakers are trying to support it as much as they can. The main and simplest way how to do it is to use it everywhere it is possible. The results are evident, since many adults show interest in learning Welsh as beginners, which is admirable.

Teachers put the largest efforts into the language resurrection. They all feel very strongly about the issue. Welsh education is provided even to older people who wish to learn the local tongue. Pedagogues also see teaching Welsh as an opportunity to integrate migrants into Welsh society. They encourage children and their families to try to use the Welsh language on any forms, like bank services which are bilingual so that bilingual services are not cut or put into disuse.

The possibilities to sustain the Welsh language are numerous. The Welsh resurrection includes road signs, government papers and offices, letters and suchlike. Some people even protest for the rights of the Welsh language and do their best to promote its use. Churches provide learners and beginners Welsh classes. Parents are choosing the Welsh schools for their children nowadays. There are even original Welsh pubs which are trying to help keep the local speech alive.

What do you think about the future of the Welsh language?

The predictions which those questioned about the future of Welsh made are predominantly hopeful and confident. At least 50% of those interviewed believe that Welsh will become commonly spoken, as more and more children are learning the language and are encouraged to use it. A greater proportion of Welsh people speak their native language than any other Celtic nation. Another positive fact is that it has become increasingly popular to send children to a Welsh school even if the parents do not speak the language. It is evident that the Welsh language is very vital.

The prognosis for Welsh is predominantly favourable. It is easier to be a part of Welsh culture if speaking Welsh. Some forms of the Welsh culture, like the Eisteddfod, can only be enjoyed through the medium of Welsh. Maybe in the far future it will be

spoken by everybody in Wales. Nowadays, the self-confidence of Welsh is quite high. Nevertheless, the language is in a delicate situation and the speakers have to keep on preserving and protecting it.

5.2 United Kingdom-Questionnaire Reflection

Wales is part of a vastly larger country, of Great Britain. In such a powerful state, there are many opinions and beliefs that can affect the general attitude to the situation of the Welsh language. To gain some idea about the general awareness of Welsh in United Kingdom, a brief questionnaire was created.

The questionnaire was concerned with the relationship between Wales and England. This relationship was the inspiration for the investigation into the current situation of the Welsh language issue. This project was accomplished by means of simple questions that were directed towards the people from the United Kingdom, excluding Wales. The group of people asked also included native speakers living in the Czech Republic.

The main intent of the survey was to find out how do people from Britain feel about Welsh. The course of the study and the results were quite disappointing. There was no significant interest in the Welsh state of affairs. It was difficult to even find subjects willing to complete the questionnaire. Finally, the outcome was surprising. It can be said that people from Great Britain, especially the English, are not very knowledgeable about the situation of the Welsh language, about its resurrection and the contemporary use of this tongue. Furthermore, people from England do not even want to support Welsh.

The reasons why the respondents were generally sceptical about the intentions of the Welsh language resurrection were miscellaneous. They did not see a sensible reason to preserve Welsh, much less to spread it. The Welsh language, in their opinion, is almost dead and people from Wales seldom use their original Celtic tongue. There is almost no interest in the Welsh language resurrection in England because the English

language is understood as an unshakeable unit and everyone should respect it and learn it.

On the other hand, the responses were not totally intolerant or dismissive. They have pointed out that many people would like to keep Wales bilingual and that English should remain the official language. It is logical, since Wales has never been independent of the United Kingdom and never wanted to be. Thus Wales fights alone in its own struggle for a better future for its original tongue. Unfortunately, there is not much help coming from the outside, although this help would be expected, mainly from United Kingdom. On the contrary, Welsh has proved that it is a strong nation and that the Welsh language is on the right way to survival.

5.2.1 Answers Assessment

This chapter is presenting the results of the questionnaires focused on the people from United Kingdom and their attitudes to Welsh. Every single question from the questionnaire is analysed and the responses are summarised to create a general view of the subject. The whole data is represented in the appendix.

Have you ever thought or heard about the Welsh language resurrection?

The answers and opinions to this question slightly diverge. That is to say that the majority of the respondents have a general knowledge about the events in Wales. However, there are still few people who have not even heard about the Welsh language resurrection and even think that the Welsh language is now dated and that it is used less and less. Fortunately, the exact opposite is true and the most of the respondents is aware of the fact that more and more people from Wales want to speak their native language and revive it.

Do you know somebody who speaks Welsh?

One half of the respondents knows at least one Welsh-speaking person and agrees that once someone speaks Welsh they are very proud of it. The second half does not know anyone who speaks Welsh at all. These results point out to the fact that Welsh is still halfway between a dialect and a self-sufficient language.

How do you feel about the Welsh people?

The relationship between the Welsh and other English-speaking natives is predominantly positive. The Welsh are considered to be proud of their heritage and roots and to be aware of the differences in the Welsh culture. Some respondents think that people from Wales are a bit old-fashioned and patriotic. However, the overwhelming opinion is that there is no difference in how to feel about Welsh or any other nationality because everyone deserves to be treated equally and with respect.

