

An investigation into how well the Llanllawen  
Welsh course meets the needs of adult learners

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# Abstract

This project is an investigation into the Llanllawen Welsh for Adults course. In particular I wanted to assess the extent to which the Llanllawen course meets the needs and objectives of students. I undertook the project because I wanted to gain a clearer insight into what enables some students to become fluent Welsh speakers while others never become confident enough to use the language in everyday life.

The main focus of the Llanllawen method is learning short story texts by heart. The various learning activities carried out in class are intended to make this enjoyable. Reading the literature on the subject, Wray's work on formulaic sequences suggests that the memorisation of correct Welsh could be an effective way of teaching and I wanted to see whether this worked in practice.

The literature also suggests that motivation and teaching methods are very important when it comes to learning a second language as an adult. I therefore wanted to investigate students' reasons for learning Welsh, their attitudes to the class and the various activities they participate in during lessons and whether they felt that their Welsh was improving as a result of attending the course. As it is not possible to learn Welsh in a mere two hours per week, I also wanted to find out whether the students were sufficiently motivated to work on learning Welsh daily in between classes. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected.

I arranged to observe four Llanllawen classes at different levels. During the class, I asked students to complete a paper questionnaire. This exploratory questionnaire provided background data about the students, including age and sex, their reasons for wanting to learn Welsh and how much time they spent practising between classes. The observations of the classes were noted manually on pre-prepared recording sheets using the Flanders Interaction Analysis Codes (FIAC). This assigns a code number to each type of student/teacher interaction. As a refinement to this method, I also recorded which language was used during the interaction. Students who completed the initial questionnaire were invited to provide further information in either a follow-up questionnaire or an interview. The follow-up questionnaires were placed online for ease of access by students. The interviews were recorded by means of a small, discreet digital recorder and later transcribed.

The analysis of the results shows that students enjoyed the Llanllawen classes. They made use of the teaching materials between lessons, particularly the CDs. They can use the sentences learned from the stories in real conversations. Motivation is the main problem because though students say they want to become fluent, the reasons they give are long term and do not necessarily motivate them to practice daily.

Recommendations for improvement include placing more emphasis on the many different ways students can learn and practice between sessions. In particular, the tutor could encourage the students to share the methods they have devised to make learning more interesting and effective. I also recommend that the methods used in Cwrs Llanllawen are more widely disseminated with a view to encouraging tutors to incorporate some or all of them into their classes.

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7. Spaced Repetition and Leitner flash card system.
8. Anki and Mnemosyne SRS programs.

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# Introduction

In this project I will be examining the Llanllawen Welsh for Adults course, and assessing the extent to which this meets the needs and objectives of students. I also hope to gain some insight into how student motivation and achievement can be improved. The methods used on the Llanllawen course differ significantly from those used on the well established Welsh courses such as Wlpan and Mynediad and I want to investigate how well this new course meets the needs of adult learners. I am particularly interested in this topic because I have been learning Welsh for some time and I have attended a variety of courses run by different colleges and universities.

Every year thousands of adults enrol on Welsh courses, from Beginners (Mynediad) to Advanced (Uwch). In the academic year 2006/7 there were 29,643 enrolments in Welsh for Adults (WEA) classes. (Pritchard and Newcombe, 2009). Anecdotal evidence suggests that very few of these students make the transition to using Welsh in every day life, either socially or in their work. It is also evident, however, that some individuals who have been learning the language for a relatively short period of time are able to become confident and fluent speakers. I want to investigate the reasons for this. Why can a small number of students make the transition to fluency whilst others either give up, or go to class after class without ever gaining the skills and confidence required to speak the language with native speakers in everyday life?

The Llanllawen courses offer a new and different approach to learning Welsh. In this project I want to investigate the efficacy of the methods used in the classes. I will first investigate the students' reasons for learning Welsh as an adult. I will then examine how Cwrs Llanllawen's content and method of delivery match those student needs. Once I have examined these issues, I will investigate whether there is a need to make changes to the course to more closely reflect the students' requirements and to improve the number of students reaching their goal of becoming a Welsh speaker. I plan to observe classes that use the Llanllawen method of teaching and I will use questionnaires to obtain data about students' reasons for wanting to learn Welsh and how they currently use the language in their everyday lives. I will follow up this initial questionnaire with a smaller number of more detailed questionnaires focusing

on students' attitudes to the activities used in the Llanllawen classes and how they make use of the course materials. Finally I will interview Welsh learners about the way they learn in class and how they work on their language skills between sessions.

Once I have explored these aspects of the Welsh for Adults courses provided by Coleg Llysfasi, I will investigate whether there are any improvements that could be made to the courses. and whether this particular teaching method could usefully be adopted by other colleges to improve student retention and levels of achievement.

The hypotheses that I wish to test are:

- Learning stories by heart is an effective way of acquiring vocabulary and grammar.
- The Llanllawen method makes learning by heart enjoyable.
- Providing high quality learning materials as part of the course helps students to study on their own between classes.
- Students do not have an accurate view of how much time and effort it takes to become a fluent speaker. They think in terms of how many years they have been attending courses rather than how many hours they have spent learning and practising.
- Tutors focus solely on what happens in class and do not teach students effective ways of practising at home.
- The role models offered by the National Eisteddfod's Learner of the Year competition are not seen as motivating by the majority of learners.

I will carry out my survey at a number of classes currently using the Llanllawen course methods and materials. The students surveyed will have been studying Welsh for varying amounts of time and I will be looking at beginners who started learning Welsh this academic year, those who have followed the Llanllawen course for a few years and also those who have been learning Welsh for some time and who have tried a variety of courses and methods.

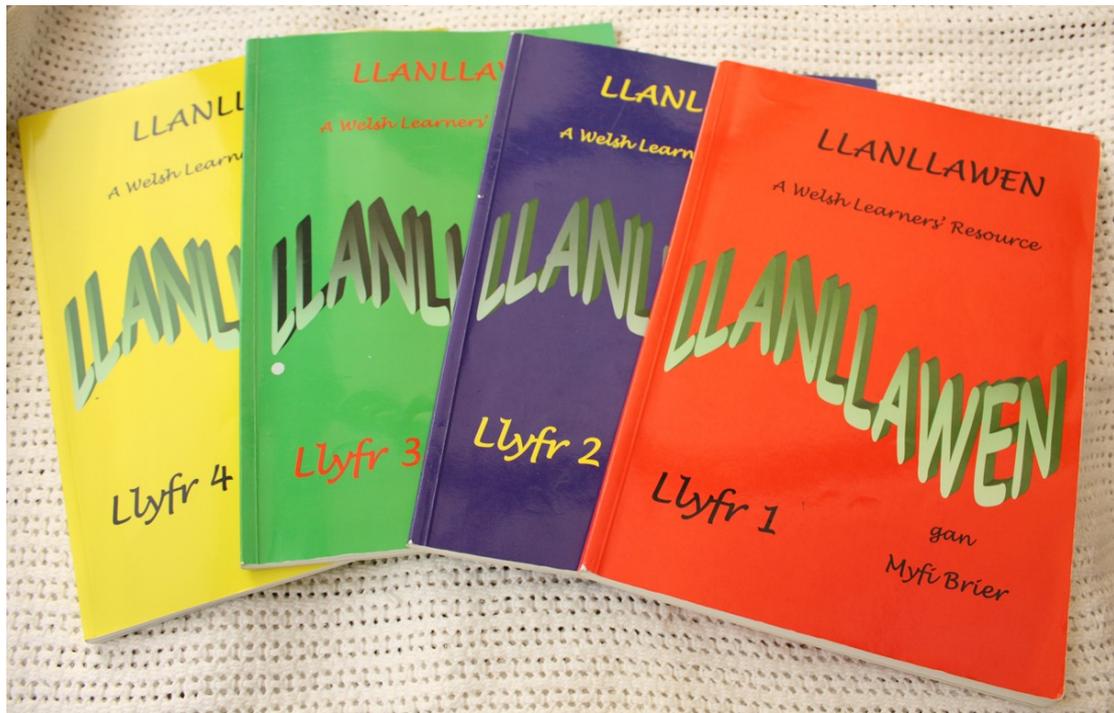
## About Cwrs Llanllawen

Cwrs Llanllawen was written by Myfi Brier, an experienced teacher of Welsh for Adults. After teaching on traditional courses for many years Myfi Brier became interested in the techniques used on the Popeth Cymraeg courses at Canolfan Iaith Clwyd. These are based on the ideas of Suggestopedia/De-suggestopedia promoted by Bulgarian Psychologist Dr. Georgi Lozanov. Originally devised in the 1970s, his methods have spread all over the world, though they remain somewhat controversial.

Myfi Brier did not adopt the entire Suggestopedia approach but instead took aspects of the method and incorporated them into activities she had used while teaching on Wlpan and Mynediad to create her own Welsh course, which she called *Llanllawen*. The guiding principle of the course is that classes should always be enjoyable and that students learn best when they are relaxed. Myfi Brier abandoned the formal study of grammar, sentence structure and sentence patterns in favour of learning story texts by heart. She believes that effective learning results from using games and activities such as playing word bingo and miming. The objective of the Llanllawen classes is to enable students to learn a number of story texts by heart. The texts are usually dialogues but can also be diary entries, letters or postcards. All the stories are set in the fictional village of Llanllawen which was created by Myfi Brier and they are based around the lives of the Morgan family who at the start of Book 1 have just moved into the village.

In terms of the aspects of the Welsh language covered, Llanllawen follows the syllabus set by the awarding bodies of qualifications for Welsh learners, such as WJEC and OCN. Books 1 and 2 cover everything required to bring a learner up to Level 1 whilst successfully mastering Books 3 and 4 means that a learner has attained Level 2. However, though the core content may appear identical to earlier courses, the approach and the teaching methods are significantly different.

## The Llanllawen course materials



## Course content

<p><b>Book 1</b></p> <p>In this course you will learn how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• React simply and effectively to what others say in Welsh.</li> <li>• Greet and respond to people.</li> <li>• Express your wants and needs.</li> <li>• Comment on the weather.</li> <li>• Locations.</li> <li>• Express your likes and dislikes.</li> <li>• Give personal details.</li> <li>• Ask for personal details.</li> <li>• Deal with special occasions.</li> <li>• Ask about other people.</li> <li>• Give details about other people.</li> <li>• Comment on the time.</li> <li>• Give details about what you have been doing.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Book 2</b></p> <p>In this course you will learn how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Persuade someone to do something.</li> <li>• Discuss future events.</li> <li>• Comment on prices.</li> <li>• Ask for directions.</li> <li>• Give directions.</li> <li>• Issue commands.</li> <li>• Ask for food and drink.</li> <li>• Spell words in Welsh.</li> <li>• Describe your weekend/day.</li> <li>• Disagree and agree.</li> <li>• Express a strong intention.</li> <li>• Write a letter using the concise form of the total past tense.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Book 3</b></p> <p>In this course you will learn how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliment and criticize.</li> <li>• Tell people what they are allowed to do.</li> <li>• Continue being concise in the Total Past Tense.</li> <li>• Describe people.</li> <li>• Ask a favour of someone.</li> <li>• Say what you would like to do.</li> <li>• Write a postcard.</li> <li>• Talk about the last five years.</li> <li>• Scold someone.</li> <li>• Talk about when you were young.</li> <li>• Write about when you were young.</li> <li>• Write a letter home.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Book 4</b></p> <p>In this course you will learn how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep a secret.</li> <li>• Not keep a secret.</li> <li>• Tell people what they ought to do/should do.</li> <li>• Tell people what they ought not do/should not do.</li> <li>• "Wrap" verbs.</li> <li>• Compare people and places.</li> <li>• Continue and develop noun clauses - "that".</li> <li>• Continue and develop being concise in the Total Past Tense.</li> <li>• Talk about people in photographs.</li> <li>• Congratulate people.</li> <li>• Reflect on events.</li> </ul>

## Approach to the topics

Most other courses start with the new work to be taught that week. The tutor will begin the lesson by explaining any new grammar and introducing any new vocabulary. There will then be a number of exercises designed to enable the students to practice the new patterns. The tutor may call on a student to speak or the class may be divided into pairs or small groups to enable them to practice the sentences drills or to talk to one another using the newly introduced patterns. Tutors often supplement the course book with other materials intended to generate discussion, for example photos or short articles from newspapers or magazines. At the end of the lesson in the book, the class may read a short dialogue or story that uses the work that has just been introduced.

Llanllawen reverses this process and starts with the story.

<p>14/11/06 21/11/06 28/11/06</p>	<p><b>STORI 3</b> <b>AR GOLL - YN Y DRE!</b></p>  <p><i>Mae Ieuan, Mair a Llinos yn cerdded o'r maes parcio i gyfeiriad y siopau.</i></p> <p>Ieuan: Lle tasio mynd yn gynta Mair? Pffis paid â deud "paned"!</p> <p>Mair: Fel mae'n digwydd - na. Dw i'm isio paned. Dw i isio mynd i siop ddillad newydd o'r enw Steil.</p> <p>Ieuan: Iawn. Lle mae'r siop?</p> <p>Mair: Dyna'r broblem. Dw i'm yn gw'bod! Well i ni ofyn i rywun. Wna i ofyn i'r wraig 'ma.</p> <p><i>Mae gwraig ganol oed yn cerdded heibio.</i></p> <p>Mair: Esgusodwch fi. Dach chi'n gw'bod lle mae siop Steil os gwelwch yn dda?</p> <p>Y wraig: Siop Steil? Arhoswch funud. Ydw - dw i'n meddwl. Ewch at ben y ffordd 'ma.</p> <p>Mair: Iawn.</p> <p>Y wraig: Yna - trowch i'r dde, ar hyd Ffordd Newydd. Cerddwch at y sinema. Dach chi'n gw'bod lle mae'r sinema?</p>	<p><b>STORY 3</b> <b>LOST - IN TOWN!</b></p>  <p><i>Ieuan, Mair and Llinos walk from the car park in the direction of the shops.</i></p> <p>Ieuan: Where do you want to go first Mair? Please don't say "a cuppa"!</p> <p>Mair: As it happens - no. I don't want a cuppa. I want to go to a new clothes shop called Style.</p> <p>Ieuan: O.K. Where is the shop?</p> <p>Mair: That's the problem. I don't know. We'd better ask someone. I'll ask this woman.</p> <p><i>A middle aged woman walks by.</i></p> <p>Mair: Excuse me. Do you know where Style shop is please?</p> <p>The woman: Style shop? Wait a minute. Yes (I do) - I think. Go (up) to the top of this road.</p> <p>Mair: O.K.</p> <p>The woman: Then - turn to the right, along New Street. Walk (up) to the cinema. Do you know where the cinema is?</p>
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The Welsh text is on the left and the English translation is on the right. The language used throughout Llanllawen is colloquial North Wales Welsh.

## **Teaching methods**

### **Reading the story aloud**

The normal procedure is to spend three weeks on each story and students will write the dates in their books, as can be seen above. The first step is always to read the story aloud several times with the tutor. This is done sentence by sentence. The tutor will read a sentence or phrase and the students will repeat the words in unison after her. During this process, the tutor will point out any new constructions or vocabulary as they occur in the story. For example she will explain instances where the English is not an exact translation of the Welsh and also indicate where mutations have occurred and what has caused them. Students may ask questions at any point, requesting further clarification. Students often annotate their books during the reading to remind them of things such as: exactly how to pronounce a word, where the stress should go, where something has caused a mutation. If the tutor detects that any students are stumbling over the pronunciation, she will make the class repeat a sentence several times until they have got it right.

Once the story has been read through completely several times, the tutor will move on to one of the other activities, usually the mime.

### **Miming sentences**

Each student chooses a sentence from the story, announces their choice out loud to the tutor and then writes it on a slip of paper or card. The tutor keeps track of which sentences have been claimed and will help students choose if they seem to be having trouble deciding. Once every student has chosen a sentence, the tutor begins by saying her own sentence aloud whilst performing a mime to convey its meaning. The class will then repeat the sentence aloud while copying the mime.

The tutor then asks the student on her right to say their sentence aloud to the class whilst miming its meaning. Once the student has devised a mime, which might involve help from the tutor and/or other students, the class will repeat the sentence aloud in unison whilst copying the student's mime.

The tutor then calls on the next student around the circle to say and mime their sentence, and thus the process is repeated until all students in the class have said and mimed their sentence.

The game then moves on to the next stage. The tutor now mimes her sentence without speaking and students have to watch carefully, remember and recognise the sentence and say it aloud. Now the tutor calls out a student's name to attract their attention and throws a small soft ball to them. The student catches the ball and, without speaking, mimes their sentence. Again the rest of the class must identify the sentence being mimed and say it aloud. The student who has just mimed calls out the name of another student and throws the soft ball to them. The second student will mime, the class will guess and so the process is repeated until all students have had a go at miming their sentence.

### **"Rapping" the sentences**

This is an activity (sometimes planned, sometimes impromptu) that the tutor uses when students are having difficulty with the pronunciation of their sentences. Rapping is often done in preparation for the mime to ensure that all students can say the sentences fluently with a good accent.

The tutor asks the first student on her right to say their chosen sentence aloud. She will then help them to find the rhythm of the sentence and the whole class will say it in unison several times. Then the sentence is passed around the circle. The tutor begins, saying the sentence quickly and in a definite rhythm. Immediately, the student on her right copies her and repeats the sentence, trying to maintain the same rhythm. As the first student finishes speaking, the next student repeats the sentence, again trying to maintain the correct speed and rhythm. The next student on their right says the sentence and so on, around the class until everyone has "rapped" the sentence. The round finishes with the class repeating the sentence altogether one last time.

Each student's sentence is passed around the circle in the same way until all sentences have been "rapped".

## Looking at the Pwyntiau sy'n codi (Points arising)

Following each story in the book is a section entitled "Pwyntiau sy'n codi" which explains the new vocabulary or grammar which has not been encountered before in previous stories. The grammar points are therefore dealt with as something that has arisen naturally out of the story, rather than being introduced arbitrarily.

Pwyntiau sy'n codi . . .



Dach chi'n gw'bod lle mae siop Steil?  
Do you know where Style shop is?

Ewch at\*ben y ffordd 'ma.  
Go (up) to the top of this road.

**PA Ffordd?**



Y ffordd yma  
*This way.*



Y ffordd yna  
*That way.*



Y ffordd acw  
*Over there.*

'Sgen i ddim syniad!  
I've no idea!

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Ydy Mair yn gw'bod lle mae siop Steil?  
Nac ydy - yn anffodus!  
Mae hi ar goll. *She's lost. Dws i ar goll. I'm lost.*  
Dach chi'n gallu helpu?  
Edrychwch ar y map, a dudwch wrth Mair. *tell*  
Unwaith eto -  
Lle mae siop Steil?  
Mae'n hawdd!  
Wir i chi!! - *Almost to you! (Howesllus!)*



Cofiwch!	Remember!
Cerddwch!	Walk!
Ar hyd	Along
Trowch!	Turn!
I'r chwith	To the left
I'r dde	To the right
Wedyn	Then

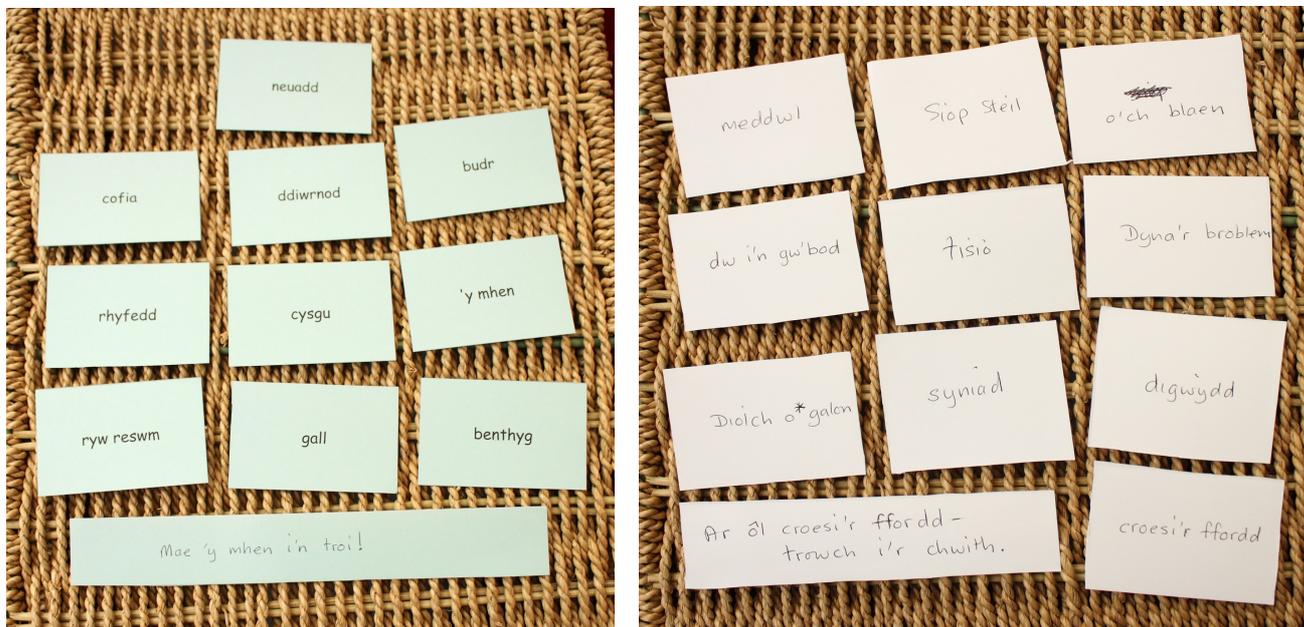
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At some point in the three weeks spent on each story, the tutor will go over the Pwyntiau sy'n codi with the class. This ensures that the new grammar and vocabulary introduced in the story are thoroughly understood.

## Word bingo

This activity is not normally done in the first week of working on a story. At the end of the first session on a new story, the tutor will ask the students to prepare bingo cards for the following week. Some students just use small slips of paper, others produce and print cards using a computer.

Each student chooses 10 words from the story. Students usually choose words that are new or that they are having difficulty remembering. Each bingo card contains one word or short phrase.



### *Examples of word bingo cards*

To play the game, the students arrange the cards on the table in front of them. The tutor will call, "Barod?" and the class will respond, "Barod!" when they are all ready. The games and activities always involve set words and phrases, like a ritual, so that students know exactly what to say when playing the games.

The tutor now reads the story aloud, beginning by reading random sentences from different places in the story. The students listen carefully and if the tutor reads one of the words they have in front of them, they say the word aloud and put it to one side.

After reading a few random sentences, the tutor then announces that she will start reading from the beginning. Gradually the number of cards in front of each student dwindles as each word is heard and the card put into a separate pile. The first student to have no words left is the winner and shouts, "Ty!" (house).

The tutor now asks the winner if they will call, to which they reply that they will. The tutor then asks the class to pass the words around the table a certain number of times. All these instructions are given in Welsh, even with the beginners. When the cards have been passed around, there is always someone without any cards. (The tutor, as first caller, starts off without cards, so there is one less set of cards than players.) The person without cards follows the ritual of saying they don't have any words and the new caller (who will not need cards in this round) responds by offering the cards they have.

The student will now read the story aloud, if possible without looking at the Welsh text. The ultimate aim is to be able to say the whole story in Welsh, looking only at the English. However, if necessary, a student can glance at the Welsh.

As before, the other students listen out for words they have on the cards in front of them and gradually put them to one side until there is another winner. As the game progresses, a student who has already called may win a round. In this case, they do not call again but instead ask someone who hasn't yet called to do it. Thus all students eventually have a turn at calling. When everyone has called, the game ends.

### **Story Jigsaw**

The final activity, usually done just before the class moves on to the next story, is to assemble a jigsaw made from a copy of the story printed onto card and cut into small pieces. This activity is normally done in pairs and students must arrange the bits of card containing words and phrases into the right order to complete the story. They are not supposed to look at the story for reference, but must do it from memory.

When the jigsaw is complete, it is disassembled one sentence at a time. One student will ask, 'Be dy...?' and then say one of the sentences in English. Their partner will respond by saying the sentence in Welsh. That sentence is then removed from the table and replaced in the envelope. The students continue asking one another, 'Be dy...?' and say a sentence in English for their partner to translate into Welsh until all the sentences have been removed from the table and put away.

# Literature Review

In the process of planning and executing this survey, I read a number of relevant articles and books. For ease of reference, these are discussed under the following headings.

- Why it is important for adults to learn Welsh.
- What is required in order to learn a language to fluency?
- Methods of teaching languages.
- Use of formulaic sequences.
- Is it important to sound like a native?
- The effects of age on language learning.
- How long should it take to learn a language?
- How motivation affects language learning.

## Why it is important for adults to learn Welsh

### **First Stage Evaluation of Iaith Pawb / Gwerthusiad Cam 1 o Iaith Pawb** (Welsh Assembly Government, 2007)

*Iaith Pawb* is the Welsh Assembly Government's national action plan for a bilingual Wales. Published in 2003, it sets out the Assembly Government's vision of a truly bilingual country where people can choose to live their lives through Welsh, English, or both languages. Between 2003-2007, this vision was backed by an investment of an extra £40 million.

"The Welsh Language Act 1993 established the principle that, in the conduct of public business and administration of justice in Wales, the English and Welsh Language should be treated on a basis of equality, 'so far as is both appropriate in the circumstances and reasonably practicable.'" (Iaith Pawb -- progress report)

People moving into Wales, whether it is to work or to retire, are usually eager to participate fully in the society they have joined. Therefore the main reasons adults undertake the difficult task of learning a new language are work-related or social. The Welsh Assembly Government has a number of targets. The ones of particular relevance to teaching Welsh to adults are:

**Target 2:** the decline in the number of communities where Welsh is spoken by over 70% of the population is to be arrested.

**Target 5:** more services, by public, private and voluntary organisations are able to be delivered through the medium of Welsh.

Non-Welsh-speaking adults moving into Wales need to learn the language if Target 2 is to be achieved. Those who move in to work in the area also require Welsh if they are to be able to provide services in Welsh and integrate fully into a Welsh speaking workplace.

Though current figures relating to the number of Welsh speakers appear at first glance to be optimistic, it is difficult to be sure whether the decline in the use of Welsh has genuinely been halted. Jones, H. M. (2008) "The Changing Social Context of Welsh: A Review of Statistical Trends" compares the situation in Wales to that in Ireland.

"The percentage of Irish speakers in the Republic of Ireland has increased in almost every Census since 1911 when 17.6% spoke Irish so that by 2002 the percentage reached 41.9% (Central Statistics Office Ireland, 2004). The question asked changed significantly in 1996, which may have contributed to a particularly large increase between 1991 and 1996. Also, in 1996 a new question was introduced which asked, of those who said they spoke Irish, how frequently they spoke the language. The results give an entirely different picture of the vitality of Irish. In 2002, of the 1,570,894 who said they spoke Irish, only 339,541 said they spoke it daily, with another 155,039 claiming to use it weekly. The concern is that the Welsh Census results may reflect a similar phenomenon: a welcome increase in the percentage claiming to be able to speak Welsh presumably reflecting a wish to identify with Wales and the language and representing a fund of goodwill towards the language counterbalanced by a much lower level of actual use of the language, perhaps representing a falling trend."

Though a high percentage of children of school age are reported in the census as being able to speak Irish, this is not transferring through to young people of working age.

"Such school-age bulges seem a common feature of countries where the education system is being used as a component in the attempt to reverse language shift "

By 2001, the Welsh Census results suggest a similar situation of apparent gain amongst the school-age population failing to carry through to older age groups.

Official government projections are that the population will increase to 3.037 million in 2011 and 3.165 million in 2021. However, this will not be due to an increase in the number of children being born, rather it will be as a result of inward migration. As

just one non-Welsh speaking person in a workplace can turn it from Welsh speaking to English speaking, if the Welsh language is to survive and flourish, more attention needs to be given to ways of enabling adult learners to make the transition from speaking Welsh in class to using the language beyond the classroom both socially and for work. As Jones says:

"The vitality of the language may be better indicated by the use made of it rather than just whether people have the ability to speak it. One point on the continuum of ability that which marks fluency is strongly related to daily use. The importance of a community of speakers whether within the family, area or social network is also identified. Many of the Welsh Language Board's efforts are directed towards promoting the position of Welsh in the community."

**Key points relating to why it is important for adults to learn Welsh:**

- The plan is for Wales to become a fully bilingual nation.
- People moving into Wales are eager to participate fully with the local community.
- Though children are reported in the census as being Welsh speaking, these gains are not carried through to older age groups.
- Inward migration will continue and if the Welsh language is to survive and flourish, more attention needs to be given to ways of enabling adult learners to make the transition from speaking Welsh in class to using the language beyond the classroom.

## What is required in order to learn a language to fluency?

### **Aptitude For Learning A Foreign Language**

(Sparks, R. and Ganschow, L., 2001)

This document looks at whether a person's aptitude for learning languages can be predicted in advance. At one time it was thought that some people had a natural aptitude for languages and that this talent could be detected before teaching them a new language. Various tests were devised that involved a combination of intelligence tests and learning artificial languages. These methods are discussed by in "Aptitude For Learning A Foreign Language".

"Symonds (1930), who also developed a test for FL prognosis, suggested that three types of aptitude were important: ability in the student's native language, general intelligence, and "quick learning" tests in the new language. His test was useful for predicting performance in French high school classes. However, Kaulfers (1931) reported that IQ scores or English grades were better predictors of FL performance than were the prognosis tests. He suggested that prognosis tests were actually weighted intelligence tests. Kaulfers (1939) also suggested that the effectiveness of aptitude tests for FL learning was dependent on the instructional situation."

Similarly, in the 1990s, there was an emphasis on students' learning styles and strategies and research tried to show how these affect students' success in learning a new language. A learning style is defined as: "a way of thinking...not an ability, but rather how we use the abilities we have."

Learning styles are primarily determined by means of self-report measures and include inventories such as the National Association of Secondary Schools Principals' Learning Style Profile (LSP), the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), the Type Differentiation Indicator (TDI), and the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL).

It is difficult to quantify how important a student's learning style actually is with regard to learning Welsh. Though research findings show positive correlations between learning styles and proficiency in learning another language, the correlation is only modestly significant.

Anxiety is another important aspect to consider when predicting achievement in language learning. Studies using Horwitz's FL anxiety scale reported that language anxiety is the best single correlate of FL achievement. Sparks and his colleagues (Sparks, Ganschow, Artzer, Siebenhar, & Plageman, 1997) found differences in anxiety between good and poor language learners on end-of-year high school oral and written proficiency measures. Onwuegbuzie, Bailey, and Daley (1999) reported that several aspects of students' self-perception were predictors of FL anxiety: their expectation of overall achievement in FL courses, their perceived self-worth, and their perceived scholastic competence .

However, in the 1990s, questions were raised as to whether anxiety is a cause or a consequence of achievement in language learning. The authors suggested that those students who reported having high anxiety and who found learning a language very difficult may have found language learning difficult in general. With regard to people learning Welsh as adults, anxiety is an issue of some importance because some researchers have reported that anxiety interferes with language learning due to the way it reduces the ability to concentrate on the target language which in turn is likely to impede memory efficiency.

**Key points relating to what is required in order to learn a language to fluency:**

- Ideas about people having a 'natural aptitude' for languages are incorrect and outdated.
- A student's learning style does not have a significant effect on their proficiency in learning another language.
- Anxiety about learning a language can have a detrimental effect on a student's ability to learn effectively.
- Daily use of a language is conducive to achieving fluency.

