

The Welsh Language

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³⁾ *zákon č. 121/2000 Sb. o právu autorském, o právech souvisejících s právem autorským a o změně některých zákonů (autorský zákon) ve znění pozdějších právních předpisů, § 60 Školní dílo:*

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ABSTRAKT

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá velštinou, dnes nejpoužívanějším keltským jazykem ve Velké Británii, který byl po mnoho staletí zakázán až do obrození v roce 1920, kdy byl postaven na stejnou úroveň jako angličtina se mohl na veřejnosti znovu začít používat.

Teoretická část popisuje původ velštiny, vývoj, příčiny a způsoby obrození jazyka a diferenciovaný přístup obyvatel k velštině.

V praktické části pak můžeme porovnat jak je velština podporována v konkrétních částech Walesu jak ze strany vlády, tak i ze strany místních obyvatel.

Klíčová slova: velština, obrození, dvojjazyčnost, národní identita

ABSTRACT

The present bachelor thesis deals with the Welsh language, the most used Celtic language in Great Britain, which has been forbidden for centuries until the revival in 1920 when the language was given the same status as English and was allowed to be used in public.

The theoretical part describes the origins of Welsh, the development, reasons and process of the revival and different attitudes of the inhabitants towards the language.

In the practical part we can compare the support of the Welsh language in different parts of Wales both on the part of government and on the part of local inhabitants.

Keywords: the Welsh language, the revival, bilingualism, national identity

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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I hereby declare that the work presented in this thesis is my own and certify that any secondary material used has been acknowledged in the text and listed in the bibliography.

May 10, 2008

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INTRODUCTION

The British Isles are home to vast range of different spoken and signed languages and dialects. We usually visualize English as the official language that is used not only in this country but also all around the world as the intercommunication language. But only few of us would probably mention other languages in connection with the British Isles that are included in another language field than West-Germanic languages, where just English belongs.

Thereby I mean a group of Celtic languages that are represented by Irish Gaelic, Scottish Gaelic and Welsh (Cymraeg) in the British Isles. These languages continue to evolve in their diversity and in the number of speakers and because this language field is quite neglected, I am going to occupy myself by Welsh as the liveliest of the modern Celtic languages and the oldest living language in England.

In the context of national awakening I will target how the role of welsh nation and the historical territory of Wales was in the history of political unit the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

As far as present is concerned I am going to focus on the importance of Welsh today, because today Welsh plays a great role in everyday life of Wales's inhabitants. Although there has been a great improvement in preservation of the language, there are still lots of things to do. Fortunately people living in Wales are aware of this fact and they do everything possible to recover their native language, thereby their culture and identity.

I. THEORY

1 STATUS OF THE WELSH LANGUAGE

Welsh is a Celtic language that belongs to the Brythonic group along with Cornish and Breton spoken as a community language in Wales (Cymru) by approximately 659,000 people, and in the Welsh colony in Patagonia (Y Wladfa), Argentina (yr Ariannin) by several hundred people. We can also find Welsh speakers in England (Lloegr), Scotland (yr Alban), Canada, the USA (yr Unol Daleithiau), Australia (Awstralia) and New Zealand (Seland Newydd).¹

“The National Statistics 2003 proved that Welsh is the liveliest of the modern Celtic languages, both in terms of actual numbers of speakers (575,168) and in terms of percentage of speakers within the political boundaries of the country (20,5%)”.²

¹ An ancestry.com. “The Welsh Bible”

<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~swlmcc/maerdy/welshhistory/h12.html> (accessed February 6, 2009).

² Britain, David, *Language in the British Isles*, Cambridge: University Press, 2007

2 ORIGINS OF THE WELSH LANGUAGE

Welsh like many European languages, has evolved from Indo-European. Indo-European was spoken about 6 000 years ago in Southern Russia, but as people migrated westwards and eastwards, the dialects of Indo-European became much differentiated and evolved into independent languages, divided into nine branches. Welsh evolved from the Celtic branch and it is fairly closely related to Cornish and Breton, and more distantly related to Irish Gaelic, Manx Gaelic and Scottish Gaelic.

The Celts are known as the first Indo-European people who spread across Europe and emerged in the middle Europe, from where they spread westwards to France and Spain, southwards to Italy and eastwards to Turkey and they left their sign upon the placenames – the names of rivers and cities. The Celtic language was brought to Britain by a group of migrants 1000 BC.³

The Romans attacked Britain in AD 43 and formed Britannia from the area now known as England, Wales and southern Scotland. Wales was not a separate country, all the native inhabitants of Roman Britain spoke Brythonic languages and were regarded as Britons and Latin became the language of administration and law. Roman power had collapsed in AD 410 and Britannia was not part of Empire any more.

Anglo-Saxon or Old English were dominant languages in eastern Britain kingdoms used by people who were led to a movement to the island today known as Germany and Netherlands.⁴

The successor languages of British evolved: Cornish in south-west Britain, Welsh in Wales and Cumbric in southern Scotland. The speakers of all these languages were known by their Anglo-Saxon neighbors as Wealas or Welsh. This word mean foreigner or also people who have been romanized. The Welsh and the Cumbric speakers adopted the name Cymry for themselves and also for the country. Under this term, which comes from Brittonic and means sense of identity, they are known even today.⁵

That time people called their language Cymraeg.⁶ Welsh (from Wealas) is a later word used by the Saxon invaders of the British Isles perhaps to denote people they considered "foreign" or people who had been Romanized.⁷

³ Maurois, André, *Dějiny Anglie*, NLN, s.r.o., 1993

⁴ Davies, Janet, *The Welsh language*, University of Wales Press, 1994

⁵ Britannia.com, your gateway to Wales and the Welsh since 1996. "Welsh, the 8th wonder"
<http://www.britannia.com/celtic/wales/eighthwonder/wonder1.html> (accessed January 4, 2009).

⁶ Davies, Janet, *The Welsh language*, University of Wales Press, 1994

⁷ Britannia.com, your gateway to Wales and the Welsh since 1996. "Welsh, the 8th wonder"
<http://www.britannia.com/celtic/wales/eighthwonder/wonder1.html> (accessed January 4, 2009).

Welsh evolved from Brittonic somewhere between AD 400 and AD and it is the rare example of an indigenous language of the Western Roman Empire spoken even today. J.R.R. Tolkien enunciates: „Welsh is the senior language of the men of Britain”⁸

⁸ Davies, John, *A History of Wales*, Penguin, 1994, p 649

3 THE WELSH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

“The Welsh language is traditionally divided into three periods: Old Welsh (c. 800 – 1150), attested mainly in glosses and short textual passages; Middle Welsh (c. 1150 – 1500), with a rich medieval literature including poetic texts originally composed much earlier; and Modern Welsh (from c. 1500).”⁹

3.1 Early and Old Welsh

Early Welsh survives only in a few inscriptions and notes extending from its beginnings to about 850. The most significant inscription is that on a memorial in the parish church of Tywyn in Meirionnydd consisting of words CINGEN CELEN TRICET NITANAM that are incomprehensible to Welsh speakers nowadays.

Only few marginal notes, brief texts and poems preserved from the Old Welsh period extending from 850 to 1100. The earliest known example of written, syntactical Welsh is the gospel book known as the *Surrexit* written at the beginning of the 8th century and two series of three-line poems written in 880 that are now preserved in the Cambridge University Library.¹⁰

3.1.1 The Cynfeirdd

Aneirin and Taliesin, the first of the Cynfeirdd (early poets) are considered to be the founders of the Welsh poetic tradition even though they belonged to Yr Hen Ogledd (The Old North) not to Wales and wrote in Cumbric rather than Welsh. From the linguist’s point of view, some works from this period could have been written much later than in the 6th century, because the oral repetition led to the modification, but they generally agree the essential works of Aneirin and Taliesin were composed in this period.

