

A329: The Making of Welsh History

DISSERTATION

May 2019

THE OPEN UNIVERISTY

**“The fork-tongued dragon: how and why did The Society for the
Utilisation of the Welsh Language contribute to a bilingual education
policy in the late nineteenth century?**

**A study of the concepts of language agency and linguistic capital in the
Victorian era.”**

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6538 words

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A short note of thanks must go to the staff at the National Library of Wales, particularly Bethan Hopkins Williams, who went above and beyond what I expected in aiding my search for key primary sources.

ABBREVIATIONS

Aberdare Report	Report of the Committee appointed to Inquire into the Condition of Intermediate and Higher Education in Wales, with Minutes of Evidence and Appendix, 1881
Blue Books	Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales, 1847
Cross Commission	Royal Commission to inquire into Working of Elementary Education Acts (England and Wales): Third Report, Evidence, Appendix, 1888
Forster Act	The Elementary Education Act, 1870
HMI(s)	Her Majesty's Inspector(s) of Schools
Memorial	Memorial presented by the SUWL to the Council to the Royal Commission on Elementary Education, 1886 [at The Cross Commission]
Revised School Code	The Revised Code of Minutes and Regulations of The Committee of the Privy Council on Education, 1862
SUWL	Society for the Utilisation (Utilization) of the Welsh Language

INTRODUCTION

“The child’s intellect called for bread and his educational parent gave him a stone”¹

Beriah Gwynfe Evans, 1892

When Beriah Gwynfe Evans wrote the above in 1892, he may have been reflecting on the impetus for the formation in 1885 of The Society for the Utilisation of the Welsh Language (SUWL): the inadequate provision in Victorian Wales for the education of monoglot Welsh children.² The inescapable penetration of the English language into Wales had arisen from prolific migration in the industrial era, but the pace of economic change was not matched by social or educational planning, nor was consideration given to the possible erosion of Welsh language and culture by the challenges of bilingual communities.³ The establishment in 1839 of the Inspectorate of Schools had initiated an investigation into teaching methods in Wales, but potentially disguised a policy of acculturation through the eradication of Welsh to create “an internal colonial model”⁴, by promoting state-wide language unification, propagating the sense of English superiority.⁵

This dissertation re-examines the efforts that were made by the SUWL, evidently the only society of the Victorian era specifically concerned with what it saw as the benefits of bilingual learning. It will investigate possible incentives for its formation, discuss its intentions and whether the SUWL’s direct action facilitated effective education in Welsh classrooms. Moreover, as suggested by the title

¹ Beriah Gwynfe Evans, ‘The Welsh Language in Education’ in *The Welsh Review*, Vol.5, March 1892, p.510

² Philip Jenkins, *A History of Modern Wales 1536-1990*, (London, 1992) p.313

³ Gareth Elwyn Jones and Gordon Wynne Roderick, *A History of Education in Wales* (Cardiff, 2003) pp.57-58

⁴ H.G. Williams, ‘Nation State versus National Identity: State and Inspectorate in Mid-Victorian Wales’ in *History of Education Quarterly*, 40:2 (2000), p.145

⁵ W. Gareth Evans, ‘The Bilingual Difficulty’: HMI and the Welsh Language in The Victorian Age’ in *Welsh History Review*, Vol 16.4 (1992), p.495

reference to ‘the fork-tongued dragon’, it will consider if the campaigns to gain language agency were successful due to the carefully constructed wording of speeches, texts and evidence.

The term ‘agency’ is defined as “the capacity to act” and is used in historical scenarios to assess the extent and effectiveness of those who shaped outcomes by specific actions.⁶ This can also be linked to language use, specifically in this dissertation when considering the actions of the SUWL, which recognised that language is integral to national identity. Jenkins suggests that [Welsh] “linguistic unity was not transformed into activism” but the activities of the SUWL would suggest otherwise and therefore warrant investigation.⁷ Furthermore, whilst the theory of ‘linguistic capital’ is predominantly drawn upon by contemporary sociolinguists to demonstrate language inequalities vis-a-vis the supremacy of English speakers in acquiring cultural and material capital, this can be researched from an historical perspective, to comprehend the motives behind education policies and associated outcomes. Examples will be provided from those who apparently sought the creation of a unified linguistic community by actively suppressing Welsh, but with consideration given to the idea that this emanated from the genuine desire to afford economic opportunity to the whole country.

Although the SUWL has received some historiographical attention, none appears to have directly aligned its aims with a concern for national identity. There is no reference to its educational contribution in Jones and Roderick,⁸ neither do these authors consider the significance of the evidence given at the Cross Commission of 1886-8.⁹ Equally, although discussing the Aberdare Report,¹⁰ they

⁶ Oxford English Dictionary ‘agency, *n.*’, definition ii.4

⁷ Jenkins, *A History of Modern Wales 1536-1990*, p.2

⁸ Jones and Roderick, *A History of Education in Wales* (Cardiff, 2003)

⁹ *Royal Commission to inquire into Working of Elementary Education Acts (England and Wales) (1888)*, hereinafter referred to as The Cross Commission

¹⁰ *Report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the condition of Intermediate and Higher Education in Wales (1881)*, hereinafter referred to as The Aberdare Report

focus largely on outcomes for the middle classes and there is no mention of the language debate or 'bilingual difficulty' as identified by Evans.¹¹

The phrase 'bilingual difficulty' appears to have emerged following the fallout of the 'Blue Books' Education Report of 1847,¹² and the term has been adopted in late twentieth-century historiography. One curiosity is why the hegemony of English in Welsh classrooms was not challenged earlier in the century, and this will be investigated in Chapter One when considering potential reasons for the SUWL's emergence. This dissertation will focus on the primary evidence of education reports, newspaper articles and SUWL documents, supported by secondary material on education in Wales which emerged in the latter twentieth century. For example, Gareth Evans addresses the lack of interest amongst historians regarding bilingual education in his 1992 article on 'The Bilingual Difficulty'¹³ in which he debates the role of the Victorian School Inspectors (HMIs). He criticises the attitude of Matthew Arnold, Chief HMI in 1882, whose negativity towards Welsh influenced his subordinates, the media and the wider British public¹⁴ describing his views as "perverted, destructive and utterly opposed to all sound education principles",¹⁵ and whose primary writings will be studied here.¹⁶ Evans refers fleetingly to The Aberdare Report and The Cross Commission, and the possibility that the SUWL's evidence at the latter disguised a hidden agenda, yet does not present analysis or explain the reasons for the reports' outcomes.¹⁷ Throughout the article there is an undercurrent of subjectivity, lacking consideration of the possibility that those pursuing the diminution of Welsh in schools might