## Methods of teaching languages

### **Bilingual Language Acquisition**

(Franson, 2009)

In this document, Franson suggests that starting with contextualized tasks and practical activities that are of low cognitive demand, such as naming items or a simple matching exercise helps new learners get started. However, more proficient learners would require more cognitively demanding tasks.

### **The importance of interaction in classroom language learning**

(R. L. Allwright, 1984)

This document puts forward the idea that getting students to communicate in class in the new language is pedagogically useful because it helps them transfer classroom learning to the outside world.

'We should not expect our learners to be able to use their classroom learning outside the classroom if they have never really had much opportunity to practise in circumstances all similar to 'real life'. In short, all too often the learner has to make too big a leap from classroom drill to genuine communications. Giving the learners practice activities designed to simulate 'real life' communication problems (e.g. declining an invitation to dinner) was the obvious way to bridge that gap, and it still is.'

Allwright also points out that tone management is important. This refers to the important business of establishing the appropriate socio-emotional atmosphere for the interaction. Students need to know how to apologise if they are late or unable to do something in class. Code management is important too. This refers to the management and negotiation of things like which language to use, which register to use, which regional accent and so on. Students need to decide how closely they will try to emulate the teacher's accent.

### **Key points relating to methods of teaching languages:**

- New learners need to start with very simple tasks but once they become more proficient, tasks should become more cognitively demanding.
- Students should practice speaking in simulated 'real life' communication in class.
- Students should be taught the correct register to use in different situations, for example when arriving late to class.
- Whether or not to use a regional accent in class is an important consideration.

## Use of formulaic sequences

### **Units of oral expression and language learning in small group interaction**

(Martin Bygate, Applied Linguistics 1988)

In this document Bygate focuses on the use of pair work or small groups in teaching a new language. A previous researcher suggested three processes that take place when learners communicate.

- a. imitating (part of) another speaker's utterance and adding to it
- b. building on your own previous utterance
- c. juxtaposing two formulaic utterances.

The cognitive process involved in such strategies consist of holding short pieces of speech in short-term memory in order to work on or add to them by addition, insertion or substitution. Bygate, however, suggests that these processes actually fulfil a more permanent role in oral discourse and therefore may offer learners a 'way in' to the business of language learning.

"Generally language knowledge—or competence—has been thought of as some sort of integrated entity which is susceptible to constant

development, rather like an organism. This could be described as a 'unitary' view of language and of language knowledge, according to which language ability depends upon a central homogeneous store. An alternative account has been suggested, however, by some theorists. Pawley and Syder (1983), for instance, suggest that a considerable proportion of linguistic knowledge and ability consists of individually stored expressions, which they call 'lexicalized sentence stems'. [...] They suggest that it is far more probable that a considerable degree of duplicate storage occurs, so that the most frequent or idiosyncratic of expressions are stored like lexical items. Sentences would then not all be produced on the basis of syntactic rules: many would be produced from prefabricated chunks."

Comparing oral and written discourse shows that they are significantly different. Natural speech tends to encourage a style in which relatively independent clauses are chained together to make longer sentences. Brown and Yule remark that, "Native speakers typically produce bursts of speech which are much more readily relatable to the phrase – typically shorter than sentences, and only loosely strung together." This is processed by the listener to extract the meaning and the result is an impression of smoothness that was not actually present in the speech, as can be seen from studying transcripts of recorded conversations.

Rehearsed speech and written language, on the other hand, makes more use of complex noun groups, conjoined parallel phrases, sequences of prepositional phrases and relative clauses.

Bygate suggests that students can gain practice in conversing by speaking together in pairs or small groups. He acknowledges that one of the disadvantages of this teaching method is that mistakes can become "fossilised" (i.e. become accepted usage amongst the group) because the learners will not know enough to be able to correct one another. However, this is not the only way non-standard or inappropriate language can become part of a learner's vocabulary. Using novels or technical texts in class can also lead to learners adopting written styles in their speech. Bygate feels that the benefits of practising conversation with a partner outweigh the dangers. He does, however, admit that structured teacher-centred activities can provide the necessary input for

learners and these would avoid the danger of learners acquiring bad habits. They thus may be more efficient than group work.

## **Formulaic Sequences in Second Language Teaching: Principle and Practice**

(Alison Wray, 2000)

In this paper, Wray examines the use of formulaic language in second language teaching. As she explains in the introduction, in its narrowest sense, formulaicity has always been a useful entrance point for the learner, with the 'phrase-book' approach providing a few pre-learned utterances for asking the way to the station or ordering a cup of coffee. However, there is much more to it than this. Gaining full command of a new language requires the learner to become sensitive to the native speakers' preferences for certain sequences of words over others that might appear just as possible. From the bizarre idiom, through the customary collocation, to the turns of phrase that have no other apparent linguistic merit than that 'we just say it that way'.

"For example Pawley and Syder (1983) who explore this learner problem in some detail, contrast the expression *I'm so glad you could bring Harry* with several grammatical equivalents which are simply never said, including, *That Harry could be brought by you makes me so glad* and *That you could bring Harry gladdens me so.*"

There is nothing wrong with the second two statements when analysed by grammatical rules, but a native speaker would never think of using them and they would sound strange if uttered by a learner.

Wray defines a formulaic sequence as:

"A sequence, continuous or discontinuous, of words or other meaning elements, which is, or appears to be, prefabricated: that is, stored and retrieved whole from memory at the time of use, rather than being subject to generation or analysis by the language grammar."

In effect, this means that the words in a formulaic sequence are 'glued together' and stored as a single 'big word'. In many cases sequences will have been learned this way in the first place. However, some appear to be constructed out of their individual constituents using the grammar and only then turned into a formulaic sequence, in a process called *fusion*.

It has been acknowledged for many years that idioms, at the very least, must be viewed as subject to this 'big words' definition. In particular we may note the ones which are semantically opaque, such as *beat about the bush*, or syntactically irregular, such as *by and large*. In both cases, it is implausible that they are generated by rule out of their lexical components. However, these irregular idioms are a small group, relative to the larger phenomenon. In order to encompass the whole range, it is necessary to allow for the possibility that word sequences may be formulaic even though they are semantically transparent and syntactically regular. Thus not just idioms but any amount of the spoken language could be formulaic.

### **Approaches to teaching formulaic sequences**

Despite the difficulties, three recent attempts have been made to introduce formulaic sequences into the teaching programme in a principled way. Each of these approaches has its own priorities and sees rather differently the role of formulaicity in language knowledge. Nattinger and DeCarrico (1992: 117) are mostly interested in the interactional functions associated with individual examples of common formulaic sequences. They focus on their usefulness in teaching conversation, recommending the following steps:

- pattern practice drills using fixed routines, to develop confidence and fluency;
- controlled variation using substitution drills to demonstrate that 'the chunks learnt previously were not invariable routines, but were instead patterns with open slots';
- increased variation 'allowing them to analyse the patterns further'.

Wray categorises formulaic sequences into three types:

### 1. **A short-cutting process**

This helps to explain why people have preferred ways of saying things and why a person's speech often features phrases characteristic to them. It also accounts for the way rehearsing a speech or lecture can lead to the speaker uttering the story almost word for word by the time it has been told several times.

### 2. **Allowing the speaker time to think**

Recent research on brain activity during linguistic tasks shows that a practised routine not only allows speedy access to the original processing route, it actually bypasses it. Formulaic sequences that are used to adjust the pacing of what is being said, to hold on to the speaker's turn to speak, to stall for time or to indicate that they want to speak next all allow the brain time to process the more complex aspects of the conversation.

### 3. **Reducing strain on the memory**

Information held inside a formulaic sequence is easier to recall later.

However, Wray warns that care must be taken when using formulaic sequences with adults. She quotes the example of a Japanese immigrant in the USA who had picked up and created formulaic sequences that enabled him to interact fully, yet he had never mastered the grammar. This suggests that it may be possible, at least for some learners, to master the form and functional power of prefabricated strings without engaging with what they contain. Simply memorising a list of unalterable phrases which can be reproduced on demand will not achieve true fluency. Teachers must, therefore, look for a way of accommodating both analyticity and formulaicity.

#### **Key points relating to the use of formulaic sequences:**

- Natural language consists of imitating the other speaker's utterance and building on it.
- Juxtaposing two formulaic sequences is a natural way of constructing speech.
- It is likely that language is stored in the memory in chunks larger than individual words.

- Sentences are not constructed from individual words based on grammatical rules but are produced from prefabricated chunks.
- Oral and written discourse is significantly different.
- Oral speech tends to be formed from chains of independent clauses.
- The impression of smoothness produced by fluent speech is apparent rather than real and is constructed in the listener's mind. This is easily shown by studying transcripts of actual speech.
- Speaking together in pairs or small groups helps students practice real conversation.
- One danger of pair work is that mistakes may become 'fossilised', ie become accepted usage by the group.
- Structured teacher-centred activities can also provide conversation practice without the dangers of acquiring bad habits.
- Though formulaicity at it's simplest consists merely of uttering a few pre-learned sentences from a phrase-book, gaining a full command of a new language means mastering the native speakers' preferences for saying things in one way rather than another.
- A formulaic sequence is a string of words that are stored and retrieved whole from memory at the time of use.
- Words in a formulaic sequence are 'glued together' and stored as a single 'big word'.
- People create their own formulaic sequences and use them regularly, which is why individuals will favour particular ways of putting something and particular turns of phrase.
- Formulaic sequences are not just idioms and any amount of the spoken language could be formulaic.
- Practice drills using fixed routines develop confidence and fluency.
- Students need to practise varying the patterns by substituting other words.
- Analysis of the pattern will help them to generate increasingly varied speech based on the original pattern.
- Formulaic sequences: act as short cuts, allow the speaker time to think, reduce strain on memory and the brain's retrieval system.

## Is it important to sound like a native?

### **Recent research on age, second language acquisition, and early foreign language learning**

(Marianne Nikolov and Jelena Mihaljevic Djigunovic, 2006)

'These case studies document that all the post-puberty learners who were frequently mistaken for native speakers definitely strived for unaccented proficiency, similarly to participants in previous studies.' (Bongaerts et al., 1997; Ioup et al., 1994). These successful language learners shared intrinsic motivation in the target language, were proud and conscious of their achievement and worked on their language proficiency actively through finding opportunities for communicating with L2 speakers and reading and listening extensively. (L2 being the standard term for the language that the learner is trying to acquire.) For many of them, the target language was either part of their profession or they had a very strong desire to become integrated into the society they had just joined. Intensive phonetic training and intensity of language use is an important factor in native-like proficiency. In studies on successful adult learners, complete immersion in the host environment (in many cases in the form of marriage to a native speaker) for an extended period of time has been found to be conducive to native proficiency. Although accent is seen by some experts as the least important aspect of L2 proficiency and speakers who fail to achieve native-like accent lose nothing important (Cook, 1995), others, for example, Bongaerts et al. (1995) found that native speakers may avoid further interactions with speakers of heavy accents and argue for the importance of accentless proficiency.

#### **Key points relating to whether it is important to sound like a native:**

- Young language learners find it easier to acquire a good native accent.
- Older learners whose accents enable them to pass as native speakers have worked hard to acquire a good accent.
- Learners who worked on their accents were intrinsically motivated by their love of the target language and consciously worked on their language proficiency.

- Learners with good accents actively looked for opportunities to converse with native speakers.
- Intensive phonetic training and language use is an important factor in native-like proficiency.
- Immersion in the host environment, for example being married to a native speaker, is conducive to fluency and having a good accent.
- Native speakers may avoid talking to learners with heavy accents.
- Accentless proficiency could be important if learners want to be accepted into the local L2 speaking community.

## The effects of age on language learning

### **Recent Research On Age, Second Language Acquisition, And Early Foreign Language Learning**

Marianne Nikolov and Jelena Mihaljevic Djigunovic, 2006)

Some people believe that there is a critical period beyond which learning a second language becomes extremely difficult. This is known as the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH). Hakuta, Bialystok and Wiley (2003) tested the critical period hypothesis on data from the 1990 U.S. Census using self-assessments on age on arrival, length of exposure, and language development from 2.3 million immigrants with Chinese and Spanish L1. (Where L1 is the standard term for a person's native language.) Instead of finding a distinct age-related cut-off point, after which there was a marked drop in a person's ability to learn a language, their results showed a steady linear decline which also varied depending on level of education and age on arrival. This lack of discontinuity indicates that, 'the degree of success in second language acquisition steadily declines throughout the life span.' Along similar lines, a huge dataset was analyzed by Chiswick, Lee, and Miller (2004) in a longitudinal survey of immigrants to Australia. These studies also failed to find any sort of discontinuity which would indicate there was a critical period for language learning. Older learners

do find it harder to acquire an L2, but there is no sudden sharp drop at a certain age in L2 learning abilities and instead there is a gradual decline across the life span. The plasticity of the procedural memory for language gradually decreases after about age 5 but that critical period can be compensated for to some extent by older learners by making use of metalinguistic skills acquired via their experience of speaking their first language. It has also been found that exceptionally successful adult learners seem to possess unusual memory capacity (Skehan, 1998, p. 233; Ioup, Boustagui, Tigi, & Moselle, 1994).

**Key points relating to the affects of age on language learning:**

- It used to be thought that there was a critical period beyond which learning a language to native-like fluency was impossible.
- Research looking at immigrants to the US and Australia show that though the ability to learn a language declines steadily with age, there is not sudden drop in the ability to learn another language.
- Adult learners can compensate to some extent for the loss of ability to learn by using communication skills acquired via their native language.

## How long should it take to learn a language?

### **Lessons learned from Intensive French**

(Netten and Germain, 2003)

Cummins and other researchers suggest that it takes learners, on average, approximately two years to achieve a functional, social use of a second language but that it may take five to seven years or longer, for some bilingual learners to achieve a level of academic linguistic proficiency comparable to monolingual English-speaking peers.

The results of a case study undertaken in Canada suggest that there is no direct relationship between how accurately someone can speak a language in spontaneous conversation and the accuracy of their academic understanding of the language. There

are two important implications of this conclusion. Earlier research had shown that teaching has little or no effect on the accuracy of someone's spoken language. If teaching a language is seen as teaching knowledge of accurate forms of the language (ie correct grammar), then teaching will have little effect on the accurate use of the language in real communication when a student has to speak on the spur of the moment. Secondly, learning to use language accurately in spontaneous communication requires teaching accuracy as a skill rather than as knowledge.

Netten and Germain's research has led the development of new definitions for both accuracy and fluency that fit better with the paradigm of communicative language teaching. Generally speaking in second language teaching, accuracy has been defined as knowledge of the forms of language. However, they suggest a redefinition of accuracy as the correct knowledge of language or the ability to use language correctly in authentic communication, (a skill as well as knowledge). These two aspects are quite separate and not interdependent (Paradis, 1994; 2004). There are therefore two types of accuracy: accuracy-knowledge and accuracy-skill (Netten and Germain, 2002; Netten and Germain, in preparation).

In second language teaching, fluency has generally been considered a phonetic phenomenon, consisting of speed of delivery, pauses, hesitations, rephrasing, etc. (Riggenbach, 2000). However, the length of pauses, the number of hesitations, and the degree of reformulation depend on the ease with which the speaker of the L2 can put together all the elements of an utterance. Fluency, therefore, is the ability to make all these connections with ease, in other words unconsciously. Fluency can therefore be defined as the ability to combine with ease the many components of language in an authentic communication situation. (Netten and Germain, 2002; Netten and Germain, 2003).

Netten and Germain found that short periods of French do not give students enough time to develop oral skills. Just a brief exposure to French, even if it occurs daily, is interrupted by learning other subjects in English; English predominates in the school day. As a result there is no retention of French. Students interviewed said, 'When you walk out of the room, you forget it.' 'It does not stay in your head.' 'I knew yesterday;

the teacher told us. But, I don't remember today.' This lack of progress, unfortunately, can contribute to the development of a negative attitude towards the learning of French. Their experience suggested that early exposure to an L2 must be sufficiently intense for students to reach at least a minimum level of spontaneous communication for the learning experience to be considered worthwhile. At least 250 hours of intense exposure to French is required to reach a level of spontaneous communication. Once students can interact spontaneously in French, they are more motivated to learn, and use, the language.

**Key points relating to how long it should take to learn a language:**

- Some research suggests that learners can achieve a functional, social use of a second language in two years.
- It may take five to seven years or longer for learners to achieve a level of academic linguistic proficiency comparable to their monolingual English-speaking peers.
- There is no direct relationship between someone's ability to speak a language correctly in spontaneous conversation and the accuracy of their academic understanding of the grammar of the language.
- Teaching people correct grammar does not necessarily mean that the accuracy of their spontaneous spoken language improves.
- Speaking a language fluently and accurately is a skill, not knowledge.
- Fluency can be defined as the ability to combine with ease the many components of language in an authentic communication situation.
- Short study periods do not give students enough time to develop good oral skills.
- Early exposure to an L2 must be sufficiently intense for students to reach at least a minimum level of spontaneous communication.
- At least 250 hours of intense exposure to French is required to reach a level of spontaneous communication.
- Once students can interact spontaneously in French, they are more motivated to learn, and use, the language.



## How motivation affects language learning

### **Age-related differences in the motivation of learning English as a foreign language: Attitudes, selves and motivated learning behavior**

(Judit Kormos and Kata Csizér, 2008)

The model of the L2 Motivational Self-System is based on Higgins' self-discrepancy theory (1987), in which it is argued that motivation is the result of someone's wish to reduce the discrepancy between one's ideal self and one's actual self. Motivation also results from wanting to lessen the gap between one's actual self and the self that one's significant others would like one to become. Dörnyei's theory is also based on the realization that 'one feels like a different person when speaking a second language and often indeed acts very differently as well' (Guiora & Acton, 1979, p. 199).

Kormos and Csizér's findings concerning the discrepancy of the positive motivational characteristics and the low level of the proficiency of students showed that positive attitudes and reportedly highly motivated behaviour do not necessarily mean that students in fact invest a sufficient amount of energy in language learning. Learning an L2 differs from the acquisition of other skills in life in requiring intensive practice and increased effort. The number of language classes provided in most instructional programs is not sufficient for becoming a successful L2 speaker if the student does not invest sufficient energy in studying outside the class.

### **Relationships between Motivation for Learning English and Foreign Language Anxiety: A Pilot Study**

(Matsuzuki, 2006)

Gardner and Lambert (1972) suggested two kinds of motivation: integrative motivation, referring to positive attitudes and feelings toward the target language group, and instrumental motivation, referring to the potential utilitarian gains of second language such as getting a better job or higher salary. According to Gardner (1985), integrative motivation was positively related to achievement in language proficiency. Some researchers, however, have raised questions about Gardner's

claims (e.g., Svanes, 1987). According to Svanes, European and American students were considered integratively motivated at university in Norway, whereas the Middle Eastern, African and Asian students were considered instrumentally motivated. Svanes concluded that the types of motivation were related to the background of the students.

Students who have practical reasons and intellectual satisfaction tend to have lower levels of foreign language anxiety. That is, the findings indicate that practical reasons and intellectual satisfaction are important factors for reducing foreign language anxiety. The results also showed that students who have intellectual satisfaction tend to have lower foreign language anxiety. Matsuzuki therefore suggests giving classes and teaching materials in which students can find intellectual satisfaction.

### **Motivation and Learning Strategies in a Foreign Language Setting: A Look at a Learner of Korean**

(Elizabeth Root, University of Minnesota, 1999)

This document is a longitudinal study examining the motivation and learning strategies of the author as she attempts to learn Korean. The research was based on the detailed diaries she kept of the lessons she attended, teaching methods used and her own attitudes and strategies during that period.

The part that was of particular relevance to this investigation was the first chapter on motivation. Though early attempts to improve the efficacy of language teaching focused on aptitude for learning languages in an attempt to teach the people who showed aptitude and reject those who did not, in more recent years the focus has been on motivation. This is much more applicable to the case of mature adults moving to Wales and wanting to learn Welsh. Introductory Welsh for Adults classes are open to all and do not demand any prior knowledge, neither do they test for aptitude because this would not be appropriate in the circumstances.

Root examines Gardner's model of motivation, looks at the criticisms of his model and also considers Dörnyei's model. **Gardner was one of the first researchers in**

**second language acquisition to focus on motivation. He chose to define motivation by specifying four aspects that needed to be present:**

1. a goal
2. effortful behavior to reach the goal
3. a desire to attain the goal
4. positive attitudes toward the goal

In his terminology, a goal was not necessarily an easily observable and measurable component of motivation, for example doing well on a test. Instead, a goal was simply a stimulus that gave rise to motivation.

Gardner also considered that there were two main reasons for studying another language. He called these 'orientations'. Through his research, he found that the two main orientations were:

1. **integrative**: a favourable attitude toward the target language community; possibly a wish to integrate and adapt to a new target culture through use of the language.
2. **instrumental**: a more functional reason for learning the target language, such as job promotion, or a language requirement.

Gardner considered orientations to be distinct from motivation. Motivation, according to Gardner:

"...refers to a complex of three characteristics which may or may not be related to any particular orientation. These characteristics are attitudes toward learning the language, desire to learn the language, and motivational intensity."

Gardner received criticism for focusing so much on the integrative motive. However, Roots believes that some of his assertions have been misconstrued. The process of acquiring another language is extremely complex and, when considering a student's motivation to learn a language, that complexity must be taken into account. Gardner simply found that: 'subjects who select integrative reasons over instrumental ones as indicative of themselves evidence higher levels of motivational intensity.' Despite

attempts to extend the model of motivation beyond two main orientations, other researchers have found their results agree closely with those of Gardner.

Dörnyei, however, felt that who was learning what and where was important and asserted that instrumental orientation would have a greater influence on language learners than a desire to integrate. He created a model of FL learning motivation that took into account some of the expanding views of motivation.

Three different levels of factors were included, which not only allowed for the inclusion of orientations but also for specific situations that involved the learner and the surrounding context.

- The first level focuses on reactions and attitudes toward the target language.
- The second level is the learner level, which focuses on the individual's reaction to the language and the learning situation and includes different cognitive theories of motivation. Cognitive theories of motivation view motivation as a function of someone's thoughts, not as an instinct, need, drive, or state.
- The third level is the learning situation level, which takes into account specific motivational factors connected with the teacher, the course, and the group of language learners with which an individual interacts. This level consists of extrinsic and intrinsic motives in different areas. Extrinsic motivation consists of doing something because of an external reward that may be obtained, while intrinsic motivation is demonstrated when we do something because we get rewards enough from the activity itself.

Intrinsic and extrinsic motives are not necessarily mutually antagonistic. However, extrinsic motivation can undermine intrinsic motivation. Traditional school settings often cultivate extrinsic motivation, but under certain circumstances classroom rewards can be combined with or lead to intrinsic motivation.

## **Second Language Learning Motivation**

(Liuolienė & Metiūnienė, Mykolas Romeris University, 2006)

Gardner's theory is important but, as several researchers have pointed out, its emphasis is on the social aspects of motivation rather than on the role of motivation in the classroom. Liuolienė & Metiūnienė therefore build on Gardner's work, relating it more closely to the teaching situation. They acknowledge that both integrative and instrumental motivation may lead to success and that a lack of either causes problems, but they then go on to point out that though Gardner discusses the learner's reaction to the learning situation he offers little explanation of how the learning situation can be manipulated in order to increase the learner's motivation. As a social psychologist Gardner was concerned with the effect of social variables on learner's motivation; language teachers are more concerned with the effect of the syllabus, lesson plans, and activities that the students experience in the classroom.

A positive attitude toward the learning situation is likely produce greater enjoyment in the study of the language, increase the desire to learn the language, and encourage students to expend effort in learning the language. The learning situation includes variables such as the teacher, the textbook, classroom activities, classmates and so forth. The learner's attitudes toward these variables will influence the learner's core motivation as well as the learner's orientation. For this reason, and because a second language is almost always learnt in an educational setting, many researchers, especially in the last decade, have attempted to modify and adapt Gardner's theory and other theories of motivational psychology and apply them to educational situations.

Researchers Crookes and Schmidt (Crookes, Schmidt 1991) were some of the first to question Gardner's approach stating that the empirical evidence is not clear enough to support the notion that integrative motivation is a cause and second language achievement the effect. They identified four areas of motivation:

- micro level, which involves the cognitive processing of the new language.
- classroom level, which includes the techniques and activities employed in the classroom.

- syllabus level, which refers to the choice of content and can influence motivation by the level of curiosity and interest aroused in the students.
- Factors from outside the classroom involve informal interaction in the new language and long-term factors.

### **Motivation as a Contributing Factor in Second Language Acquisition** (Jacqueline Norris-Holt, 2001)

Like the previous authors discussed so far, Norris-Holt considers Gardner's model of motivation to be useful when examining what goes on in the language classroom. However, she also considers other aspects of learning that are thought by those researchers building on Gardner's work to have an influence on second language acquisition. These include the variables of intelligence, language aptitude, motivation and situational anxiety (Giles and Coupland 1991). In a formal setting intelligence and aptitude play a dominant role in learning, while exerting a weaker influence in an informal setting. The variables of situational anxiety and motivation are thought to influence both settings equally.

The final phase of the model identifies linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes of the learning experience. Linguistic outcomes refers to actual language knowledge and language skills. It includes test indices such as course grades or general proficiency tests. Non-linguistic outcomes reflect an individual's attitudes concerning cultural values and beliefs, usually towards the target language community. Ellis (1997) reasons that individuals who are motivated to integrate both linguistic and non-linguistic outcomes of the learning experience will attain a higher degree of second language proficiency and more desirable attitudes.

Norris-Holt concludes: 'In order to make the language learning process a more motivating experience instructors need to put a great deal of thought into developing programs which maintain student interest and have obtainable short term goals.' She also points out: 'The use of an interesting text can also help to increase the motivation level of students in the classroom. Many Japanese texts often contain material which fails to capture the interest of students due to the heavy emphasis on vocabulary and grammar.'

## **Language Learning Motivation: The Student, the Teacher, and the Researcher**

(Gardner, 2001)

Though R. C. Gardner is talking about school age children, much of this applies to adults moving into Wales and deciding to learn the language. Gardner says: 'There is considerable interest today in the notion of motivation to learn a second or foreign language, but it wasn't always this way. In 1956 when Wally Lambert and I began our research, it was generally agreed that learning another language involved intelligence and verbal ability. Concepts like attitudes, motivation and anxiety were not considered to be important at all. Today, much of this has changed, and one sometimes gets the impression that affective variables are considered to be the only important ones.'

Gardner points out that learning a second language is a difficult time-consuming process, and he supposes that a number of variables will be found to be important. To date, research has focussed on individual difference characteristics of the student such as attitudes and motivation, language anxiety, self-confidence, field independence, personality variables (e.g., need achievement, risk-taking, empathy and the like), intelligence, language aptitude, and language learning strategies, but other variables and other classes of variables might well be considered viable candidates.

In his research, Gardner focused on motivation because he believed that many of the other variables were dependent on motivation for their effects to be realized. For example, language-learning strategies probably will not be used if the individual is not motivated to learn the language. He therefore believed that motivation was a central element along with language aptitude in determining success in learning another language in the classroom setting. He also thought that what is motivational or motivating to the teacher may not be to the student.

As Gardner says: 'When students are learning a second language, they [...] must acquire language content (vocabulary, grammar and the like); they must acquire language skills (oral production, aural comprehension); they must develop some degree of automaticity and fluency with their handling of the language; and

ultimately, they must develop some degree of willingness to use the language outside of the classroom. This is no small set of requirements.'

In learning another language, the student is required to incorporate speech sounds, grammatical structures, behaviour patterns, and the like that are characteristic of another culture, and this is not true of most other subjects which are generally all part of the student's culture and acquiring this material does not involve any personal conflict. But learning another language involves making something foreign a part of one's self.

Gardner believed that teachers played an important role in motivating their students. There is some evidence to indicate that this concept applies to other school subjects. He refers to Dörnyei (2001, p. 119) who presents a set of four principles that he considers important in this conception of motivation. They are:

1. Creating the basic motivational conditions.
2. Generating student motivation
3. Maintaining and protecting motivation
4. Encouraging positive self-evaluation."

The motivated individual expends effort to learn the language. That is, there is a persistent and consistent attempt to learn the material by doing homework, by seeking out opportunities to learn more, by doing extra work, etc. Second, the motivated individual wants to achieve the goal. Such an individual will express the desire to succeed, and will strive to achieve success. Third, the motivated individual will enjoy the task of learning the language. Such an individual will say that it is fun, a challenge, and enjoyable, even though at times enthusiasm may be less than at other times. Changes can occur, but such changes generally will be within reasonable limits. The student who is highly motivated will not suddenly become amotivated, and the one who exhibits very little motivation will not suddenly become highly motivated. It is true that such 'conversions' are possible, but they are highly unlikely. Situational factors can raise or lower motivation, but only within certain bounds. Most importantly, teachers can contribute to these changes.

### **Key points relating to how motivation affects language learning:**

- Motivation results from the wish to reduce the discrepancy between one's ideal self and one's actual self.
- Motivation also results from wanting to lessen the gap between one's actual self and the self that one's significant others would like one to become.
- Dörnyei realised that a person feels and acts differently when speaking a second language.
- Positive attitudes and reportedly highly motivated behaviour do not necessarily mean that students in fact invest a sufficient amount of energy in language learning.
- The number of hours spent in class is not sufficient for becoming a successful L2 speaker if the student does not invest sufficient energy in studying outside the class.
- Gardner and Lambert suggested two reasons for studying another language: integrative motivation, referring to positive attitudes and feelings toward the target language group, and instrumental motivation, referring to the potential utilitarian gains of second language such as getting a better job or higher salary.
- Students who gain intellectual satisfaction from learning the L2 tend to have lower foreign language anxiety.
- Classes and teaching materials need to provide students with intellectual satisfaction.
- Integrative and instrumental reasons for learning a new language are referred to by Gardner as 'orientations' which he considered to be different from a motivation.
- Three different levels of factors can be observed: the first level focuses on the society's reactions and attitudes toward the target language; the second level is the learner level, which focuses on the individual's reaction to the language and the learning situation; the third level is the learning situation level, which takes into account specific motivational factors connected with the teacher, the course, and the group of language learners with which an individual interacts.

- Motivation can be either extrinsic and intrinsic. Extrinsic motivation consists of doing something because of an external reward, intrinsic motivation means that the activity itself is rewarding.
- Traditional school settings often cultivate extrinsic motivation, but under certain circumstances classroom rewards can be combined with or lead to intrinsic motivation.
- Both integrative and instrumental motivation may lead to success but a lack of either causes problems.
- If students have a positive attitude to the learning situation, they are more likely to enjoy study and therefore expend more effort in learning the language.
- Tutor, course materials and fellow students all contribute to the learning situation.
- In a formal educational setting intelligence and aptitude play a dominant role in learning, while exerting a weaker influence in an informal setting.
- In order to make the language learning process a more motivating experience instructors need to put a great deal of thought into developing programs which maintain student interest and have obtainable short term goals.
- The use of an interesting text can also help to increase the motivation level of students in the classroom.
- Motivation is probably the most important factor in learning another language. For example, language-learning strategies probably will not be used if the individual is not motivated to learn the language.
- The motivated individual will enjoy the task of learning the language. Such an individual will say that it is fun, a challenge, and enjoyable.