A later manuscript, the Red Book of Hergest written in 1400 by Llywarch Hen and Heledd contains several poems that belong to the greatest pieces of Welsh literature.¹¹

By the end of the eleventh century Welsh was a rich language with an oral literary tradition considered as the longest in Europe. It remained Celtic language in its vocabulary and syntax, but the language also borrowed some words from Latin and English.¹²

⁹ Answers.com. “Welsh language” <http://www.answers.com/topic/welsh-language> (accessed February 23, 2009).

¹⁰ Davies, Janet, *The Welsh language*, University of Wales Press, 1994

¹¹ BBC Wales. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/history/sites/themes/language.shtml> (accessed January 21, 2009).

¹² Davies, Janet, *The Welsh language*, University of Wales Press, 1994

3.2 The Welsh language in the Middle Ages

The victory of William of Normandy led to exploration of England and English, which had enjoyed high prestige, had to compromise with French, which became the language of the English court and of the high culture. Fortunately, Welsh did not suffer the fate of English although much of the Wales border was in the Normans hands. Welsh literature was influenced by French forms, French words became assimilated into Welsh and few places in Wales such as Beaumaris and Hay were given French names. Norman-French personal names such as William are now popular among the Welsh. The influx of English and French speakers was great and Wales remained predominantly Welsh speaking in the Middle Ages.¹³

3.2.1 Literature

The Welsh language had won its place side by side with Latin as a language of learning and culture; Welsh also became an effective medium for religious literature and continued to be used in legal texts, in works of medicine and romances. The spoken language had a variety of dialects, but there was only one literary language.

Above all, it was used in poetry. The contents of poems were mainly praises of patrons, their homes and hospitality. Welsh poetry was characterized by *cynghanedd* (harmony, literary), an intricate system of sound-chiming.

The greatest figure in the Welsh literary history was Dafydd ap Gwilym.¹⁴

3.3 Modern Welsh

3.3.1 The Welsh language after the Act of Union

With the Act of Union in 1536 English became the language of the courts of Wales. Henry VIII prohibited the use of the Welsh language in public administration and the legal system and no one using Welsh should have public office.¹⁵

The adoption of fixed surnames, after the English pattern illustrates the growth of English influence. Most of the new surnames were based upon the father's Christian name e.g. Davies

¹³ Britannia.com, your gateway to Wales and the Welsh since 1996. "Welsh, the 8th wonder"
<http://www.britannia.com/celtic/wales/eighthwonder/wonder1.html> (accessed January 4, 2009).

¹⁴ Encyclopedia Britannica, "Celtic literature"
<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/101794/Celtic-literature/42304/Welsh-literature> (accessed February 15, 2009).

¹⁵ The Welsh Language: History, facts and figures. "The historical context"
<http://wales.gov.uk/docs/drah/publications/20090202LCOfactsandfigsen.doc> (accessed February 16, 2009).

(David) and some were based on a nickname e.g. Lloyd (Llwyd – grey) or a place-name e.g. Trevor (Trefor). This change had started by the mid 16th century and by the late 17th century it was completed among all classes.¹⁶

3.3.2 The Reformation

Protestantism elevated the mother tongue as the language of worship, which meant that the language of the worship in the kingdom of England was English. The kingdom of England included the Cornish speakers of Cornwall and Welsh-speakers of Wales, where the mass of the people had no knowledge of English, so they should be denied an understanding of the new religion. One of them was Sir John Price of Brecon known as being the first, who in 1547 printed the book in Welsh. This book known as *Yn y lhyvyr hwnn* has no official title and contains the Lord's Prayer with the instruction on how to read Welsh.¹⁷

As the kingdom of England didn't sympathize with the European religion, the government realized that linguistic uniformity is not as important as religious conformity, so this led parliament to pass an Act in 1563, which ensures that Welsh translation of the Bible and the Prayer Book should be available by 1567. This task was given to William Morgan Bishop of Llandaff and of St Asaph, who in 1588 created the first Welsh translation of the Bible. This publication was an essential event in the Welsh history and it is considered as model of correct and majestic Welsh.¹⁸

3.3.3 Welsh humanists

The most distinguished Welsh scholar of his day was Dr. John Davies of Mallwyd, who in 1620, together with Richard Parry, Bishop of St. Asaph produced a revision of William Morgan's Bible. He also published a Welsh grammar in *Latin Antiquae Linguae Britannicae ... Rudimenta* and a Latin-Welsh dictionary. Davis was a member of the band of Welsh lexicographers and grammarians, where also William Salesbury belonged. This scholar and chief translator of the first Welsh New Testament published a collection of Welsh proverbs, a Welsh-English dictionary and also a guide to Welsh pronunciations.¹⁹

¹⁶ Davies, Janet, *The Welsh language*, University of Wales Press, 1994

¹⁷ Davies, Janet, *The Welsh language*, University of Wales Press, 1994

¹⁸ Encyclopedia Britannica, "Celtic literature" <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/101794/Celtic-literature/42304/Welsh-literature> (accessed February 15, 2009).

¹⁹ An ancestry.com. "The Welsh Bible"

<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~swlmcc/maerdy/welshhistory/h12.html> (accessed February 6, 2009).

3.4 The Welsh language in the 19th century

The heavy industry especially in the South Wales was growing and as Welsh speakers were moving into these areas to find a job, they brought the language with them²⁰, so the number of Welsh-speakers was rising and the Welsh language was going to become an urban tongue.²¹

3.4.1 Attitudes to Welsh

There were no upper-class families speaking Welsh, because the Welsh language was considered as the subordinate language and it was spoken only among the lower and working classes.

As mentioned before, under Henry VIII's rule, Welsh was replaced by English in Wales and Welsh was taught only in Sunday schools or people had to learn it at home or in the chapel.

Although the aristocrats ceased to use Welsh progressively, common people endeavoured to preserve their native language, because they believed Welsh is part of their identity and their national wealth. This period is associated with the odious symbol the Welsh Not, or Welsh Note, which means that children were discouraged to use Welsh and if they did, they would be punished.²²

The Act of 1889, only the second Act of Parliament since the 17th century to apply only to Wales resulted in a network of nearly a hundred state secondary schools across Wales. Due to this Act thousands of Welsh children from all levels of society were able to continue their education at a secondary level, where Welsh lessons were offered and schools had no English parallel.²³

3.5 The Welsh language after the World wars

The First World War caused the decline of Welsh speakers, because thousands of them died in the conflict and the proportion of inhabitants of Wales speaking Welsh fell. As economy became weaker, mass unemployment, poor farming and living conditions forced thousands of mainly young and active people to move out of Wales. The Welsh language was

²⁰ Davies, Janet, *The Welsh language*, University of Wales Press, 1994

²¹ Britannia.com, your gateway to Wales and the Welsh since 1996. "Welsh, the 8th wonder"
<http://www.britannia.com/celtic/wales/eighthwonder/wonder1.html> (accessed January 4, 2009).

²² BBC Wales. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/history/sites/themes/language.shtml> (accessed January 21, 2009).

²³ Britannia.com, your gateway to Wales and the Welsh since 1996. "Welsh, the 8th wonder"
<http://www.britannia.com/celtic/wales/eighthwonder/wonder1.html> (accessed January 4, 2009).

in deep decline, neither thousands of refugees that learned Welsh did not help to support of the language.²⁴

During this time English was used in daily life. Also in schools children were obliged to use the English language at the expense of the Welsh language and parents were exposed to a psychological pressure to believe that learning Welsh is useless. The economic depression made people to neglect the language maintenance.