¹¹ W. Gareth Evans, 'The Bilingual Difficulty': HMI and the Welsh Language in The Victorian Age' *Welsh History Review*, Vol 16.4 (1992)

¹² *Reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the State of Education in Wales (1847)*, hereinafter referred to as The Blue Books

¹³ Evans, 'The Bilingual Difficulty': HMI and The Welsh Language in The Victorian Age', p.494

¹⁴ Evans, 'The Bilingual Difficulty': HMI and The Welsh Language in The Victorian Age', p.499 and p.503

¹⁵ Evans, 'The Bilingual Difficulty': HMI and The Welsh Language in The Victorian Age', p.498

¹⁶ Matthew Arnold *Reports on Elementary Schools 1852-1881* (London, 1889) and *On the Study of Celtic Literature, 1867* (New York, 1898)

¹⁷ Evans, 'The Bilingual Difficulty': HMI and The Welsh Language in The Victorian Age', p.504

have been sincere in seeking economic advantage for the principality via the linguistic capital of English.

Evans's article is comparable with that of HG Williams¹⁸ in which he discusses the mid-century HMI Harry Longueville-Jones who contradicted the popular views of his contemporaries and is worthy of further consideration as an incipient advocate of bilingualism in education and possible inspiration for the SUWL. Williams's subjectivity is evident in his article of 2000, suggesting the British were driven by a determination to eradicate Welsh identity via biased education policies.¹⁹ Additionally, his study of The Elementary Education Act of 1870 illuminates the underlying political influence of leading Nonconformists in their efforts to control Welsh classrooms, which may have been a significant contributor to the alternative route taken by the SUWL.^{20, 21} Finally, BL Davies's assertion that SUWL members engaged in a deliberate tactic of "disturbing ambivalence" towards Welsh in their evidence at the Cross Commission may have merit, although the primary text deserves a closer examination than is offered.²²

Since the late twentieth century, there has been a paucity of scholarship on nineteenth-century ambitions for bilingual education. The aim of this study, therefore, is to establish whether the SUWL devised an adroit focus on the significance of bilingualism, resulting in a situation where Welsh language agency became an achievable goal, and its early proposals, meetings and campaigns will be considered in Chapter Two. Whilst it is not the principal purpose of this dissertation to explore sociolinguistics, language is regularly imbued with political intent and so it is apposite to demonstrate

¹⁸ H.G. Williams, 'Longueville Jones and Welsh Education: The Neglected Case of a Victorian HMI' in *Welsh History Review* (1990) Vol 15:1, pp416-442

¹⁹ Williams, 'Nation State versus National Identity: State and Inspectorate in Mid-Victorian Wales' p.146

²⁰ H.G. Williams, "'The Forster Education Act and Welsh Politics, 1870-1874' in *Welsh History Review* 14, 1-4, (1988) pp242-269

²¹ *The Elementary Education Act (1870)* hereinafter referred to as The Forster Act

²² B.L. Davies, 'The Right to a Bilingual Education in Nineteenth Century Wales' in *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* (1988) p.148

certain techniques employed by the SUWL which facilitated access to the linguistic capital of English whilst securing, promoting and advancing the Welsh language. By analysing some of the discourse used in original documents, the objectives of the speakers will be revealed. Official reports might appear to display neutral language, yet they can also exhibit bias on the part of advocates of both English and Welsh-medium education. These sources offer an opportunity to consider the historical impact by scrutinising semantics, to uncover from seemingly straightforward interactions if they masked political attempts to strengthen Welsh identity. Evidence from the Aberdare Report and the Cross Commission will therefore be examined in Chapter Three, to uncover any persuasive rhetoric.

The SUWL lacks sufficient recognition as a contributor to Welsh education and identity. By considering how the concepts of language agency and linguistic capital were evident in the late Victorian era, an innovative approach to this topic and an alternative perspective on the perception of 'Welsh' and 'British' identity will emerge.

CHAPTER ONE: Acts and Attitudes

“The English language is rapidly gaining ground, and it is very desirable that it should altogether supersede the Welsh”²³

The Reverend Augustus Morgan, 6th April 1847

The genesis of nineteenth-century debate concerning the Welsh language as a marker for identity can clearly be traced to the ‘treason’ of the Blue Books. This seminal event appears to have instigated a new dawn of political awareness in Wales, exposed attitudes such as that above, and fired the starting gun for the debate about Welsh in schools. Despite the wholesale consensus from within the ranks of the Welsh political and religious influencers about the reports’ synonymity with national affront, they do not appear to have immediately or collectively addressed the idea of safeguarding national identity via language agency; English language in the classroom appears to have been largely uncontested. Instead, their focus - although initially united - remained distracted by internecine debates for the place of religion in education, meaning the issue of how to challenge the medium of instruction remained unresolved into the second half of the century.

The influence of HMIs towards bilingual education, both during and after the Blue Books fallout, is a contender for probable contributor to the later emergence of the SUWL. The HMIs, particularly those of the mid-Victorian period, have been collectively condemned for their outright disregard for the Welsh language, ignoring its significance for identity and setting a prejudicial and influential trend that continued well beyond 1847.²⁴ At the time of the Blue Books, HMIs appeared especially blinkered

²³ The Reverend Augustus Morgan, in ‘The Blue Books’ (1847), Part III, p.414

²⁴ Evans, ‘The Bilingual Difficulty’: HMI and the Welsh Language in The Victorian Age’ in *Welsh History Review*, Vol 16.4 (1992), p.494

in their approach to the language ‘difficulty’, or any contemplation of bilingual education, although Harry Longueville Jones was a notable exception. He was the first HMI of Church Schools in Wales, appointed in 1848.²⁵ English-born but acquiring Welsh and French languages in adulthood, Jones’s appreciation of the advantages of multilingualism in education was based on his own positive linguistic experience.²⁶ His additional interest in social welfare led to comprehension of the link between education and social mobility and also that between language and cultural identity.²⁷ Without specifically identifying the concept, HG Williams includes Longueville Jones as an advocate of linguistic capital, as someone who sought bilingual education so that the Welsh could partake of the economic advancements being made nationally. Longueville Jones was ultimately thwarted in his mission as he was a lone voice, repeatedly discredited by his superiors when calling for radical policies at a time when state intervention in education was seen as vital for re-shaping society following the findings of the Blue Books.²⁸