## Conclusions from the Literature Review

Motivation is a very important aspect of language learning. Someone taking on a new language has many hours of intensive study ahead of them and they will need to maintain their motivation over a number of years. It therefore seems appropriate to consider the achievement rates of adults on Welsh for Adults courses in the light of Gardner's research on motivation. Also, it seems that it is necessary to separate out the concept of "orientation" (which is defined by Gardner as the student's expressed purpose for learning a language) from the actual motivation to study. **It is possible for a student to express a desire to integrate with the new culture or to use the new language in work yet still lack true motivation to achieve these goals. Examples of students who learn languages to a high level simply as an intellectual challenge or in order to read the literature written in that language indicate that motivation and orientation can indeed be considered as separate, though interrelated things.**

Gardner found that people who selected integrative reasons rather than instrumental ones for learning another language showed higher levels of motivational intensity. However, in the case of people moving into a bilingual society, which is what exists in Wales, this may not be as powerful a motivator as it is for those moving into a monolingual one.

Dörnyei's model with three different levels may be more appropriate when considering the complex interplay between students' ultimate goals, their short term targets and needs, the need for the tutor to cater for different levels of ability and motivation and how best to reward, encourage and motivate students.

A positive attitude toward the learning situation is likely to produce greater enjoyment in the study of the language, increase the desire to learn the language, and encourage students to expend effort in learning the language. The learning situation includes variables such as the teacher, the textbook, classroom activities, classmates and so forth. The learner's attitudes toward these variables will influence the learner's core motivation as well as the learner's orientation.

As Norris-Holt points out:

'In order to make the language learning process a more motivating experience instructors need to put a great deal of thought into developing programs which maintain student interest and have obtainable short term goals.'

'The use of an interesting text can also help to increase the motivation level of students in the classroom. Many Japanese texts often contain material which fails to capture the interest of students due to the heavy emphasis on vocabulary and grammar.'

Allwright's emphasis on getting students to communicate in class also has implications for teaching methods and class activities. In the Llanllawen classes, the rituals of the games enables students to practice communicating in a low risk, low stress way. Considerations of providing useful vocabulary has implications for the people writing the materials for Welsh for Adults courses. It is important that polite, even oblique ways of making requests are included. It is not enough just to teach students the imperative mood of verbs if in real life they would not be issuing a direct order but instead would be making requests in a more roundabout way.

Allwright's inclusion of tone management and code management also raises interesting issues for teachers of Welsh to adults. How closely should they emulate the accent of the locality where the classes are being held? How colloquial or formal should the language be?

Bygate also is an advocate of students practising their conversation in class. He acknowledges that one of the disadvantages of this teaching method is that mistakes can become 'fossilised' and he admits that structured teacher-centred activities can provide the necessary input for learners and these would avoid the danger of learners acquiring bad habits and in the long run may be more efficient than group work.

Wray's work on formulaic sequences is of particular relevance to the Cwrs Llanllawen which focuses almost exclusively on learning stories by heart. However, Wray warns that care must be taken when using formulaic sequences with adults. She quotes the

example of a Japanese immigrant in the USA who had picked up and created formulaic sequences that enabled him to interact fully, yet he had never mastered the grammar. This suggests that it may be possible, at least for some learners, to master the form and functional power of prefabricated strings without engaging with what they contain. Simply memorising a list of unalterable phrases which can be reproduced on demand will not achieve true fluency. Teachers must, therefore, look for a way of accommodating both analyticity and formulaicity.

The importance of motivation is significant because the people signing up for Welsh for adult classes do not normally fall into the category of having a high aptitude for language learning and most have not learned a language since they were at school.

### **Changes to my original ideas as a result of the literature review**

As a result of undertaking the literature review, I made some changes to the questions I would like to answer. In my first questionnaire, I asked students why they wanted to learn Welsh. This gives an insight into their orientation, as defined by Gardner, but does not necessarily say much about their motivation. I therefore made sure that I included questions on motivation and attitudes to the class teaching methods and course materials in the interviews and follow up questionnaires.

I also need to examine how well the students are able to take the formulaic sequences they learn in class and alter and combine them to produce natural sounding speech.

# Methodology

All kinds of factors might influence whether a student becomes a fluent Welsh speaker after attending classes so in this project I am trying to investigate something that is complex. Science traditionally works with monocausal models in which each effect has one cause but this doesn't fit well with social science which is usually best explained by multi-causal models in which there are many factors which may be independent or interrelated. (Oppenheim, 1992)

I have selected the following questions to explore in my research:

- Do students enjoy the Llanllawen method and find it motivating?
- Is learning sentences and phrases by heart an effective way of acquiring vocabulary and grammar?
- In what ways are the Llanllawen materials being used for self-study between classes?
- How much practice do students think they need?
- How much practice between classes do students actually do?
- How long do students think it should take them to become fluent?
- Are students inspired and motivated by the role models offered by the National Eisteddfod's Learner of the Year competition?

In order to discover whether students enjoy the Llanllawen method of learning Welsh and find it motivating, I need to find out about their attitudes towards the teaching methods used and their opinions as to whether they find them effective. I also need data about other aspects of the class such as whether they find their fellow students supportive and whether the course materials suit their needs.

Learning material by heart tends to be regarded as old-fashioned these days, yet the Llanllawen course relies almost solely on this method of teaching Welsh. I need to find out what students think about this and whether they find it an effective way of learning. I also need to find out whether they can apply language that they have

learned by heart to real life situations outside the classroom. Do they think that they can achieve real fluency this way?

In order to learn a language effectively, a student must study on their own between classes. I need to find out how long students think it will take them to become fluent, how much work they think they need to do and how much they actually do during the week when not in class.

The Llanllawen course uses its own materials, written and produced by a single author. The book is used in class but a CD is also provided for use at home. I need to find out how students make use of the materials for self-study and whether the materials can be used in different ways to suit people with different learning styles.

Each year an award is presented at the Eisteddfod Genedlaethol (National Eisteddfod) to the Welsh Learner of the Year. This is intended to acknowledge outstanding achievement in learning Welsh and to showcase the level that learners can attain. I want to find out how learners actually feel about this competition and whether they find such role models inspiring.

The Llanllawen classes are run each year in a number of centres in North Wales. The full course lasts for four years with a course book for each level. I want to investigate students on several levels: those who have only just started learning Welsh and those who have been learning for some years. Because learning Welsh as an adult is often an intermittent process that can be interrupted by events in a student's life such as gaining, losing and changing jobs, having children, dealing with family illnesses and bereavements, students in the higher classes may have been learning Welsh for more than four years and may have tried several different ways of learning. Thus they may be able to offer some insight into how Llanllawen compares with other methods in terms of helping them to become fluent.

The main ways of data collection that are available to me are:

- Observations
- Questionnaires
- Interviews

Interviews could be carried out:

- Face-to-face
- By telephone
- Via computer (e.g. Skype or MSN)
- By e-mail
- By text chat / social networking discussion

There are some problems with using interviews as a means of data gathering. Cicourel lists five of the unavoidable features of the interview situation:

- Difficulty of ensuring uniformity across the interviews due to differing levels of mutual trust, social distance and interviewer's control.
- If questioning seems too probing, the interviewee might adopt avoidance tactics.
- Both interviewer and respondent are bound to hold back some of the things they could have said.
- Meanings which are clear to one may be unclear to the other, even when both are doing their best to communicate well.
- Just like in daily life, it is impossible to control all aspects of the interview.

One problem with using questionnaires is incomplete response and this was why I decided to ask students to complete the questionnaire in the class during the tea break. Whilst carrying out an early trial of a prototype questionnaire, I allowed students to take them home to complete, but it proved difficult to collect them back in again. Though people promised to bring them back the following week, many of them forgot and it took several reminders before all the questionnaires were returned.

Out of the possible methods of data collection, I have chosen to use a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods because this will give me the best overall picture of the students in the classes and how the teaching is actually carried out. Though most of the questions I want to answer relate to students' attitudes and opinions and interviews and observations are the best way to gather this kind of data, it would be helpful to have background information on who the students are, for example age, gender, why they have chosen to learn Welsh, how long they have been studying the

language, their educational level, any other languages they speak, how they hope to use Welsh, and whether they have the opportunity to speak Welsh during the week between classes. This will enable me to put the findings in context. I will use exploratory paper questionnaires given out in classes to collect this background data because questionnaires are a good way to gather responses from a large number of students in a quick and efficient manner. The responses can be analysed in a spreadsheet and the resulting data displayed in graphical form to make it easy to understand. The interviews will be done with a small number of students and will be transcribed in full. This method of data gathering produces far more detail than a questionnaire and gives a better understanding of a student's motivation, experience of different teaching methods and use of the language both in class and out in the community, but the transcription and analysis is time consuming, which limits the number of interviews that can be done.

Students will be given the choice of remaining anonymous if they prefer, however, at the end of the questionnaire I will invite them to provide more information, either by completing a follow up questionnaire or by taking part in a short interview. I will select a small number of students to interview from these volunteers and the rest of the people who are willing to provide more information will be given the link to the online follow up questionnaire.

I plan to give out the exploratory questionnaires during the class session when I go to observe the class. I chose to do this rather than simply giving the questionnaires to the tutor to hand out in class because I feel that if the students have met me, they are more likely to be comfortable with providing the answers to follow up questions.

In order to record the way the teacher and the students are interacting during the learning activities that take place in a Llanllawen class, I will use Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories (FIAC). This allocates a number to each type of interaction. I will devise a table for recording what is happening in the class, minute by minute.

## Flanders' Interaction Analysis Categories (FIAC)

1. <b>Accepts feeling: accepts and clarifies the feeling tone of the students in a non-threatening manner. Feelings may be positive or negative. Predicting and recalling feelings are included</b>	<b>Indirect Influence</b>
2. <b>Praises or encourages: praises or encourages student action or behaviour. Jokes that release tension, not at the expense of another individual, nodding head or saying 'uh huh?' or 'go on' are included</b>	
3. <b>Accepts or uses ideas of student: clarifying, building, or developing ideas or suggestions by a student. As teacher brings more of his own ideas into play, shift to category five.</b>	<b>Teacher Talk</b>
4. <b>Asks questions: asking a question about content or procedure with the intent that a student may answer</b>	
5. <b>Lectures: giving facts or opinions about content or procedures; expressing his own ideas; asking rhetorical questions</b>	
6. <b>Gives directions: directions, commands, or orders with which a student is expected to comply.</b>	
7. <b>Criticises or justifies authority: statements, intended to change student behaviour from non-acceptable to acceptable pattern, bawling someone out; stating why the teacher is doing what he is doing, extreme self-reference.</b>	<b>Direct Influence</b>
8. <b>Student talk-responses: talk by students in response to teacher. Teacher initiates the contact or solicits student statement.</b>	<b>Student Talk</b>
9. <b>Student talk-initiation: talk by students which they initiate. If 'calling on' student is only to indicate who may talk next, observer must decide whether student wanted to talk. If he did, use this category</b>	
10. <b>Silence or confusion: pauses, short periods of silence and periods of confusion in which communication cannot be understood by the observer.</b>	

When using these categories during the observations, as well as recording a number corresponding to a particular type of interaction, the letters C (Cymraeg/Welsh) or E (English) were added.

I will put the more detailed follow up questionnaires online. Because I live some distance from the teaching centres, taking them to give out to students in class would be difficult to arrange and very time-consuming. Sending them by post would mean students having to give out their addresses and would also be slower and more expensive. Even if I enclose a stamped addressed envelope, the response rate may also be lower due to students having to remember to take the completed questionnaire to the post box. Emailing students with a link to an online questionnaire means that they need only reveal the minimum of personal data and the responses can be collected more quickly. The results are automatically totalled and analysed graphically by the Google documents system.

Interviews are classified by Oppenheim (1992) as either exploratory or standardised. As he explains: 'An interview is not a conversation; it is a one-way process and its purpose is to obtain factual information.' When interviewing students it is important that I do not let my personal feelings intrude and I must remain neutral and non-judgemental so that the interviewee feels able to express their true opinions, whatever they may be. Ideally, the interviewee will talk with little or no prompting by me.

In a standardised interview, every interviewee is asked the same questions in the same way, at least as far as is possible. An exploratory interview, on the other hand, is: 'essentially heuristic: to develop ideas and research hypotheses rather than gather facts and statistics.' (Oppenheim, 1992) The skill required by the interviewer is to get the interviewee talking 'freely and with some degree of insight about their thoughts, feelings and formative experiences. [...] The main purpose is not data collection but ideas collection.' (Oppenheim, 1992)

As the main purpose of the interviews is to gather data rather than collect ideas, I will use standardised, structured interviews with pre-planned open questions. Open-ended questions are ones that provide a frame of reference, but otherwise leave the respondent free to answer as they see best, for example what kind of music do you like listening to? Closed questions are ones that allow the interviewee a limited, pre-determined number of responses to choose from. I will use these in the questionnaires, but not in the interviews. Scale questions are ones in which the respondent is asked to choose an option from a fixed scale of alternatives, eg Strongly agree, Agree,

Undecided, Disagree, Strongly disagree. I don't feel this sort of question will be appropriate for the interviews, but they will be used in the follow up questionnaires that are intended to elicit more information about students' views of the Llanllawen classes.

I will use a mixture of direct and indirect questions. Direct questions would be of the form, do you enjoy the Welsh classes? Indirect questions might ask for the interviewee's views on learning Welsh as an adult and how colleges are meeting students' needs. The interviewee's attitudes can be inferred from their replies,. Tuckman (1972) suggests that, 'by making the purpose of the questions less obvious, the indirect approach is more likely to produce frank and open responses.'

I will, as far as possible, ask the questions in a set order, though I will allow for a little deviation if necessary to take into account the students' different experiences of learning Welsh. I will record the interviews using a small and thus discreet digital recorder. Interviews will then be transcribed.

### **To summarise**

I will use questionnaires given out in class to find out:

- The students' educational background.
- Why they want to learn Welsh.
- How they currently use Welsh in their everyday lives.
- How many hours they spend learning and practising Welsh between classes.

I will need to observe a number of Llanllawen classes at different levels in order to find out:

- Whether the students appear interested in the activities and engaged by them.
- How much of the time in class is spent speaking Welsh and how much time is spent speaking English.
- What roles the tutor and students play during classes.

I will use more detailed follow up questionnaires and also interview a few students from Llanllawen and other classes in order to find out:

- Whether they enjoy the Llanllawen method and find it motivating.
- Whether they find learning sentences and phrases by heart an effective way of acquiring vocabulary and grammar.
- Whether they find that stories more memorable than random sentences and phrases.
- How they are using the Llanllawen materials for self-study between classes.
- How much practice they think they need.
- How much practice between classes they do.
- How long do they think it should take them to become fluent. (In terms of years and in terms of study hours.)
- Whether they have been taught any language learning methods, such as spaced repetition.
- What they think of the role models offered by the National Eisteddfod's Learner of the Year competition.

The trial run with a limited number of questionnaires not only revealed the best way of administering them, I also specifically asked people to say if anything was unclear or confusing. (Oppenheim, 1992). As a result, I amended two or three questions to make them easier to understand.

When people are being interviewed, they may not answer questions truthfully. For example they may play down or exaggerate how much studying they do in the week, depending on who they are talking to. In some circumstances students may think it is not 'cool' to study hard, even though they do a lot of work, while other students may feel guilty about how little work they do and thus claim to do more. All students may be tempted to give the answers that they think the researcher wants to hear.

This effect can be minimised by comparing the interview results with another value that is known to be valid. Careful choice of questions and avoidance of bias by the interviewer will also minimise the danger of students being untruthful in their responses. The interviewer must attempt to remain neutral throughout and must be

aware of any tendency to seek answers that validate their own opinions. However, there is a conflict between reliability and validity. The most valid responses will come from respondents who feel relaxed and in tune with the interviewer so that they are prepared to be open and honest with their responses. (Kitwood, 1977)

It is important to take into account any possible effects of the research on the students taking part. In this case, all the students are mature adults, so they are able to give informed consent. I will take care to explain the purpose of the research both to the tutor involved in teaching the classes and also the students taking part. Students will be informed of what will be noted during the observations and assured that no individuals will be identified. Before giving out questionnaires, I will ensure that all students are aware that they may remain anonymous if they prefer and that those who do reveal their names so that I may contact them with regard to a follow up interview or questionnaire, will not be identified in the completed report and that their data will be held in accordance with the requirements of the 1998 Data Protection act. Students will be made aware that they may withdraw from the research at any time and there will be no repercussions if they do this.

The project will be undertaken during the academic year 2010-2011. I plan to start the data collection as soon as possible in the autumn once the classes have settled into the new term. This will be from late October onwards. Allowing for holidays and problems with bad weather during the winter restricting travel, the remainder of the data collection will be done in the spring of 2011.

## Carrying out the project

The research project went through the following phases.

- I reviewed the relevant literature and discussed the questions I wanted to explore with the people responsible for the Llanllawen course.
- I trialled a questionnaire with one class and decided on my research objectives.
- I decide which hypotheses would be investigated.
- I decided that observing classes would be a useful thing to do and I decided to use the Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories (FIAC) to record what I was observing.
- I selected who I needed to approach regarding observing classes and giving out questionnaires.
- The data collection took place between November 2010 and May 2011.
- The answers to the initial questionnaires were entered into an Excel spreadsheet and formulae were used to generate totals for each category.
- The follow up questionnaire, designed to collect more in-depth data on students' attitudes to the Welsh class and course activities, was devised. This was done using Google documents and was therefore on the Web.
- Those who had indicated a willingness to answer follow up questions and who had provided an email addressed were contacted with a link to the Google documents questionnaire.
- The results were collated and the hypotheses were tested.

## Results

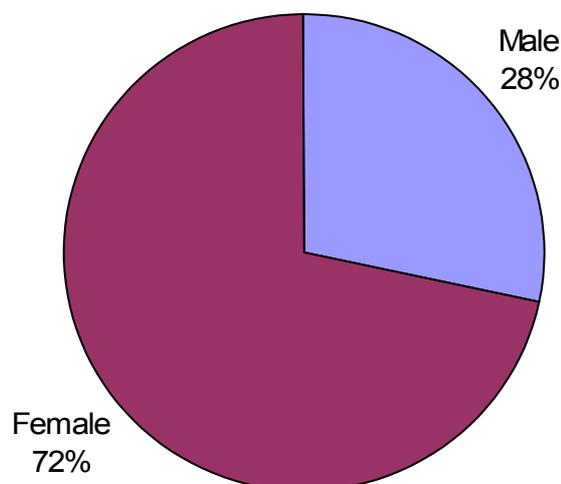
The results are presented in four sections: exploratory questionnaires, observations of Llanllawen classes, follow up questionnaires, interviews with students.

### Initial exploratory questionnaires

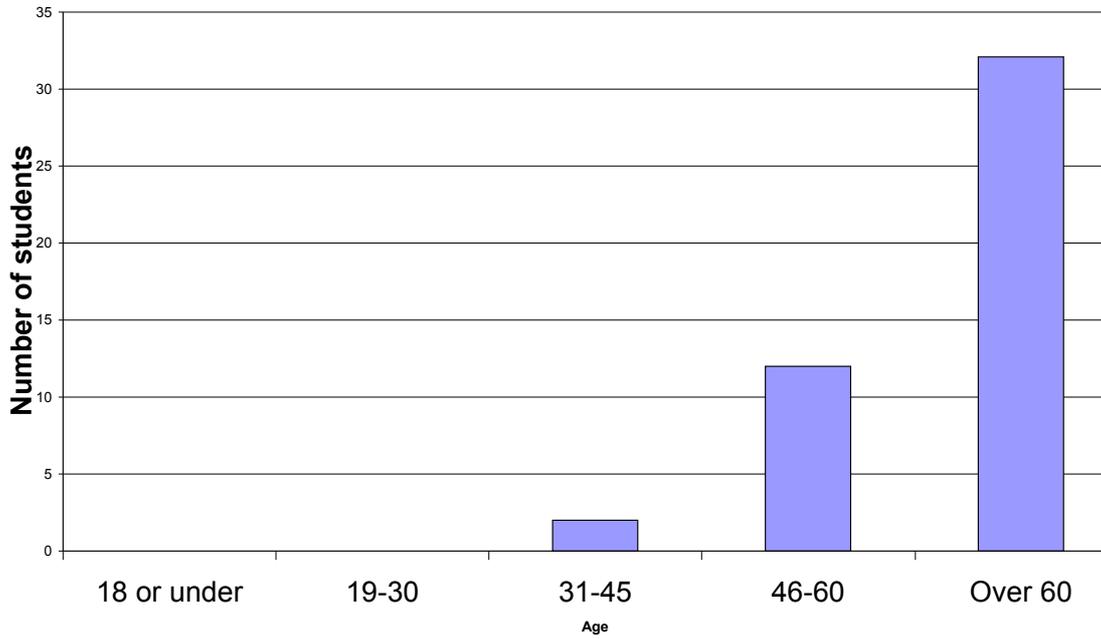
The total number of exploratory questionnaires returned was forty-six, which was a response rate of 100%. The high response rate was due to the fact that the questionnaires were given out when I visited the class in order to observe it and all students completed the questionnaires during the tea break,

Data from the questionnaires was entered into an Excel spreadsheet to produce the following analysis. As can be seen from the pie chart and column graph below, in terms of gender, nearly three quarters of the students were female and only just over one quarter were male. In terms of age, most students were over 60 and the majority were retired. Ten students work part-time and only three work full-time while 32 were retired.

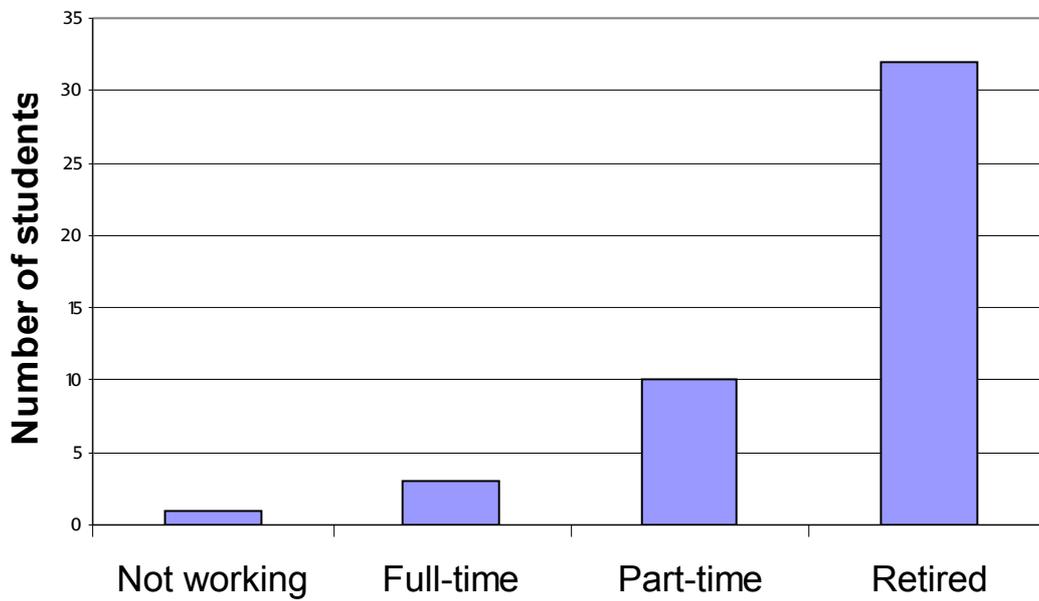
**Students -- by sex**



## Students by age

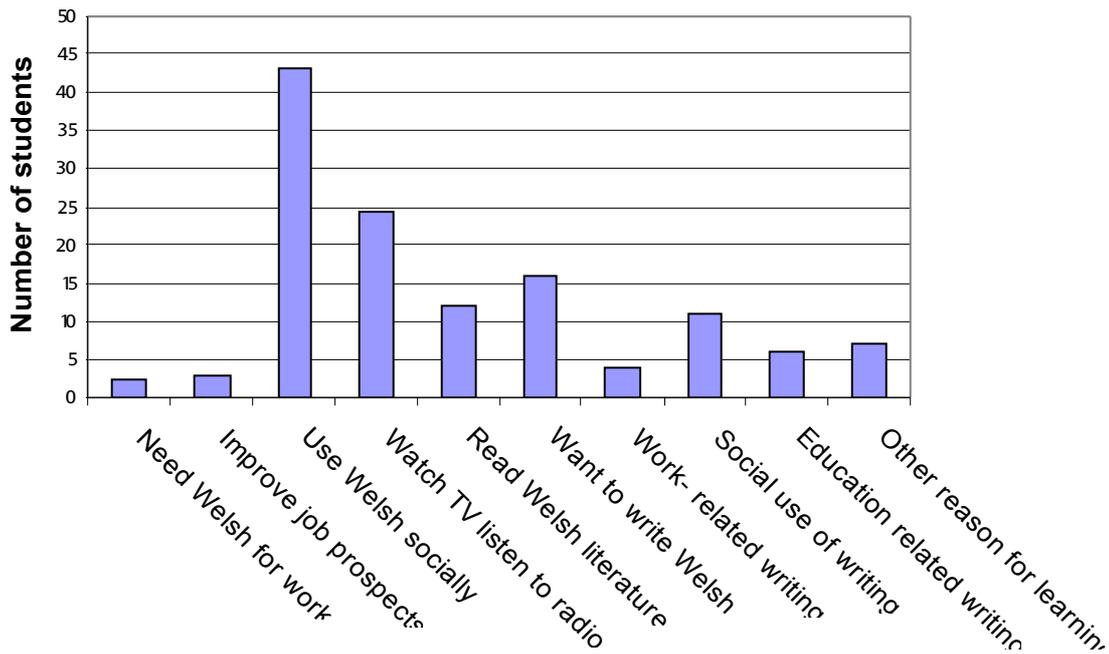


## Students who are working



All the classes investigated were held during the day, which may have skewed the results towards those who are not working at all or who only work part-time. Further investigations into evening class student numbers would need to be carried out to get a true picture of the overall student population. Amongst the students investigated, therefore, the majority are learning Welsh for reasons other than those related to work.

### Reasons for learning Welsh



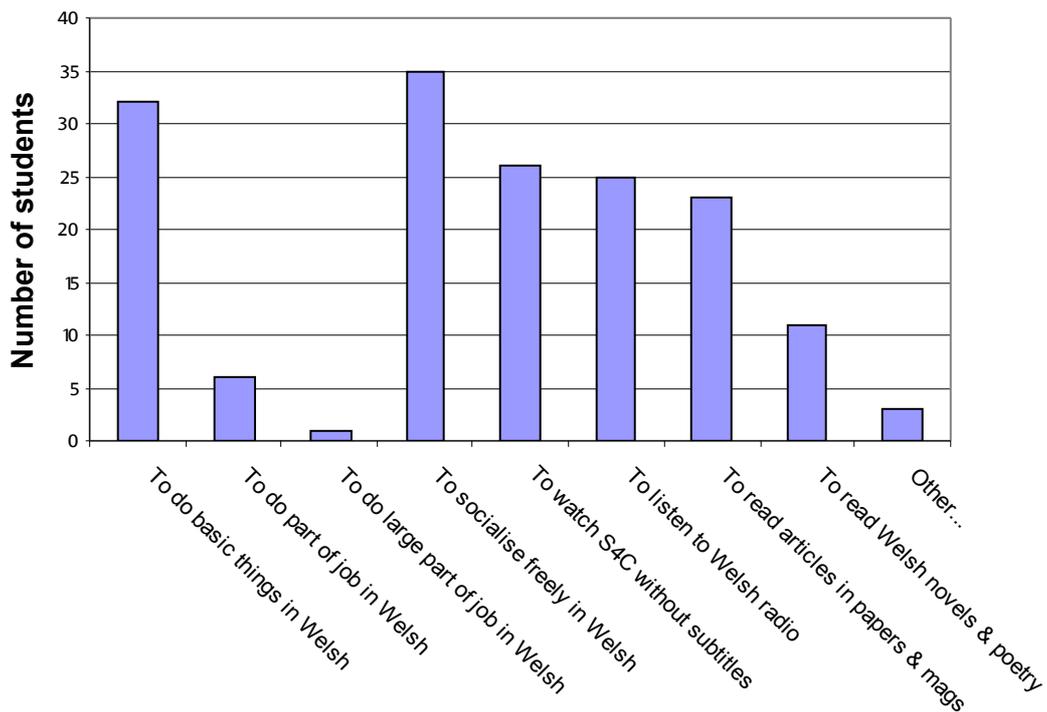
The social use of Welsh was the most common reason given for wanting to learn with 93% of respondents citing that as one of their reasons. Of those who gave other reasons for learning Welsh, nearly all indicated that they wanted to use Welsh socially in addition to their particular purpose.

Other reasons for learning were:

- "My children are at a Welsh medium school."
- "I enjoy gaining knowledge of languages."
- "Denbigh choir speak primarily Welsh."
- "To feel more a part of the community."
- "I want to write short stories for local magazines."
- "I enjoy learning languages and would like to understand more about Wales."

All the students had English as their first language. Other languages spoken by students were: French, German, Spanish, Italian, Greek, Norwegian, and Khmer. Fifteen students (33%) spoke at least one additional language, whilst seven students (15%) spoke two or more other languages. However, only three people (7%) considered themselves fluent speakers of languages other than English or Welsh, whilst the remainder considered themselves learners.

Their ultimate goals, with regard to learning Welsh, are shown below.



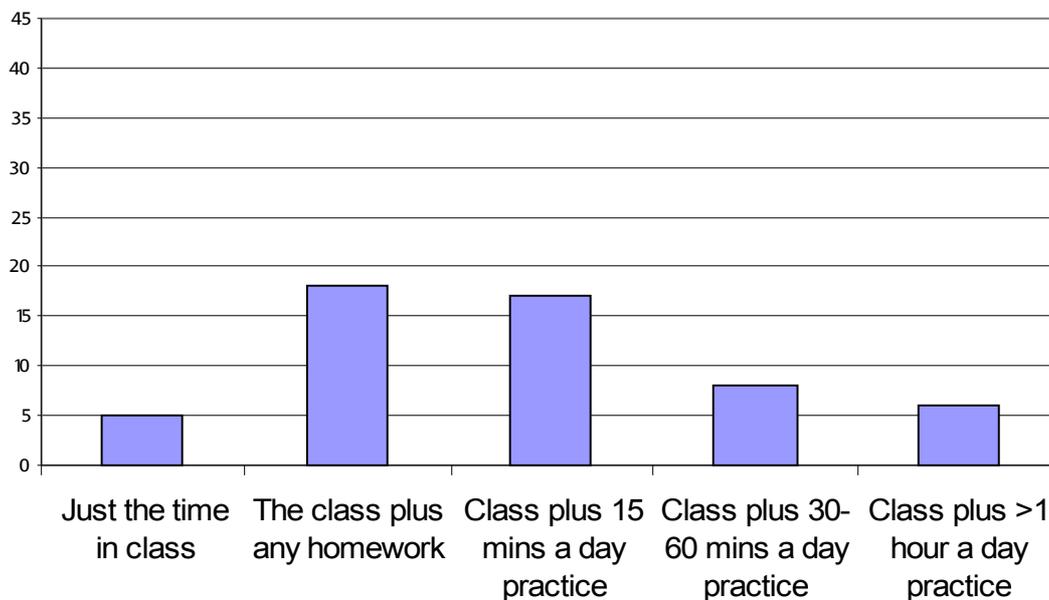
When asked what they hoped the course would provide, this is what they said:

<i>It will get me started</i>	<i>It will teach me to speak Welsh</i>	<i>It will teach me to read &amp; write Welsh</i>	<i>Support. I will meet other learners</i>	<i>Just part of what I need, I will supplement the course with self-study</i>	
11	25	8	32	4	Totals
24	54	17	70	9	% Percentage

This shows that while just over half the students believe that the course alone will provide everything they need to become fluent Welsh speakers and only 9% felt that they would need to do extra study on their own, a large majority of the students (70%) valued the classes for the support provided by their fellow learners.