The salvation of the Welsh language came after World War II. As people were searching for the latest information, daily newspapers increased in popularity, radio started broadcasting and cinemas began to show talkies.²⁵

In the history of Welsh, the demanded creation of the Welsh Region of the BBC on the 4th of July 1937 was extremely important development and the BBC was nominated as an important patron of Welsh literature.²⁶

Welsh was demanded to be entitled to the same privileges as English in the administration of the law and public services in Wales. On the basis of Welsh petition the first piece of legislation to change the status of Welsh was approved.²⁷

The Welsh Courts Act 1942 permitted use of the language although Welsh speakers were still prevented from using it in the courts.²⁸

3.6 The Welsh revival in the 20th century

The most important event in the history of the Welsh language came when the interest group in Wales started a campaign for the salvation of the language and formed The Welsh Language Society in 1962 to protect rights of Welsh. This group inspired by BBC Wales Radio Lecture given on the 13th of February 1962 by Saunders Lewis, where he pointed out the decline of Welsh and started a campaign for the salvation of the language and formed The Welsh Language Society.²⁹

Saunders Lewis was the most notable Welsh writer and literary critic of his day, dramatist, historian and political activist, but he was mainly known as Welsh nationalist and former

²⁴ BBC Wales Home. "Wales society and culture"

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/culture/sites/aboutwales/pages/culture.shtml> (accessed February 6, 2009).

²⁵ BBC Wales. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/history/sites/themes/language.shtml> (accessed January 21, 2009).

²⁶ Davies, Janet, *The Welsh language*, University of Wales Press, 1994

²⁷ The Welsh Language Society, The Welsh Language Petition, Educational Campaigns. "The language of Heaven" <http://www.llgc.org.uk/ygyrchu/Iaith/CymIaith/index-e.htm> (accessed January 23, 2009).

²⁸ Welsh Language Board. "Welsh and the Law" <http://www.byig-wlb.org.uk/English/welshlanguage/Pages/WelshandtheLaw.aspx> (accessed February 21, 2009).

²⁹ The Welsh Language Society, The Welsh Language Petition, Educational Campaigns. "The language of Heaven" <http://www.llgc.org.uk/ygyrchu/Iaith/CymIaith/index-e.htm> (accessed January 23, 2009).

President of the Welsh National Party known as Plaid Cymru. Lewis is considered to belong to the most prominent figures of twentieth-century Welsh language literature and in 2005 he was voted as 10th Wales' greatest ever person. In his lecture entitled The fate of the language proclaimed that Welsh could be saved and explain oneself: "Restoring the Welsh language in Wales is nothing less than a revolution. It is only through revolutionary means that we can succeed." ³⁰

Members of the Welsh language society used non-violent practices as protesting against using only English forms. They aimed to provide the political dynamic, which would lead to bilingual road signs or Welsh medium teaching.³¹

This was achieved by two Welsh Language Acts. The first signed in 1967 consists of a Preamble and five sections that allow Welsh to be freely used by those who so desire, give the right to use Welsh orally in court proceedings in Wales and Ministers the right to provide Welsh versions of forms and state the obligation to include Wales in "England".

The second Welsh Language Act in 1993 established the principle, that in the conduct of public business and the administration of justice in Wales, the Welsh and English languages should be treated on the basis of equality.³²

Wales became due to these acts officially bilingual and Welsh enjoys the same legal status as English within the borders of Wales.

³⁰ National library of Wales. "*Tynged yr Iaith*, The Welsh Language Society, Broadcasting in Welsh, The Welsh Language Act" <http://www.llgc.org.uk/ymgyrchu/iaith/TyngedIaith/index-e.htm> (accessed February 26, 2009).

³¹ BBC Home. "Wales on air" <http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/walesonair/database/protests.shtm> (accessed January 20, 2009).

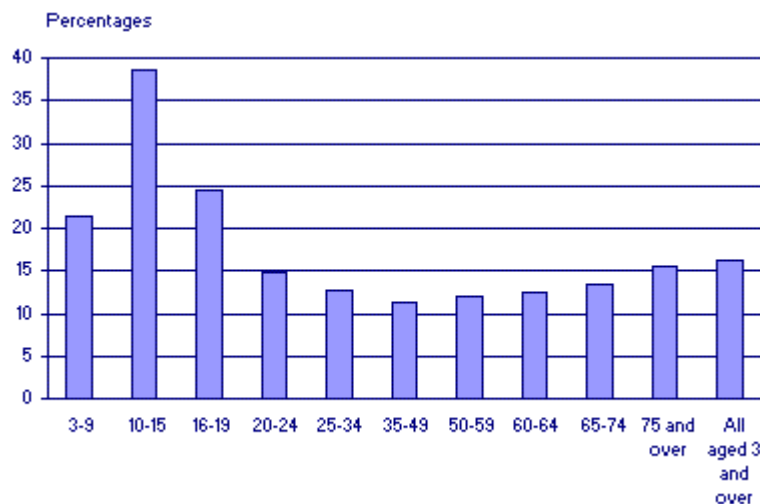
³² Absolute Astronomy, Exploring the universe of knowledge. "Welsh language act" http://www.absoluteastronomy.com/topics/Welsh_Language_Act_1967 (accessed February 5, 2009).

4 THE WELSH LANGUAGE TODAY

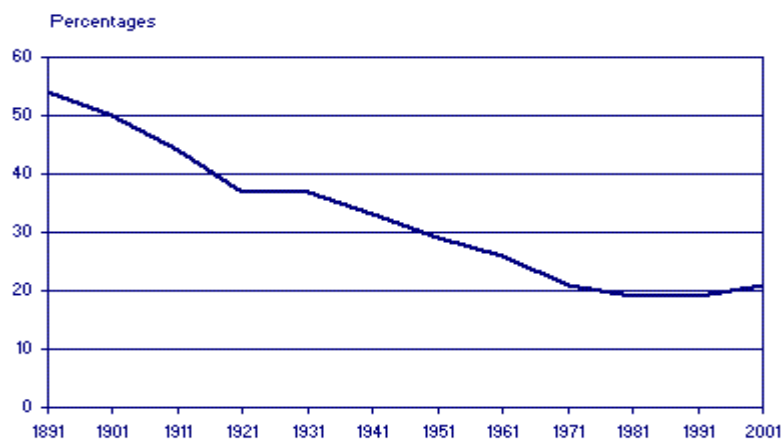
4.1 Number of Welsh speakers

There are two languages spoken in Wales: English by about 80 per cent and Welsh by about 20 per cent of inhabitants, but the number depends on what one means by speaking Welsh.³³

The first graph shows us the ability of Welsh people to speak, read and write Welsh according their age.



In the second graph we can see number of people speaking Welsh, which is little bit increasing in recent years.³⁴



³³ O'Driscoll, James, *Britain: The Country and its people*, Oxford University Press, 2002

³⁴ National statistics. "Welsh speakers increase to 21%" <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/CCI/nugget.asp?ID=447> (accessed Mai 3, 2009).

The number of people speaking Welsh is increasing since 1991 thanks to Welsh-medium education, a lively media industry and the enthusiasm of people living in Wales who are learning the language, because they want to preserve their native language.³⁵

Therefore the Eisteddfod festival, world-famous festival of music, song and dance was established with the view to promote Welsh culture and the Welsh language. Today this festival is seen as a brilliant opportunity how to maintain national feelings.

But there is a question what will happen if parents don't speak to their children in their own language. Whether children learn Welsh or not, this influence many factors like the amount of time they spend with Welsh speaking parent, if they have any relation or neighbors speaking Welsh or also such simply things as watching TV, listening radio or reading books in Welsh.