Williams proposes that there were glaring differences between the attitudes of Longueville Jones and the subsequent Chief HMI Matthew Arnold, although an alternative interpretation of their views is that they were not as disparate as they initially appear.²⁹ Although the former was driven by his desire to uphold the integrity of the language for its own merits, both recognised that competence in English would benefit Welsh people. The social discrimination that dominated the nineteenth century legitimised the views of Matthew Arnold, who was appointed Inspector of British Schools in Wales in 1852 and Chief HMI in 1882,³⁰ and allowed him to exploit his prominent position when expressing

²⁵ Williams, ‘Nation State versus National Identity: State and Inspectorate in Mid-Victorian Wales’, p.154

²⁶ Huw Pryce, ‘Jones, Harry Longueville (1806-1870), archaeologist and educationalist’ in *Dictionary of Welsh Biography*. Available at <https://biography.wales/article/s11-JONE-LON-1806> (Accessed 30th April 2019)

²⁷ Williams, ‘Nation State versus National Identity: State and Inspectorate in Mid-Victorian Wales’, p.155

²⁸ Williams, ‘Longueville Jones and Welsh Education: The Neglected Case of a Victorian HMI’, p.419

²⁹ Williams, ‘Nation State versus National Identity: State and Inspectorate in Mid-Victorian Wales’, p.164

³⁰ Stefan Collini, ‘Arnold, Matthew (1822-1888)’ in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Available at <http://www.oxforddnb.com.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-679?rskey=C1FK46&result=1> (Accessed 4th April 2019)

opinion on Welsh language and its place in education. Social Darwinism pervaded Victorian Britain, supported by an ethnographic belief in a human hierarchy which legitimised public control, including for language, with English being the pinnacle of the linguistic trajectory.³¹ Although justifiably vilified for his infamous remarks regarding the fate of Welsh,³² by considering Arnold's writings as apposite to the era, another perspective on his views can be offered; that Arnold held sincere belief that to elevate all speakers to a common language would be individually and nationally advantageous. His observations within the collective 'Reports on Elementary Education' have been labelled derogatory to Welsh, particularly his sweeping use of 'drawback' as an adjective for the language. However, this could reinforce his support for the best possible educational system for the period, effecting equal opportunity, as within the same paragraph, he notes a desire to "break down barriers to the freest intercourse between the different parts [of geographical areas]".³³ His failure to recognise the cultural link between language and identity is salient, although he was principally employed to ensure the most effective form of education for industrial Britain, which was seen as only accessible via the English language.

Williams praises Longueville Jones for seeking specific grants for Welsh schools³⁴ but interestingly, Arnold was also more aware of effective means of teaching than either Williams or Evans have given him credit for. He eventually opposed the Revised School Code³⁵ specifically its system of payment by results, as he realised its shortcomings, whereby teaching was manipulated for results rather than educational advantage and called for "this exclusive stress" for teachers to be relaxed.³⁶ Whilst there can be little doubt that Arnold propelled pro-English attitudes within his study of Celtic Literature, the

³¹ Gwyneth Tyson Roberts, *The Language of the Blue Books* (Cardiff, 1998) p.49

³² "Whatever encouragement individuals may think it desirable to give to the preservation of the Welsh language on the grounds of logical or antiquarian interest, it must always be the desire of a government to render its dominions as far as possible homogenous" Matthew Arnold (1852) in Williams, 'Nation State versus National Identity: State and Inspectorate in Mid-Victorian Wales' p.164

³³ Matthew Arnold, *Reports on Elementary Schools 1852-1881*, (London, 1889), p.13

³⁴ Williams, 'Nation State versus National Identity: State and Inspectorate in Mid-Victorian Wales' p.160

³⁵ The Revised Code of Minutes and Regulations of The Committee of the Privy Council on Education, 1862

³⁶ Arnold, *Reports on Elementary Schools 1852-1881*, p.125

argument that he admired Welsh cultural activities at the Eisteddfodau and the positive effect these events could have on wider British cohesion can be upheld: “No service England can render the Celts by giving you a share in her many good qualities can surpass that which the Celts...render England”.³⁷ Nevertheless, the Welsh language remained anathema to some sectors of the English press, which poured scorn upon any effort to assert Welsh distinctiveness. Historians have roundly accused HMIs of negatively influencing the media against Welsh language³⁸ and yet an article in *The Times* in 1886 includes Arnold in its derision. Depicting Arnold as “more Welsh than the Welsh”³⁹ in his admiration of their desire to preserve their language, this possibly exemplifies the dichotomy of his professional promotion of the English language and personal opinion of Welsh cultural identity.

Throughout Arnold’s tenure as HMI, it was religion in Wales that dominated debates about education⁴⁰ and despite the majority of the population being Welsh speakers, including monoglot rural areas⁴¹ central government did not address this in education legislation, nor did Nonconformists desire that language provision should be put ahead of religious concerns in classrooms. It was undoubtedly the 1868 general election that brought Wales into focus as having defined political needs, and Gladstone’s 1870 appointment of a Welsh-speaking bishop for St Asaph was a fillip for the language.⁴² Nevertheless, it was The Forster Act of 1870, chaired by another of Gladstone’s appointees, William Forster, which dealt another blow to any hopes of advancing Welsh-medium education by its decision to grant state aid to National elementary schools based on results of tests conducted in English.⁴³ The financial incentive for suppressing Welsh in favour of English had been initiated by the educational

³⁷ Matthew Arnold, *On the Study of Celtic Literature*, 1867 (New York, 1898), p.xii

³⁸ Evans, ‘The Bilingual Difficulty’: HMI and the Welsh Language in The Victorian Age’ in *Welsh History Review*, Vol 16.4 (1992), p.503

³⁹ Anon., ‘In the Year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Sixty-Six’ *The Times* (8th September 1866) *The Times Digital Archive*,

<http://link.galegroup.com.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/apps/doc/CS134783784/GDCS?u=tou&sid=GDCS&xid=08f83248> (Accessed 2nd May 2019)

⁴⁰ H.G. Williams ‘The Forster Education Act and Welsh Politics, 1870-1874’ p.244

⁴¹ Jones and Roderick, *A History of Education in Wales*, p.84

⁴² Jenkins, *A History of Modern Wales 1536-1900*, p.296

⁴³ Jones and Roderick, *A History of Education in Wales*, p.79

changes of 1862,⁴⁴ the undesirable effects of which were condemned in 1887 by leading SUWL spokesman Dan Isaac Davies in his evidence at The Cross Commission as “the indiscriminating broom of Mr Robert Lowe’s Revised Code”.⁴⁵ Such political manoeuvring of creating educational objectives to be achieved exclusively in English ensured its advancement and popularity in Wales, effectively proscribing Welsh and once again relegating the debate about bilingualism.