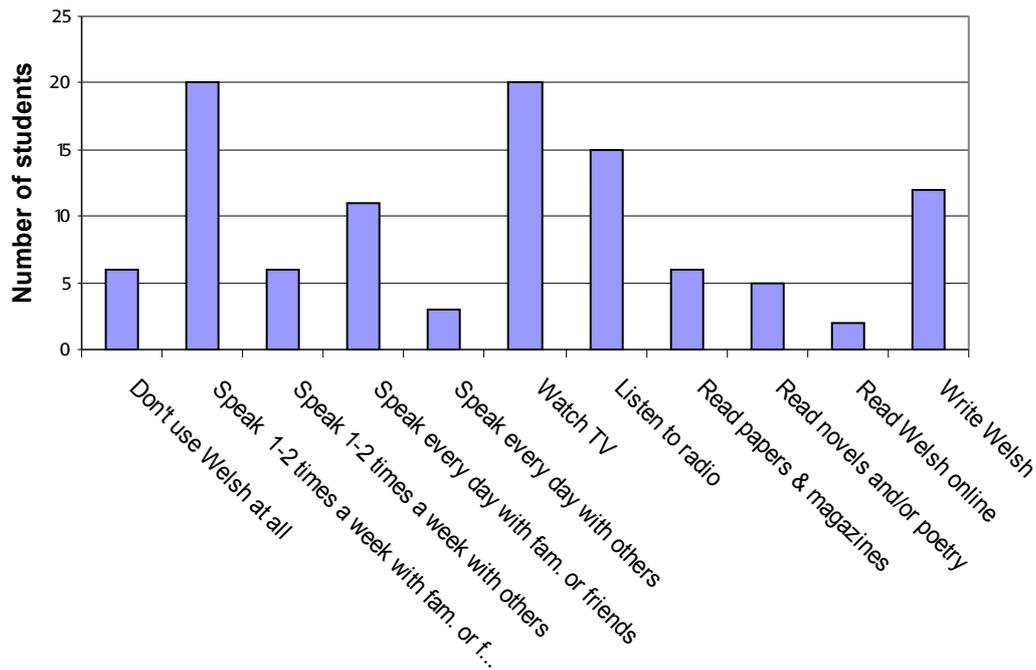
In view of the emphasis in the literature on intensive language study, the answers to the question regarding how much work the students normally did during the week between classes were revealing.

### Time spent per day learning Welsh



Five students (11%) said that they only studied while in class, ie for 2 hours per week. A much larger number of students (39%) did the homework they were set, which in the case of Cwrs Llanllawen is to work on memorising the current story. 37% of students say that they study for about 15 minutes per day. Only eight students (17%) studied for between 30-60 minutes per day and only six (13%) study for more than an hour.

Even though the students were still learning Welsh and did not claim to be fluent speakers, many of them were using the language in daily life. Only 13% didn't speak Welsh at all between classes and roughly a quarter (24%) were speaking Welsh every day with friends or family.



Watching TV and listening to Welsh radio were both popular activities for practising Welsh. 43% watch S4C and a third (33%) listen to Radio Cymru.

### Summary of results from the exploratory questionnaires

The results indicate that the student population in a typical Llanllawen Welsh class held during the day:

- consists mostly of older women.
- the students are most likely to be retired or working part-time.
- the students' first language is English.
- one third (33%) the students have learned or are learning another language in addition to Welsh.
- only a minority (7%) consider themselves fluent speakers of a language other than English or Welsh.
- they want to use Welsh socially with friends.
- just over half the people in the class want to watch Welsh TV and listen to Welsh radio (52%).
- a sizeable minority want to be able to read Welsh (26%) and write Welsh (35%).

- the majority of students (90%) are prepared to study between lessons, while nearly a third (30%) will work for 30 minutes or more on Welsh study each day.
- most students (70%) value the classes for the peer support that they provide.
- the majority of students (87%) tried to use Welsh in some way during the week by speaking with friends or family
- watch Welsh TV and listen to Welsh radio as a way of practising the language between lessons.

## Observations of Llanllawen classes

### **Overall impressions of the classes**

Four classes were observed. A beginner's class (Llanllawen 1), a class who are in their second year of studying Welsh (Llanllawen 2) and two advanced classes, Llanllawen 4 and Lleisiau'r Llan 1 who have been studying Welsh for four or more years.

Whilst carrying out the observations, I used the Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories (FIAC). I modified the recording method slightly to include a note of the language used during the interaction as well as recording what type of interaction it was. The completed observations can be found in the Appendix and a summary is presented here.

In all four classes, the students appeared happy and relaxed throughout the lesson. Students greeted one another in a friendly and open manner at the start, often using Welsh and said farewell to one another at the end. The students seemed to be focused on their work and they did not attempt to talk amongst themselves while the tutor was explaining something. The students did not appear to be inhibited about asking questions if they were unsure about something, yet there was no sense that they were asking questions as a diversionary tactic to avoid having to speak Welsh. In the more advanced classes, the students actually made an effort to ask questions in Welsh if they were able to do so.

Though there are only a limited number of set activities, the students joined in willingly and appeared engaged by the tasks. There were no signs of boredom or trying to evade or delay the teaching activities.

## Summary of the Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories (FIAC)

The Flanders Interaction Categories were devised to record interactions in academic classes in schools and some interaction types were not observed during the Llanllawen lessons. The absence of category 7 is only to be expected when teaching adults who are voluntarily taking a class. (Category 7 in which the teacher: 'Criticises or justifies authority: makes statements, intended to change student behaviour from non-acceptable to acceptable pattern, bawling someone out; stating why the teacher is doing what he is doing, extreme self-reference.') Adult students very rarely challenge a tutor's authority directly and, if a class does not suit them, they are more likely to drop out than to cause trouble by behaving in a way that forces a teacher to take direct action to modify their behaviour. However, the absence of any interactions in category 3: 'Accepts or uses ideas of student: clarifying, building, or developing ideas or suggestions by a student,' is more interesting and is one indication that the Llanllawen method of teaching is based on the assumption that the students are learning a skill rather than an academic subject. The teaching methods and the course content are fixed and student input is not usually encouraged, apart from at the beginning of each session when the tutor may ask if anyone has a 'Waw ffactor' (Wow factor) to share about using Welsh during the week outside class.

Analysing the number of minutes spent on each type of interaction shows that in the advanced class, the tutor is speaking Welsh for over half of the lesson time (56%) and English for a mere 18% of the time. The percentages do not add up to 100% because there were times when the tutor was not speaking. In the beginners' class, the tutor naturally had to spend more time speaking English (40%) and consequently less on speaking Welsh (32%).

However, looking at the time the students spent speaking Welsh, in the advanced class, one or more students was speaking Welsh for 54% of the time. In the beginners' class students were not far behind, speaking Welsh for 45% of the available lesson time.

Looking in more detail at the way Welsh is used in the class, when the tutor is giving instructions about what to do next, she speaks entirely in Welsh in the advanced class

and does not use English at all for this purpose. In the beginners' class two thirds of the instructions are given in Welsh and the remaining third in English.

When it comes to explaining things about the content of the lesson, teaching new vocabulary, explaining grammar etc. in the advanced class the tutor manages to do just under half of the teaching in Welsh, the remainder being in English. In the beginners' class, all the explanations are in English.

Students often ask questions in class or raise points they are not certain about. In the advanced class, students carry out this kind of interaction in Welsh for one third of the time. However, the majority of these interactions take place in English. In the beginners' class, these interactions take place almost entirely in English.

## Llanllawen teaching activities

### **Reading aloud with the tutor**

During the reading, the tutor works with the students on their pronunciation. In the advanced class I observed at different points in the lesson:

- The tutor picks up on a pronunciation point and makes the class repeat a sentence several times to ensure they have got it correct.'
- Tutor picks up the students on the pronunciation of "dewch".
- The tutor repeats the phrase and makes the students repeat the phrase to perfect the pronunciation.
- When a student stumbles over a difficult sentence, the tutor picks up on it. She makes the students repeat the sentence until they have got it.

In the Llanllawen 4 class I observed the following:

- Tutor explains any new vocabulary, including 'derbyn'. She corrects the students' pronunciation, insisting on them losing the English 'uh' sound and getting the correct Welsh 'er'.
- The tutor explains some new words and emphasises their pronunciation. She picks up the incorrect pronunciation and instructs the class to repeat the words.
- Tutor explains that you never hear people saying the initial 'R' on the 'roedd' form (imperfect).
- The students chorus, "Ew!" and "llew" to get the pronunciation right. Everyone laughs.

In the Llanllawen 1 class (beginners) I observed the following:

- Tutor gets the class to practice the 'uw' sound for 'uwd' (porridge)
- Tutor picks the students up on their pronunciation of the word 'grisiau'. She makes the class repeat it several times.
- Tutor explains the colloquial usage in which 'roedd' loses the 'r' to become 'oedd'. She explains that most people say, 'on i' not 'ron i'.
- Tutor gets students to repeat the sentence, 'Ew! On i isio paned,' in as Welsh a way as possible.

In the Llanllawen 2 I observed the following:

- Tutor gets students to keep repeating 'dach chi'n gw'bod be'?' quickly to encourage them to sound like a native.
- Tutor explains another sentence. Students repeat 'lliwio, lliwio'
- Tutor picks up the students on the pronunciation of 'wneath' and 'wneathon' and makes them say it correctly.
- Tutor picks up and corrects the students' pronunciation of 'g'neud'

## Word bingo

Though this is a simple game, the students seemed involved throughout and were concentrating on listening for the words they had in front of them. The idea is not just for the caller to read the sentences out in Welsh, but that they should be able to use the English text as a prompt and say the Welsh accurately without looking at it on the page. The game is played in exactly the same way with the beginners' class and the advanced classes. As I observed in the Lleisiau'r Llan class of advanced learners:

- The bingo game begins and the students listen as the tutor reads the story. Random sentences at first, then right through from the beginning.
- A student shouts 'tŷ!' and becomes the new reader after the tutor has told the class to pass the words around the circle. The student reads in Welsh, looking only at the English words. When a student has a word that has just been read out, they say the word aloud.
- Another round, another student reads. The others listen intently, saying any words that they have on their cards as they come up in the story.
- When someone shouts 'tŷ!' the student who was calling follows the ritual of asking the winner if they will read and they agree. Then the student who was calling asks everyone to pass the words around the table so many times. The tutor is just playing the game without helping or prompting the students in any way, though at the changeover of the callers, she offers encouragement.
- The tutor encourages the students to read from the English.
- A student wins for the second time. Student says they have already read. The tutor reminds the caller of the phrase to use when asking for a volunteer to read. The tutor reminds them that it's like a ceremony.
- Tutor tells the students to use the same phrases every time. The next student reads. The tutor gently corrects them when they stumble over a phrase.
- All the students have been participating well and concentrating on the reading.

From my observation of the Llanllawen 1 beginners' class:

- Tutor asks if students are ready. As far as possible the rituals of the class are done in Welsh.
- A student asks for the Welsh for 'English'. Tutor explains 'Saesneg'. The student says that she'll try to read the story by looking only at the English translation.
- The tutor explains that the idea is for them to be able to look at the English and say the story correctly and fluently in Welsh.
- A student comments that it's harder to remember the sentences out of order. Another student starts reading the story aloud.
- The student (reading from the English) is a little hesitant but the tutor praises and encourages.
- Laughter as the new reader says, 'Brysiwch bawb!' (Hurry up!) encouraging the others to hurry as they arrange their words for the next round.

The game seems to keep the students very focused on listening to the caller, so those who are not actually reading are still actively participating.

## **Miming**

Though this was the least popular activity according to the responses to the questionnaires, this was not apparent when observing in the class. To the outside observer, the mime activity seems to provide some light relief from the intense concentration on the reading and listening for words in the bingo. In each class where miming was observed, there was a good deal of laughter. The way the miming game is carried out, students have to learn one another's names, which will help class bonding, and there are opportunities for joking, for example near the end of one class where I wrote: 'Tutor goes around the table, asking each student to say their sentence and work out how to mime it. Laughter and confusion when a student says the sentence in the wrong language. Each student in turn works out a mime for their sentence. There is laughter at one male student's mime for "wraig" (woman). There is more laughter as other students try to work out a mime for their sentence. Laughter

again at a slight confusion over meaning. All the laughter is genuine and good-natured.'

In another class I wrote: 'Applause and laughter as the ball is successfully thrown right across the table to another student. Amusement over the mime for "Dach chi'n gw'bod be'?" A student works out another mime. The class repeats it. Laughter as the ball flies wildly across the room. A student makes a joke about miming "weekend". Laughter and confusion. Applause as a student catches an awkward throw.'

Even if it is not directly helping all students remember sentence patterns and vocabulary, the mime certainly seems to work as an icebreaker and bonding exercise which helps to lower the students inhibitions about speaking to one another in Welsh.

### **'Rapping' sentences**

The Llanllawen method places a great emphasis on pronouncing Welsh correctly and saying the words as much like a native speaker as possible. The tutor explains to students that native Welsh speakers often lack confidence in their own language skills due to not having been taught in Welsh at school when they were young. If they grew up at a time when the language was only seen as the language of the home and not the language of business or the academic sphere, they feel uncomfortable if learners speak a more formal bookish type of Welsh. For this reason, the tutor will pick up students' pronunciation and correct it throughout the lesson, but especially during the rapping. As I observed: 'Tutor tells class to try the pronunciation of "pethau gwirion". Tutor picks up and corrects the students' pronunciation of 'g'neud'. Tutor repeats "Dach chi'n gw'bod be'" several times with the class. Tutor picks up the students on the pronunciation of 'wneath' and 'wneathon' and makes them say it correctly.'

## Follow up questionnaires

The follow up questionnaires were placed online and were created using a Google documents form. The results are automatically transferred into a Google spreadsheet which can be downloaded and opened in Excel. Of the 21 people who expressed a willingness to take part in a follow up questionnaire, 14 responded, which is a response rate of 67%.

The responses showed that most students (87%) enjoy the weekly classes and look forward to going. The remainder (21%) didn't always feel like going, but mostly enjoyed the classes.

With regard to the aspects of the class that they most enjoyed, the tutor's enthusiasm and knowledge of the subject was highly rated, as was the support of other students in the group. Here are the responses, in descending order of popularity.

(Note: Students could select more than one option.)

<b>Which aspects of the class do you enjoy?</b>	<b>No. of students</b>
The tutor's enthusiasm and knowledge of the subject.	14
The other students in the class are friendly and supportive.	13
Being able to ask the tutor about aspects of the Welsh language.	13
Doing familiar activities each week helps me to feel confident in class.	13
The materials are well produced.	12
The course gives me everything I need to enable me to practice at home. (Book and CD)	11
Playing word bingo.	11
Doing the story jigsaws.	11
The social aspect of the course, for example the conversation during tea breaks.	11
The stories and characters in the Llanllawen course books. I find them interesting.	9
Reading the stories aloud with the tutor.	9
Miming sentences.	8
Other	3

This shows that doing familiar activities makes students feel confident and relaxed in class and this is certainly borne out by the observations that were carried out. The course materials are also rated highly and thought to be of a high quality.

The 'Other' aspects cited as enjoyable were:

'Clwb Llanllawen' (This is the spin-off society that holds monthly meetings with speakers, activities, walks and excursions for Welsh learners.)

'You know what to expect it is not threatening in any way, no surprises.'

The students responses to the question, 'Which aspects of the class do you dislike?' are shown below. (Note: Students could select more than one option.)

<b>Which aspects of the class do you dislike?</b>	<b>No. of students</b>
We do the same activities every week. It gets a rather boring.	2
I feel awkward and embarrassed doing the miming.	2
Reading the stories aloud with the tutor is too simple and boring.	2
The stories, characters and situations in the Llanllawen course books are not relevant to my situation.	1
I don't enjoy the word bingo.	1
I don't enjoy the story jigsaws.	1
The stories, characters and situations in the Llanllawen course books are not very interesting.	0
The books don't look serious enough. They look like something for children.	0
I don't get on with the other students.	0
I don't feel that I can ask questions in class about things like grammar.	0

Only a few students said they disliked any aspect of the course.

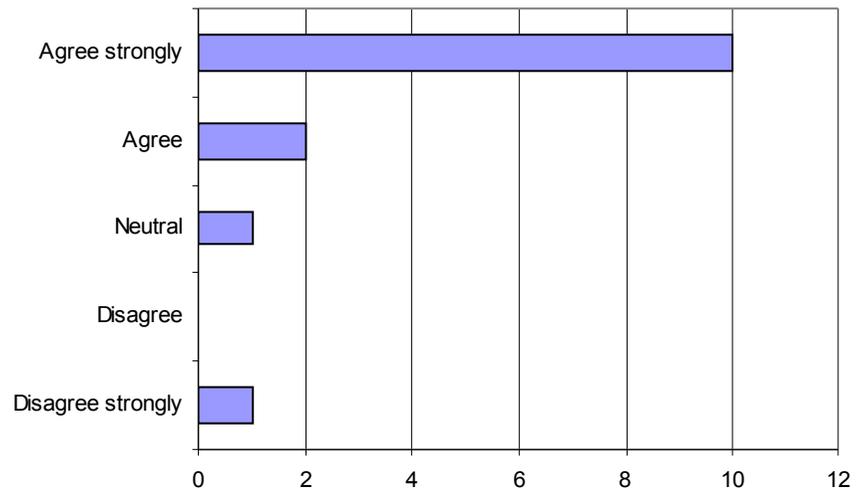
In addition to the reasons listed above, other reasons for not being happy with the course were:

'I feel the miming wastes too much time.'

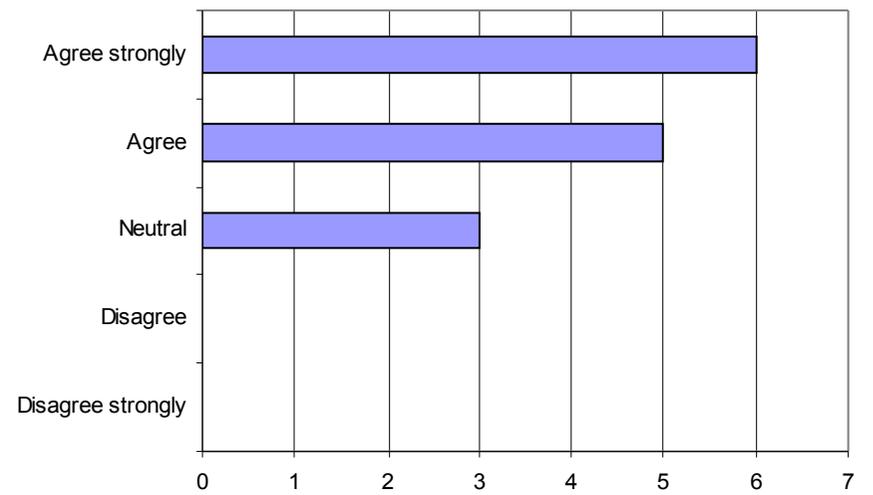
'CD's never worked.'

When asked about other activities in the Llanllawen classes, students were largely positive about reading aloud in class with the teacher. Similarly most students felt that the word bingo game helped to improve their listening skills and that the jigsaw helped them to remember the story. Students were more ambivalent about the miming activity, however. Opinion was divided and the majority either feeling that it did not help or that they were neutral on the issue.

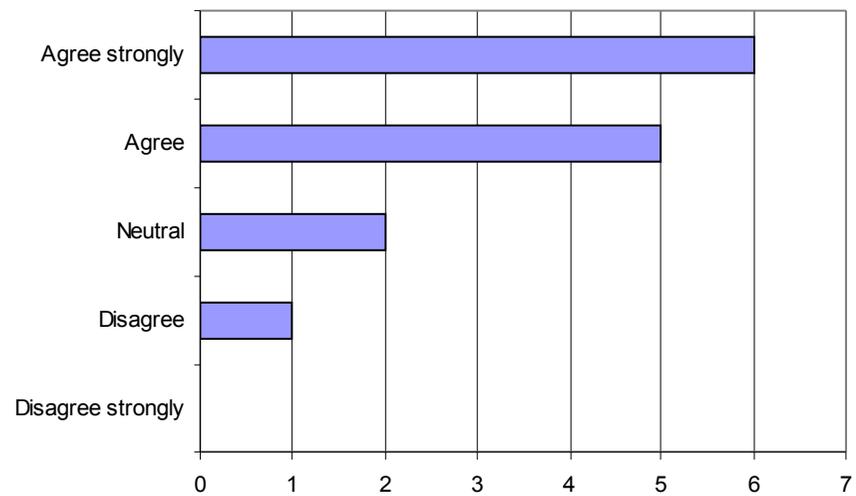
**Reading aloud helps to improve my pronunciation and accent**



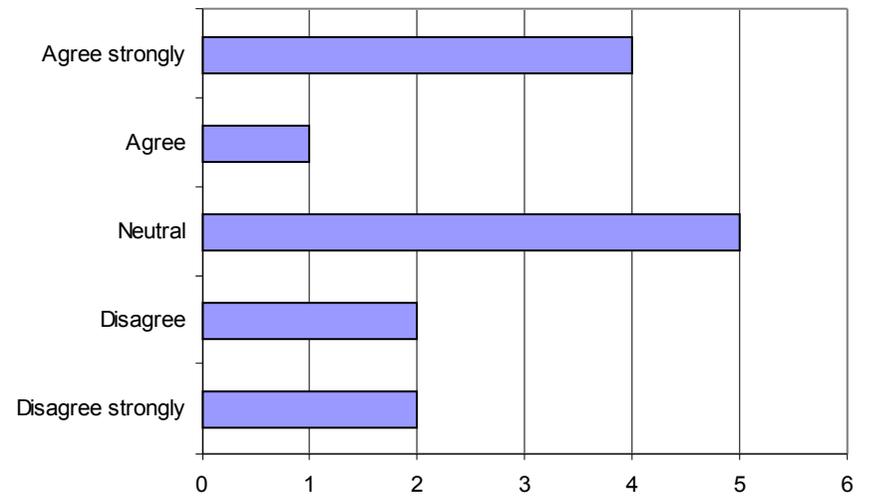
**Playing word bingo helps improve my listening skills**



**Doing the jigsaw helps me remember the story**



**The miming helps me to remember sentences**





When asked how well they knew the story at the end of the three-week period, most students were fairly confident, though only 7 said that they could say the whole story without looking at the Welsh (using the English as a prompt) and only 2 claimed to be able to recite the story without referring to anything.

I can say the entire story confidently with virtually no mistakes whilst looking at the English version	7
I can say the story fairly confidently with just a few mistakes and perhaps a swift glance at the Welsh.	6
I can recite the entire story confidently by heart without looking at anything.	2
I can say some sentences with confidence, but need to glance at the Welsh quite a lot.	0
I don't really know the story at all.	0

When asked whether they understood why they were learning stories by heart, less than half the students were aware of any research to support this method, though a quarter of the students felt that the method was working for them and so were happy to continue. One student had seen more advanced students speaking Welsh fluently, so felt that the method must be sound.

I am aware that this is a well-established learning method used successfully by many language learners.	8
I don't know anything about the theory behind the method, but my Welsh is improving so it works for me.	5
I don't understand the reasons behind it, but I trust the tutor to know what she's doing.	3
I'd rather learn grammar so I can construct sentences as needed.	2
I don't understand why we do it, but I've seen people from higher level Llanllawen classes speaking Welsh confidently, so it must work.	1

A student also commented, 'Learning colloquial (sic) language is good but limited in real contact,' by which she seems to mean the lack of opportunity to practice speaking with Native Welsh speakers.

When asked how they went about learning the story, a variety of methods were employed and most students reported using more than one, for example speaking aloud with the CD when no one else was present but listening while remaining silent if there were other people about. Only one student said that all they did with the CDs was to listen to them in silence without speaking the words aloud.

I listen to the CD, repeating the sentences after the speaker.	11
I read the whole story out loud many times.	10
I read the whole story silently many times.	6
I listen to the CD while remaining silent.	5
I listen to the CD while reading the story at the same time	4
Other	4

As well as the methods suggested in the questionnaire, some students also adopt other methods, some making use of technology. For example:

- I record myself reading the story then check my recording against the handout in both English and Welsh. I repeat until I can say the Welsh accurately whilst reading the English.
- I type the story in Welsh.
- I write it down repeatedly.

Some students (about a third) make flashcards out of the sentences in the stories to help them learn. They use them in various ways, including teaming up with a fellow student:

- With my fiancée (year 1)
- at home and whilst relaxing ie. like reading
- As a power point presentation.

Almost all of the students surveyed (12 people) used the CDs to help them learn. Only two said that they did not use them and one student said this was due being unable to play them, so presumably s/he would have made use of them if s/he had not had technical difficulties.

From the responses, it appears that the CD is a valued part of the course materials. Students used the CDs in a number of ways and in different locations. Some transfer the tracks to an MP3 player to give them more flexibility as to when they could listen.

- I use the CD when I am learning a new story and use the pause button to give me time to repeat the sentence again and again. I also use the CD in the car when I'm the passenger so that I can really concentrate on each sentence.
- I only listen to the CD occasionally, usually when I'm ironing!
- in the car, very occasionally
- often while driving
- all the time
- At home about twice per week.
- in car and on iPod
- In the car
- When I am driving the car
- In the car, around the house on an i pod when walking the dog, I repeat out loudly when there is no other walkers about
- I transfer to an MP3 player and listen whenever and wherever convenient.
- In the kitchen and when driving by myself

When asked about how they used what they had learned in class to help them to speak Welsh during the week, students reported that they could recall appropriate sentences to use in conversation and could also mix and match words and phrases, adapting a sentence to suit the occasion however nearly half the students (6 out of the 14 respondents) also felt that they got frustrated because they did not have the right words and phrases for what they wanted to say.

I can mix and match sentences, phrases and words from the Llanllawen stories and use them in conversation.	11
I find that appropriate sentences and phrases from the Llanllawen stories come into my mind and I can use them in conversation.	10
I get frustrated because I don't have the right words and phrases for what I want to say.	6
I don't speak Welsh outside the class.	3
Other	2

The 'Other' responses were:

- I write short stories in Welsh.
- limited conversation due to lack of wide knowledge of Welsh.

When asked which language they tried to think in when taking part in a Welsh conversation, only 1 person said that they just used sentences and phrases from the Llanllawen stories and just one person worked out what they wanted to say in English and then translated into Welsh. Most people used a mixture of making up their own sentences from scratch and using ready-made sentences from the stories.

I think what I want to say in English and then translate into Welsh.	1
I think of sentences and phrases from the stories that would be appropriate and use those in the conversation.	1
A mixture of the two options above.	8
I don't speak Welsh outside the class.	2
Other	1

The 'Other' responses was:

- I TRY to think in welsh

With regard to learning Welsh between classes, only one student claimed to do more than one hour per day of practise. Two students said they did 30-60 minutes daily and another four said they did 15 minutes every day.

Otherwise, the practice sessions were more sporadic. Student variously claimed to do:

- Time in class plus 2 hours a week.
- Test my fiancée who is doing year 1.
- Bouts of Welsh learning. Varies with no set times.
- The time in class plus 15 minutes twice a week.
- Time in class and then a number of times a week but not every day.

According to the literature, in order to make good progress, student would need to be doing 30 minutes per day or more and only 3 students were doing that much work.

However, when asked to comment on whether they thought they were doing enough work between classes, twice that number (6 students) felt that they were doing enough practice to enable them to make good progress.

Enough to enable me to make good progress.	6
Just about enough to enable me to keep up in class.	4
Not really enough and I sometimes feel I am getting left behind.	4

With regard to the question of whether the Learner of the Year award was motivating, the majority of the students (10 out of 14) were aware of the award. Some students were impressed by the winner's achievements and not only felt inspired by their example but were sure that they could emulate them. However, there was also a feeling that there must have been special circumstances to enable the award winners to do so well and two people even thought that they must have a special gift for languages. Three students actually felt disheartened that the award winners had become fluent so quickly and four people said that they had too many other commitments to allow them to work as hard as the Learner of the Year had done.

I am impressed by their achievements and feel inspired by their example.	2
I think that I could emulate them.	2
I think that they must have a special gift for languages in order to learn so quickly.	2
I think that there were special circumstances that enabled them to do so well.	5
I feel disheartened by how quickly they have learned the language when I have been learning for years.	3
I plan to study for long periods each day like they did and make big changes to my life such as only speaking Welsh with family at home.	0
I intend to work as hard as they did in order to succeed.	1
I have too many other commitments that prevent me from working as hard as they did.	4
Other	1

The 'Other' comment was:

- Most learner of the yearers (sic) are married to welsh speakers so false impression.

I take this to mean that they believe that being married to a Welsh speaker gives the award winners an advantage denied to most students.

## Interviews with students

Two students were interviewed about their experiences of learning Welsh.

Student UA has been learning Welsh since she moved to Wales in 2001. She lives in a very rural area just outside a small village near Bala which is mainly Welsh speaking. She is married to a native Welsh speaker, though she does not speak Welsh with her husband. She has young children who attend a Welsh medium primary school. She is well educated with a degree and professional qualifications, but she is not working at the moment.

Student EB is older and her children are now grown up and married. She is also married to a native Welsh speaker. Though she has always lived in Wales, she was born and brought up in Wrexham and only learnt a bit of Welsh at school where it was taught as though it were a 'foreign' language. EB now lives near Ruthin in a much more Welsh-speaking area. She works part-time.

The issues discussed were:

- When and why they decided to learn Welsh.
- How long they have been learning and what classes they have attended.
- What activities they did in class and whether they enjoyed them.
- What materials were provided as part of the course and whether they have used other teaching materials.
- Whether they practiced Welsh between classes with family and friends.
- How and where they practice speaking Welsh.
- Whether they enjoyed the classes they attended.
- Whether family, friends and neighbours have supported their efforts to learn Welsh.
- Whether they have been inspired in their efforts to learn Welsh by any role models.
- Whether they have ever attended the National Eisteddfod.
- Watching Welsh TV and listening to Welsh radio.
- Reading books in Welsh.
- Whether qualifications are important to them.

## Transcript of the interview with UA (Questionnaire no 007)

Date: 14 October 10

Time: 2.00-3.00 pm

Location: Interviewer's home

Interviewer: Margaret Hall (MH)

MH: Right, OK. What I'm going to do is, um, sort of try and do... make like a story out of it so I'm going to start right back at the beginning. So when did you first decide to learn Welsh ...um, and why?

UA: Well I moved... I moved to Wales in 2001... July 2001. ...and, well I find it the usual really, moving here really from London, without a job, and therefore I had the time to learn Welsh. Why did I want to learn Welsh? Well it's because really I came to Wales every year as a child on holiday and the only Welsh I knew was "araf" from the roads. And "llwybr cyhoeddus" from the public footpath signs and I would look at this sign every holiday and think, "*What is that?*" So the language was completely strange to me. And because I'd lived abroad, I'd lived in Zimbabwe for two years where the local language was Shona. I hadn't bothered to learn much of the language apart from the greetings and I felt some of my other VSO volunteers had and I did feel that if I ever lived again in a place I would try and learn the language. And therefore I did have the opportunity because I had all this time. So there wasn't really any question of it, it was something I had to do.