4.2 Where the most Welsh speakers live

These days most Welsh speakers live in the north and west of the country, because many people is employed in the agriculture sector and related businesses, where the highest concentration of Welsh speakers occurs. There are also more Welsh speakers in the cities and towns than in the countryside.³⁶

The areas with the highest numbers of Welsh speakers can be divided into two categories. The first one is represented by the inhabitants of the older age mainly over sixty-five, who are concentrated in the north-eastern coalfield and in West and North Glamorgan. The second category includes Welsh speaking people who moved to the areas with the low percentage of Welsh speakers, because they were attracted by employment opportunities. This inflow of inhabitants caused the great expansion of the Welsh language in the areas such as Newtown, Llandrindod and also Cardiff.³⁷

³⁵ BBC Wales Home. "Wales society and culture"
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/culture/sites/aboutwales/pages/culture.shtml> (accessed February 6, 2009).

³⁶ Economic Research Unit Background Analysis „Socio-economic characteristics of Welsh speakers - an initial analysis“
<http://wales.gov.uk/firstminister/research/economic/adhoc/welshspeakers/welshspeakers.pdf?lang=cy>(accessed March 2, 2009).

³⁷ O'Driscoll, James, *Britain: The Country and its people*, Oxford University Press, 2002

4.3 Welsh speakers in Cardiff

In Cardiff we can hear at least 94 languages. The most commonly spoken are Somali, Urdu, Bangla and Arabic.³⁸

Only very few people speak Welsh while 200 years ago everybody spoke Welsh. Today everyone communicates in English, because as Cardiff grew so quickly in the 19th century, it became cosmopolitan and English was the only language to be understandable for all inhabitants. On the other hand we can find some people who refuse to speak English, they even hate this language.³⁹

Officially, according to the principle of The City and County of Cardiff, Welsh and English is used in public business, administration of justice or at meetings on a basis of equality.⁴⁰

Most of the Welsh speakers live in the middle class area of Cardiff and are employed in administration, education, the media, although the most rising number of Welsh speakers has been noted in the more wealthy parts. However with the Anglicization any person who speaks Welsh is assigned to the low social status.

4.4 The Welsh language in public life

In the mid 20th century, Welsh had no public status and Welsh speakers were not allowed to use their language in court proceedings. In the 1970s and 1980s, there was a great demand for a new Welsh Language Act, which would put Welsh on an equal footing with English with regard to the public sector. The demand led to the Welsh Language Act of 1993, the most significant legislation in respect of the language, which puts Welsh and English on an equal basis in public life in Wales.

“The Act specifies three things:

- it places a duty on the public sector to treat Welsh and English on an equal basis, when providing services to the public in Wales
- it gives Welsh speakers an absolute right to speak Welsh in court

³⁸ The National Centre for Languages. “Positively Plurilingual”
http://www.cilt.org.uk/pdf/pubs/positively_plurilingual.pdf (accessed February 16, 2009).

³⁹ Cardiff. “The Welsh Language Scheme”
http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/content.asp?nav=2872%2C3259%2C5018&parent_directory_id=2865 (accessed February 20, 2009).

⁴⁰ Aberystwyth in Ceredigion West Wales. <http://www.aberystwyth.com/> (accessed April 17, 2009).

- it establishes the Welsh Language Board to oversee the delivery of these promises and to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language”⁴¹

Nowadays, while only 20 per cent of the population of Wales speaks Welsh, the aims of the Welsh Language Board seem to have general support by almost 70 per cent of people in Wales who believe more should be done to promote Welsh.⁴²

4.5 The Welsh language in the economic sector

The use of Welsh in the private sector is limited, because it is mainly owned by external companies. A prominent historian of Wales, Professor Geraint H. Jenkins mentioned: „Welsh is still excluded from the private sector and it is entirely possible that members of our National Assembly will decide, in their wisdom, that Welsh is not the most important badge of national identity in a land in which four-fifths of the population do not speak it.“⁴³

But in recent years many people became conscious of the fact, that the ability of speaking Welsh is a cornerstone when running a business and also when being employed, so there have been a number of campaigns to encourage businesses to use more Welsh in advertising or magazines.⁴⁴

With Welsh language Act, the number of Welsh speakers is still increasing, there can be found more and more customers who give priority to be served in Welsh. This means the importance of using bilingualism in various work sectors is competitive edge how to increase the current number of customers, how to attract new one or how to create goodwill. That goes without saying, that customers appreciate companies providing required information in their native language.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Welsh Language Board. “Welsh and the Law” <http://www.byig-wlb.org.uk/English/welshlanguage/Pages/WelshandtheLaw.aspx> (accessed February 21, 2009).

⁴² Prof. Peter Wynn Thomas. “Welsh today” <http://www.bbc.co.uk/voices/multilingual/welsh.shtml> (accessed January 22, 2009).

⁴³ North American Journal of Welsh Studies. “The Welsh Language in the 20th Century” <http://spruce.flint.umich.edu/~ellisjs/Jenkins.PDF> (accessed February 25, 2009).

⁴⁴ David Davies, Member of Parliament for Monmouth. “Davies to oppose new Welsh Language Scheme” <http://www.david-daviesmp.co.uk/newsshow.aspx?id=6&ref=216> (accessed March 5, 2009).

⁴⁵ Welsh Language Board. “Welsh in the Economy” <http://www.byig-wlb.org.uk/English/welshlanguage/Pages/WelshintheEconomy.aspx> (accessed February 22, 2009).

4.6 The Welsh language in European Union

The Welsh Assembly Government has been working closely with the UK Government to negotiate the use of Welsh at the EU Institutions. Wales was campaigning for the official use of the Welsh language for many years until July 2008 when the Welsh Heritage Minister, Alun Ffred Jones, became the first person to speak Welsh formally at an institutional meeting of the European Union. He described it as a historical event that would help normalize the language and help to strengthen the image of Wales at the international level, economically and culturally. Before the meeting he said: “Welsh is one of Europe's oldest languages and I am delighted that my ministerial colleagues from across the union will hear it as a living and dynamic language of business” and his first word was 'Diolch', which means 'Thank you'.⁴⁶

The Welsh language has been accepted as a "co-official" language in the council of ministers. There have been decided that Ministers representing the UK at its meetings can speak in Welsh. Welsh will not be added to the list of the EU's 23 official languages, but speeches can be given in Welsh, all European legislation will be translated into Welsh and anyone wanting to correspond with major EU bodies in Welsh can do so. But campaigning for co-official status in other EU institutions will continue so that people can correspond and receive replies in Welsh.⁴⁷

4.7 Education

The first school to use the Welsh language as the medium of instruction was set up in Aberystwyth in 1939. Nowadays, there are hundreds of primary and secondary schools in Wales that teach entirely or mainly through the medium of Welsh.⁴⁸

Children are taught through the medium of Welsh known as Welsh medium education at nursery and primary schools from the ages 5 to 16. In 1990, Welsh became a compulsory subject for all pupils up to age 14 in Wales and from 1999 all secondary schools are obliged to offer the Welsh language as a second language to pupils up to sixteen years of age.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Ian Drury. “Welsh spoken for first time at EU but is it all just a waste of British taxpayer’s money?” <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/worldnews/article-1087843/Welsh-spoken-time-EU-just-waste-British-taxpayers-money.html> (accessed February 20, 2009).

⁴⁷ European Bureau for Lesser-Used Languages. “EU welcomes the dragon's tongue, Cymraeg” http://www.eblul.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=181&Itemid=1 (accessed February 23, 2009).

⁴⁸ Omniglot Writing Systems and Languages of the world. “Welsh (Cymraeg)”. <http://www.omniglot.com/writing/welsh.htm> (accessed November 20, 2008).

⁴⁹ Davies, Janet, *The Welsh language*, University of Wales Press, 1994

Bilingualism is important for children living in Wales. Their choices and opportunities will be affected by whether they are mono-lingual, bilingual or multi-lingual.⁵⁰

Since many modern speakers cannot write or easily understand the traditional written language, all Welsh universities teach some courses in Welsh and there are numerous Welsh courses for adults throughout Wales. The ability to speak Welsh is essential or desirable for certain career choices in Wales, such as teaching or customer service.⁵¹

4.8 Publishing

Welsh people are literate people. This has been proved in the 16th century, the period of an oral art, which is the earliest Welsh literary tradition.