HG Williams highlights the stumbling block that was the ‘conscience clause’ within the Forster Act, whereby secular education was given prominence over religion in the classroom, seen as threatening Nonconformist values.⁴⁶ Failure to agree a way forward against the Bill was attacked in the Welsh press for destabilising not only the Liberal government but also threatening Welsh unity.⁴⁷ Williams suggests that the inability of Nonconformists to form a united stance against this Bill was a catalyst for a more Welsh-defined political focus. Additionally, he notes the involvement of Henry Richard, Wales’s first Nonconformist MP, in the lengthy debates concerning the Bill and his growing realisation that Wales faced a difficult choice: to stand up for Welsh cultural identity, or submit to those who made decisions on Wales’s behalf.⁴⁸ Another route to advancing national identity was becoming necessary.

Williams’s omission appears to be that although Welsh was seen as the language of Nonconformism,⁴⁹ it is entirely feasible that the failure of religious leaders, and indeed Henry Richard, to prevent the implementation of The Forster Act ultimately led to a strengthening of cultural identity by those who identified another factor: the link between bilingual teaching and language agency. Equally, Richard’s

⁴⁴ Jones and Roderick, *A History of Education in Wales*, p.65

⁴⁵ The Cross Commission, Q.42,698

⁴⁶ H.G. Williams ‘The Forster Education Act and Welsh Politics, 1870-1874’ p.244

⁴⁷ Anon., ‘The Collapse of the Liberal Party’ *The Western Mail* (11th December 1871) *British Library Newspapers*, <http://link.galegroup.com.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/apps/doc/Y3205036838/GDCS?u=tou&sid=GDCS&xid=3b860756> (Accessed 30th April 2019)

⁴⁸ H.G. Williams ‘The Forster Education Act and Welsh Politics, 1870-1874’ p.266

⁴⁹ H.G. Williams, ‘Nation State versus National Identity: State and Inspectorate in Mid-Victorian Wales’ p.160

later involvement on committees addressing Welsh education may have been initiated by his irritation at this Act's outcome. Reinforcing national identity via language agency may also have arisen from a situation in Wales where nineteenth-century education provision, particularly for Welsh speakers, had not developed equally.⁵⁰ New legislation in the 1870s permitted Welsh judges to conduct proceedings in Welsh; a major advancement for monoglot Welsh speakers and welcomed as recognition of "common sense" in not tolerating the demise of the vernacular.⁵¹ This was also sound argument for encouraging the language within education so that those who acquired legal roles could offer justice comprehensible to all Welsh citizens. Moreover, Jenkins suggests that those involved in Welsh-specific campaigns may have been influenced by European examples of nationalism, such as that gaining ground in Ireland,⁵² notably the founding of *The Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language* in 1876.⁵³ Given these contributory forces, the SUWL's establishment was almost inevitable.

⁵⁰ K.O. Morgan, *Rebirth of a Nation, 1880-1980*, (Oxford, 1981), pp22-23

⁵¹ Anon., 'Welsh Language and Welsh Judges' *The Western Mail* (29th June, 1874) *Welsh Newspapers Online* <https://newspapers.library.wales/view/3981278/3981282/16/> (Accessed 30th April 2019)

⁵² Jenkins, *A History of Modern Wales 1536-1990*, p.334

⁵³ 'Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language, The' (2019). Available at <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803100515670> (Accessed 12th May 2019)

CHAPTER TWO: The Dragon is Hatched

“Those who suffer most from the evil results of the present imperfect, irrational system of State education occupy only the humblest spheres”⁵⁴

The Reverend DJ. Davies, January 1882

Whilst the legacy of the Blue Books, the ‘biased’ HMIs and religious disputes undoubtedly played their part, the rallying call to initiate an organised movement to formally tackle the ongoing issue of bilingualism was a paper presented at a meeting of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion in 1882. In this, Reverend DJ Davies condemned the futility of pursuing English-only instruction for Welsh monoglot children, blaming not only the “malevolence” of the education system but also the indifference of Welshmen to challenge this.⁵⁵ The paper included an addendum by Thomas Powel, editor of *Y Cymmrodor* and subsequent Professor of Celtic at Cardiff College, who used the linguistic parallel in Ireland to urge his point, endorsing the argument for Welsh language provision by connecting the Eisteddfodau’s cultural heritage, an equivalent lacking in Ireland.⁵⁶ However, BL Davies suggests that this is yet another example of the Welsh submitting to the primacy of English,⁵⁷ with little acknowledgement given to the astuteness of these late Victorian pioneers: by securing competence in both, Welsh students could exploit their unique linguistic advantage.

Further analysis of the early manoeuvrings before the SUWL’s official formation exposes its intentions. Once again, Powel was a contributor at the group’s meeting at the Liverpool Eisteddfod of 1884, at which he submitted a paper revealing the findings of a recent questionnaire circulated to

⁵⁴ The Reverend D.J. Davies, ‘On The Necessity of Teaching English through the Medium of Welsh in elementary schools in Welsh-spoken districts’ (1882) in *Y Cymmrodor* Vol. 5, Part 1, p.13

⁵⁵ Davies, ‘On The Necessity of Teaching English through the Medium of Welsh in elementary schools in Welsh-spoken districts’ (1882), p.8

⁵⁶ Powel in Davies, ‘On The Necessity of Teaching English through the Medium of Welsh in elementary schools in Welsh-spoken districts’ (1882) pp14-37, especially p.27 re Ireland

⁵⁷ Davies, ‘The Right to a Bilingual Education in Nineteenth Century Wales’ pp137

elementary head teachers. Responses were mixed, and not wholly encouraging from those who reported the entrenched view of parents satisfied with English-only instruction.⁵⁸ Apathy for change from some educators and parents has been documented by contemporary historians.⁵⁹ Glanmor Williams proposes that industrialisation was not as threatening to Welsh as some maintained, as town and urban populations had sustained the vernacular via stable Nonconformism and flourishing societies, underpinned by a burgeoning publishing industry.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, omitted from secondary sources is investigation into the discussions at SUWL meetings which pushed for bilingual education. Powel used several cogent arguments in his 1884 paper. For example, a valuable tool in reinforcing national identity is to present reminders of a shared history and Powel did exactly this, recalling the eighteenth-century success of Griffith Jones's circulating schools and urging similar expansion into nineteenth-century education to create "an independent means of culture." Overtly criticising the prevailing "prejudice", he also issued warning of disenfranchisement with a system which treated the national language as "troublesome lumber". He clearly foregrounded the responsibility of Government, reminding those who doubted the SUWL's influence that those in power existed to enact the will of the people; a technique which not only underlined the unequal power relationship between England and Wales but also pressed those present to consider their stance on Welsh in classrooms. Within the same section, Powel directed subtle insult towards those opposed to bilingual teaching, suggesting they lacked foresight and wisdom; a precarious tactic but one designed to create insecurity by exposing an outdated stance.⁶¹

The 1885 Aberdare Eisteddfod hosted another SUWL meeting, at which the outcome of ongoing enquiry into the introduction of Welsh-medium instruction into elementary education was debated.