MH: When you decided to learn Welsh, did you look for a class or did you immediately look for a class or did you try and learn on your own first?

UA: Oh, no I... Well actually that's interesting. because I was working, the first time I came here was working and it was in the summer holiday and I must have had an interest in learning Welsh because I bought a book called Link Word and I... I did try and study that alone and it... it helped you to learn the vocabulary by making the connection between the pronunciation of the word. For instance "cadno", I always remember now, means "fox", though that is a South Walian fox, though I didn't know that at the time. But the reason that I know it's "cadno" is because of the sentence, "the cad knows where to find the fox".

MH: Right...

UA: And there was just hundred of these sayings. But when I tested it out on one of the, erm, visitors to the Youth Hostel at Kings where I was working I was a little bit disheartened because he didn't understand what I was trying to say to him. I was trying to say, "Oh, yes I am learning Welsh and I know the word for 'cow', which is 'buwch' But I obviously didn't say it correctly at the time so he didn't know what I was saying. So then I realised that the book alone wasn't going to be good enough and I needed probably instruction. But what I can't remember is how I found out about courses when I first moved here. I think it must have just been quite obvious that the college would do Welsh language

classes. Or I might have had something in the post. But something... I would have seen something which would have triggered me to respond immediately because I started learning. That's when I started going to Welsh classes straight away. Yeah...

MH: And so what type of class was that? A beginners' class obviously, but was it once a week, twice a week, more intensive, less intensive?

UA: Yeah... No, I think I'm remembering now what happened in the first instance because, um, when I was, um, when I was going through the house buying process I found out about this course at Coleg Harlech which was a week long in the summer holidays, Welsh language and culture with Gwyn Weldon Evans. And when I moved to Wales I did that week's course, so it would have been through Gwyn that he encourage me to carry on at Coleg Harlech. So by the September, I had enrolled on the Wlpan course and it was a very intensive Wlpan because we used to go there about three days a week

MH: Oh, right.

UA: Three mornings a week. Erm... and then... and by about January I also found out about this course for teachers which was being run at Coleg Menai in, erm... in Bangor and I used to go there for one whole day, from something like ten till three or something. That was a Welsh Language for Teachers. So in that first year, I did the.. finished the Wlpan, started Pellach and had also done perhaps six months of this Welsh Language for Teachers which I have to say I did not get on very well with at all. And I can't believe that I actually drove all the way from Dyffryn to Bangor once a week for this course which to me was just double Dutch.

MH: Oh, right. Right, yeah. So you did have quite an intensive start then.

UA: Yeah.

MH: Um... So, um... So that was a traditional Wlpan course really. So what sort of things were you actually doing in the class. Can you remember back that far?

UA: Well I can. I have to say that it was very disappointing. It was very... It was very didactic. It was just book-based and it was very dull.

MH: Right.

UA: And... erm... we, we, we did a certain amount of messing around in the class.

MH: Yes, so were you doing the sort of asking distracting questions to keep the tutor talking about...

UA: The tutor did a lot of talking.

MH: Right.

UA: We at times, we were told, "Right now, rwan ta, talk to your partner," and therefore we would just talk about what we'd seen on television last night in English.

MH: Right, right, so...

UA: So for me the language class was not successful so we sort of stormed through the book and, erm, it didn't work for me because, erm, I was still not able to use any of the Welsh that I was learning in any kind of real sense on the street. I wasn't using my ears, I wasn't listening with my ears, I was learning just to read dialogue off a page. Erm... There'd be one thing, one thing that there were strengths in that class was perhaps I'm looking at cultural history, historical stories. Things like the Mabinogi and stories about Branwen and looking at poetry which I did enjoy so it was more, some of it was literary Welsh. So we moved into that, perhaps by the second year we moved into literary Welsh.

MH: Right.

UA: That was interesting, but that wasn't helping me either talking on the street. So none of my, none of my early Welsh. And then my Welsh was curtailed by the fact that by the March of the following year, 2002, I was, became pregnant for the first time. I was quite an old mum really at thirty-nine. So, erm... my Welsh learning then just continued until the Christmas of that year and I didn't, I didn't go back for another year, but... but I'm grateful for that initial year but I'm grateful for that initial year because it was intensive and I felt that I... I'm not particularly strong, not very good at languages and I felt I needed that and I know other mothers, young... parents of young children have thought, oooh, I'll learn when the children go to school, but I knew that as soon as my children went to school they were going to be learning so much quicker than me.

MH: Yeah.

UA: So I knew that I would need a really good head start to even be able to keep anywhere near them. So I was very grateful for that first year even though I did feel that it really wasn't, um, spot on in terms of learning styles and helping me to get a grip on the language.

MH: So what sort of materials did you use as part of the course?

UA: Just the Wlpan book.

MH: Just the Wlpan book. And did you find it attractive, easy to read?

UA: Yes, well, it was fine in itself. But I... it was... it just wasn't enough. Um, I was grateful for the sort of early, the early... that year, in just trying to get a grip on the basic grammar. I'm a person that needed to learn the Why's...

MH: Mmmm...

UA: I was always asking, "Why?" Whereas some people can just accept, like children do, absorb the language but I always needed to know why. So I... The tutor was quite traditional in that sense and I am grateful in that way. I'm sort of knocking it, but in a way I'm quite grateful that I had that grounding because perhaps later I would be able to try and be more accepting. But we... in terms of the materials I feel there's a lot more scope to use other materials in the class and just do other things. I mean, we just used the book. It was just like, "Turn the page, well this page now..." and just reading the text to Welsh is not powerful enough on its own. One has to then learn the line, perhaps and learn to deliver it so that one absorbs it. Erm, and I kind of have felt that it is a way to actually learn vocabulary that if one can learn a sentence, short sentence or a saying, an expression, with that word in it, learn it in the context, one is much more likely to learn that word than if you've just got a list of vocab.

MH: Yes.

UA: And it's not in a context. I don't learn vocab like that. I learn it by using it in a context. So I just felt that there was... The book in itself was OK but it just... it became boring.

MH: So that like the little dialogues weren't sort of interesting and they didn't grip you...

UA: Well, I think they could have done and the writers made a big effort to try and make the dialogues interesting but it's the way that it was... that is was presented to us. If we... For me personally, I would like -- and I was always trying to do it with my partner, but nobody really... So perhaps it's just me? But I would have liked to learn the dialogue. I would like then to have performed the dialogue.

MH: That's very interesting because I'm going to come on to that later.

UA: Right.

MH: Yes, erm...

UA: But reading the dialogue alone did absolutely zilch. Just bored me actually.

MH: Right.

UA: Made me a bit angry.

MH: Ah, yes... So did you manage to practise in between classes? Was this now a weekly class or were you still on the quite intensive?

UA: I'm still stuck in the first year. I'm still in that first year then, so I had, erm, towards the end of that year, that academic year, I was pregnant, but I was still in that first year.

MH: So did you practice between lessons?

UA: I'd probably say no.

MH: Right.

UA: Oh, you mean homework, like homework.

MH: Oh, yes.

UA: Yes, sorry, I thought you meant did I actually practise it on the street.

MH: No, no. Just...

UA: Oh, yeah, I did because I realised that this was a huge investment of my time. I also realised that here I was in Wales, I didn't have a job, I didn't really know what I was gonna to be doing and I knew that I wasn't going to be able to teach without this language. I did want the language. I wanted to be able to communicate and I had met other incomers who, yeah, had done really well and they were a real inspiration. So yes, I would have done quite a lot of study at home for this. Yeah...

MH: So you mentioned homework. Erm, did the tutor give you specific homework?

UA: Yeah, yeah... Probably out of the Wlpan.

MH: What sort of thing were you given? Sort of things to translate, or...?

UA: Well, it might have...

MH: Or stuff to practise?

UA: Yeah. I think they were just out of the Wlpan really.

MH: Just the exercises.

UA: Sometimes you got, you've got to write a piece... You got a choice of three, you might have to write a letter or something. So that's free writing. Or there might be an exercise. I think they have an extension book and there might be sort of matching... matching vocab or it might be a cloze exercise, fill in the blanks, it might be practising "yes" or "no" or it might be practising tenses of verbs, erm... So yeah, so I'd say that in that first year I did homework and I would say it was mostly based on Wlpan.

MH: Yeah.

UA: Whether it actually... If you asked me, "Did it actually teach you anything?" I would say no.

MH: Right.

UA: 'Cos it was just very paper based exercise.

MH: I mean, did you actually enjoy... How did you feel about the class? Did you kind of look forward to going to the classes or...?

UA: Well, I did. You know, I was new in Wales, I was meeting people, having a bit of a laugh at the same time. We all got on. Erm... it was... it provided me with some kind of structure to my day because I wasn't working.

MH: Right.

UA: So I very much appreciated the language class actually.

MH: And at the time, you had time to put quite a lot of effort into it.

UA: Yeah. And I actually met my husband through it because the girl that I was friendly with on the course knew him.

MH: Oh, right.

UA: So I met him through her.

MH: Right. Erm... OK, so moving on now to the first year or so, um, did you manage to progress? Was there a progression? Erm... Basically have you been continuously learning and attending classes or have you, sort of had gaps where you had to put it on hold for a bit? Could you... Could you just give me a sort of idea of bringing you from there to now.

UA: Hmm...

MH: Really, what happened in between those years?

UA: Erm... I'm gonna just try and, just out of interest try and go through it in a nutshell. As I said to you, by the March 2002 I was pregnant so I finished that year, that intensive year and we moved house and we moved to Bala. So that was the end of my... I did a whole first year and then in the second academic year, going from 2002 to 2003, I was now at the level of Pellach because we had already started -- with my intensive year we'd done Wlpan and we'd already done half of Pellach. Erm, I think then in September 2002, I think that I started Pellach again...

MH: Right.

UA: ...from the beginning in Bala with Ceri. Pellach -- and I think it was because I'm basically saying, I'm at Pellach but gosh I've only been learning Welsh for a year and I really hadn't got a clue. So I think... then by the Christmas of that year -- so after one term -- I had my son, so I didn't go back to class, erm, until

Joe was, erm, much older. So I think, perhaps, so erm... (pause) Well, I'm just going to guess now because I can't work it out.

MH: Yes. No, just a rough estimate...

UA: I think I left... I think I missed about a couple of years there of formal Welsh. Well, my husband was working at home, so I was able to get out, erm, to get out to escape (laughs). So I think probably actually by 2006, I was back in class again and I... I probably went then into Uwch. And I started... I did Uwch over a period of three years, because I started one year. Finished. Started and didn't go any more, maybe did a term. Started it for another academic year and then we had to, and then we basically repeated it because, erm, because the class was joining with another class and... So I feel as if I've been on Uwch for years. And I would say, I was going Uwch for three years.

MH: Yeah.

UA: So 2006 to, erm, 2010 to just this July now...

MH: It's been Uwch.

UA: Yeah. I've been mostly with the same teacher in Bala similar kind of, similar group, similar people, plodding through, in much the same way as we plodded through Wlpan. Slightly more interesting.

MH: So again, a bit of a grammatical bias and working on sort of translating sentences, that sort of thing. Yeah?

UA: Yeah. But the teacher is not, er, doesn't have the sort of educational background as the first tutor so it's less... it's more conversational than grammar.

MH: Right.

UA: And explaining things. It's more, it's more her sort of thinking on the hoof. Oh, why do we do that? She's not got the sort of grammatical background. It's supposed to be more conversational. But we, but we do have an interesting, erm, element to the course. It started about a year ago, erm, where, erm, on one of the days she brings somebody in from the community and they come and talk to us and we split up into about two or three groups. Usually two or three of them come, or maybe two of them. No, two or three of them come, then you're perhaps with one other learner or three of you at the most, in a group with that person from the community, just chance to chat.

MH: Yes.

UA: Well, that's quite powerful really, because, well, you're meeting local people, and these are usually, sort of, you know, community leaders or people who are very involved in the community actually who are wanting to come and do this with us really. And they're meeting you, you know, is important as well, so

they get a chance to talk to a learner. Oh, you're doing very well and encourage you and, erm, just, just, you know, confirming, just appreciating what... that you're making the effort.

MH: Oh, right. Yes.

UA: Because on the street, you wouldn't, you wouldn't necessarily be talking to them in Welsh, you'd be talking in English.

MH: Yeah.

UA: You wouldn't know. So that's been quite powerful, but apart from that we look at local papers, so we might look at the Cyfnod, maybe look at Golwg...

MH: Yeah.

UA: But you know, and play a few games, er, language games, but mostly it's just plodding through the course.

MH: Have you tried any other ways, er, like intensive weeklong courses? Not, because you say not.

UA: Only the Siarad weekend.

MH: Oh, have you been to the, sort of Sadwrn Siarads?

UA: Yeah. I used to go. I'm mean, I've been on about two or three of those weeklong courses in Dolgellau.

MH: Oh, yes, 'cos they do those, don't they?

UA: Yes, the summer...

MH: Yes.

UA: The summer course and there's an Easter course. Erm, I've been on about two or three of those over the years. Erm... vaguely helpful, you know, but you're with a whole group of people who you don't know and you might not be quite the right level with the tutor. I found them fairly interesting. Yeah, I mean fairly interesting and then some Siarad Sadwrn's I've been on, but I haven't been away to like Nant Gwtheyrn or...

MH: No... I was going to ask about... So you haven't been to Nant Gwtheyrn?

UA: No. Only to visit, not on a course.

MH: Yes. Not on a course. Have you ever... have you tried, erm, actually buying extra materials any commercial packages or do you try and supplement the class by your own self-study, either with buying a commercial package or book or putting materials together yourself?

UA: I... I'm interested in other commercial materials. A friend of mine is using some, Cadw Swn, she's talked about and, erm, I think one called Rosetta Stone, but I haven't... They're quite costly so I haven't felt that I could justify that although one of them, I think the Cadw Swn sounded really interesting because, she -- this woman I know -- spends hours on the train every day commuting and the tapes are interspersed with music, classical music, and she said that she'd heard that it can really help learning a language to play music at the same time. Anyway, she hasn't... I haven't actually experienced it, erm. I mean from time to time I'll think I must, erm, use the Internet more so occasionally I'll go on the BBC web site or there are others, but I'm not doing it in a systematic way. I'm trying to be systematic, erm, and in the mornings now when Bethan wakes up and wants to watch telly and so part of -- I just feel that if things aren't in your routine, it's all very ad hoc and sporadic and it doesn't work and so part of my routine at the moment is to watch Cyw in the mornings with Bethan, which is the S4C. And to be honest, that's about my level of Welsh now. I used to watch it years ago and I used to be like, oh, I don't understand it, and at least now I enjoy watching it because I'm actually, and it's nice to think, oh, you must have come on because you understand that now. So, I'm trying to do that as my daily routine. Er, I used to read at night time, I used to read novels like the Bethan Gwanas novels for dysgwyr, I used to read those but I don't tend to read Welsh novels now at night. I used to read to B---, but we stopped doing that. Erm... (long pause)

MH: Yes. No, I'm going to come back to reading.

UA: I buy the Cyfnod... Are we not doing reading now?

MH: I'll be... I will be coming back to that. Erm, so that's fine. But no you haven't been. Well, to be honest, there's not that much for Welsh. If you're learning something like French or German there's quite a lot of commercial packages that you can buy

UA: Hmm... Yeah, there's not a lot.

MH: But with Welsh there isn't, especially not once you get beyond the very beginner.

UA: No.

MH: There's quite a lot of stuff that gets you started but once you get up to our level, no, I must admit there's not much around then. Um... OK, oh, yes, now apart... obviously your tutor was helping you on the course, but has anyone else, any particular person helped you, er, in your attempts to speak Welsh? Family, friends or neighbours? And if so, how?

UA: Well, I mean, I was... I mean, my first answer is, not really. My neighbour, farmer's wife, she tries to talk to me in Welsh. Erm... I've got various, sort of, friends who are, sort of, mothers of children who I know from the village. And

particularly on the telephone I've noticed they'll try, they'll talk to me in Welsh.

MH: Right.

UA: More easy, for some reason, than face-to-face. But I do find that if I get involved in a conversation, we would just end up slipping into English.

MH: Yeah.

UA: Er... I do keep trying not to, but I can't, I just get fed up with just... I get to the point where I'm just, wanna talk naturally, and talking Welsh isn't natural. So I can't think of anybody in particular that jumps out. No.

MH: Erm... I think you said earlier that you knew some incomers who had become fluent so did... were there people who kind of inspired you, somebody you knew personally because they had become fluent and you thought, oh, I want to be able to do that.

UA: The people who I know, a couple of women who I know who have learnt Welsh have done so because of their job and they tend to be people in the health sector, er, who have had to learn Welsh. There's a lady in Bala from Lesoto and she speaks fluent Welsh and she works for the council. I think if you are, you do manage to get a job for the council, you... you're just gonna learn Welsh because you're so surrounded by it you're having to read it, you're having to write in it and I know that if I had done that, I would be much better than I am now.

MH: Yeah.

UA: Yeah. So the people who have done it are them, but I feel that they've had an advantage over me, you see.

MH: Yeah.

UA: I feel that just sitting at home with a book is not the way to learn Welsh, I mean now I've just offered my services at the school as a volunteer. You know, I need it to be part of my routine, I need to be out using it and, er, or even like when the school sends stuff home, I've offered to do translating for them, because if I'm forced to do something, like translation of a poster or a newsletter, you know, I get a lot out of that. But I'm not just, I don't... I'm not gonna just do it for the sake of it.

MH: No, no. Erm... Obviously you're aware of things like the Learner of the Year Award. Yes, you're aware of that? Erm, if you see one of these articles about the Learner of the Year, you know, do you find their example inspiring, do you feel that you can emulate them?

UA: No.

MH: No.

UA: No, and the girl I know locally who's a fluent Welsh speaker was put forward for that and I'm really not very impressed with the whole process.

MH: Right.

UA: You know, I thought it was a bit of a fix. I thought they didn't interview people properly and they just wanted a sexy story, a sexy sort of something that they could kind of market. And she just didn't feel that she fitted into that bracket. And then she was told that she wasn't a learner, which is ridiculous because she'd learnt. Because they felt that she was so fluent, that she actually didn't come under the bracket of a learner any more. But she did learn it and she's only been doing it for sort of, perhaps, 7 or 8 years, but she was fluent by 4 or 5 years. But she was out of that bracket, so no, I'm not impressed with that really. Erm, I have enjoyed watching their stories when I've seen them on the television, you know, heard them being interviewed, perhaps I'm *vaguely* interested, but I think it's a bit, erm, propaganda really.

MH: I mean, do you think there's something perhaps a bit, usually a bit special about them or their circumstances that's enabled them to achieve?

UA: Yeah. Well, circumstances, yes. But they're special also, that they're people who, for whom learning a language is, you know, quite a straightforward process. And, erm, I mean the two people I'm thinking of, I think they were the winner last year and the runner up, they... I mean, fair play, it's to their effort, but they did submerge themselves into the language, erm, and they did it, but they must have had special sort of ability, I think, to learn languages to be able to cope with that. I mean, I would like to see a much more realistic Welsh Learner of the Year, much more realistic, you know, somebody perhaps more normal. Even if it has taken them 10 years or 20 years, you know, the plodders. You know, why do they always have to have these people who have learned it in 2 or 3 years? And I don't relate to it.

MH: So in a way you almost find it off putting.

UA: I almost resent it.

MH: OK, moving on. Have you ever been to the National Eisteddfod?

UA: Yeah.

MH: Oh, you have. Erm, did you enjoy it? Was it useful? Did you, did you think it was worth going?

UA: Well, yes. I like those kind of events. Yes.

MH: So was that when it was... Which one did you go to?

UA: Er, Bala.

MH: Yes. Have you been to more than one?

UA: Er, yes, when it was last in North Wales. I think it was near Mold. Yes, I went to that one. I've never travelled great distances, I've not, not down to South Wales. I... When I had young children I found it difficult to tap into the learners' tent. I wasn't there for long enough and I had to entertain the children so, erm, last year I enjoyed it more. The children were a bit older and there's always lots of things for the children to do at it. I enjoyed the one in Bala because I was involved in the learners' tent on a rota for coffee in the café and also had learned a poem. So, you know, I do find that if you're involved in something it's much more enjoyable.

MH: Yes, rather than just going along and just as a visitor.

UA: But even that was a bit of a fix. The winner... The winner, the person who went through from the learners' tent, because our preliminary was in the learners' tent, he... to me he... I wish they'd clarify, you know, what is a learner because he had, he'd lived in Wales all his life, been to a primary school where there was Welsh learnt, but hadn't learnt it properly and re-learnt it again and one of the... it was obvious when he stood on stage. He was in a completely different bracket to the rest of us. So I think that they need to take into account people's background really when they make, be a bit more precise as to what is a learner.

MH: Erm, OK. Are you attending a class at the moment?

UA: Well, I haven't started, because of this basic skills course. But I'd really... Last year I said this and this year I'm saying it again and I'm running out of time again. I really wanted to get my A-level done this year.

MH: Right.

UA: But I wasn't really confident that it was going to happen with the last year and I don't think it's going to happen again. So I was thinking about doing the, er, correspondence course with Bangor University.

MH: Oh, right.

UA: The Meistroli with them. And I think what I've decided now is to come back to class, because I like the routine, you know. I need the routine in my life because at the moment I'm not working and I've finished my course. I might do the Meistroli with Bangor University and do it with her [ie with the local class she has attended before]. Well, it's only another sixty quid. Do it twice! And just see which one works for me.

MH: Do you enjoy that class?

UA: I don't feel that it's tapping into my learning style.

MH: So you don't feel, sort of, 'Oh, goody! It's Welsh tomorrow!'

UA: No.

MH: You said you don't feel that it's tapping into your learning style, so what type of activities do you find particularly useful for learning Welsh?

UA: Erm...

MH: What seems to work for you?

UA: Well, I'd like to write more, for myself, to be given time to write things. So be given topics to write stuff about. You can do it in different ways. You can do it on your own or you can do it with a partner and swap. You can mark each other's work. Then you'd be looking up words that you wanted to look up.

MH: So you do spend quite a lot of time on the writing, rather than the speaking?

UA: No. You were asking me what I, personally, would like to do.

MH: Yes. Sorry. So you do speak quite a lot at the moment in the class?

UA: Yeah, it doesn't work for me, you know. This kind of, all sit down, you know, 'Sut mae'r penwythnos?' and 'Sut mae'r wyliau?' Well, are you asking me how my holidays were or are you trying to get me to speak Welsh? Oh, yes, she's trying to get me to speak Welsh. Right. OK. And I find that conversation, thinking on the spot very difficult. I mean, I would rather, OK, ask the question and just give me time to make some notes and formulate some response because if I end up just saying how I say it, I know that perhaps that verb wasn't quite right, or it wasn't... I'd rather have time to write it down first and then say it. And then I want... I want feedback straight away on that, on that sentence. Is that how you say it? Oh, we don't have that. So it's just, everything's a bit of a free for all.

MH: Right. So even when you're speaking you're not confident that you're saying it right.

UA: No. And then you've got to say it quickly, because if you don't speak, then somebody else is going to chip in, so it's not very systematic. And when we do reading, say we're reading a book, you'll have, 'Right, can you read now?' So you'll go round and you'll read, in Welsh and then you're starting to translate it, but for some bizarre reason in our class, everyone has decided that this translation is a bit of a free for all, so somebody might read it and then translate it, and then the next time somebody might read it and somebody else decides to chip in. So you don't feel as if you're getting time to have your turn. It's very frustrating. You feel reduced to a childlike state. You know, I feel I've gone back to this sort of adult/child relationship in the class and sometimes I misbehave as a rebellion. You know, there's a man in that class who is a bit silly, he's always talking about King Pixie and taking on, sort of different characters, and sometimes we all end up being completely silly and I think there's something wrong there.

MH: But you're being silly in English, are you? Or Welsh?

UA: Probably English.

MH: Do you converse in Welsh? I mean, do you have a tea break? Do you talk to each other in Welsh during the tea break?

UA: Er... Most people there are pretty sensible and they're there for a reason and I think it just depends on how we feel. You know, if somebody starts talking to you in Welsh then you'll think, 'Oh, yeah, they want to try and talk, and you will try and talk Welsh, but I have to say on the whole it's usually in English teabreak. 'Cos people are tired, you know.

MH: Yeah. Need a break. And so the Meistroli materials, are the similar to what you've had so far?

UA: From what I've seen, yeah.

MH: And you supplement these materials. You said you read novels, you read the Golwg, you read novels...

UA: Yeah. I find that if I'm looking at a magazine by my bed or something and I can annotate it, I like to go back to that then, you know, and then you can read it more fluently. And I've got these Welsh books that I read to the children, and I find now I've got this whole series of Sam Tan which I used to find quite difficult and I find them much easier now. But I read them to the kids and I'll take that away upstairs and I'll go through with the dictionary and I'll just check some words. But I know I'm going to read that book again, so that's kind of repetition with literature that I appreciate. The Cyfnod, the Bala newspaper, I don't read it as much as I should I buy it but I just get frustrated. There are very long words in it and it's very passive. Very formal tenses in there so I tend to just read one article that looks fairly interesting but, no, I'd rather just stick to the novels and the children's story books that I know that I'm going to be revisiting over and over again and I learn that way 'cos I see that word or that expression and I'll remember that from that book.

MH: Do you do any other activities in class? Does the teacher work on your pronunciation?

UA: No, I would say not. I would say not a great deal. She's not very proactive in that department. It's all rather sort of relaxed.

MH: So she's not working to improve your accent?

UA: No.

MH: And you read a passage and translate into English? Do you do it the other way round?

UA: No. We don't seem to do it the other way round.

MH: And do you do pair work, discussing things in pairs?

UA: Hmm.

MH: Do you do any role-play?

UA: Very little. I do like role-play in Welsh. I don't particularly like it in English.

MH: Have you ever tried memorising phrases or sentences or even short passages of text?

UA: Yes.

MH: And you find that helpful?

UA: Yeah.

MH: Have you ever heard of Spaced Repetition? Or the Leitner card system?

UA: No.

MH: You haven't come across any of the Spaced Repetition software such as Anki or SuperMemo or Memosyne?

UA: No.

MH: Do you use audiovisual material to help you learn? Tapes or CDs or DVDs, watching film or watching TV programmes?

UA: Yeah. I watch TV. I like to watch Welsh TV.

MH: But you don't use any CDs? Do you get any CDs with the course?

UA: Yeah. We get a CD. The Uwch tape was awful. Everyone complained about it, it was so fast. I mean, I was still listening to Pellach tapes.

MH: So part of the materials was a CD with... What are they? Conversations to follow or stories to listen to?

UA: Well, they're just extracts. They could be anything, you know, they could be a letter, or just a report or a story. They could be anything and in the book then there would be questions, you know like a comprehension. There would be questions after it.

MH: So did you listen to those as part of your practice? Do you listen to it repeatedly?

UA: Yes.

MH: Do you repeat the words after the CD?

UA: No. No.

MH: So you're just listening?

UA: Just listening, yeah. I have got a very basic Welsh tape but I'm beyond that now anyway.

MH: And you've not heard of the term Shadowing?

UA: No.

MH: Do you find the audio materials helpful?

UA: Yeah.

MH: Do you listen to them at home or do you listen to them while driving?

UA: In the car.

MH: Do you listen to Radio Cymru?

UA: Yes.

MH: Where do you listen to radio?

UA: At home or in the car.

MH: When you listen, do you listen intently or have it on while you're doing other things?

UA: No. It's just background. I am listening, but I'm not listening, if you know what I mean. And I like listening to music. You know, I think the music's lovely and then, well, if I understand something, well that's great.

MH: Have you ever tried recording TV or radio and then watching it or listening to it over and over again?

UA: No, I haven't. I don't think I have that facility to record the radio. I don't have a tape machine.

MH: I've started doing it via the computer with the Listen Again.

UA: Right. OK. What and then put it on the MP3 player? What BBC Radio Cymru?

MH: Yes. Radio Cymru is on the iPlayer. There are a few podcasts. Have you come across any of the podcasts?

UA: What, in Welsh?

MH: Yes. There are some, in case you're interested. Pigion is quite good, it's a kind of pick of the week. Some of them are a bit fast, but...

UA: Oh, right.

MH: Because it's on your MP3 player or computer, you can listen again and again.

UA: So, it's extracts from the week, is it?

MH: Yes. A bit like Pick of the Week on Radio 4. I think it runs for about half an hour, something like that. So that's worth downloading.

UA: I definitely need that repetition. It works.

MH: You mentioned that you read novels. When you're reading, have you ever tried pulling out useful sentences that look useful or interesting to learn them?

UA: Yeah, yeah. That's what I was saying before. I do think that's a good idea. Unfortunately I've got about ten different notebooks all over the place.

MH: Right. So organising things is a problem.

UA: So organising, I find very difficult. In fact I should be doing it on the computer really. You know, I should have a folder. I write them on a scrap of paper, but I should get them onto the computer and access them there. But then I'm conscious of, like, the Welsh North/South issue and whether something is vaguely useful or said. You know, and I'm still not very good at my verbs and that's an important part of the sentence, getting the verb right at the beginning of the sentence. So, you know, what I try and do is just, like, kind of get into the habit of saying, 'What have you done?' and just get into the habit of saying that verb that week, using that expression as much as you can during the week.

MH: So do you manage to speak Welsh to people during the week? Obviously you speak in classes, but do you speak between classes?

UA: Yes, if I'm feeling confident. I mean, when I was going to Welsh class and I was feeling confident then I would try and use it in the street. Definitely, yeah.

MH: So that would be if you met somebody you knew?

UA: Yes. Just small talk. There are some people who I'm quite comfortable to speak Welsh to. They tend to be, like there's a woman in Llanuwchllyn who I know who helps me and she doesn't like talking to me in English. But I find, I find it a bit offensive, frankly, so I purposely don't speak Welsh to her because she's almost forcing me to speak Welsh and I just feel uncomfortable doing that. I don't like being forced to do it, if I'm put on the spot. If I'm feeling kind of relaxed, then I'm quite happy to have a go, and I'm quite happy now if I don't know a word, I'm quite happy now just to use the English word and then not to freak out and say, 'What's that word in Welsh?' because I find that

people don't want, they don't wanna think. They don't wanna be asked. I find that, it just comes so naturally to them, really you should just try and remember what the word was and when you get home, look the word up.

MH: So just with the neighbours.

UA: You know, I like to think that I would speak more Welsh at home, but B--- and I have just got into this English relationship.

MH: So does he speak Welsh?

UA: Yeah. Yeah. And obviously it's helpful because I hear him speaking to the children but, you know, in terms of me and B---, we have very little conversation in Welsh.

MH: But you feel you're still not happy yet with your current level of Welsh, you'd say?

UA: Erm, I'm OK, but I know I should have been much better by now. But, to be honest, do I really want to be able to speak Welsh to people? Not particularly. You know, when I'm talking to people, I just want a conversation and, erm, I mean, OK, some people don't like speaking English, so I suppose it is a problem, but I want to be able to understand what people are saying. I'm going to a meeting tonight at the school and I'm thinking, oh, God, am I gonna understand what's going on? And I want to be able to help my children with their homework, I want to be able to get by. You know, I don't want to look at Welsh and think, God, that's a funny language. 'Cos it's not, it's a lovely language, but whether I'm ever actually gonna be able to use it on a day to day basis, I don't know.