In 1647, when the first printed book came to light in Wales, the publication of Welsh books was seen as an uncertain business. As late as in the 19th century the Welsh book trade became prosperous.⁵²

Publisher of long-running Gwasg Gomer with his Gomer Press is publishing books on Welsh history, politics, arts or recreation was joined by many newer ventures such as Y Lolfa, Welsh publisher specializing in Welsh fiction, poetry, children's literature, language tutors and politics. One of the most well-known publishing houses specializing in books of Welsh interests since 1994 is Ashley Drake Publishing Ltd.

Wales has never had any Welsh daily newspaper, but we can find many Welsh periodicals reporting on current affairs and lifestyle issues. Two weekly papers published for the whole Wales 'Y Cymro' and 'Golwg' prove that the taste for reading in Welsh exist on a significant level.⁵³

4.8.1 Literature in Welsh

Literature in Wales is highly celebrated and the readers take care of their books, sustain the language and the culture. That could be the reason why such a great amount of books in Welsh is published and distributed through the Welsh bookshops annually. Despite the small

⁵⁰ BBC Home. The school gate for parents in Wales. "Education in Wales"
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/schoolgate/aboutschool/content/inwelsh.shtml> (accessed February 23, 2009).

⁵¹ Answers.com. "Welsh language" <http://www.answers.com/topic/welsh-language> (accessed February 23, 2009).

⁵² Davies, Janet, *The Welsh language*, University of Wales Press, 1994

⁵³ Naaswch Welsh Studis Web Links. "News and media"
<http://spruce.flint.umich.edu/~ellisjs/links.html#NEWSPAPERS> (accessed February 26, 2009).

number of Welsh speakers in the population of Wales there has been a significant improvement both in the quantity and quality of Welsh books.

Welsh literature is considered as the oldest surviving literature in Europe. Much of it is unknown outside the United Kingdom; on the other hand, there is a group of Anglo-Welsh poets who are famous throughout the world. To this group belongs Dylan Thomas, Wales' greatest poet with his best known work *Under Milk Wood*.⁵⁴

The most important novelist of the 20th century is Kate Roberts known as *Brenhines ein llên*. Other popular Welsh writers are Tegla Davies, T. Rowland Hughes, and Islwyn Ffowc Ellis. Realistic drama was developed by R. G. Berry, who became prominent as one of the pioneers of the drama in Welsh and social dramatists D. T. Davies. Frequently used themes are the love of nature, the boldness of imagery, and the lilt of language.⁵⁵

4.9 The media

Welsh language broadcasting has grown considerably since the beginning of the 1970s when the society began to campaign for a Welsh language radio and television service so the BBC established Radio Cymru. There were also other attempts to establish a separate television channel for Welsh programs, but the Conservative government announced that it would not carry this proposal.⁵⁶

There are many TV channels and radio stations based in the Cardiff that broadcast daily from 5 a.m. until midnight entirely or mainly in Welsh:

- S4C - Homepage of S4C - the fourth channel for Wales (S4C) introduced in November 1982, which provides 3 hours viewing through the medium of Welsh every evening
- BBC Cymru Wales - full bilingual radio and television service provides the latest news and programming for Welsh television and radio in Welsh and English.
- News Wales - a daily updated Welsh news resource
- Newyddion (BBC Cymraeg) – online video of latest news in Welsh⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Neurotic Poets Web Site. "Dylan Marlais Thomas" <http://www.neuroticpoets.com/thomas/> (accessed January 22, 2009).

⁵⁵ Parry, Thomas, *A History of Welsh Literature*, Oxford, 1955

⁵⁶ National library of Wales. "*Tynged yr Iaith*, The Welsh Language Society, Broadcasting in Welsh, The Welsh Language Act" <http://www.llgc.org.uk/ymgyrchu/Iaith/TyngedIaith/index-e.htm> (accessed February 26, 2009).

⁵⁷ Naaswch Welsh Studis Web Links. "News and media" <http://spruce.flint.umich.edu/~ellisjs/links.html#NEWSPAPERS> (accessed February 26, 2009).

II. ANALYSIS

5 WELSH DIALECTS AND ACCENTS

At the beginning of my analysis I would like to point out great differences between different parts of Wales. Like any other language Welsh has also many dialects and accents that vary throughout Wales, but in Wales, the differences are significant in a large extend. The most noticeable contrast is between North Wales called a North Welsh accent and South Wales called a Swansea accent although the distinction is still not as extended as in England. The most widely spoken dialect is the speech of east Glamorgan, but since many Welsh medium school teachers come from South-West Wales, their influence upon today's pupils is great.⁵⁸

Many fluent Welsh speakers have already experienced some troubles when speaking English, because their accent is still predominantly Welsh and also when somebody comes into an area and doesn't have that same accent as here, he is regarded as something strange.

For some native English speakers from Scotland or Ireland Welsh accent seems to sound guttural and throaty, they even call it as the most strangest and irritating accent on the planet. The Welsh accents are among the least popular in the UK nevertheless people in Wales are proud of the way they speak and they are even shocked to hear that Welsh accent is so unpopular.

⁵⁸ Trudgill, Peter, *Language in the British isles*, Cambridge: University Press, 1 edition, 1984

6 WELSH IN NORTH VS. WELSH IN SOUTH

There are not only several variations in the Welsh language itself between the Northern and Southern part of Wales, but there is also diverse attitude towards using this language. As I have already mentioned in the theoretical part English is spoken by about 80 per cent and Welsh about 20 per cent of inhabitants. The Southern Wales covers the former one and the Northern Wales the latter one.

In the middle of Wales there is a fictitious line which divides Wales into two parts. South of this line is an area called “Little England beyond Wales”, where the language of the majority of people living here is English. Only few people use the Welsh language in everyday life, whereas in the north of this area, the Welsh language has always been much stronger.⁵⁹

6.1 South of Wales

In Southern Wales we can hardly ever hear Welsh, although everybody spoke Welsh 200 years ago until Henry VIII's regulation to impose the English language as the only official language of Wales.⁶⁰

The use of English became necessity in the time of industrialization in the 19th century when the capital became cosmopolitan and hardly anybody could speak Welsh, so people started to use English to understand each other.

In the paragraph about Welsh revival in the 19th century, there has already been explained the difficult position of the Welsh language before the establishing of The Welsh Language Society in 1962, which should protect rights of Welsh.⁶¹ For better understanding how was live of local people who couldn't speak their native language hard I would mention the life experience of Welsh Coal miner Des Harriss from Cardiff who expresses his attitude towards the Welsh language that he likes Welsh and wants to pass it to his children as well. In his opinion, the devolution process is very important for Welsh people to manage their country as they want, because they want to do some things differently than English do.

He also retrospects the time when he started to attend school in 1954, through the all school period he was allowed to learn only Welsh national hymn. If he was caught speaking

⁵⁹ Na cestě po Walesu, 2007. Documentary. TV, ČT1. 2008. Dec. 11.

⁶⁰ The Welsh Language: History, facts and figures. “The historical context” <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/drah/publications/20090202LCOfactsandfigsen.doc> (accessed February 16, 2009).

⁶¹ The Welsh Language Society, The Welsh Language Petition, Educational Campaigns. “The language of Heaven” <http://www.llgc.org.uk/ymgyrchu/Iaith/CymIaith/index-e.htm> (accessed January 23, 2009).

Welsh he would take it through the mouth. The school he attended was of course an English speaking school.

But today, fortunately, as the time is changing; a lot of schools are supporting children to learn the Welsh language.⁶²

6.1.1 Monmouthshire vs. Carmarthenshire

I have chosen these two counties to submit a proof of the fact above why Welsh is so rarely heard. I would like to show that not only common people but also the government is responsible for so low numbers of Welsh speakers. This can be seen in two counties in Southern Wales: county Monmouthshire and county Carmarthenshire.