⁵⁸ Thomas Powel, 'The Place of the Welsh Language in our national education' (1884) in *The Cymmrodorion Section, Third Meeting, National Eisteddfod Association, 4th Report*, p.65, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth

⁵⁹ W.G. Evans, 'The British state and Welsh-language Education 1850-1914' in *The Welsh Language and its Social Domains 1801-1911*, Geraint Jenkins, ed., (Cardiff, 2000) p.479

⁶⁰ Glanmor Williams, *Religion, Language and Nationality in Wales* (Cardiff, 1979) p.143

⁶¹ Powel, 'The Place of the Welsh Language in our national education' p.67-69

The report of this meeting includes a sub-section from the SUWL's secretary, Beriah Gwynfe Evans, and illuminates his fervent persuasive skills.⁶² Evans was clearly at home with an audience from his experience as an elementary school teacher, but used a fundamental manipulative strategy in this scenario, positioning himself as a narrator in a story to influence opinion of his views, detailing how, in his view, the Welsh should be seen in the wider world. Repetition in speeches is often used to shape opinion and Evans employed this by consistently detailing the poor prospects for Welsh children exposed to English-only instruction, questioning its inequality and obvious ineffectiveness of a well-established but flawed system. However, he was sufficiently perceptive to use the passive voice in the section where he queried the cause of the problem: “*It has been said* that since the present system works well enough....”, avoiding direct signposting of responsibility towards central government.⁶³

Evans was particularly dexterous in his metaphorical reference to the classroom being an “educational brickyard” already in possession of materials which could enable improved output and yet whose labourers were denied fair usage. Metaphorical references augment persuasive strategies, especially those creating images of battle situations, which influence a ‘them and us’ scenario from which the listener/reader considers a ‘side’ to choose. Evans’s entire submission was brimming with ardent petition to his audience, foregrounding references to language as an identity marker, concluding that the only way to create a national entity was to “seize the efficient weapon” which was already available to them and calling upon all Welshmen to unite in utilising the language.⁶⁴ What followed this meeting was direct petition to Government from the SUWL and subsequent formal contribution to the education debate via inclusion as witnesses at The Cross Commission.⁶⁵

⁶² Beriah Gwynfe Evans ‘The Utilization of The Welsh Language for Educational Purposes in Wales’ (1885) in *The Cymmrodorion Section, Third Meeting, National Eisteddfod Association, 5th Report* pp66-73, National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth

⁶³ Evans, ‘The Utilization of the Welsh Language for Educational Purposes in Wales, pp.67-68

⁶⁴ Evans, ‘The Utilization of the Welsh Language for Educational Purposes in Wales, pp.68-72

⁶⁵ Davies, ‘The right to a bilingual education in nineteenth century Wales’ (1988) p.139

Prior to this, however, the SUWL's Dan Isaac Davies had already begun campaigning to change the minds of ordinary Welsh people. Newspapers articles have always been an effective tool in directing public opinion and Davies appears to have exploited this at a time when mass distribution was facilitated by the flourishing press industry.⁶⁶ It had been claimed at the 1884 meeting that it was not the intention of the SUWL to thrust its views on Welsh people,⁶⁷ yet Davies contradicted this as he began a key linguistic strategy of cumulative persuasion to enforce his point, writing a series of letters which appeared in *The Western Mail* in August 1885, prior to the Aberdare Eisteddfod. These were entitled 'The Utilisation of the Home Language of Wales'⁶⁸ and outlined reasons for the bilingual campaign and its educational benefits, including improved aptitude to acquire subsequent languages, reinforcing national and individual advantages. Davies's use of 'home' in this correspondence is crucial, as it exposed his awareness of pathos;⁶⁹ the appeal to emotion, often employed in convincing speech or writing. By selecting 'home' for the series title, he automatically linked the language with nostalgia and belonging, reinforcing its national ownership.

Davies's fourth letter of 19th August is particularly revealing. He clearly stated that it was not the campaign's intention to "subordinate English to Welsh",⁷⁰ strategically adding "in education" which arguably revealed a specious acceptance of English primacy. In the same section, he referred to research in other bilingual countries, reiterating the argument that he considered Wales's individualism, not merely a periphery of England, and comparing it to bilingual Alsace, where he noted "the German Government is..... careful to see that German has fair play"; an implicit criticism of the British government for not delivering equality for Wales. In this letter, Davies also conveyed his

⁶⁶ Kenneth O. Morgan, *Wales in British Politics 1868-1922*, (Cardiff, 1963) p.9

⁶⁷ 'The Place of the Welsh Language in our national education' p.73

⁶⁸ Davies, D.I., 'The Utilisation of the Home Language of Wales' *The Western Mail* (series of six letters dated 6th, 10th, 13th, 19th, 21st August 1885 and 2nd September 1885), *British Library Newspapers*. See Bibliography for full references

⁶⁹ Oxford English Dictionary 'pathos, *n.*', definition 4.

⁷⁰ D.I Davies, 'The Utilisation of the Home Language of Wales', Letter IV, *The Western Mail*, (19th August 1885).

Available at

<http://link.galegroup.com.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/apps/doc/BB3205136516/GDCS?u=tou&sid=GDCS&xid=b25c002c>
(Accessed 10th April 2019)

comprehension of the precarious linguistic situation at the time. He made several references to an earlier article in the *Western Mail* where the bilingual movement had been denounced, suggesting it was only those higher up the social ranks who could afford to learn two languages and that English must prevail in schools.⁷¹ He countered this by engaging in another linguistic tactic, the appeal to reason, detailing the pitfalls of the English-only system but the commercial advantage for the wider British population in mastering both languages; the ability to compete with the influx of polyglot European immigrants.⁷² Whilst Davies's letters sought to canvass like-minded colleagues and the wider Welsh public, changing the minds and attitudes of government representatives would involve a more sustained campaign.