Why do you think the Welsh language should/should not be sustained?

As the Welsh language is the part of the Welsh identity, the respondents usually think that it should be sustained. There were some affirmative answers in the questionnaires, for instance that no language should be lost because it has an enormous cultural significance. Still, not every respondent shared this enthusiastic opinion. Many of those asked thought that it is pointless to sustain Welsh, for it is used less and less and the official language in United Kingdom is English. It follows that English continues to be a constant symbol of Englishness and there is no possibility of renouncing it.

To what extent would you support the Welsh language? (Imagine there is a proposal to give 10 million pounds for Welsh schools teaching the Welsh language.)

This question was a bit tricky. The majority of the respondents agreed that it is important to sustain Welsh, however, when reading about the huge amount of money they hesitate. Nearly all did not even want to hear about it and meant that there is no need to focus on such unnecessary things. Nevertheless, as some respondents noticed,

the financial support for the teaching of non-English languages already exists. Questions as to whether something is truly economically beneficial are always very difficult. Consequently, people may have been slightly confused by this question.

Why do you think that it is/it is not important to take care of a heritage as such an old language?

Here, the responses are overwhelmingly similar. Every person asked agreed that it is important to take care of a language, since it is probably the most significant element in a nation's culture. There is no reason to let a language die out since it gives people a feeling of worth and belonging. On the other hand, given the situation and history of Welsh, it is surprising that there are still beliefs that it is pointless to sustain and support old languages. In the British democratic and tolerant world it is quite unusual.

Imagine you are Welsh speaking person who moved to England. Should there be some schools providing education in the Welsh language?

According to the majority of the respondents, it is quite illogical to found special Welsh-medium schools in England, since there will be just a low demand. If the demand was higher, it would be possible to think about some Welsh school project in England. Nowadays, however, it is completely pointless.

Imagine you are English person who moved to Wales. Should you be forced to learn the Welsh language?

Many people, especially from England, think that Welsh is spoken less and less. Our respondents are of the same opinion. However, the exact opposite is true. In today's Wales, the Welsh language education is compulsory for every child up to age 16. It follows that the use of Welsh will continue to increase.

At the same time, the respondents predominantly agree that every person who comes to live in any country should be prepared to speak the national language. In the case of Welsh it is apparently different, since no person asked thinks that it is necessary to learn the Welsh language when moving to Wales.

A good idea is to start just with the basics of the Welsh language and it should remain compulsory only for children, for Welsh has always been spoken alongside English and the position of the Welsh language will change very slowly.

How do you feel about this statement below?

“Welsh people should speak English and not bother with their own language.”

As expected, almost every respondent disagrees with the statement. However, it must be said that not every person asked really takes interest in the situation of the Welsh language. It can be supposed that the answers in this questionnaire are predominantly based on the social conventions. On the other hand, when the question is more touching, for example on economic or on a personal support, the respondents start to abandon their tolerant prejudices, which is quite sad.

Conclusion

The Welsh language is a self-contained and self-confident language which is trying to assert itself in the cruel linguistic world controlled by English. Although the Welsh language once faced death, it survived and today attracts more and more new speakers. Welsh has started to blossom and represents an interesting linguistic phenomenon. Hardly ever can be seen such an old language experiencing a great revival.

The personalities most responsible for the sustaining of the Welsh language are primarily Saunders Lewis, William Morgan, Isaac Carter, Dan Isaac Davies and John Gruffydd. These enlightened men showed no fear and fought for a better future of their native tongue. It was a difficult and long struggle, but now it can be said that they have won. There are more than 500 thousand Welsh-speaking people in Wales and the number continues to increase, the efforts expended have not been vain.

At the present time, the most appreciated factor in the Welsh society is national cohesion. Everything works almost without problems. The Welsh language coexists with English in one territory, children from Wales are taught both languages at schools and every single Welshman is given the right to use the Welsh language wherever wanted to. This privilege is the most important result of the Welsh language resurrection and it is the notional victory of the whole process.

The Welsh desire for freedom and independence has been apparent during all the history of Wales and still persists in minds of the Welsh people. This desire and love for the Welsh country are also included in the famous verse written by John Morris-Jones, who was the first professor of Welsh at the University College of North Wales:

*“And yet I sing my country,
for Wales shall one day be
the happiest and loveliest land
a time when we shall see
no violent hand to waste her,
no coward to betray her,
no quarrelling to weaken her,
and when Wales shall be free.”*

(John Morris-Jones in Stephens 2000, 89)

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Appendix B (on CD): United-Kingdom Questionnaire.pdf

Appendix C (on CD): Welsh-Questionnaire_Filled.pdf

Appendix D (on CD): United Kingdom-Questionnaire_Filled.pdf