6.1.1.1 Monmouthshire

County Monmouthshire in the south-east has the smallest number of Welsh speakers in Wales. There is no relevant proof why local people are unwilling to speak Welsh, but it is said people in this county share the same idea as Monmouth MP David Davies, who disagree with plans to create a new Welsh Language Act in Wales to avoid employment of Welsh speakers and translators in large private companies. He believes any company should make their own decision which language they prefer to speak. If they are forced to use Welsh, it could happen, they will be no more interested in doing business in Monmouthshire and non-Welsh speakers would suffer from discrimination.

As an example he mentions British telecom, which offers a Welsh language scheme, but the number of people using it is in decline. Instead of such an expensive scheme he advises to support people to learn the language.⁶³

6.1.1.2 Carmarthenshire

County Carmarthenshire is a fortress of the Welsh language with the highest number of Welsh speakers in South Wales. It is a proud Welsh speaking area and there has never been a period in history, when the majority of population did not speak Welsh.

An increased number of Welsh speakers has been most notable amongst young people between the ages of five and fifteen, who are learning and using the language. It has been achieved also thanks to the Council that is promoting the language and encouraging its use throughout the county.

⁶² Na cestě po Walesu, 2007. Documentary. TV, ČT1. 2008. Dec. 11.

⁶³ David Davies, Member of Parliament for Monmouth. "Davies to oppose new Welsh Language Scheme" <http://www.david-daviesmp.co.uk/newshow.aspx?id=6&ref=216> (accessed March 5, 2009).

Carmarthenshire County Council supports the Welsh Assembly Government's vision for a 'truly bilingual Wales' and describes the Welsh language as an essential part of national identity, history and culture that must be respected and preserved for future generations.

Councillor Wyn Evans, a member of the Executive Board has been appointed to be responsible for Language Development and a Members Advisory Panel on the Welsh Language has been established.

The Council has adopted the principle that it will treat Welsh and English on a basis of equality, which means that the documents are published both in English and Welsh and Welsh is supported to be used in public meetings as well as phone calls and correspondence should be answered bilingually. Welsh inhabitants are in a position to decide which language they prefer to use in the social, public, cultural and economic life, because it was recognized that people's views and needs can be better expressed in their preferred language.⁶⁴

6.1.1.3 Welsh Language Scheme 2006-09

Welsh Language Scheme 2006-2009 is the third Welsh Language Scheme developed by Carmarthenshire County Council to ensure that bilingualism will be promoted and developed within the County.

The aim of this scheme is to give support to school pupils and students of all ages in speaking, reading and writing in both languages, to promote the use of the Welsh language by all inhabitants and organizations across Carmarthenshire County or to foster bilingualism in services, meetings etc.⁶⁵

6.1.2 Church service

Of course, churches are also part of public services and they are also obliged to respect the state regulation to use bilingualism.

Dean Wyn Evans, who serves in a small parish St. David's explained that the main services especially on Sunday are served in English, but there are also two simultaneous services for the parishioners one in English and one in Welsh at each end of the building.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ Carmarthenshire County Council. "Welsh language"

<http://www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/english/council/welshlanguage/pages/home.aspx> (accessed March 11, 2009).

⁶⁵ Carmarthenshire County Council. "Welsh language"

<http://www.carmarthenshire.gov.uk/english/council/welshlanguage/pages/home.aspx> (accessed March 11, 2009).

⁶⁶ Na cestě po Walesu, 2007. Documentary. TV, ČT1. 2008. Dec. 11.

6.2 North of Wales

We already know that Welsh is much more often heard in the Northern part of Wales, because Welsh speakers are mostly employed in the agriculture sector and related businesses or they moved to the areas with the low percentage of Welsh speakers, because they were attracted by employment opportunities.⁶⁷

Almost every inhabitant from Northern Wales can speak fluently or at least understand Welsh quite well. There can be even found lot of primarily older people in this area, who could not understand English at all; they are against the Royal family.

Gina Jones from Conwy describes the behavior of local people when playing the national anthem as blunt. She said: “There is tradition when playing an anthem that everybody is supposed to stand, but some people will not stand. But then, when the Welsh national hymn is singing they will stand definitely”.⁶⁸

6.2.1 Gwynedd

Gwynedd in Northern Wales is considered to be the very essence of Wales and personification of everything that is Welsh. Local council is aware of this fact so their plan is to protect the cultural heritage and promote the use of the Welsh language throughout the area. Everybody speak Welsh here, so if someone wants to learn proper Welsh, this is the right place where to learn this language.

In Gwynedd, Welsh has been the main language for over thousand years and always regarded as the basis of a rich culture. Local council protects and develops the language and Welsh is principle medium of education for children. Gwynedd County Council also prescribed that all internal communications must be conducted in Welsh only.⁶⁹

6.2.1.1 Gwynedd Welsh Language Charter

Gwynedd Welsh Language Charter, the first charter of its kind in Wales was launched to promote the Welsh language in Gwynedd, to raise standards of Welsh medium services to the public and of course to improve the lives of people living in Gwynedd.

⁶⁷ Economic Research Unit Background Analysis „Socio-economic characteristics of Welsh speakers - an initial analysis“
<http://wales.gov.uk/firstminister/research/economic/adhoc/welshspeakers/welshspeakers.pdf?lang=cy>(accessed March 2, 2009).

⁶⁸ Na cestě po Walesu, 2007. Documentary. TV, ČT1. 2008. Dec. 11.

⁶⁹ Cyngor Gwynedd Council. “Deposit Draft June 2004”
http://www.cartoplus.co.uk/gwynedd/english/text/01_pt1.htm (accessed March 11, 2009).

The aim of this charter is to ensure that public bodies and voluntary organizations treat English and Welsh on the equal basis and customers must get services in their chosen language.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Cyngor Gwynedd Council. “Gwynedd Welsh Language Charter”
http://www.gwynedd.gov.uk/gwy_doc.asp?cat=6136&doc=22269&Language=1 (accessed March 11, 2009).

7 OPINIONS ON THE WELSH REVIVAL

As it is already written in the theoretical part, the Welsh revival in the 19th century was the most important event in the history of the Welsh language. In general terms there is broad support for ensuring the survival of Welsh, on the other hand native Welsh speakers fear it could foster division and disapproval. Most people living in Wales support using Welsh and they are proud of it, only very small percentage of inhabitants opposes to use the language. Under mentioned, there are some examples of completely different attitudes towards using and teaching the Welsh language.

Tim Williams, a bilingual historian and Welsh language activist repine against increasing emphasis on Welsh to be taught in schools even at the expense of other subjects e.g. foreign languages that appear to be much more useful for pupils.⁷¹

Many people see as disadvantageous to learn English and Welsh as compulsory subjects instead of e.g. German or French. Especially those who run a business in Wales perceive the lack of these language skills as a continuous handicap in their business career.

Although some schools have tried to resist the compulsory education of the Welsh language, because the number of those who could utilize these skills is very low in some areas, they were not successful.

Also parents would spend this amount of money elsewhere, but since many of them have experienced threatening phone calls, they are now afraid to dispute language policies in schools.

Wales is a bilingual country, but we can find people who share the idea that Welsh should be the only language of usage. If one wants to be accepted, must be Welsh speaker, which seems to be kind of discrimination for non Welsh speakers since most people do not speak Welsh.