⁷¹ Anon., 'Welsh Intermediate Education' *The Western Mail*, (12th June 1885), *Welsh Newspapers Online*, <https://newspapers.library.wales/view/4316367/4316369/11/> (Accessed 10th April 2019)

⁷² Davies, 'The Utilisation of the Home Language of Wales', Letter IV, *The Western Mail*, (19th August 1885)

CHAPTER THREE: The Power of Persuasion

“Bilingualism, let the two languages be what they may, gives a lad a most valuable commercial start in these days of cosmopolitan trade”⁷³

Dan Isaac Davies, 19th April 1887

Martin Johnes describes contemporary identity in Britain as being defined by shared experiences, but that the Welsh language is the unique distinguisher from those who identify as English.⁷⁴ Dan Isaac Davies realised its significance over a century before and, giving evidence at the Cross Commission, his above words articulated his pioneering spirit: untapping access to the linguistic capital of English was essential. More importantly, if this was enabled via Welsh-language instruction, Welsh might not perish. Davies was appointed assistant HMI in 1868, but his recognition of bilingualism as a vehicle for language preservation had emerged earlier in his career, when he was a successful schoolmaster who flouted regulation against using Welsh.⁷⁵ He understood that only by challenging the status quo would language agency be achieved, although careful persuasion was necessary to change the mindset of those invested in English exclusivity.

To further assess changes in attitude towards bilingual education, it is necessary to analyse two significant education reports of the 1880s: The Aberdare Report which came before the SUWL’s formation and The Cross Commission, in which it played a vital role. Although targeted at different sectors of the educational ladder – intermediate and elementary – both debated the role of Welsh. The Aberdare Committee of 1881 had much more of a Welsh flavour than the earlier Forster Act; it was overseen by Lord Bruce, former long-standing Liberal politician and advocate of compulsory

⁷³ The Cross Commission, Q.42,668

⁷⁴ Martin Johnes, ‘Wales, History and Britishness’ in *The Welsh History Review*, 25:4 (2011) pp596-619

⁷⁵ Robert Thomas Jenkins, ‘Davies, Dan Isaac (1839-1887), a pioneer of the teaching of Welsh in schools’ in *Dictionary of Welsh Biography* Available at <https://biography.wales/article/s-DAVI-ISA-1839> (Accessed 28th April 2019)

secondary education. In Gladstone's government, he supported Welsh cultural causes⁷⁶ and his association with Welsh-specific education had undoubtedly been enhanced by his appointment as President of Aberystwyth College in 1875.⁷⁷ The Aberdare Committee included Henry Richard, and two Welsh speakers, perhaps an acknowledgement of "the distinctive characteristics of Wales".⁷⁸

The report's discussion of the Welsh language reveals, by analysis of some of the phrasing, any underlying attempts to influence the debate. Discussion of the language and its close association with the nationality was covered in section IV of the Report,⁷⁹ where reference was immediately made to Welsh loyalty to the Government, with no signs of "protests against the supremacy of a dominant race"⁸⁰, acknowledging the hierarchy and exposing the prejudice of some witnesses who considered that "Welshmen should as much as possible be educated out of their own country".⁸¹ Specific reference to 'the bilingual difficulty', although not frequent, is significant for this discussion. The use of 'difficulty' in this official capacity immediately presented bilingualism and Welsh itself negatively, perpetuating the idea that the language remained an obstacle to overcome. The phrase first appeared in the introductory section of the Minutes of Evidence,⁸² discussing the challenges for Welshmen and although the general tone was one of concern for the education provision to effect equality, the overwhelming sense was that progress for Wales could only be achieved by absolute proficiency in English. Within the main body of discussion was debate surrounding a future Welsh University and the problematic "competition" faced by Welshmen.⁸³ This section is replete with pejorative vocabulary when used in collocation with Welsh, suggesting the Welsh were "handicapped" by their

⁷⁶ Jenkins, *A History of Modern Wales 1536-1990*, p.322

⁷⁷ Matthew Cragoe, 'Bruce, Henry Austin, first Baron Aberdare (1815-1895)' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* Available at <http://www.oxforddnb.com.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-3732?rskey=eZbQpJ&result=2> (Accessed 16th April 2019)

⁷⁸ The Aberdare Report, p.a3 and p.vi

⁷⁹ The Aberdare Report, Chapter IV, p.x/vi

⁸⁰ The Aberdare Report, p.x/vi

⁸¹ The Aberdare Report, p.x/vi

⁸² The Aberdare Report, p.xxii

⁸³ The Aberdare Report, p.12

language, including from Commissioners who directed witnesses via manipulative and adverse vocabulary such as “imperfect”, “hampered” and “disadvantaged”.⁸⁴

Despite these negative connotations, an alternative viewpoint should be considered; that there was a genuine attempt to promote English to facilitate linguistic capital for Welsh people. The Committee had, after all, been tasked with addressing inadequate provision of secondary and higher education in Wales, a country economically disadvantaged compared to England and lacking in satisfactory educational provision for its burgeoning middle classes.⁸⁵ As Jenkins points out, Liberals and their supporters faced an uncomfortable dilemma: the desire to effect radical political change for Wales with the recognition that they needed to establish a workforce educated to a standard which would contribute to and benefit from capitalism.⁸⁶ Statistical evidence regarding Welsh speakers and weekly/monthly publications was presented in the Report’s preamble and it is entirely feasible that the perception of Welsh as a healthy language in homes and chapels was sufficient for it to be overlooked for educational benefit.⁸⁷

Rather than accepting that statements which portrayed Welsh pessimistically were intended predominantly for derision, as can be concluded from the Blue Books, the Aberdare Report participants may have merely been seeking parity with England for intermediate education in Wales. Linguistic uniformity was arguably part of such concern: “What we want is to create a general desire from the peasant up to the peer.....English must be the language of educated Wales.....the fusion of the classes by the elevation of all through contact with the best”.⁸⁸ Committee members and witnesses undoubtedly attributed their own elevated status to high educational achievement in English, and were

⁸⁴ The Aberdare Report, p.146

⁸⁵ Gordon Roderick, ‘A fair representation of all interests? The Aberdare report on intermediate and higher education in Wales, 1881’ in *History of Education*, (2001) 30:3, p.235

⁸⁶ Jenkins, *A History of Modern Wales 1536-1990*, p.344

⁸⁷ The Aberdare Report, p.x/vii

⁸⁸ Rev D. Williams, witness, The Aberdare Report, Q.4931, p.218

potentially seeking similar linguistic capital on a wider scale. Despite largely favourable outcomes of the Aberdare Report for Welsh education, namely a second university, the debate concerning language did not materialise into Welsh-medium education provision in the final assessment.⁸⁹

In comparison with the Aberdare Report which was class-driven and skewed towards improvements for middle-class education,⁹⁰ the concern of the Cross Commission was to investigate elementary provision across England and Wales, through which the vast majority of five to thirteen-year olds passed, the outcome of which might therefore have a widespread and longstanding impact on the future of Welsh. Some witnesses for the Aberdare Report who had debated the medium of instruction had insisted that elementary education in English was of sufficient standard to continue,⁹¹ but the subsequent years' debates indicate that others felt differently. Unlike the Aberdare Report, the SUWL was directly involved in the Cross Commission, although Hywel Edwards proposes it sought bilingual education as the "handmaiden of English".⁹² Perhaps a simpler explanation could be that it was because the SUWL was astutely aware that Welsh identity would be reinforced, and the language itself would flourish, if its teaching was used as a vehicle to access English.