MH: You said you were doing the A-level. I mean, do you want the qualification for, like, job purposes? Or do you feel like it's a validation for you and something to aim at?

UA: Yes. That really. But something to aim at because I know that if I'm working towards this, my Welsh will get better. I'm not just working towards it because I want another A-level.

MH: Well, that's about it then. Thank you very much.

## Transcript of the interview with EB (Questionnaire no 002)

Date: 4 May 11

Time: 12.00-12.30 pm

Location: Pavilion, Corwen

Interviewer: Margaret Hall (MH)

MH: Did you actually grow up in Wales?

EB: Yes. Well... Wrexham.

MH: Right.

EB: Which... yes, it's in Wales, but it wasn't so Welsh at the time, they had a bit of, er, an effort to bring it back to being a Welsh town at the time when I was in primary school.

MH: And did any of your family speak Welsh at the time?

EB: No... No.

MH: So it was an English speaking childhood really.

EB: Yes.

MH: So did you do any Welsh in school?

EB: Yes, erm, not very useful Welsh, it was -- we were, erm, a pilot class for, erm, a scheme and so we learnt our sentences and we practised them and practised them and practised them until they were recorded and that's the Welsh that we did every year.

MH: Oh, right.

EB: So it was very limited.

MH: So approximately how old were you?

EB: That, I remember then, that was I was 10.

MH: Ten, so you were about 10.

EB: Well, we did it each year, up until I was 10. But we just recorded what we'd learnt that year.

MH: Right.

EB: But it was very very limited.

MH: Right. Right.... And that was a Welsh class, using Welsh. You weren't taught at all in Welsh in the other lessons?

EB: No, not during... No. No.

MH: Erm... OK. So then that was at junior school.

EB: Yes.

MH: So did you do any Welsh at secondary school?

EB: Er... as... Welsh as a foreign language.

MH: Welsh as a foreign language. Right. Right...

EB: Erm... Yes I did that, up to O-level.

MH: Up to O-level. And did you actually take the O-level?

EB: I'm just trying to remember. Yes... Yes, I did. Yes.

MH: Er then, after you left school what... what did you do then? Did you stay in Wales or move away?

EB: I went to Bangor, but doing science. I mean Welsh I completely forgot....

MH: Right.

EB: ...all about Welsh. I could read signs and things but, erm, as for speaking it, it never entered my head.

MH: So it just dropped out of your life then.

EB: Yes...

MH: Um... Then I think I remember that your husband was Welsh speaking...

EB: Yeah.

MH: ...but that you didn't speak Welsh with him at first.

EB: Not at first. He'd been at sea for, since... he went to, erm, Merchant Navy school at fourteen, went to sea at sixteen as an apprentice so his Welsh... Well, he was away from his family...

MH: Right.

EB: ...so he didn't speak Welsh and his Welsh isn't as good as the rest of his family.

MH: Right.

EB: And so, I didn't know he did speak Welsh at first (laughs)

MH: Erm, so then, did... did you live away from Wales or have you always lived in Wales?

EB: Er, we did move down to Kent for a couple of years...

MH: Right.

EB: ... but it was only two years.

MH: Yes, so then you were living back here. So at what point did you actually decide that you wanted to be able to speak Welsh and that you wanted more Welsh?

EB: I think I wanted -- as soon as I had children they went to the local school, bilingual, erm, Daf by then -- my husband -- had shown, erm, his expectation that they would be given Welsh names, which they were and that they were Welsh children being brought up in Wales. They had learned a lot, you know, Welsh, as Welsh speakers during their schooling because, the school -- because they had Welsh names -- assumed they were Welsh speaking and didn't realise until they were... until the time that they were leaving really, that the last one was leaving the primary school that they weren't actually speaking Welsh at home...

MH: Right.

EB: ...so they had picked it up. And in all that time I felt I should...

MH: Right.

EB: ...I knew I could read Welsh, erm, I had a reasonable vocabulary, but I didn't use it.

MH: So you weren't actually speaking it then.

EB: Not at home.

MH: Not even with the children?

EB: No, no.

MH: How were the children...

EB: Except a few phrases.

MH: Er, did they help? Because when my children, 'cos my children were, went to bilingual school. And actually there were not helpful at the time because when I tried to speak Welsh, they would laugh at my accent.

EB: Yes.

MH: So did you...

EB: Yes. They didn't laugh, but they *smiled*. I think I found it worse.

(Both laugh)

EB: Oh, mummy's speaking Welsh again. Yes, isn't she being funny. Yes.

MH: I suppose that didn't help the confidence?

EB: No, no. Not at all. No.

MH: Erm... OK, so... At what point then did you actually... Did you try and learn on your own or did you find a class?

EB: Erm... I don't think... I don't remember attending any classes, thinking back. No. No I didn't. I... I kept thinking I ought to be able... as I say there were quite a lot of Welsh words in my head...

MH: Hmm...

EB: ... and I knew what they meant and in church and things I'd sung Welsh hymns and, erm, I could remember poems from school and so on, but I could never put all these words together.

MH: Right.

EB: I never knew how to start, erm, because whenever I tried to concoct a sentence in my head it would always be... written Welsh that I was concocting.

MH: Right. Yes.

EB: And so when I said it, it was wrong...

MH: Yes.

EB: ...yes, so I didn't bother.

MH: Right.

EB: So I didn't do anything until I started a class.

MH: So, what was the first class you went to? Was it the Llanllawen?

EB: Yes.

MH: So you've only done the Llanllawen, then?

EB: Yes.

MH: You haven't done one of the traditional...?

EB: Not... I did after I did the four... Well, I didn't do four years because I started on the year two, I think.

MH: Yes.

EB: Erm, went up to the fourth year of Llanllawen and then, er, tried Pellach.

MH: Yeah. So how did you find the Pellach?

EB: Very like school.

MH: Very like school. Right.

EB: Very confusing.

MH: Yes.

EB: And... boring, although the teachers did do their best. I found... But I also found it, erm... uh... I haven't got a very good imagination and so when we were set tasks which seemed to be the regular ones of, in pairs, to talk to each other about something, I was, I spent most of my time trying to work out what I would say in English, erm, never mind in Welsh. Thinking, what am I going to tell this person about what I did at the weekend? I'm not going on holiday so what can I make up? Well, I don't really like London, so what can I make up? And it was always you had to make up things to say and that took more... most of the time, without ever getting round to... translating into Welsh, er, successfully.

MH: So that was the Pellach...

EB: Yes.

M. ...course? Traditional Pellach course. So what did you think of the course materials? Were they interesting?

EB: Erm... The... the some of the ones... one or two of the things, I can't remember what, but I know one or two things I quite enjoyed doing. Er, but it was mostly from prepared pieces of paper that the tutor had brought with her rather than actually out of the...

MH: ...actual file.

EB: ...file. The course that was in the file. There would be extra, erm, little sort of, erm, exercises that the tutor had brought...

MH: Yeah...

EB: ...some of those I found quite interesting.

MH: Erm were... were you able to practise what you'd learned in the lesson. Er, were you able to practise that in the week?

EB: Hmm...

MH: From the Pellach?

EB: No... No.

MH: No. So did... did the tutor give you any homework?

EB: Erm... (Hesitantly) Yes...

MH: Can you remember what sort of thing?

EB: Written.

MH: Written work?

EB: Yes. Which I did. Usually. Erm... Yes, but I... I wouldn't say, no I'd just do the homework and have it ready to take with the next time.

MH: So you did, you did the homework...

EB: I did.

MH: ...whatever you were given and then, erm... Wh-well, what happened if the students didn't do their homework? Did, what, er...?

EB: I don't remember anyone taking much notice of the homework anyway.

MH: Yes, no. Right. So... (both laugh)

EB: It was generally up to us if we did it.

MH: So generally how did you feel about that class? Did you feel that you wanted to go each week?

EB: (Emphatically) No. No, I had a headache most weeks on thinking about it. Er... I thought, it's not hard, there's nothing wrong with it, why don't I want to go? But I didn't.

MH: You didn't want to go?

EB: Yeah.

MH: Yeah.

EB: I think it was... partly the stress of trying to do the exercises, the tasks, you know speaking to total strangers.

MH: Mmmm...

EB: It wasn't comfortable. I found the whole thing uncomfortable.

MH: Mmmm, so it was stressful. And so did you do a lot of this sort of pair work? In the classes.

EB: Yes.

MH: The tutor, the tutor would ask you to talk to one another about...

EB: Yes.

MH: Did... did... Was it a 'she'?

EB: Yes. We had different tutors.

MH: Did she give you a topic to talk about or just...?

EB: Er, yes, it would be a little exercise.

MH: But did you, er, but did you actually stick to speaking Welsh when you were supposed to be talking to one another.

EB: Oh, yes.

MH: Yes.

EB: Yes.

MH: So you were, yes.... So you did... How many years of Pellach did you do then?

EB: One.

MH: Just one year.

EB: One.

MH: Er... Did you manage to do this continuously, so you did four year -- no, you did three years of Llanllawen...

EB: Yes. And then the fourth year...

MH: You went straight into Pellach.

EB: Yes.

MH: Now what happened then, did you have a gap or did you manage to come straight back?

EB: Erm... [pauses] I think I had a gap that year. Because I was working it wasn't always convenient to fit in a class with the days or afternoons, or whatever that I had off.

MH: Yeah...

EB: And so I had a year off

MH: Right.

EB: And during that year I got in touch with, erm, [the college]

MH: Yeah.

EB: To see whether [tutor M] had a class. Er, er I was going to go back to the fourth year of Llanllawen...

MH: Right. But then she said she'd got... there wuh- there was this one.

EB: The Lleisiau'r Llan had started.

MH: Um... Have you tried any other ways of learning Welsh? Er, have you tried any of the intensive weekends, like Nant Gwrtheyrn?

EB: No. No, I've thought about it, but mostly it's the cost (laughs) that's put me off.

MH: Yes. Yes. Do they have round here...? In our local college, they have a thing called a Sadwrn Siarad, which is like, just a day course where they have people of all levels go.

EB: Er, they might have...

MH: But you've not done?

EB: No.

MH: No. And have you tried learning any other way or have you just stuck to the Llanllawen materials? You haven't bought any teach yourself books or...

EB: Not Teach Yourself

MH: ...that sort of thing?

EB: I get the occasional book out of the library...

MH: Right.

EB: ...which I struggle through slowly, but I don't always finish them. Erm, but, er, I do -- I ought to do more. I quite enjoy getting a book out.

MH: Mmmm.

EB: But, erm, but I'm not very good at going to the library. That's what's holding me back. (laughs) Getting round to going to the library.

MH: So they would be novels?

EB: Yes, Yes.

MH: Novels.

EB: Yes, simple ones.

MH: Of course you started with the Llanllawen and that has got, erm, you know, it's got all your materials you need, hadn't it, so...

EB: Yes.

MH: ...so how do you feel comparing the Pellach materials to the Llanllawen materials? Which one do you feel is most...

EB: Oh, Pellach

MH: ...useful.

EB: Oh, a long way. But the... [realising she said the wrong one.] Oh, sorry. Llanllawen! (laughs) That's what I meant. Llanllawen, yes.

MH: Erm... Right. When you were deciding to go back to learning Welsh, was there anyone that was perhaps a role model? Did you see anybody that you knew or see somebody on television who you thought would perhaps inspire you to think, ooh, I've, I've kind of, I should be able to do that.

EB: Erm...

MH: What spurred you on?

EB: No, I can't say that I did have a role model. I've always thought, erm, because I've heard quite a lot... more in Ruthin than obviously than there was in Wrexham. Erm, sort of heard more and more Welsh around me, I've always been able to follow quite a lot of the conversation. Not nearly as much as I can now.

MH: Hmmm.

EB: Much better at following now. But enough to know that if I just put a little effort in, I would at least be able to understand people...

MH: Yes.

EB: ...erm, better. I think, erm, my aim, I think was to actually... understand the punchline of a joke.

MH: Yes!

EB: I could always follow the joke up to the punch line and that would be the one that -- that I just wouldn't get.

MH: (laughing) Wouldn't get. Yes, I know. I know the feeling, yes. Erm, were you aware of the Learner of the Year Award at the Eisteddfod, the National Eisteddfod? The Learner of the Year.

EB: Yes, I think. Yes.

MH: When you read about one of these award winners, how, how do you feel? Do you feel kind of -- oh gosh, that's inspiring, I could do that or do you think they've had some kind of special circumstances that made it easier for them?

EB: No, I, er I think, I find it inspiring. Not enough to actually stop me being lazy...

MH: (laughs)

EB: ...but yes, I, I do sort of think, oh, I'm sure if I tried I could do that.

MH: Yes.

EB: Yes.

MH: Have you ever been to the National Eisteddfod?

EB: No.

MH: No, I haven't either. Erm, what is putting you off? Is it cost or distance or the feeling that there isn't anything there for you?

EB: Erm...

MH: Or perhaps lack of someone to go with?

EB: No, I think I could persuade my husband to come quite easily, er, if I really wanted to go. Er... Why don't I want to go? (long pause) Erm... I think

basically I'm a very unsociable person. There are so many things that I think are a good idea until it comes to the time and I think no, I won't bother. I think, that it's that sort of level...

MH: Right.

EB: ... There isn't any one thing. I think I would, if, if I... If somebody made me go I think I would enjoy it. If they could get some sort of...

MH: Perhaps, perhaps if this group decided...?

EB: Yes.

MH: So if a bunch of us decided to go one day, you might go, but there's nothing...

EB: And then I think that I would enjoy it and probably get something out of it.

MH: Erm, right so at the moment you're attending this class here, the Lleisiau'r Llan. Er, do you have to travel far to get here?

EB: Erm, it doesn't seem far. It's what? Quarter of an hour?

MH: Yes. Yes. Er, how far would you be prepared to travel to a class that particularly suited you?

EB: Mmm... Half an hour.

MH: Half an hour.

EB: Yes.

MH: Erm, what do you feel about this class? Are you, are you enjoying it?

EB: Yes.

MH: What is it particularly that you enjoy?

EB: Erm... That it's friendly, so that I know the people, the other students. Erm, and everybody feels to me on the same level. Perhaps not linguistically there's some find it easier than others and some have started from a Welsh background and some have come from very English, so, er, but when I say everybody's on the same level, they're, nobody is trying to outdo any of the others.

MH: Right.

EB: There's nobody trying to be the star of the class.

MH: Right.

EB: Erm... and... I enjoy the work that we do I enjoy the substance of the course. But, oh, you know the Llanllawen and the Lleisiau'r Llan. Erm... and...

MH: Did you perhaps get a feeling when you did the Pellach that it was more obvious who was good and who was, perhaps, struggling a bit?

EB: Yes. Yes.

MH: That method...

EB: Yes.

MH: ...brought that out more.

EB: Yes. Erm, not that I mind not being, sort of, top of the class.

MH: No.

EB: Er... I think... But it was a little bit offputting that, erm... I thought it wasn't the tutor that I felt was classifying us...

MH: Mmmm...

EB: ... hmm, you know, it was sort of the other students were, one or two out to be the stars of the class.

MH: A bit competitive?

EB: And there were a couple of girls who were completely switched off. They only came because they had to. I think that they worked for the...

MH: Right.

EB: ... council and they, they had to come (laughs) and they were the opposite end. (laughs) It's difficult if one of those was your partner...

MH: Yes.

EB: ...because they didn't want to be there.

MH: Right. Well yes. No, I've had that before as well. Erm, now obviously we're actually doing the Lleisiau'r Llan which is slightly different but if you think back to the, um, actual Llanllawen because that's what most of the research is about. I didn't want it to get complicated by bringing in the Lleisiau'r Llan as well.

EB: No.

MH: Erm... So of the activities that we do, 'cos obviously we still do them...

EB: Yes.

MH: ... There's the bingo, there's the miming...

EB: Yes.

MH: ... the reading aloud...

EB: Yes.

MH: Which ones do you find particularly useful?

EB: Erm, I know I always, er, I enjoyed when, um, we didn't do it every time, but when we -- we do it more I think now, with the sentence. When we've chosen the sentence and get it in sort of a 'rap', sort of a rhythm and pass it round like Chinese whispers.

MH: Yeah, yes.

EB: Erm, I find that useful. Erm, and the bingo because it...it, well, you have to learn the words for that. It's an incentive to, to actually learn it off by heart.

MH: And does that help you? So that's when you're reading. And what about when you're listening? Do you, do you feel that it helps you?

EB: Yes. Yes.

MH: Yeah.

EB: Certainly it helps. Listening to all... all the different voices and the different -- you have to listen so hard because not everybody says it, um, completely correctly.

MH: Yeah.

EB: So you have to listen hard and, but also you're also, in your own head correcting them if you think they've said it not quite right.

MH: Yes. Erm... Thinking back to the Pellach, obviously you would be learning about grammar on the Pellach course, did you find that helpful?

EB: (pause) No, I think... I sort of thought, well, that's, I've done that bit, when, when I was in school.

MH: Yes. You did that when you were in school.

EB: Yes. So if I really wanted to know, I know. It didn't do anything with the grammar which made it easier to remember.

MH: Remember. Right. (pause) Oh, yes, on any of the courses have any of the tutors, erm, in your case perhaps only two tutors, but I suppose there was school as well. Have any of them taught you particular ways to learn and practice at home? Any techniques for learning? Has anybody kind of...?

EB: No, I don't think so.

MH: So you feel in terms of homework and practising, they want you to do it, but not necessarily said what... what do do?

EB: No, no. I think homework has always been down to me (laughs) to work out how to do it.

MH: Erm, on the Llanllawen it's kind of understood you're going to learn the story, isn't it?

EB: Yes.

MH: So that gives you something to learn. Erm, do you find that, actually, I can't, erm... No, 'cos you've not bought any other materials. You haven't used any tapes or...

EB: No.

MH: ...CDs...

EB: No. Other than the tapes that come with the Llanllawen and the one that come with the Pellach.

MH: Erm... Do you watch television? (pause) Welsh television? Or listen to Welsh radio?

EB: Yes. Only if I... if it's an interesting programme, if I would watch it whether it was Welsh or English.

MH: Right.

EB: Yes.

MH: Erm... Do you...? When you listen... So you do listen to the radio?

EB: Yes.

MH: Do you, do you actually sit and listen or do you have it on while you're perhaps ironing or washing up.

EB: I don't often listen to the radio in Welsh.

MH: You don't.

EB: I don't often listen to the radio.

MH: Have you ever tried recording a TV or radio programme and listening to it several times to try and get...?

EB: No, no it would be helpful, I'm sure it would. I've never thought of that. I think the disadvantage of that is actually knowing how to record it.

MH: So in having the technology?

EB: But I could now, use... I could look on iPlayer.

MH: Yes, yes, it is something that you can do with the iPlayer. Erm, and actually on the S4C, they have got a special learner's page. Were you aware of that?

EB: No.

MH: Ah! Right. Well, I went to an evening actually. I'm digressing a little bit here. There was... S4C came to Dolgellau and they had an evening, erm... It was very good actually because we got a really good chance to practice speaking Welsh they brought one of the actresses from, oh, what's she in now? Um, well, she was in... she has been in Pobl y Cwm, she's been in all the Welsh dramas. Oh, she was hyfryd, hyfryd iawn and she was talking to us in the café beforehand, so that was good. Er, but actually if you look at the S4C page, they've got featured programmes and you can just drag the little slider back, you see...

EB: Yes.

MH: ...and you can just repeat anything.

EB: Oh, I see so you just... if you didn't quite hear the sentence, you can say it again.

MH: Yes, if you didn't quite catch a bit, or you weren't sure, you can just listen to that bit again. Anyway, erm, but tutors haven't really taught you how to, perhaps suggesting doing that kind of thing?

EB: No. No.

MH: No.

EB: No.

MH: Erm... (referring to list of prompt questions used to keep the interview on track) We've done reading novels. Oh, yeah, when you are reading novels, do you just read them or do you actually make notes, look up things, words that you don't know?

EB: I have to look up words.

MH: Yes.

EB: Yes, but I don't actually make notes. Just...

MH: Have you ever made, er, a particular effort to learn... if you find a useful or interesting sentence in a story, have you ever kind of made a note, have you ever thought that you ought to learn it?

EB: No... No.

MH: Erm... Right, OK. How much chance do you get to speak to people in Welsh between the classes?

EB: Well, I should be able to speak all the time to my husband, er, but we always have spoken English until recent years. Erm... If we... For some reason if we go out for the day, we tend to spend the day speaking Welsh.

MH: Right.

EB: I think it's a privacy thing that starts it off.

MH: Uh, huh.

EB: Erm, then if we happen to go... the day that we went to Harlech, erm, because, to, the agricultural show, because most of the stalls there were Welsh people, Welsh speaking. In fact everything, as far as I could see was in Welsh, except for the, er, showing the horses. Showing the cattle...

MH: Right.

EB: ... and the sheep, that was all done in Welsh, over the... the tannoy, but the horses was done in English. (laughs) Which I found interesting...

MH: (laughs)

EB: ...amusing, but because it was a Welsh event, erm, it was very easy to carry on in Welsh. And I said before that if we go to France where you don't hear... There's no English. No telephone, newspaper, television, anything to distract you, and so once you start off in Welsh... In fact in France I even dreamt in Welsh, erm, because I'd gone from one day to the next speaking Welsh.

MH: Speaking Welsh. Mmm.

EB: And it's taking the English away...

MH: Yes.

EB: ...rather than... Then, once you've got the Welsh into your head, there's nothing to distract you.

MH: Yes.

EB: Erm, as we say, we could speak Welsh all the time. I try to remember but then we've got something important to say, go back to English and then forget... forget to go back to Welsh again.

MH: So do you find that the Llanllawen course is giving you enough vocabulary, er, enough of the right kind of words and sentences to use?

EB: Erm, it's certainly giving me the sentences, the glue, to use. The actual vocabulary, erm, I have got quite, a bigger vocabulary than I have got from Llanllawen, erm, because of being always in Wales.

MH: Yeah.

EB: You know, the sort of constant background of Welsh.

MH: Yes.

EB: Starting off from school really. A lot of the vocabulary I remember, I remember from school.

MH: From school, yes.

EB: So it's easy to slip that vocabulary into...

MH: Yeah.

EB: ...the, er, construction which...

MH: So you're finding that works for you? Learning the pattern...

EB: Yes.

MH: ... and then being able to just chop and change...

EB: Yes.

MH: ... it a bit with other words.

EB: Yes.

MH: So that's working?

EB: Sometimes that happens without me realising it. You know, I'll suddenly come out with a sentence where I've changed the nouns and the verbs.

MH: Right. Without really thinkingd...

EB: And I think, 'Gosh! Where did that come from?' (laughs)

MH: Right, we're nearly at the end now. Erm, so... what would you say your ambitions were with the Welsh? You're obviously not still quite happy with where you are, you want to...

EB: Yes. It's improved a lot, erm... er, since I've been doing the Llanllawen and the Lleisiau'r Llan. Erm, and I think... I don't know how or when it does improve, it's just that looking back from where I am now, looking backwards, I think, 'Gosh! I couldn't have done this a couple of years ago.'

MH: Mmmm.

EB: So, somehow or other it is, erm, improving and if it carries on like that, erm... I... There are gaps in what I'm able to say, how I'm able to join into a conversation. Erm, I'm not quite sure what the gaps are yet, erm, it's not just vocabulary, it's having, right on the tip of my tongue, the right sentences.

MH: Hmmm.

EB: Erm, to...

MH: Yeah.

EB: ...to say. I find it's easier, I find to go into a shop, say, or into a... somewhere to, and start off the conversation, because I'm saying what I want to say. Then somebody else asks... asks you a question or... And that's what I find more difficult.

MH: Keeping it going...

EB: Because I've got... I know what I'm trying to say but I've... then... erm, it's that instant translation. It's all right if you sort of think, 'Oh! Oh, yes I could say this and even go in and start off...'

MH: Yes.

EB: ...it's the follow on.

MH: Have... have you ever sort of planned out what you want to say...

EB: Yes.

MH: ... even to the extent of almost writing almost your own little story or...

EB: Yes.

MH: Yes. And then you've got like your little speech to...

EB: Yes.

MH: Yes. Yes. So you've done that. Erm, yes, just fine. That's just fine really. Erm... So... so really you just want to keep going.

EB: Just keep going.

MH: Just keep going and keep getting more fluent. Er, have you any interest in... in qualifications or exams?

EB: Not the slightest.

MH: Not the slightest. And you don't... Do you find that motivating? Would you, would you find the thought of doing an exam something that would make you work and motivate you?

EB: Erm... I mean, if the... if there was a, a test involved in the Llanllawen or Lleisiau'r Llan, erm, yes I would want to... I... I wouldn't want to have not done the work.

MH: No, so you'd want to do OK.

EB: I would want to do the work.

MH: But you don't actually feel any need for... No.

EB: I don't want to go chasing a qualification at all. (laughs)

MH: Erm, that's fine and then presumably you... you intend carrying on if this class carries on?

EB: Yes.

MH: Just carry on.

EB: Yes.

MH: Yes. That's very good.

EB: Otherwise I'd go back and start again. (laughs)

MH: (laughs) Start again with the Llanllawen.

EB: Yes.

MH: Well, I think that's... that's great. Thank you very much.

## Discussion and conclusions

There were a number of hypotheses that I wanted to test and I will discuss each one in turn.

### Learning stories by heart is an effective way of acquiring vocabulary and grammar.

The responses to the follow up questionnaire show that the students did learn the stories thoroughly. They also felt that they could use the sentences and phrases learnt from the stories in general conversation. Students either use the sentences verbatim or mix and match, swapping verbs and nouns for other words that are appropriate in the circumstances.

Here is what student EB said about learning stories by heart:

EB: It's certainly giving me the sentences, the glue, to use. The actual vocabulary, I have got a bigger vocabulary than I have got from Llanllawen, because of being always in Wales. Starting off from school really. A lot of the vocabulary I remember, I remember from school. So it's easy to slip that vocabulary into the construction and then being able to just chop and change it a bit with other words.

MH: So that's working?

EB: Sometimes that happens without me realising it. You know, I'll suddenly come out with a sentence where I've changed the nouns and the verbs.

MH: Right. Without really thinking...

EB: And I think, 'Gosh! Where did that come from?' (she laughs)

In her work on formulaic sequences, Wray warns that care must be taken when using formulaic sequences with adults because of the danger that students will simply regurgitate set sentences and phrases without actually achieving true fluency. However, the experience of at least some of the Llanllawen students suggests that there are so many different examples of sentences provided in the stories that they thoroughly absorb the patterns and can then use them with their own vocabulary.

## **Conclusion**

Memorising sentences is a valid method of teaching Welsh to adults.

By focusing on memorising the sentences, students can construct a conversation more quickly and fluently than if they were building each sentence from scratch using the rules of grammar.

## **The Llanllawen method makes learning by heart enjoyable.**

My impression gained from observing four different classes was that students were engaged by the learning activities and were enjoying what they were doing. The analysis of the follow up questionnaires bears out this impression and most students looked forward to attending class each week. The support of their peers was valued highly, as was the tutor's enthusiasm and knowledge of her subject. The majority of students reported that doing the familiar activities helped them feel more relaxed and confident in class. As there is evidence in the literature that anxiety impedes language learning (Sparks and Ganschow 2001), the relaxed atmosphere can only be beneficial.

The Llanllawen teaching method and the activities ensure that the students speak a considerable amount of Welsh right from the start. Of course this is not conversational Welsh, the students are reading Welsh or saying Welsh phrases and sentences from memory. This ensures that all the Welsh spoken is grammatically correct and, due to the teacher's insistence on correcting faulty pronunciation, it is also spoken with a good accent. It does not, however, give students practice at speaking extempore.

The students said that reading aloud with the tutor, 'rapping' sentences, playing word bingo and doing the story jigsaw helped them remember the story, improved their pronunciation and helped improve their listening skills.

When asked which of the activities she found particularly useful, EB said in the interview:

EB: I know I always enjoyed when we've chosen the sentence and get it in sort of a 'rap', sort of a rhythm and pass it round like Chinese whispers. I find that useful. And the bingo because it...it, well, you have to learn the words for that. It's an incentive to actually learn it off by heart.

MH: And that helps when you're reading. And what about when you're listening? Do you feel that it helps you?

EB: Yes. Yes. Certainly it helps. Listening to all the different voices and the different -- you have to listen so hard because not everybody says it completely correctly. So you have to listen hard, but you're also, in your own head, correcting them if you think they've said it not quite right.

This shows that EB is not just listening to what is said but is also comparing the student's speech to what might be called an ideal template of how the story should go.

The activity that students liked least was the miming. Though a few agreed strongly that it helped them to remember sentences from the story, many were ambivalent and a few disagreed strongly that miming was helpful. However, these feelings were not apparent when I observed the classes taking part in this activity. All the participants seemed to be enjoying it and there was a good deal of laughter while the game was going on. The way the miming game is played means that students have to learn one another's names and engage with each other in an active way, so it is possible that though students are correct when they say it does not directly help them memorise the story, it may perform a useful function in bonding the class together and it also helps to lighten the mood.

Perhaps surprisingly, though the activities in a Llanllawen class are few in number and repeated every couple of weeks, no one said they found this boring. Despite the fact that the games are played by set rules, students did not feel that they were being treated like children.

For comparison, student UA on the Uwch course said:

'So somebody might read it and then translate it, and then the next time somebody might read it and somebody else decides to chip in. So you don't feel as if you're getting time to have your turn. It's very frustrating. You feel reduced to a childlike state. You know, I feel I've gone back to this sort of adult/child relationship in the class and sometimes I misbehave as a rebellion. You know, there's a man in that class who is a bit silly, he's always talking

about King Pixie and taking on, sort of different characters, and sometimes we all end up being completely silly and I think there's something wrong there.

MH: But you're being silly in English, are you? Or Welsh?

UA: Probably English.

The set pattern of the lesson and the predictability and non-competitive nature of the games seems to create a safe and comfortable space that enables students to learn.

### **Conclusion**

The tutor's ultimate aim is to make students learn the text off by heart and the various games and activities make this task fun rather than onerous. The familiarity and the almost ritual element of the games ensures that students always know what they are doing and are thus in a relaxed frame of mind, which makes them receptive to learning new material. The games ensure that students get to know one another within the class and this produces a feeling of camaraderie that makes students more willing to attend classes.

## **Providing high quality learning materials as part of the course helps students to study on their own between classes**

Almost all the students who completed the follow up questionnaire said that they thought the Llanllawen materials were well produced and also gave them everything they needed to practise Welsh during the week between classes. The CDs were particularly popular and all but two students used them regularly. The CDs enabled the students to make use of time that otherwise would not have been productive for Welsh learning, such as while doing household tasks, walking the dog or driving.

The books are deliberately made to look informal with the use of the Comic Sans font and a variety of cartoon illustrations, mostly taken from Microsoft Clipart. However,

no one felt that they ought to look more serious or that the cartoons looked childish. The books and CDs are colour coded and overall give a very professional look to the course.

### **Conclusion**

The students perceive the Llanllawen materials to be of high quality and they make considerable use of them during the week. Providing both the text of the story in Welsh, the translation into English and the story recorded on CD gives students enough material to use for practice without having to buy other packages.