General attitude towards the Welsh language is that the expanding of Welsh should be supported, but those who refuse to speak Welsh should not be forced or even underprivileged. Everybody has right to speak his own language. Southern Welsh learners are conducting the linguistic revival, but for those who naturally speak Welsh, the language is their symbol of

⁷¹ University of Maryland University College Europe. "The Welsh language"
<http://faculty.ed.umuc.edu/~jmatthew/articles/welsch.html> (accessed March 11, 2009).

identity and their roots and speaking Welsh is so natural for them as the ability to speak at all.⁷²

In Wales, especially in Southern part, there are quite a lot of people who do not care about the Welsh language at all. They are not interested if the language dies or not and they even do not believe that the statistics made in recent years are true and unconverted.

Such people do not support Welsh to be taught at schools, they conceive that children who learn Welsh as a first language have poorer English skills, which seems to be not good for their future life. In their opinion the Welsh language has no relevance in Wales, so there is no reason to use it.

We can find thousands of people living in Wales who have never been good at the Welsh language, but they had to struggle with it for many years until they reached the age when they were allowed to decide which subjects they want to concentrate on. Such people feel they wasted a lot of their childhood trying to learn a language that they have never used outside school. Anyway some people are not gifted with learning languages, so they should not be forced to speak Welsh just to be Welsh.

⁷² Na cestě po Walesu, 2007. Documentary. TV, ČT1. 2008. Dec. 11.

8 WHY PEOPLE LEARN WELSH

In this chapter I would like to make reference to the paragraph 4.7, which states that in 1990 Welsh became a compulsory subject for all pupils up to age 14 in Wales and from 1999 all secondary schools are obliged to offer the Welsh language as a second language to pupils up to sixteen years of age.⁷³ That's the one thing that made Welsh people learn Welsh, but there is also another reason. Most people are learning Welsh, because they appreciate the Welsh culture and so they protect their roots. Otherwise there are also native Welsh people who are not interested in learning Welsh at all.

Through Wales we can find a great amount of courses where anybody can learn Welsh whether he is beginner or advanced speaker and at the time of modern technology like digital TV, the Internet and other media forms the learning Welsh is much more accessible.

Meic Aberafan from Wales has always been speaking English all his life until the possibility for his children came to attend Welsh medium school. He decided to give them a chance to learn this language as he has never had and he began to learn Welsh as well. He admits he enriched his life has never regretted it.

Dan from Southern Wales is currently learning the Welsh language and he is very glad of the fact that Welsh came back to schools, because it is a great start for him. He already knows most of the basics so with a bit of hard work he trusts he will finally learn to speak in the native tongue of his country and half of his family and he may also contribute to save this ancient and beautiful language.⁷⁴

⁷³ Davies, Janet, *The Welsh language*, University of Wales Press, 1994

⁷⁴ Prof. Peter Wynn Thomas. "Welsh today" <http://www.bbc.co.uk/voices/multilingual/welsh.shtml> (accessed January 22, 2009).

9 ABERYSTWYTH

Aberystwyth, colloquially known as Aber can be shown as perfect example of town supporting the Welsh language especially through the education, because not many towns or cities support Welsh as Aberystwyth does.

As already mentioned in the previous section, the first school to use the Welsh language as the medium of instruction was set up in Aberystwyth in 1939.⁷⁵ Therefore Aberystwyth has become a major centre of Welsh education. Welsh can be heard from all sides, because there is great expansion of the Welsh language through radio and magazine and Welsh has also been made more attractive for the visitors who came here to view the National library.

Aberystwyth is a historic town and tourist centre in the west coast of Wales in Ceredigion, where the Welsh language is used in everyday life and the majority of local population is bilingual.

It is famous holiday resort and administrative centre, but primarily we can find here most of the symbols that make the Welsh language a living language, which will hopefully survive. Aberystwyth's greatest attraction for Welsh lovers is the Dictionary of the Welsh language and National Library of Wales, but it is also famous for the University of Wales Aberystwyth, which promotes the using of Welsh expressively.

Aberystwyth is also home to many institutions like The Welsh Language Society, which was founded to protect the rights of Welsh and supported Welsh to be used in education.⁷⁶

9.1 Education

Welsh schools are a minority of the schools in Wales, but Aberystwyth has not only the University of Wales Aberystwyth, but also one comprehensive school Ysgol Gyfun Gymunedol Penweddig, both using Welsh. Even the town has a low number of inhabitants; there is quite great support of the Welsh language. For this reason I just chose this town.

Schools respect official languages and offer the English language as well as the Welsh language. They believe it is important to transform the national identity and cultural awareness to the children and everyone living in Wales should know his native language. This

⁷⁵ Omniglot Writing Systems and Languages of the world. "Welsh (Cymraeg)".
<http://www.omniglot.com/writing/welsh.htm> (accessed November 20, 2008).

⁷⁶ Aberystwyth in Ceredigion West Wales. <http://www.aberystwyth.com/> (accessed April 17, 2009).

is also useful for their future jobs to know both languages to be attractive for employer and customers.⁷⁷

9.1.1 The Aberystwyth University

The Aberystwyth University founded in 1872 is the oldest university in Wales. It is a bilingual institution which runs on the basis of a Welsh Language Scheme prepared under the Welsh Language Act 1993. This act states that public bodies providing a service to the public in Wales have to treat both English and Welsh on the basis of equality.

University's Language Scheme, the University Charter and the Strategic Plan of the University aim to provide freedom to students and other staff of the university in decision making whether they prefer to speak Welsh or English. That is why the Aberystwyth University is considered to be one of two universities teaching the courses in the Welsh language the most often.

It is considered as one of the most modern universities for its modular degree system covering academic and vocational courses. University tries to satisfy the needs of all students so they are offered many subject, courses or seminars in Welsh. Students have also right to be examined in Welsh.

University divided the Welsh medium studies into five categories that state to what extent the Welsh language is used. E.g. the category one means that 70% or more of the degree schemes are offered through the medium of Welsh and when combining two schemes 70% or more of the provision will be available in Welsh in each subject.

Their mission statement is: "We have a special responsibility for the needs of Wales and remain deeply aware of our role in sustaining the native culture of Wales and the Welsh language".⁷⁸

9.2 The Llafur journal

Llafur was established in 1970 to promote and propagate all aspects of people's history in Wales. It is a scholarly journal published both in English and Welsh every year in the Autumn/Winter. Most of the articles are written on the basis of original researches.

⁷⁷ Aberystwyth in Ceredigion West Wales. <http://www.aberystwyth.com/> (accessed April 17, 2009).

⁷⁸ Prifysgol Aberystwyth University. <http://www.aber.ac.uk/en/> (accessed April 18, 2009).

The most interesting fact about this magazine is that everybody who has some experience with the Welsh history or owns some revealing documents can contribute to this magazine. No matter if he is experienced writer or not, editors from Aberystwyth are willing to give an advice on presentation, style or anything else.

Llafur also organizes many events that are included in the online database on the Llafur website.⁷⁹

9.2.1 Welsh People's History Society

People who are interested in Wales's history can become a member of Welsh People's History Society. All members are entitled to receive regularly the Llafur journal, influence the future policy and development of the Society and they have also opportunity to attend the Annual General Meetings.⁸⁰

9.3 The Dictionary of the Welsh Language

Inhabitants of Aberystwyth are proud of the fact, that Aberystwyth is home to the Welsh Dictionary (Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru), which is the first standard historical Welsh dictionary comparable with the Oxford English Dictionary, but in a little bit shorter version. The dictionary of the Welsh language has 7.3 million words in 3,949 pages forming four substantial volumes.

It contains vocabulary of the Welsh language coupled with English equivalents from the Old Welsh, through the plentiful literature of the Medieval and Modern periods, to the eruption of vocabulary in the 20th century all in alphabetical order.

The program for creation of this dictionary started in 1921 as the research project of the University of Wales Board of Celtic Studies at the National Library of Wales together with a small team of staff and the Rev. J. Bodvan Anwyl.

In 1949 editor R. J. Thomas published first 64 pages and part of these pages was bound as Volume I in 1967. The Volume II was bounded in around 1970, the Volume III in 1998 and the last volume was published in 2002 and launched at the Welsh Assembly by the First Minister, Rhodri Morgan.