It was possibly this reason that the SUWL presented its 'Memorial' paper before the Cross Commission in Spring 1886.⁹³ The document was designed to state the SUWL's aims, emphasising their significance by the use of 'grave' in the introduction, presenting the language debate as a serious issue.⁹⁴ Analysis of this again reveals some calculated wording, for example, raising the inequality of

⁸⁹ Roderick, 'A fair representation of all interests? The Aberdare report on intermediate and higher education in Wales, 1881' p.233

⁹⁰ Roderick, 'A fair representation of all interests? The Aberdare report on intermediate and higher education in Wales, 1881' p.248

⁹¹ The Aberdare Report, Q.3885-6, p.175

⁹² H.T. Edwards, 'The Welsh Language at the Eisteddfod' in *The Welsh Language and its Social Domains 1801-1911*, Geraint Jenkins, ed., (Cardiff 2000), p.315

⁹³ 'Memorial presented by the Council to the Royal Commission on Elementary Education' (1886) in *The Society for Utilising the Welsh Language in association with the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, Lockyear, Llandilo, pp1-13, hereinafter referred to as 'The Memorial'

⁹⁴ The Memorial, introduction, p.3

permitting the use of ‘native’ languages in Scotland and Ireland “in assisting the work of education”⁹⁵ yet reiterating that the primacy of English must be upheld. An interesting footnote on page 4 reveals how Welsh had been diminished by “systematic repression”⁹⁶ hinting at cultural contraction via centralised linguistic policies and yet use of contradictory vocabulary such as “acquiesced” indicated a subservient stance. Nevertheless, the document underlined the inaccuracies of reports that Welsh was diminishing and was critical of the complacency in assuming that the existing system was satisfactory.⁹⁷ The Memorial was professionally presented as a well-formulated and workable proposal, covering all aspects of the SUWL’s suggested implementations, including schemes of work and teacher training/supply.⁹⁸

The SUWL’s research had been acknowledged; amongst the witnesses called on the sixty-ninth day of Cross Commission evidence were four members of the SUWL, including Evans and Davies, the latter in his capacity as HMI Sub-Inspector. However, it had been the direct influence of Henry Richard, again a Committee Member, that had secured a place on the agenda for debate of bilingual teaching.⁹⁹ The difference in the discussion of Welsh in the Cross Commission and that of the Aberdare Report was that the evidence given by the members of the SUWL underlined the importance of using Welsh as a tool for improving English language proficiency and this was borne out by the expansion of Society’s title at the 1885 Aberdare Eisteddfod to include “for the Purpose of Serving a Better and More Intelligent Knowledge of English”.¹⁰⁰ BL Davies argues that it was the SUWL’s prior petitioning of Henry Richard that secured direction of his questioning in its favour, although he offers limited analysis of SUWL members’ shrewd use of vocabulary and phrasing in their evidence to

⁹⁵ The Memorial, Point 1

⁹⁶ The Memorial, p.4

⁹⁷ The Memorial, pp4-5

⁹⁸ The Memorial, pp10-11

⁹⁹ Matthew Cragoe, ‘Richard, Henry (1812-1888)’ in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

<http://www.oxforddnb.com.libezproxy.open.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-23527?rkey=7Jko5k&result=1> (Accessed 4th April 2019)

¹⁰⁰ H.T. Edwards, ‘The Welsh Language in the Eisteddfod’ in *The Welsh Language and its Social Domains 1801-1911*, Geraint Jenkins, ed., (Cardiff 2000), p.315

promote the aim of Welsh-medium instruction.¹⁰¹ Although BL Davies questions the motives of the SUWL's emphatic reiterations of its priority to strengthen English skills, he overlooks a simpler explanation than the 'fraud' insinuated: its awareness of the advantage for all Welsh 'dragons' to possess proficiency in two tongues – English and Welsh.

Beriah Evans was instrumental in his evidence, revealing the SUWL's cross-denomination membership, cleverly focusing on its educational intentions rather than on any religious differences within the group; clearly a reference to the problems which had hindered educational reforms in 1870.¹⁰² He was unambiguous in his criticism for the denial of bilingual teaching, claiming its advantages had been "deliberately ignored".¹⁰³ His use of the term "injury"¹⁰⁴ when describing the lack of Welsh in elementary education personified the language, transferring the expression into an unfamiliar domain by equating it to a body which had suffered a violation. Evans again demonstrated the persuasive effect of metaphor, particularly towards the end of his evidence, describing the existing state of teaching as "counterfeit coin" to denounce its worth.¹⁰⁵ Evans's description of the Welsh child being diminished in confidence is particularly revealing. When asked about the effects of Welsh being overlooked, he replied: "if he has the least spark of patriotism, it fills his youthful mind with a deep-seated hatred of the foreign language".¹⁰⁶ Evans was insightful here: not only was he stressing the link between language and patriotism, he raised the warning flag to those promoting English-only instruction that such policy might provoke a schism in wider national unity.