### **How much practice do students think they need? How much practice between classes do students actually do?**

It is very difficult to say how long it should take before someone becomes fluent in a new language. Germain and Netten suggest at least 250 hours of intense exposure to French is required to reach a level of spontaneous communication. It is certainly not possible to learn Welsh by simply attending a class for two hours per week and students seem to realise this. Cummins and other researchers have suggested that a person can become functional in a new language and use it socially in two years. However, though some students had been learning Welsh for more than four years, none of them seemed to consider themselves fluent. Many did attempt to use Welsh during the week with family and/or friends, but they were not living their lives through the medium of Welsh.

With regard to the amount of practice students do in between classes, very few claimed to do an hour or more per day and some did not practice daily. According to the literature, in order to make good progress, student would need to be doing 30 minutes per day or more and only 3 students were doing that much work. However, when asked to comment on whether they thought they were doing enough work between classes, twice that number (6 students) felt that they were doing enough practice to enable them to make good progress. This may indicate that though they are

doing enough to keep up in class, they are not actually doing enough to enable them to become truly fluent speakers.

There is a discrepancy between what students know they ought to do and what they actually do. Kormos and Csizér point out that, 'positive attitudes and reportedly highly motivated behaviour do not necessarily mean that students in fact invest a sufficient amount of energy in language learning,' and this was borne out by the responses to the questionnaires. They go on to say, 'Learning an L2 differs from the acquisition of other skills in life in requiring intensive practice.' The problem is therefore one of motivation. However well the students work in class, if they do not practice sufficiently between lessons, they will not progress as well as they would wish.

### **Conclusion**

Though students know that it is important to practise in the week, most are not doing enough to make significant progress. Only a very few do more than one hour per day. Students doing significantly less than this can get by satisfactorily in class, but will not gain a deep enough knowledge of the sentence patterns to be able to use the language fluently in real life conversation. Motivation is the problem because though students say they want to become fluent, the reasons they give are long term and do not necessarily motivate them to actually get out their books and practice every day.

## **The importance of correct pronunciation**

This was not included this as one of the original hypotheses for investigation, but during the observation of the lessons it became apparent just how much emphasis the tutor places on correct pronunciation. I noted many instances during the observations of the tutor picking up an incorrect pronunciation and making the whole class repeat the word until they could say it correctly and specific instances have been noted in the results chapter. This is in contrast to the classes attended by student UA. She did not learn Welsh in a Llanllawen class but instead has followed the traditional route of

Wlpan, Pellach and Uwch. When I asked if the tutor corrected the students' pronunciation, she said:

UA: No, I would say not. I would say not a great deal. She's not very proactive in that department. It's all rather sort of relaxed.

MH: So she's not working to improve your accent?

UA: No.

The Llanllawen tutor believes that a good accent encourages native speakers to speak with learners, hence her insistence on getting words right. A convincing accent does not come automatically. In the literature, Nikolov and Djigunovic (2006) point out that all the post-puberty learners who could pass as native speakers had striven for proficiency with regard to accent. Though many Welsh tutors seem to agree with Cook (1995) and think that accent is less important than fluency, other researchers have found that native speakers may avoid speaking with people who have strong accents and this may be particularly important with regard to the uneasy relationship between the Welsh and English languages. The effects of accent on the reactions of native Welsh speakers was not examined in this research project. Further research is therefore needed in order to say whether a good local accent makes a difference when a learner talks to a native speaker in Welsh.

### **Conclusion**

Because the Llanllawen activities mean that students are often speaking aloud as part of the group, the tutor can correct any problems with accent without appearing to single out any one student. Students are saying sentences that they have memorised, so the tutor can work on pronunciation without distracting a student who may be trying to assemble a sentence in their head in order to say it aloud.

The effects of accent on the reactions of native Welsh speakers was not examined in this research project. Further research is therefore needed in order to say whether a

good local accent makes a difference when a learner talks to a native speaker in Welsh.

## Pair work

Another topic that arose out of the research but which was not originally included in the hypotheses for investigation was the use of pair work in class. The Llanllawen teaching method does not make any use of pair work where the students practise speaking with a partner. However, this is a method used in many other Welsh for Adults classes to encourage students to use the Welsh they have learned and it is recommended by Bygate (1988).

Bygate does warn of possible dangers, for example that incorrect language patterns will become 'fossilised', by which he means that they will become fixed in the student's memory, despite being wrong, but he feels that the benefits of practising conversation with a partner outweigh these dangers.

However, both the students interviewed had been in classes where pair work was used and neither enjoyed the activity nor did they find it particularly useful. Student UA said:

'At times we were told, "Right now, rwan ta, talk to your partner," and therefore we would just talk about what we'd seen on television last night in English.'

Student EB said that she never knew what to say and would not have been entirely comfortable doing the activity in English.

'When we were set tasks which seemed to be the regular ones of, in pairs, to talk to each other about something, I spent most of my time trying to work out what I would say in English, erm, never mind in Welsh. Thinking, "What am I going to tell this person about what I did at the weekend? I'm not going on holiday so what

can I make up? Well, I don't really like London, so what can I make up?" And it was always you had to make up things to say and that took more... most of the time, without ever getting round to... translating into Welsh, er, successfully.

### **Conclusion**

Though pair work may have some benefits and encourage students to think quickly and use Welsh in a more natural situation, the experiences related by the two students who were interviewed means that the method is also problematical. It does not suit all learners and it requires a good deal of tutor input to keep the students focused and make it work successfully.

## **Tutors focus solely on what happens in class and do not teach students effective ways of practising at home**

In the Guidelines at the front of each Llanllawen book, Myfi Brier says:

'The success of the course is dependent on the learners consolidating the classroom experience by listening to the accompanying CD. The author of *Llanllawen*, from her experience, recommends that not less than 30 minutes per day is integral to successfully learn the Welsh language. The more the learner listens and practises, the quicker the process.'

However, though this is clearly stated in the book, it is likely that students do not refer back to the Guidelines once they have embarked on the course. Though the observations show that the tutor does encourage the students to learn the story in the week, the response to the exploratory and follow up questionnaires shows that only a minority of students work for 30 minutes or more per day. Of course once a student leaves the classroom, the tutor has no real influence over their behaviour, however more emphasis could be placed on ways to learn and practice outside the classroom.

The follow up questionnaires reveal that some students are using their own innovative methods to practice, such as recording themselves saying the stories aloud from memory, writing the text down rather than saying it aloud and making flashcards and PowerPoint presentations from the story text. It might be helpful if there was a time set aside in class for students to share study methods that have worked for them. There are also methods such as the Leitner system of spaced repetition using flashcards that would be applicable to learning Welsh. Spaced repetition is a system whereby more time is spent learning the items that are proving to be most difficult. Difficult material is studied daily. Easier material is studied at less frequent intervals. This maximises the time spent studying harder material. (For full details of the system, see the Appendix.) The Leitner method uses physical flashcards in a compartmentalised box, but computer programs are also available that do the same thing and automatically present material at different intervals, depending on how well the students respond to the questions on the cards. Anki and Mnemosyne are two well-known examples of computer spaced repetition programs. Versions for iPhone, Android phones, iPods etc are also available and these might also be useful for students to practice in odd moments of spare time and help to make practising during the week more enjoyable. However, neither of the students interviewed were aware of these study methods.

MH: Have you ever heard of Spaced Repetition? Or the Leitner card system?

UA: No.

MH: You haven't come across any of the Spaced Repetition software such as Anki or SuperMemo or Mnemosyne?

UA: No.

## **Conclusion**

Students progress more slowly than they would like because they are not doing enough practice during the week. Though the tutor regularly encourages students to practice daily and the Llanllawen materials provide all that students need to become

fluent, once away from the class, the majority of students do not spend enough time on learning Welsh.

## The role models offered by the National Eisteddfod's Learner of the Year competition are not seen as motivating by the majority of learners

Some students said they were motivated by the example set by the people who won or were short-listed for the Welsh Learner of the Year award. Student EB said when interviewed: 'I think, I find it inspiring. Not enough to actually stop me being lazy. But yes, I, I do sort of think, oh, I'm sure if I tried I could do that.'

However, other students felt that they could not emulate their example because of their other commitments. A third of the respondents thought that there must have been special circumstances enabling the winners to achieve a high level of Welsh so quickly. Nearly a quarter of the students actually found the apparent ease with which the award winners had achieved fluency to be off putting.

Student UA said:

'But they're special also, they're people for whom learning a language is, you know, quite a straightforward process. And, erm, I mean the two people I'm thinking of, I think they were the winner last year and the runner up, they... I mean, fair play, it's to their effort, but they did submerge themselves into the language and they did it, but they must have had special sort of ability, I think, to learn languages to be able to cope with that. [...] I mean, I would like to see a much more realistic Welsh Learner of the Year, much more realistic, you know, somebody perhaps more normal. Even if it has taken them 10 years or 20 years, you know, the plodders. You know, why do they always have to have these people who have learned it in 2 or 3 years? And I don't relate to it.'

However, according to one of the respondents to the follow up questionnaire, student UA is one of the people he would regard as having an unfair advantage because, as he put it: 'Most learner of the yearers (sic) are married to welsh speakers so false impression.' Student UA is married to a native Welsh speaker and has children

attending a Welsh-speaking school and thus ought to be ideally placed to immerse herself in the language.

### **Conclusion**

Though the Welsh Learner of the Year Award is motivating to some students, others find these high-fliers intimidating and do not relate to them.

Finding more appropriate role models, perhaps students who have struggled for some years before finding the motivation to practice daily and who have discovered ways of learning that suit their situation might prove beneficial and help to motivate learners.

# Recommendations

## Cwrs Llanllawen

All the evidence collected indicates that students find learning stories by heart to be an effective way of acquiring vocabulary and grammar. They are able to use sentences exactly as learned in the stories, where appropriate, but they also have no problem mixing and matching sentences and phrases they have memorised with other vocabulary to produce natural sounding speech. They enjoy the classes and take part enthusiastically in the games and activities, though their feelings towards the miming activity were more ambivalent. In this project the students were only asked about whether they felt the miming improved their Welsh and were not asked whether they felt the activity provided other benefits, such as encouraging class bonding, adding a little light relief to the class or helping them overcome their inhibitions. As shyness can be a problem when students try to speak Welsh with native speakers, the miming may be valuable in ways that are not directly linked to memorising sentences.

The materials are considered by the students to be of a high standard and students also find that they provide a useful resource not only for the classes but also for practising during the week. The CDs were especially valuable with students making extensive use of them in a number of ways.

It is therefore recommended that no changes be made to the current materials or class activities at present. However, it is suggested that more research is carried out into the miming activity and whether the benefits outweigh the disadvantages some students reported.

With regard to whether students have an accurate view of how much time and effort it takes to become a fluent speaker, it does appear that though the tutor urges students at the end of every session to practice in the week, most students are not doing enough to enable them to be fluent speakers by the end of the four year Llanllawen course. Once

out of the class and beyond the reach of the tutor, students are not as diligent as they should be.

It is therefore suggested that more emphasis is placed in class on how students can learn and practice between sessions. In particular, the tutor could encourage the students to share the methods they have devised to make learning more interesting and effective. Different methods suit different people, depending on learning style and other demands on their time. Students therefore need a variety of ways of learning that they can use as needed. Less imaginative and enterprising students may be missing out on ways that would really help them because they had not thought to experiment with different ways of using the materials.

Motivation is the main problem regarding the students' lack of sufficient practice during the week. Though students report that they are motivated to learn, the reasons they give are best described using Gardner's term 'orientations'. Orientations might be thought of as a long-term goal such as integrating more closely with the local Welsh community, being able to help a child with homework or get a better job. Useful though these orientations are, they are not always enough to motivate a student on a day-to-day basis and make them open the course book, practice using flash cards or listen to the CD. This day-to-day learning activity is more likely to be produced by means of intrinsic motivation; in other words, the activities must be enjoyable in themselves. This is certainly the case with the class activities, but if more emphasis was placed in the class on finding enjoyable ways of practicing between classes, the students may become more willing to put in the work necessary to achieve fluency.

The National Eisteddfod's Learner of the Year competition is intended to provide role models for other learner and to motivate them to try to emulate their success. At the moment, the Llanllawen tutor does not make use of role models as a way of trying to motivate students and I wanted to investigate whether this already existing programme might prove useful in providing good examples of successful learners. The response from the students, both in the questionnaires and the interviews, indicates that this is unlikely to prove successful and could even be detrimental to the students' attitudes.

I therefore recommend that if role models are considered as a way of motivating students to work harder during the week, student UA's suggestion of finding role models amongst those who have achieved over a longer period of time is the best approach, rather than looking for high-flyers.

## Applicability of these findings to Welsh classes in general and other language courses

Learning short story texts by heart has been shown to be an effective learning method. The Llanllawen class activities such as reading texts aloud in unison with the tutor, word bingo, 'rapping' and story jigsaws are all designed to help make the memorising more enjoyable. Learning story texts and the accompanying activities could therefore be incorporated into the traditional Welsh courses such as Wlpan, Pellach and Uwch. They would also be applicable to other language classes, whatever language is being taught. I would therefore recommend that the methods used in Cwrs Llanllawen are more widely disseminated with a view to encouraging tutors to incorporate some or all of them into their classes.

## Topics for further investigation

Motivating students to work daily on their Welsh is the biggest problem tutors face and it is a problem that is very difficult for a tutor who only sees students once a week to address successfully. Motivation is not just a problem for Llanllawen students, it applies to anyone learning Welsh or any other language or in fact any skill-based learning such as playing a musical instrument or becoming a writer.

Tutors can make classes as interesting and engaging as possible, but students spend the majority of their time elsewhere. In some situations, it is possible to hold classes or training sessions daily or at least several times a week. This was the approach taken

by the intensive French classes referred to in the literature section and is a tactic employed by schools regarding sports. It is also the basis of the original Wlpan course in which classes were held several times a week or even daily. However, this is not normally a practical proposition when teaching adults who have other demands on their time.

Norris-Holt suggests that short-term goals might help, also that the texts need to be interesting. Llanllawen offers both these. The short-term goal is to learn the current story by heart and students reported finding the text engaging. However, this is still not enough to ensure that students commit to sufficient daily practice to become fluent. Though they do enough to manage in the class activities, the sentences are not memorised sufficiently to still be retained six months or a year later.

Further research into ways of engaging students with their learning on a daily basis is required and there are various possibilities to explore.

One well established method of improving motivation is to use a mentor who will contact a student regularly and encourage them in their efforts. In fact attempts have been made in previous years in the Llanllawen classes to encourage students to find a native speaker who will act as their mentor, but the project has never really taken off due to being unable to find people to volunteer for the job. The Clwb Llanllawen was supposed to provide an opportunity for native speakers to meet and interact with the learners, but though Clwb Llanllawen is well attended by learners, most of the native speakers who go to the meetings are members of staff from the college running the classes. A formal mentoring scheme in which the mentors are given training in how to best help learners and are then paid for each contact session is likely to be much more successful, but funding would be required to pay for this. Similarly, a campaign to encourage native speakers to interact with learners, both in the community and at events like the Clwb Llanllawen meetings may be beneficial, but would require funding. In her book *Think Without Limits: You can speak Welsh* Lynda Pritchard Newcombe lists twelve tips for Welsh-speakers who encounter learners, but these need to be publicised more widely. (Newcombe, p. 162)

The responses to the questionnaires show that Welsh TV and radio was popular amongst students. S4C do provide services for learners on their website, but at present there are no programmes directly aimed at learners. Not all students have Internet access or the fast broadband connection needed to stream the videos, so programmes for learners would be a valuable resource. Suggestions includes: drama aimed at adults using simpler language and a slightly slower speaking pace than the current output, short news bulletins in which the language is kept simpler and new vocabulary is explained, and/or available as subtitles (similar in style to the Newsbeat programme aimed at teenagers on Radio 1), fly-on-the-wall documentaries following the lives of students learning Welsh and their attempts to use the language in different situations. If done well, these could also be of interest to native speakers and would help bridge the divide between these groups and help them to understand one another's problems when it comes to conversing together.

Clwb Llanllawen (the spin off social group) already organises talks, games evenings, guided walks and trips to places of interest. The club needs continued support so that these activities can be maintained and extended. Organisations such as the Merched y Wawr, Cymdeithas Edward Llwyd and the National Eisteddfod do support and encourage learners, though it is likely that not all students are aware of the opportunities they provide. Encouraging direct links between these organisations and the learners in the Welsh classes is likely to prove beneficial.

Establishing new branches of Clwb Llanllawen in different parts of North Wales and extending the idea further afield to Mid and South Wales is another possibility that could be explored. This would enable learners who at present cannot travel to Ruthin where the club meetings are held to participate in the activities offered.

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## Appendix

# Observation Sheet – Welsh for Adults

Class: LL 1 Date/Time: 9/11/10 10.00 am - 12.00 pm

Time	Teacher	Students	Activity/notes
0.01	2C	8C	Tutor welcoming the class. Students acknowledge the greetings.
0.02	5C		Tutor explains about the video of the play performed by one of the other groups now being available on the website.
0.03	5C		
0.04	4C & 6C	9C	Tutor talks to the class. Students listening and responding.
0.05			
0.06	4C & 6C		A student asks about an absent class member. Tutor responds and explains why they are no longer in the class. (They have transferred to an Uwch class which suits them better.)
0.07	6C	8C	Tutor leads the students in reading the play they are learning. Tutor reads a sentence or phrase, the students repeat it after her.
0.08	6C	8C	
0.09	6C	8C	
0.10	2C & 6C	9C & 8C	Interruption as a student with a small child arrives late. The class quickly settles and tutor and class continue to read the play together.
0.11	6C	8C	
0.12	6C	8C	The tutor picks up on a pronunciation point and makes the class repeat a sentence several times to ensure they have got it correct.
0.13	6C	8C	
0.14	6C		The tutor reminds the students of how the bingo game is played. (This group contains some people who have not done Llanllawen but who have learned on other courses and are therefore not yet familiar with the Llanllawen activities.) While the students got their cards organised, the tutor talks with one student. She gives the Welsh for a phrase the student doesn't know.
0.15	5C	9E & 9C	
0.16	6C	8C	The bingo game begins and the students listen as the tutor reads the story. Random sentences at first, then right through from the beginning.
0.17	6C	8C	
0.18		8C	A student shouts 'tŷ!' and becomes the new reader after the tutor has told the class to pass the words around the circle. The student reads in Welsh, looking only at the English words. When a student has a word that has just been read out, they say the word aloud.
0.19		8C	
0.20	4E	8C	The round ends and the words are passed along again. The tutor asks the students to give the Welsh for the words and phrases that are on the cards she's holding. Another student reads the story aloud.
0.21		8C	

0.22		8C	The students are listening and saying any words that they have on their cards as they come up in the reading. At the end of that round, the tutor asks the students to put a phrase into the past tense.
0.23	4E & 4C	8C	
0.24	4C	9E	Tutor asks who said, 'tŷ!' A student asks a question in English about a particular way of wording something. Tutor asks if they are ready. The students respond. Another student reads the story in Welsh, looking at the English text.
0.25	4C	8C	
0.26		8C	Another round, another student reads. The others listen intently, saying any words that they have on their cards as they come up in the story.
0.27		8C	
0.28	2C	8C	The game continues. When someone shouts 'tŷ!' the student who was calling follows the ritual of asking the winner if they will read and they agree. Then the student who was calling asks everyone to pass the words around the table so many times. The tutor is just playing the game without helping or prompting the students in any way, though at the changeover of the callers, she offers encouragement.
0.29		8C	
0.30		8C	The game continues. All the students read in Welsh from the English text. The tutor encourages, saying, "Gwych!"
0.31	2C	8C	
0.32	5C & 5E	8C	The tutor encourages the students to read from the English. She offers more vocabulary. The student who won the last round takes over as bingo caller and asks if everyone is ready.
0.33		8C	
0.34	5C & 5E	8C	The game continues and a student wins for the second time. Student says they have already read. The tutor reminds the caller of the phrase to use when asking for a volunteer to read. The tutor reminds them that it's like a ceremony.
0.35	5C & 5E	8C	
0.36	5C & 5E	8C	Tutor tells the students to use the same phrases every time. The next student reads. The tutor gently corrects them when they stumble over a phrase.
0.37	5C & 5E	8C	
0.38	5C & 5E	9E	The tutor explains some phrases. A student asks a question in English. The tutor explains the meaning of a phrase in English.
0.39	5C & 5E		
0.40		8C	The game continues with the caller asking the winning student if they will read next.
0.41		8C & 9C	
0.42	6C	8C	The game continues. One student reads more hesitantly from the English. The tutor directs this time at the changeover of readers.
0.43		8C	
0.44	6C	8C	The tutor encourages the next student to read looking only at the English. All the students have been participating well and concentrating on the reading.
0.45		8C	

0.46	6C	9E	A student asks a question in English about what a phrase means. The tutor responds in Welsh.
0.47	6C		
0.48	2C	9C	The game ends. Everyone has now had a turn at reading. The tutor leaves the room briefly and the students talk amongst themselves in Welsh. The tutor returns and explains a phrase using the flipchart.
0.49	5E & 5C		
0.50	5C		Tutor continues explaining phrases while writing on the flipchart. She speaks mostly in Welsh, just explaining the meaning in English. A student asks a question in English. The tutor explains in English about the future tenses.
0.51	5E	9E	
0.52	5E		The tutor explains in English about the mime and how to represent the different tenses with the body. The body stands in the present tense, the future is in front and the past behind.
0.53	5E		
0.54	6C	9E	The tutor announces that she will go and put the kettle on for tea break. She tells the students in Welsh to do the story jigsaws and hands out envelopes containing the cut up cards with words, sentences and phrases. The students talk amongst themselves in English.
0.55	6C	9E	
0.56		9E & 9C	The students do the jigsaws while the tutor makes the tea and coffee. Some students talk in English, some read the sentences aloud in Welsh as they place them in order. All are focused on the game.
0.57		9E & 9C	
0.58		9E & 9C	The jigsaw game continues. The students are still talking amongst themselves, getting louder but still focused on the game.
0.59		9E & 9C	
1.00		9E & 9C	The students say the sentences aloud as they place them in the right position. Two students are talking together in Welsh.
1.01		9E & 9C	
1.02		9C	A student calls to another student in Welsh about biscuits for break time.
1.03		9E & 9C	
1.04			
1.05			
1.06			
1.07			
1.08		9E	The students are talking about filming the rehearsals for the play the group is working on. Students ask questions in English about holidays.
1.09		9E	
1.10	4C & 5E	9C & 9E	There is a discussion of dates in a mixture of Welsh and English.
1.11	4C & 5E	9C & 9E	

1.12	5E	9E	The tutor explains 1-to-1 with a student in English about a word. Tutor then asks the class in Welsh whether they went to the Clwb Llanllawen the previous week. Tutor and class discuss the talk given by the speaker.
1.13	4C	9C	
1.14	5C	9E & 9C	A student starts to ask a question in English and changes to Welsh. The tutor answers in Welsh, offering new vocabulary. She writes words on the flipchart.
1.15	5C		
1.16	2C & 4C	9C	The tutor talks 1-to-1 with a student in Welsh while the others finish the questionnaire. Tutor talks about the success of Clwb Llanllawen in getting people to talk to one another.
1.17	5C & 5E		
1.18	5C		Tutor tells an anecdote in Welsh. The students respond non-verbally, showing interest. Tutor continues talking about Clwb Llanllawen in Welsh. A student asks a question in English.
1.19	5C	9E	
1.20	5C & 5E		The tutor explains more vocabulary, writing on the flipchart.
1.21	5C & 5E		
1.22	6C	8C	The group begins work on a new page of the drama. Tutor reads the text in Welsh, the students read it after her. The tutor spots a typing error in the script and the students correct their copies.
1.23	6C	8C	
1.24	5C & 5E	9E	Tutor explains a mutation in a mixture of Welsh and English. Then she continues with the reading. A student asks a question in English. Tutor responds in English.
1.25	5E		
1.26	5E & 5C		Tutor tells the students in English where to indicate the soft mutation by writing in an asterisk. She explains the aspirate mutation in the phrase 'her dress'.
1.27	5E & 5C		
1.28	6C	8C	The tutor continues with the reading, the students repeating each sentence after her. The tutor explains the soft mutation after yn and suggests students mark it with an asterisk. Tutor picks up the students on the pronunciation of "dewch".
1.29	6C & 5E	8C	
1.30	5E		Tutor comments on how a particular phrasing, which sounds strange when translated into English is very natural Welsh. Tutor explains that the use of the imperfect tense is not the same as in English and Welsh uses the imperfect tense more than English does.
1.31	5E		
1.32	5E & 6C	9E & 8C	Tutor explains about a colloquial expression used in the play. A student responds in English, offering a comment.
1.33	6C	8C	
1.34	6C & 4C	8C	The tutor repeats the phrase and makes the students repeat the phrase to perfect the pronunciation. tutor asks a direct question in Welsh. The students respond in Welsh.
1.35	4C	8C	
1.36	6C	8C	A student offers an example from the previous act. The reading continues. A student asks another grammar question in English.
1.37	6C	9E	

1.38	5E	9E	<p>Tutor explains the grammar, using the flipchart to write on. Another student asks a question in English about the meaning of a phrase. Tutor reassures the students that, "It will all make sense in time." Tutor and students discuss the subtle differences in meaning between the Welsh and the English.</p> <p>The discussion moves on to encompass translations and doing simultaneous translation. Tutor warns about translating directly from the English to the Welsh because it won't produce natural language.</p> <p>The tutor asks the students in Welsh to choose a sentence. The students in turn read out the sentence they have chosen. The students write their sentences on cards and pieces of paper.</p> <p>Tutor asks a student to read their sentence. The students "pass" the sentence around the table to get the pronunciation and rhythm right.</p> 
1.39	5E	9E	
1.40	5E	9E	
1.41	5E		
1.42	6C	8C	
1.43	6C	8C	
1.44	6C	8C	
1.45	6C	8C	
1.46	6C	8C	
1.47	6C	8C	
1.48	6C	8C	
1.49	6C	8C	
1.50	6C	8C	
1.51	6C	8C	
1.52	6C	8C	When a student stumbles over a difficult sentence, the tutor picks up on it. She makes the students repeat the sentence until they have got it. She offers variations of the sentence.
1.53	6C & 5E	8C	
1.54	6C & 2C		Tutor goes around the table, asking each student to say their sentence and work out how to mime it. Laughter and confusion when a student says the sentence in the wrong language.
1.55	6C & 2C		
1.56	6C, 2C		Each student in turn works out a mime for their sentence. There is laughter at one male student's mime for "wraig" (woman).
1.57	6C, 2C		
1.58	6C & 2C		There is more laughter as other students try to work out a mime for their sentence. Laughter again at a slight confusion over meaning. All the laughter is genuine and good-natured.
1.59	6C	9E & 9C	As the class comes to an end, the tutor asks students to work on learning the page for next week. Students pack up their things and as the others talk amongst themselves and gather up the cups, the tutor talks 1-to-1 in Welsh with a student.
2.00			

# Observation Sheet – Welsh for Adults

Class: Llanllawen 1 Date/Time: 22/03/11 2.00-4.00 pm

Time	Teacher	Students	Activity/notes
0.01	2E & 3E	9E	Tutor welcoming people. Tutor encourages one of the students to share her 'Waw ffactor'. She has had a comment on Facebook in Welsh. Tutor translates the comment and uses it to teach the class new words which they note down.
0.02	2E & 3E	9E	
0.03	2E & 3E	9E	
0.04	2E & 3E	9E	
0.05	2E & 3E	9E	
0.06	2E & 3E	9E	
0.07	2E & 3E	9E	
0.08	2E & 3E	9E	A student asks a question to clarify the spelling of a plural.
0.09	2E & 3E	9E	
0.10	6E	10E	Two students (male) were talking together and had to be brought to order by tutor.
0.11	4C	8E	The class discussed with tutor when to use i or am. Tutor asked a student about another 'Waw ffactor'.
0.12	3E & 3C	8E	Tutor encourage class to thank people for speaking Welsh with them.
0.13		10E	Tutor giving out verb tense handouts. Students talking amongst themselves while the tutor does this.
0.14	5E & 5C	9E	Tutor going over the verb tense handout, indicating which ones the class has already covered and what is still to come.
0.15		10E	Students talk amongst themselves as they check that they have the correct handout.
0.16	5E		Tutor explains the different ways of counting in Welsh, the old way and the new way taught in schools.
0.17	5E		Tutor explains that the old way is still used with time and people's ages while maths is done using the new way of saying numbers.
0.18	6C	8C	Tutor begins leading the class in reading the story. Tutor reads a sentence or phrase, the students repeat it after her.
0.19	6C	8C	
0.20	5E		Tutor explains about how the verb changes: wnes i, wnaeth mam. Tutor mentions miming the verb tenses and puts her hand back to point in order to indicate distant past.
0.21	5E	9E	A student mentions having hurt her shoulder. Tutor explains the Welsh for 'shoulder' and writes it on the whiteboard. The student comments that the word is useful.
0.22	5E	9E	
0.23	5E	9E	Tutor explains the gender of the word for 'shoulder'. She reminds the students that there is no 'it' in Welsh.

0.24	5E	9E	Tutor reminds students to always go for the simplest way of saying something and not to remain silent because they can't be fluent.
0.25	5E	9E	Student asks about why 'yn' is used. Tutor tells student not to worry about grammar. Refers o 'yn' as 'glue'.
0.26	5E		Tutor explains that it's best not to analyse, just learn the sentences and it will become automatic.
0.27	5E		Tutor encourages the students to learn the stories thoroughly. She explains that grammar won't help you to speak.
0.28	5E & 4C		Tutor asks each student in turn what their sentence for the mime is.
0.29	6E & 4C		Tutor explains how to mime the past tense.
0.30	6E & 6C		Tutor explains about miming the 'roedd' tense, the continuous past.
0.31	6E & 6C	8C	The selected student says their sentence, miming it as they do so.
0.32	6C	8C	Student throws the soft ball to another student and she reads her sentence. All the students mime her sentence.
0.33	6C	8C	
0.34	6C	8C	Tutor asks a student to repeat a sentence to perfect the pronunciation.
0.35	6C	9E	A student asks for clarification on a mime. The activity then continues, throwing the ball to another student.
0.36	6C	8C	Tutor asks a student to say, 'Pasiwch y brawtheg...!' Student responds, telling the others to pass the sentences around the circle.
0.37	6C	8C	The students use the set patterns, almost group rituals, in passing the sentence cards around and saying, 'Wnei ddechrau.'
0.38	6C	9C	One student asks for the word for 'ball'. Tutor provides the word.
0.39	6C	8C	The activity continues with the students throwing the ball to the next student to mime their sentence. When they've guessed what it is, the group say the sentence out loud.
0.40	6C	8C	
0.41	6C	8C	Laughter at one of the mimes.
0.42	6C & 2C	8C	Tutor praises the students for guessing the mime.
0.43	4E	8C & 9E	The tutor says one of the sentences in English and asks for a translation. The students say the sentence in Welsh. A student asks for the Welsh for 'afternoon'.
0.44	4C	8C	The tutor goes around the group asking each student in turn what they had for breakfast.
0.45	4E & 4C	8C & 9E	Tutor gets each student to repeat the pattern, 'Wnes i gael..... i frecwast' filling in the appropriate foods in the gap.
0.46	6E & 6C	8C	Tutor gets the class to practice the 'uw' sound for 'uwd' (porridge)

0.47	2	8C	The tutor now gets the miming activity underway again. A student passes the ball, the next student mimes the sentence, the group says the sentence in chorus.
0.48	2	8C	
0.49	5E & 6C	8C	Tutor picks the students up on their pronunciation of the word 'grisiau'. She makes the class repeat it several times.
0.50	6E		Tutor winds up the miming ready for the break.
0.51			Tea break. Students talk amongst themselves as they fill out the questionnaires I have given them. 
0.52		10E	
0.53		10E	
0.54		10E	
0.55		10E	
0.56		10E	
0.57		10E	
0.58		10E	
0.59		10E	
1.00		10E	
1.01		10E	
1.02		10E	
1.03		10E	
1.04		10E	
1.05		10E	
1.06		10E	
1.07	6E & 2E		Tutor gathers the class together again to start the next activity.
1.08	5E		Tutor explains the different tense usage in Welsh and English. In English we would say, 'I needed,' but in Welsh it would be, 'I was needing.'
1.09	5E		Tutor reminds students that 'angen' and 'isio' don't have 'glue'. Tutor refers students to the 'Pink Tense' on the handout of verbs.
1.10	5E		Tutor explains the colloquial usage in which 'roedd' loses the 'r' to become 'oedd'. She explains that most people say, 'on i' not 'ron i'.
1.11	6C	8C	Tutor gets students to repeat the sentence, 'Ew! On i isio paned,' in as Welsh a way as possible.
1.12	6C		The next activity is the Word Bingo. Students take out their words (written on bits of card or small slips of paper) and arrange them in front of them.