⁷⁹ Llafur. "Welsh People's History Society" <http://www.llafur.org/journal.html> (accessed April 19, 2009).

⁸⁰ Llafur. "Welsh People's History Society" <http://www.llafur.org/journal.html> (accessed April 19, 2009).

There is a belief the creation of this dictionary was a great step forward in preventing Welsh to die out. Now the language is preserved at least in several volumes.⁸¹

9.4 The National Library of Wales

National library in Aberystwyth was built through hard work of Welsh people and Members of Parliament. Now it houses many of the greatest literary fortunes of Wales and other Celtic countries including the "Black Book of Carmarthen", the oldest surviving manuscript written in the Welsh language. Britain's most valuable pieces were stored in the National Library's vault during the World War II.

The visitors come to see here millions of books, manuscripts, archives, pictures, maps, photographs and electronic copies of most of these things, but also view the exhibitions, watch films, attend lectures and use other learning facilities.⁸²

9.5 Aberystwyth web pages

The town Aberystwyth has its own guide available on the internet in the English language and of course in the Welsh language. Some people may ask whether it is really necessary to translate everything in Welsh when everybody understands English, but it is about the attitude of each county or town if they accept Welsh as part of their life and their culture or if they just feel that bilingualism is a necessity.

The guide provides information about services available in this area, events held in Aberystwyth like the race called Jewellery House Welsh Lady Fun Run founded by Menter Aberystwyth in March 2006 to celebrate St. Davids Day in style and aimed to put Aberystwyth on the map. This guide also offers possibility of accommodation as well as recommendation what to do in leisure time.⁸³

⁸¹ Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru. "A Dictionary of the Welsh Language" <http://www.aber.ac.uk/geiriadur/> (accessed April 19, 2009).

⁸² The National Library of Wales Aberystwyth. <http://www.llgc.org.uk/index.php?id=2> (accessed April 19, 2009).

⁸³ Aberystwyth Guide <http://www.aberystwythguide.org.uk/> (accessed April 17, 2009).

9.6 Radio Ceredigion

Radio Ceredigion is the local radio station established in 1992 broadcasting for the West Coast of Wales. It has three studios at The Old School, in Aberystwyth.

Radio Ceredigion has a wide range of listeners mainly thanks to the bilingual broadcasting that is very appreciated by their listeners especially by Welsh learners who can improve their language skills in this way.

Radio offers wide range of music, news and information across the region, talk shows or people can listen to fashion advisor and financial advisor.

Radio Ceredigion runs round-the-clock and their blocks are divided into different styles so that each age group had their own back.⁸⁴

9.7 Bilingual signs

According to Aberystwyth Town Council, companies are obliged to use bilingual signs without exception. As an example I would like to mention the case of the coffee chain Costa Coffee. The campaigners of the Welsh language society accused this company of ignoring the Welsh language and not respecting a letter from council to use bilingual signs.

Local people welcome this regulation; because they appreciate to have right to use the language they choose as they didn't have some time ago.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Radio Ceredigion 2000 <http://www.radioceredigion.net/> (accessed April 19, 2009).

⁸⁵ Aberystwyth in Ceredigion West Wales. <http://www.aberystwyth.com/> (accessed April 17, 2009).

10 EISTEDDFOD FESTIVAL

Eisteddfod festival already mentioned in the theoretical part is one of Europe's largest and oldest youth festivals and also one of the greatest illustrations how the inhabitants of Wales promote Welsh culture. The rootage of this festival, which is well-known all over the world dates back to the 12th century when Lord Rhys invited poets and artists to Eisteddfod and the best ones were awarded.

Welsh people have always been celebrating poets, painters, artists and also singing belongs to the greatest tradition of Wales. This is big celebration of music and culture through the medium of Wales. Conductor of one of the competing choir participating in 2008 said: "It is the way of our life. The way of making young people to become more confident in all the things they will do in their lives".⁸⁶

This festival takes place in a different location within Wales and it is held every year in May since the 19th century. In 2008 it was held in Cardiff and this year it is going to be organized in Bala, town in Gwynedd, North Wales.

Thousands of youth between the ages 7 to 24 come here to compete in singing, dancing, recitations and then they are awarded in three ceremonies:

- The Crowning of the Bard, where the best poet in free meter is awarded
- The Awarding of the Prose Medal for the winner of the Prose competitions
- The Chairing of the Bard for the best long poem

The last festival was attracted by more than one hundred thousand of visitors and another millions of people were watching the festival on TV. There could be found 300 tents offering all kind of entertainment e.g. sculptures, ceramics, photography, wood carving, the latest developments in the field of science and technology or last but not least the performances from some of the country's most popular clog-dancing troupes.

Each year including the last one the official language is how else than Welsh, but everybody who should have any problems to understand the Welsh language can use translation equipment with a simultaneous translation service. There were even some proposals by local people to sing only Welsh language songs at the festival, but finally it was realized that English has also its place here.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Na cestě po Walesu, 2007. Documentary. TV, ČT1. 2008. Dec. 11.

⁸⁷ The National Eisteddfod of Wales. <http://www.eisteddfod.org.uk/english/> (accessed March 3, 2009).

10.1.1 Learner of the year

One of the main events of this festival is the competition called Learner of the year, which is open to anyone who is more than 18 years old and can speak quite fluent Welsh. This part is very valued among local people, because it shows that it is possible to learn Welsh.

An integral part of this competition is the nomination of teachers, but also others who learned their children or students to speak Welsh or they supported anyone using Welsh or learn Welsh. Among these persons we can find e.g. a mother of two children who has switched to speaking Welsh at home or a man from Hong Kong who became fluent in Welsh through using email, the internet and courses in spite of the fact that he has never been in Wales. Now this man is working with Bedwyr Centre at Bangor University in North Wales.

From all the competitors we can feel their enthusiasm for the Welsh language, which is unbelievable. One of the participants notified, that she decided to learn Welsh because of her children so that she was able to help them with their homework and could be part of their school life.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ The National Eisteddfod of Wales. <http://www.eisteddfod.org.uk/english/> (accessed March 3, 2009).

CONCLUSION

The aim of this work was to elucidate the thorny way of the Welsh language from the origination till the nowadays when the language has to face all kind of restraints. During this time it had to be done much until Welsh could be used in public and pupils could be taught in Welsh.

In the 16th century using of the Welsh language was prohibited and only English could be used in public. The Welsh language was considered as the subordinate language until first piece of legislation to change the status of Welsh, The Welsh Courts Act 1942 appeared.

The next essential event in the history of the Welsh language came in 1962 when The Welsh Language Society to protect rights of Welsh was established. This society was created as a result of Saunders Lewis's lecture, where this former President of Plaid Cymru strongly opposed the restoration of Welsh. This speech belongs to the most influential broadcasts in the history of Wales.

Further important government regulations that helped Welsh was The Welsh Language Act 1993 followed with the Government of Wales Act 1998. Both are the cause of the fact that in the public sector and the administration of justice in Wales, the Welsh and English languages should be treated on the basis of equality.

These three most notable documents caused the fact, that nowadays the Welsh language can be heard through the entire nation even in some part of Wales especially in Northern Wales much more often. But also the establishment of radio stations, TV channels and publishing books, magazines and newspapers in Welsh helped the Welsh language maintenance.

The Welsh language as a unique language with many regional dialects is worth being preserved. The inhabitants of Wales and government are aware of this fact and that is why they adapt measures necessary for the salvation of the language to be preserved for the next generations.

Fortunately, I must tell that after reading a lot of materials about the Welsh language I have to admit Wales is a nation that grasps to stand by itself as an independent nation and they try to protect the language as it is their own heritage, culture and national wealth and do everything to maintain national feeling.

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