Dan Davies's evidence was integral to the SUWL's campaign. The careful management of his answers included an emphasis on his stance as an 'Anglophile' the successful adoption of Welsh by industrial

¹⁰¹ Davies, 'The Right to a Bilingual Education in Nineteenth Century Wales' (1988), p.143

¹⁰² The Cross Commission, Q.42,569

¹⁰³ The Cross Commission, Q.42,585

¹⁰⁴ The Cross Commission, Q.42,584

¹⁰⁵ The Cross Commission, Q.42,597

¹⁰⁶ The Cross Commission, Q.42,582

immigrants and its increasing use for efficient deliverance of legal judgements;¹⁰⁷ vocabulary chosen to demonstrate how Welsh was not a threat but an effective contributor to linguistic harmony within Britain. He engaged again in an intelligent appeal to emotion and logic when describing children disadvantaged by what he saw as inferior opportunity: “I feel for the children in our schools [who] are actually losing chances in life”.¹⁰⁸ He appeared confident in his stance that parents would increasingly become aware of the advantages of bilingual education, although delivered this in axiomatic rhetoric, as he failed to present statistical evidence, instead deferring to class structure and suggesting Welsh gentry would “regain the confidence of the people” [of Wales] should they themselves be fully conversant in Welsh.¹⁰⁹ The most illuminating section of Davies’s evidence is in his answers to the questions regarding the ‘difficulties’ of bilingual teaching¹¹⁰. Davies repeatedly stressed the intention of the SUWL to promote more effective teaching of English by the introduction of Welsh, careful to satisfy the Commission that it sought “not the preservation of Welsh”¹¹¹ and yet contradicted himself by debating its potential demise, reiterating the failure of previous language ‘prophets’ and concluding: “providence keeps it alive”.¹¹² Ultimately, he exposed the underlying intention of the SUWL for language agency in noting: “under the new arrangement it [Welsh] should be turned into an advantage”.¹¹³

The final report for the Cross Commission concluded that the evidence had been sufficient to grant Welsh as a specific subject, and that to address the “bilingual difficulty”, the teaching of the vernacular “concurrently with that of English” would be recognised in the Code.¹¹⁴ The dragon had been heard.

¹⁰⁷ The Cross Commission, Qs.42,631, 42,633 and 42,637

¹⁰⁸ The Cross Commission, Q.42,638

¹⁰⁹ The Cross Commission, Q.42,641-2

¹¹⁰ The Cross Commission, Q42663-81

¹¹¹ The Cross Commission, Q.42,666

¹¹² The Cross Commission, Q.42,669

¹¹³ The Cross Commission, Q.42,676

¹¹⁴ The Cross Commission, Final Report, Part IV, Chapter 2., p.144

CONCLUSION

“Until a language can be used freely as an exponent of thought, it does not serve its highest purpose as an instrument of culture”¹¹⁵

The Reverend D.J. Davies, January 1882

Long before contemporary theories of nationalism, Reverend Davies’s words reflect Ernest Gellner’s belief of a shared culture being intrinsic to nationalism. Gellner, however, also believed that in the age of industrialisation and the linguistic challenges faced by transforming communities, the standardisation of language and mass education was necessary for cultural homogeneity.¹¹⁶ Evidently, not all Welsh people would have conceded.

From the discussion presented in Chapter One of this study, it can be concluded that the SUWL’s formation was prompted by a series of failures to recognise the specific educational needs in Wales in an era when English was seen as the only viable language for individual and national prosperity. The ‘treason’ of the Blue Books was an unwitting instigator of language agency; it clearly outraged the nation, but without the fireball of debate it ignited and which smouldered over the decades, Welsh might have been permanently relegated and neglected. The derogatory attitudes displayed by many in positions which shaped education policies were indicative of the era, where English supremacy was assumed and largely accepted. Nevertheless, attitudes did evolve over the period in discussion, as the failures of a system which sought to suppress Welsh were exposed by perceptive educationists. A

¹¹⁵ Davies, ‘On The Necessity of Teaching English through the Medium of Welsh in elementary schools in Welsh-spoken districts’ (1882), p.33

¹¹⁶ Philip Spencer and Howard Wollman, ‘Contemporary Approaches to Nationalism’ in *Nationalism: A Critical Introduction* (London 2002), p.34

contemporary conclusion regarding the endurance of Welsh might be that it was the robust religious influence that was the overwhelming factor in its survival and yet discussion here has shown that the unresolved religious debates surrounding the Forster Act were surpassed by well-argued proposals for bilingual learning.

Some of the campaigns and texts of the SUWL and the evidence of its members who were witnesses for The Cross Commission were analysed in Chapters Two and Three. The Aberdare Report and Cross Commission are long and detailed documents, and the partial analysis offered here is restricted by the limitations of this study. Nevertheless, the findings are salient to the Welsh language debate and how it was perpetuated. BL Davies is not alone in his intimation that the SUWL were highly tactical; Gareth Evans also suggests that SUWL members prioritised English at the Cross Commission as a ploy to secure a pathway for Welsh.¹¹⁷ These arguments hold merit, yet it has been demonstrated that opacity was not the SUWL's overwhelming focus; Powel, Evans and Davies were often explicit in their criticism of the system's failings for Welsh children, but mindful of how to foreground certain linguistic characteristics to create an assumed inevitability to the ideas they was presenting.

The extent of the SUWL's contribution to bilingual education is quantifiable: Welsh language became a recognised grant-earning subject for schools from 1891¹¹⁸ and although formal provision for the use of Welsh in the elementary curriculum was not granted until 1907,¹¹⁹ some twenty years after Dan Isaac Davies's premature death, the SUWL's contribution to Welsh language agency cannot be ignored. One irony of its success was that all campaigns and meetings were conducted in English,

¹¹⁷ Evans, 'The British state and Welsh-language Education 1850-1914' p.474

¹¹⁸ Evans, 'The British state and Welsh-language Education 1850-1914' p.472

¹¹⁹ Jenkins, *A History of Modern Wales 1536-1990*, p.313

noted with amusement by an attendee at the 1884 gathering, but proving its judicious recognition of the need for widespread access to the emerging global lingua franca.¹²⁰

Dan Isaac Davies's sanguine prediction that there would be three million Welsh speakers by 1985 failed to materialise.¹²¹ A national language will never reach an apotheosis; its constantly evolving status reflects its past but continues onwards, and although statistics today indicate that only around one fifth of Welsh speak the language, its endurance is surely testament in part to the efforts of the SUWL.¹²² This study has contributed to an understanding of how the Welsh language was maintained via educationists who were astutely aware of the escalating ubiquity of English and the advantages of bilingualism. Whilst the SUWL's actions did not guarantee a reversal of a trend, or serious challenge to the hegemony of English, the fork-tongued dragon was a wise beast. Far from deliberate duplicity, it simply used the available tool - its own linguistic expertise - to facilitate the longevity of its mother tongue.

6538 words

¹²⁰ Anon., 'The Utilisation of the Welsh Language. Meeting at Cardiff' *South Wales Daily News* (23rd October 1885), National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth

¹²¹ Davies, 'The right to a bilingual education in nineteenth century Wales' (1988) p.137

¹²² Richard Marsden and Penni Bestic 'The weakness of European Wales', *Planet: the Welsh Internationalist*, (2017) vol. 225, p.32

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