1.13	6C	8C	Tutor asks if students are ready. As far as possible the rituals of the class are done in Welsh.
1.14	6C	8C	The tutor reads the story aloud. Beginning by reading random sentences from different places in the story. If a student has one of the words that she reads out, they say that word aloud and move it to one side.
1.15	6C	8C	One student calls, 'Tŷ!' (house) Tutor asks if they will read. The student agrees. Tutor asks the students to pass the words around the table. The tutor is now left without any words and says so in Welsh. The student who is about to read gives her their set of words.
1.16	6C	8C	
1.17	6E		A student asks for the Welsh for 'English'. Tutor explains 'Saesneg'. The student says that she'll try to read the story by looking only at the English translation.
1.18	6E		The tutor explains that the idea is for them to be able to look at the English and say the story correctly and fluently in Welsh.
1.19		8C	The student reads the story for the bingo. As each student hears a word that they have in front of them, they say that word aloud and put it to one side.
1.20		8C	
1.21		8C	Another student shouts, 'Tŷ!'
1.22	6E		The tutor explains that the student who has just been reading should ask the one who has just won if they will read.
1.23	6E		The tutor explains how they can jump around the sentence when they first start to read and then start from the beginning and read the story straight through.
1.24		8C & 9E	A student comments that it's harder to remember the sentences out of order. Another student starts reading the story aloud.
1.25	2C	8C	Laughter as a student reacts late to hearing a word, repeating the word long after the others have spotted it.
1.26		8C	The student (reading from the English) is a little hesitant but the tutor praises and encourages.
1.27	2C	8C	The game continues. The next person to win has already had a turn at reading, so the ritual request for someone else to volunteer to read is followed by another student taking a turn at being 'bingo caller'.
1.28	2C	9C	Laughter as the new reader says, 'Brysiwch bawb!' encouraging the others to hurry as they arrange their words for the next round.
1.29	2E	8C	Another student reads and looks startled when the tutor says the word out loud because she is playing the game too. She jokes, 'No, I wasn't correcting you.'
1.30			The game continues as before with the reading aloud and the turn taking.
1.31			
1.32	2C	8C	A student wins. Again there is the ritual of asking if they will read and asking everyone to pass the words around the table so many times. The tutor makes an encouraging comment.

1.33		8C	Another student starts reading the story aloud.
1.34		8C	The game continues as before with a new student reading aloud.
1.35		8C	A student calls, 'Tŷ!' The ritual of finding someone to read and passing the words so many places around the table follows.
1.36		8C	Again a student is without any words so says, 'Sgen i ddim geiriau.'
1.37		8C	Another student starts reading the story aloud and the game continues.
1.38	2C, 6C & 6E	8C	The tutor wins this time. The student reading asks who hasn't read yet. The tutor encourages the students, telling them the formula to use to ask the question.
1.39			A reader is found, the words are passed around again and set out for the next round.
1.40		8C	Another student starts reading the story aloud from the English.
1.41		8C	
1.42		8C	The final student wins. All have now had a turn at reading.
1.43	4C & 4E	8C	The tutor asks the class for the Welsh translation of the words she has in front of her, saying, 'Be dy "dark" yn Gymraeg?' and so on. The students respond in chorus.
1.44	6E	9E	A student asks how the 'an' makes the word ffodus into a negative.
1.45	5E	9E	There is a brief discussion about the meanings of words in English and Latin, 'an' and 'un'
1.46		8C	Now a student asks, 'Be dy ....?' from the bingo cards they have in front of them. The class answers in chorus.
1.47	6E	10	Tutor asks the students to pass the words back to their owners. The students talk amongst themselves.
1.48	6E		Tutor asks students to look at the English (Saesneg) and gets them to repeat, 'Dw i'n edrych ar y Saesneg.'
1.49	6E	8C	Next she gets the students to change it to, 'Dan ni'n edrych ar y Saesneg.'
1.50	6C	8C	The class reads the story in unison in Welsh from the English text.
1.51	6E		Tutor says they will now move on to the Pwytau sy'n codi (Points arising).
1.52	5E		Tutor explains which tense 'wnes i' actually is and that 'I got up' is the same as 'I did get up'.
1.53	5E		The tutor explains that for this tense 'yes' for every person is 'do' and 'no' is 'naddo'.
1.54	4E	8C	Tutor asks what I did dance is in Welsh. The class say the answer in unison.
1.55	6C	8C	They do the same with other verbs.
1.56	6C	8C	

1.57	6C	8C	Tutor asks students to underline the letters that will undergo a soft mutation and put a line through those letters that will be dropped.
1.58	6C	8C	
1.59	6C	8C	The tutor reads the verb, eg dysgu Cymraeg and the class put the correct form into the sentence by saying it in unison.
2.00	2C & 6C	8C	
2.01	6E		Tutor tells the class to work on the story during the week.
2.02	6E	9C	Class bids farewell to one another in Welsh.

# Observation Sheet – Welsh for Adults

Class: Llanllawen 2 Date/Time: 23/03/11 2.00-4.00 pm

Time	Teacher	Students	Activity/notes
0.01			Students arriving, arranging tables for the class. 
0.02			
0.03			
0.04			
0.05			
0.06			
0.07			
0.08	3E	9E	Tutor asked if anyone had a "Waw ffactor". This led to answering a question about the translation of Horseshoe Pass in which the Welsh and English do not mean the same. Also a question about the meaning of 'garth'.
0.09	3E	9E	
0.10	6C & 6E	9E	Tutor introduces the story they are doing that lesson. (Story 8, Book 2)
0.11	6C	8C	Tutor reads the story and the students repeat after her.
0.12	6C	8C	
0.13	6C	8C	
0.14	6C & 6E	8C	Tutor suggests getting out the handout showing all verb tenses, colour coded.
0.15	6E & 5E		Tutor goes through the story sentence by sentence, explaining the translation and the difference between the tenses. (Welsh makes more use of the imperfect tense than English does so a literal translation won't always work.)
0.16	5E		
0.17	5E	10E	Confused discussion as they debate whether a colour on the handout is blue or green or turquoise. Tutor reminds students of the soft mutation after "wnes i".
0.18	6C	8C	Students repeat the sentence after Tutor.
0.19	5E	9E	Tutor gets students to mime the two different past tenses. A student asks a question about where to put in 'yn'.
0.20	5E		Tutor explains that if they learn the story, it will form a blueprint and then it will seem natural.
0.21	5E		Tutor explains how language isn't done consciously. If there is enough input, output will eventually become automatic. Tutor emphasises that students must know the story 10+ out of 10.
0.22	5E		
0.23	5E		Tutor suggests speaking first and then writing what you have just said.
0.24	5E		

0.25	5E	9E	Another question about 'roedd'. The student says it makes her think of a question because in English, questions begin with 'was'.
0.26	5E & 6E		Tutor answers the question.
0.27	6C	8C	Tutor returns to explaining each sentence & students repeating the sentences to get the meaning and the pronunciation.
0.28	5E & 6C	8C	Tutor emphasising the pronunciation is 'pethe' not 'pethau'.
0.29	5E & 6C	8C	Tutor suggests that they remember the difficulty of stretching to mime the past tense 'wnaeth' as a reminder that it, 'pushes the soft mutation.'
0.30	5E		Tutor explains that in English we would say, "I did want / I wanted". In Welsh we would use the imperfect "on i isio".
0.31	5E		
0.32	5E		Tutor explains that once students grasp the imperfect tense they will understand a lot more because the Welsh use that tense a lot.
0.33	5E		
0.34	5E		
0.35	5E		Explains the origin of isio and angen not having 'glue' is due to the original being, "I am having a need of a cup of tea on me," but is has become more like the English in modern Welsh.
0.36	5E		Tutor suggests 20-30 minutes a day of learning to master the story.
0.37	5E	9E	Tutor replies in response to a question about whether it would sound really wrong to make a mistake by suggesting that the students speak quickly and confidently to make native speakers think they are better than they are.
0.38	5E		
0.39	4C	8C	Tutor asks students to suggest variations on the pattern, 'on i isio...'
0.40	4C	8C	
0.41	5E		Tutor explains that a construction will sound weird if translated literally. For example 'tan iddi hi gyrraedd'.
0.42	5E & 6C		Tutor says the sentences slowly, explaining their meanings and pronunciation.
0.43	5E & 6C	8C	Students repeat the sentences.
0.44		9E	A student arrives late, held up by work. She apologises.
0.45	5E & 6C		Tutor continues explaining the sentences. Explains the use of 'cael'
0.46	5E	9E	Students start talking amongst themselves about something while Tutor writes on the board to explain why 'roedd' is singular with 'Lowri and Gerallt'. (In answer to a question from a student.)
0.47	5E	10E	
0.48	5E	9E	A student asks a question about 'i fynny' and what form of 'the' is required.

0.49	5E	9E	Tutor writes the different forms on the board and explains about Welsh not liking two vowels together.
0.50	5E		
0.51	6C	8C	The students start repeating the sentences after the tutor again.
0.52	5E & 6C	8C	Tutor gets students to keep repeating 'dach chi'n gw'bod be?'' quickly to encourage them to sound like a native.
0.53	5E & 6C	8C	Tutor explains another sentence. Students repeat 'lliwio, lliwio'
0.54	5E		Tutor explains use of soft mutation after 'ei' to indicate 'his hair', aspirate mutation for 'ei' when it means 'her'.
0.55	5E		Tutor explains the rarity of the aspirate mutation and that it is dying out.
0.56	5E & 6C	8C	Tutor tells students not to worry if they forget the grammar but that they will remember the Welsh for 'she has coloured her hair pink'.
0.57	5E & 6C	8C	The students repeat the sentence in Welsh.
0.58	5E & 6C	8C	Explains another sentence 'ti'm yn gall' (you're not sensible). Explains that ddim has changed to 'm
0.59	5E & 6C	8C	The students repeat the sentence.
1.00	5E & 6C		Tutor explains that there is not verb when using 'bod'.
1.01	5E		Uses the Llanllawen colour coding to explain which verb tense is being used. Pink = imperfect, green = total past.
1.02	5E & 6C	8C	Students repeating sentences and words after the tutor.
1.03	5E & 6C	8C	
1.04	5E & 6C		Tutor encourages students to speak quickly and confidently.
1.05		10E	TEA BREAK
1.06		10E	Students talking amongst themselves in English while filling out the questionnaires.
1.07		10E	
1.08		10E	
1.09		10E	
1.10		10E	
1.11		10E	Students talking amongst themselves in English while filling out the questionnaires.
1.12		10E	
1.13		10E	
1.14		10E	
1.15		10E	

1.16	5E	9E	Tutor mentions the drama being performed by the two most advanced classes. She explains that students will be given pieces about the characters and a synopsis of the plot to help them understand what is going on. There is a little confused talk. A student asks what is 'hard' re the story being performed.
1.17			
1.18			
1.19			
1.20			
1.21	6E		The class refocuses on the task in hand.
1.22			
1.23			
1.24	6E		The students chose their sentences for the mime.
1.25	6C	8C	The tutor leads the students in 'rapping' the sentences to get the rhythm and fluency.
1.26	6E & 6C	8C	Tutor asks a student what her sentence is. Student responds by saying the sentence. The class repeats the sentence in unison a few times.
1.27	6C	8C	Tutor picks up the students on the pronunciation of 'wneath' and 'wneathon' and makes them say it correctly.
1.28	6C	8C	Tutor makes a joke about 'neigh!' The students pass the pronunciation around the table.
1.29	6C	8C	'wnaethon ni fynd' The students pass the pronunciation around the table. Then they repeat the whole sentence.
1.30	6C	8C	Tutor asks in Welsh what the next sentence is. Reminds the students again that there is no verb after 'bod'.
1.31	6C	8C	Instructs the students in Welsh, 'tair gwaith'. The students repeat the sentence, 'Jini ti'm yn gall'.
1.32	6C	8C	Tutor asks for another sentence. Class repeats part of the sentence.
1.33	6E	10E & 8C	Murmurs of confusion about something. Tutor tells class to try the pronunciation of 'pethau gwirion'. Tutor picks up and corrects the students' pronunciation of 'g'neud'.
1.34	6C	8C	Tutor repeats 'Dach chi'n gw'bod 'be' several times with the class.
1.35	6C	8C	Tutor asks for another sentence. Class repeats the sentence.
1.36	6C	8C	Tutor asks for another sentence. Class repeats the sentence.
1.37	3E	8C & 9E	Tutor asks for another sentence. Class repeats the sentence.
1.38	6C	8C	The activity progresses to adding a mime to the sentence. The first student begins to devise a mime. Another student asks which sentence they are doing.
1.39	6C	8C	The class repeats the sentence in unison while copying the mime.
1.40	6C & 6E	8C	The next student works out a mime for the sentence. The class repeats the sentence in unison while copying the mime.

1.41	2E	8C	Tutor encourages a student to devise a mime. Laughter from group.
1.42	2E & 6C	8C	Applause and laughter as the ball is successfully thrown right across the table to another student.
1.43	4E & 6C	8C	Amusement over the mime for 'Dach chi'n gw'bod be'?'
1.44	2E	8C	A student works out another mime. The class repeats it. Laughter as the ball flies wildly across the room.
1.45	2E & 6C	8C	Tutor encourages a student to devise a mime.
1.46	2E & 6C	8C	The next student works out a mime for the sentence. The class repeats the sentence in unison while copying the mime.
1.47	2E & 6C	8C	This process is repeated several times.
1.48	6C	8C	
1.49		10E & 9E	A student makes a joke about miming 'weekend'. Laughter and confusion.
1.50		8C	Applause as a student catches an awkward throw.
1.51		8C	Students now mime the sentence without speaking and the rest of the group say the sentence in unison.
1.52		8C	Tutor encourages the students to repeat the sentence together. Another student does their mime, the rest of the group guesses and say the sentence aloud.
1.53		8C	This pattern continues for the next few minutes.
1.54	2E	8C	Tutor makes a joke about 'Jean' (there are 3 Jeans in the class). Laughter at a wild throw of the ball.
1.55		8C	Students now mime the sentence without speaking and the rest of the group say the sentence in unison.
1.56	2C	8C	The tutor now mimes her sentence. The class repeats it aloud. Next comes the ritual of passing the sentences around the circle.
1.57	6E	8C	The tutor now mimes her new sentence. The class repeats it aloud.
1.58	2E	8C	Another student mimes, the class repeat the sentence aloud. Tutor suggests just doing a couple more sentences.
1.59	6E	8C	Another students mimes, the class repeat the sentence aloud. Tutor tells the students to pass the sentences back to their owners.
2.00			Class finishes. Tutor encourages students to 'Really hit that story' during the week in preparation for the next class.
2.01			Class disperses.

# Observation Sheet – Welsh for Adults

Class: Llanllawen 4 Date/Time: 21/03/11 10.00 am - 12.00 pm

Time	Teacher	Students	Activity/notes
0.01			Class arriving and settling.
0.02	2E	8E	Introducing me (as observer) to the class.
0.03	4		Tutor asks if the students have brought the pictures to talk about.
0.04	2C & 5C		Welcoming a couple of latecomers. Tutor starts explaining about the Lleisiau'r Llan class (more advanced learners) and the drama they are putting on.
0.05	5C	8 & 10	The tutor picks up that some weren't understanding the explanation in Welsh about the Lleisiau'r Llan class and the play. Repeats the information in English.
0.06	5E	8	
0.07	5E	8	
0.08	5 & 2	8	Tutor talks about the pilates class she attends, which is taught through the medium of Welsh. Jokes about also going to the English class sometimes.
0.09	5 & 2	8	
0.10	5 & 2	8	The class listens to the tutor's explanation about what the follow up class Lleisiau'r Llan does. Sometimes they ask a question.
0.11			I explained briefly (in English) why I was there and the purpose of the observation.
0.12			
0.13	5C & 2C		Tutor explains one of the photos that a student has brought into class (as requested by tutor last week).
0.14	4C & 2C	8C	The student talks about the photo in Welsh. Tutor adds words that they don't know and occasionally corrects their Welsh.
0.15	2C	8C	A student shows B&W wedding photo and talks about it. Tutor provides words the student doesn't know and encourages when student hesitates or stumbles.
0.16	4C & 2E	8C	Tutor asks the student a question in Welsh about a family relationship. Later the class respond in unison to a direct question.
0.17	4C	8C	
0.18	5E	8E	The student continues to talk in Welsh about the photo. Tutor picks up a point about a verb tense and explains it to the students.
0.19	5E	9E	Tutor makes a note on the board about verb & mutation in response to a question.
0.20	4C	8C	Tutor encourages a student and makes a comment about the photo, encouraging the class to agree.
0.21	4C	8C	The student continues to read their prepared piece. Tutor encourages questions from the class. Tutor calls on another volunteer to speak.

0.22	3C	8C	Tutor encourages another student to talk about their photo in Welsh, which they do, sometimes slipping into English.
0.23		9C	Tutor brings the class back to Welsh. Another student asks a question about the photo.
0.24	5E	9E	Tutor explains a language point.
0.25	3C & 2C	8C	Tutor asks another student to speak. She talks about her photo in Welsh.
0.26	2C & 4C	8C	Tutor asks a question about the photo and explains more new vocabulary.
0.27	2C & 3C	8C	Tutor asks a question of the whole class, asking them to recall a phrase they should know.
0.28	4C	8C	All the students have their attention focused on photo and are listening to what the student is saying. The student manages to speak almost entirely in Welsh with just the occasional phrase in English.
0.29	2C & 4C	8C & 8E	Tutor asks another student to speak about their photo. There is a slight digression by the student in English as she explains about family resemblances.
0.30	2C	8C & 8E	
0.31		8C	The tutor asks the other students to ask questions about the photo. The photo is passed around the table. The student explains the photo and the tutor offers any words he doesn't know. The tutor asks where they lived and whether they spoke Welsh.
0.32		8C	
0.33		8C	Tutor asks another student to speak about her photos. The student is fluent as she reads what she has prepared.
0.34		8C	The class listen in silence.
0.35	5E	9E & 9C	A student asks a question, "What is 'intelligent' in Welsh?" Tutor supplies the answer and the student says in Welsh, "They look intelligent."
0.36		10	Murmuring about the table as the students agree and/or write down the word. Another student is asked to speak about their picture.
0.37		8C	The student explains in Welsh but repeats some sentences in English to clarify for fellow students or when he runs out of words in Welsh. The class laugh at the joke when he says, "He was English, but he was a nice man."
0.38		8C	
0.39		8C	The class applaud the student's explanation about his family.
0.40		8C	The tutor explains some new vocabulary. She asks another student if they have brought a picture.
0.41		8C	As the student shows the picture, the tutor jokes, "He looks a bit of all right." Laughter from class.
0.42		8C	The student explains the photo and the tutor encourages with non-verbal ways, leaning forwards, nodding encouragingly and saying, "Hmmm," in agreement.
0.43	2C	8C	The tutor reinforces a word 'prifathro' (headmaster). She asks the class the Welsh for 'junior school'. The class respond with the answer.

0.44	2C	8C	The student continues explaining in Welsh before briefly expanding and clarifying a bit in English. The tutor congratulates the student in Welsh.
0.45	5C	8C	Tutor explains about the absence of a class member who has been travelling and whose mother has died.
0.46	4C, 4E & 2C	8C	Tutor asks another student to speak. She also asks, "How would we say, 'This picture was taken'?" The class respond in chorus.
0.47	3C & 4C	8C	The tutor rephrases what a student has said to make it more correct. She asks a question to elicit more information.
0.48	5E		Tutor explains something.
0.49	2C		The class applauds the students. Tutor goes to put the kettle on for tea break.
0.50			I give out the questionnaires and the students complete them while the tutor makes the tea and coffee.
0.51			
0.52			
0.53			
0.54			
0.55			
0.56			
0.57			Tea break & filling out the questionnaires. The class chatted together in English during this period.
0.58			
0.59			
1.00			
1.01			
1.02			
1.03			
1.04			
1.05			
1.06			
1.07			
1.08			
1.09			
1.10			
1.11	6C		Tutor gathers the class back together.

1.12	6C	8C	The class now begin work on a new story Stori 8. The class read the story aloud after the tutor.
1.13	6C	8C	
1.14	5C & 5E		The tutor explains about doing numbers (ordinals), first, second, third etc.
1.15	5C & 6C	8C	Prompted by tutor, the class reads the numbers aloud after her.
1.16	5E		Tutor explains how to do dates in Welsh.
1.17	5E	9E	Discusses dates with the students and explains how complex they are in Welsh.
1.18	6C & 5E	8C	The tutor returns to reading the story aloud, sentence by sentence. Tutor explains any mutations that occur and explains the phrase "wrth y modd".
1.19	5E	8C	Tutor explains any new vocabulary, including 'derbyn'. She corrects the students' pronunciation, insisting on them losing the English 'uh' sound and getting the correct Welsh 'er'.
1.20	5E & 6C	8C	
1.21	5E & 6C	8C	The class repeats the sentence to get the pronunciation correct.
1.22	5E & 6C	8C	The tutor explains some new constructions.
1.23	5E & 6C	8C	Tutor ensures that the students understand the new work.
1.24	2E	10E	A phone rings. Students laugh. The tutor makes a joke.
1.25	5E & 6C	8C	The tutor explains some new words and emphasises their pronunciation. She picks up the incorrect pronunciation and instructs the class to repeat the words.
1.26	5E & 4C	9E	A student questions a detail of pronunciation. The tutor asks the students to offer an alternative way of saying something using a "long winded verb" instead of "concise".
1.27	5E & 6C	8C	
1.28	5E & 6C	8C	The tutor explains about tagging an emphatic sentence in Welsh. Students repeat the phrase after her.
1.29	5E		The class laughs at a joke. Tutor explains more vocabulary.
1.30	5E & 6C		Tutor explains more vocabulary.
1.31	5E & 6C	8C & 9E	Tutor and class continue to read the story. A student asks a question.
1.32	5E	9E	A student asks a question about verb tenses, the imperfect.
1.33	5E		The tutor uses her miming system to explain verb tenses and the different past tenses. The students seem confused.
1.34	5E	10	

1.35	3E & 5E		Tutor asks the students to supply another verb for the explanation. The confused students seem to understand a little better. The tutor tries to explain that there is no one "correct" past tense; it depends on what you want to say.  ↓
1.36	3E & 5E		
1.37	3E & 5E		
1.38	3E & 5E	9E	
1.39	5E		
1.40	5E		Tutor explains that you never hear people saying the initial 'R' on the 'roedd' form (imperfect).
1.41	2E & 5E		When asked why the 'mi' is sometimes used in front of the verb and sometimes not, the tutor jokes about "the voices in my head" for including the 'mi' in the story because that was just what the character said when she was writing the story.
1.42	5E & 6C	8C	Tutor finishes explaining the vocabulary and pronunciation and the class start reading again. Whenever there is a mutation, the tutor points it out.
1.43	6C		The students chorus, "Ew!" and "llew" to get the pronunciation right. Everyone laughs.
1.44	5E & 6C	8C	The tutor leads the class through the story, line by line. She explains the mutation after 'glue'.
1.45	5E	9E	Tutor explains a point of grammar because a student has asked a question.
1.46	5E & 6C	8C & 9E	The students repeat the story after the tutor. A student asks for clarification on a point of grammar.
1.47	6C	8C	The reading gets underway again, the tutor leads the class through the story, line by line.
1.48	6C	8C	
1.49	6C	8C	
1.50	6C	9C	Tutor asks the student to choose their sentence for the mime. The students call out the sentence they have chosen.
1.51	5E		The students tear up pieces of paper to make a sentence card. Tutor negotiates a sentence with a student who hasn't yet chosen one.
1.52	6C	8C	Tutor reminds students to put the English sentence on the back. Students 'rap' the sentence, passing it around the circle. Tutor asks another student for their sentence. The 'rapping' continues until all sentences have been practised.
1.53	6C	8C	
1.54	6C	8C	
1.55	6C	8C	Reading the story through again, this time without any explanation. Students repeat each sentence after the tutor.
1.56	6C	8C	
1.57	6C	8C	
1.58	6C & 6E		Tutor asks the students to work on memorising the story during the week and get Bingo cards ready for the next lesson.
1.59			Class ends. Students bid farewell to one another.

# Spaced repetition

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

**Spaced repetition** is a [learning](#) technique that incorporates increasing intervals of time between subsequent review of previously learned material; this exploits the psychological [spacing effect](#). Alternative names include *spaced rehearsal*, *expanding rehearsal*, *graduated intervals*, *repetition spacing*, *repetition scheduling*, *spaced retrieval* and *expanded retrieval*.<sup>[1]</sup>

Spaced repetition is particularly applied to [vocabulary](#) acquisition and learning [Chinese characters](#) as part of language acquisition, due to the volume of data involved – some programs, such as [Anki](#), have specialized support for these goals – but it is of general applicability.

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- 1 Research and Applications
- 2 Pimsleur's graduated-interval recall
- 3 Prominent researchers
- 4 Prominent practitioners
- 5 Software
- 6 Further reading
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Anki, a computer program implementing spaced repetition.

## Research and Applications [edit]

The notion that spaced repetition could be used for improving learning was first<sup>[*citation needed*]</sup> proposed in the book *Psychology of Study* by Prof. [C. A. Mace](#) in 1932. In 1939, Spitzer tested the effects of a type of spaced repetition on 6th Graders in Iowa to learn science facts.<sup>[2]</sup> Spitzer tested over 3600 students in Iowa and showed that spaced repetition was effective. This early work went unnoticed and the field was relatively quiet until the late 1960s when cognitive psychologists, notably including Landuaer & Bjork<sup>[3]</sup> and Melton,<sup>[4]</sup> explored manipulation of repetition timing as a means to improve recall. Around the same time, [Pimsleur language courses](#) pioneered the practical application of spaced repetition theory to language learning and in 1973, [Sebastian Leitner](#) devised his "[Leitner system](#)", an all-purpose spaced repetition learning system based on [flashcards](#).

# Leitner system

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia



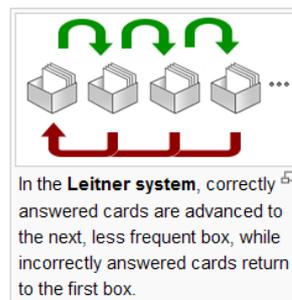
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Please help [improve this article](#) by adding citations to [reliable sources](#). Unsourced material may be [challenged](#) and [removed](#). *(April 2010)*

The **Leitner system** is a widely used method to efficiently use [flashcards](#) that was proposed by the German science journalist [Sebastian Leitner](#) in the 1970s. It is a simple implementation of the principle of [spaced repetition](#), where cards are reviewed at increasing interval.

## Method [edit]

In this method flashcards are sorted into groups according to how well you know each one in the **Leitner's learning box**. This is how it works: you try to recall the solution written on a flashcard. If you succeed, you send the card to the next group. But if you fail, you send it back to the first group. Each succeeding group has a longer period of time before you are required to revisit the cards.



In the **Leitner system**, correctly answered cards are advanced to the next, less frequent box, while incorrectly answered cards return to the first box.

## Examples [edit]

*Example 1.* Suppose you have 3 groups called Group 1, Group 2 and Group 3. The cards in Group 1 are the ones that you often make mistakes with, and Group 3 contains the cards that you know very well. You might choose to study the Group 1 cards once a day, Group 2 every 3 days, and the Group 3 cards every 5 days. If you look at a Group 1 card and get the correct answer, you "promote" it to Group 2. A correct answer with a Group 2 card "promotes" that card to Group 3. If you make a mistake with a Group 2 or Group 3 card, it gets "demoted" to the first level, which forces you to study that card more often.

The advantage of this method is that you can focus on the most difficult flashcards, which remain in the first few groups. The result is, ideally, a reduction in the amount of study time needed.

*Example 2.* This example uses 5 proficiency levels and 12 decks of flash cards. Cards at Proficiency Level 1 are reviewed at every learning session; those at Level 5 are retired and no longer in use. Those at Levels 2, 3, and 4 are reviewed every 2nd, 3rd, and 4th session, respectively.

http://ankisrs.net/

## Anki

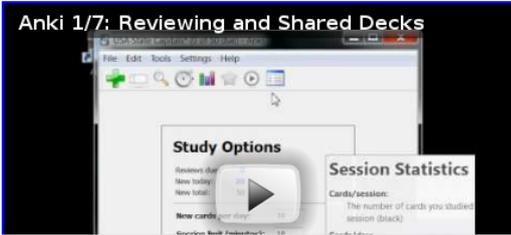
Anki is a program which makes remembering things easy. Because it is a lot more efficient than traditional study methods, you can either greatly decrease your time spent studying, or greatly increase the amount you learn.

Anyone who needs to remember things in their daily life can benefit from Anki. Since it is content-agnostic and supports images, audio, videos and scientific markup (via LaTeX), the possibilities are endless. For example:

- learning a language
- studying for medical and law exams
- memorizing people's names and faces
- brushing up on geography
- mastering long poems
- even practicing guitar chords!

Thousands of hours of work have gone into developing and supporting Anki. Please consider supporting the author so that Anki can continue to improve. [Donate](#)

### Intro Videos



Anki 1/7: Reviewing and Shared Decks

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## The Mnemosyne Project

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### Welcome to the Mnemosyne Project

The Mnemosyne Project has two aspects:

- It's a sophisticated free flash-card tool which optimizes your learning process.
- It's a research project into the nature of long-term memory.

### Efficient learning

The Mnemosyne software resembles a traditional flash-card program to help you memorise question/answer pairs, but with an important twist: it uses a sophisticated algorithm to schedule the best time for a card to come up for review. Difficult cards that you tend to forget quickly will be scheduled more often, while Mnemosyne won't waste your time on things you remember well.

The software runs on Linux, Windows and Mac OS X. There is also a plugin called **Mnemogogo** which allows you to review cards on Android phones (using Mnemododo) and phones with Java (using Mnemojojo). This also works on Blackberry devices.