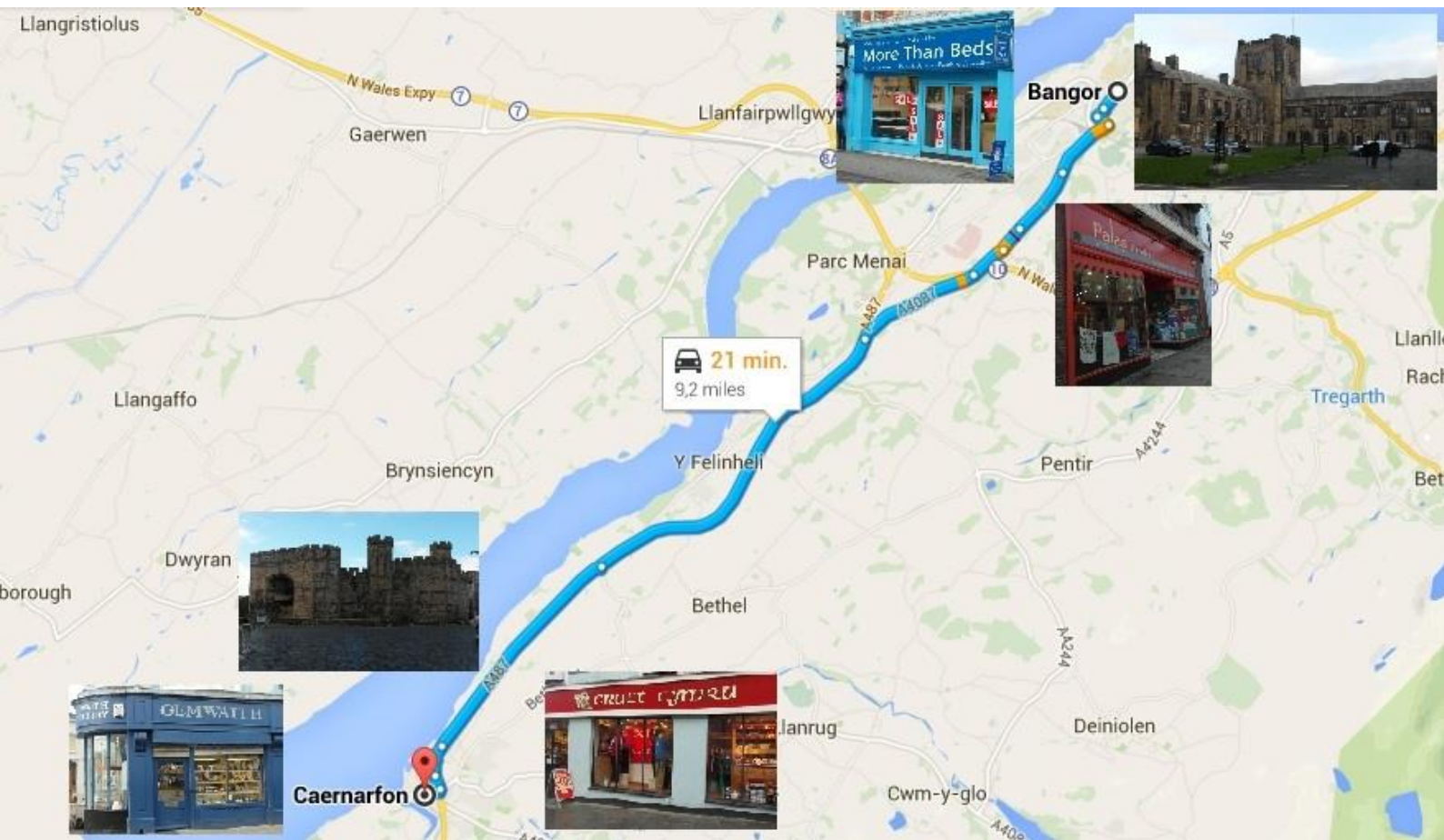


# Language Choice of Shop Owners in Bangor and Caernarfon



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## **Abstract**

The aim of this thesis was to discover what language was used by shop owners in Bangor and Caernarfon when they were greeted in either English or Welsh by a customer. The question arised whether shop owners would converge to a customer by speaking the same language. Two hypotheses were formulated on the basis of the Accommodation Theory: when the customer greets the shop owners in English, the latter will respond in English because the shop owners have a tendency to converge to their customers, and when the customer greets the shop owners in Welsh, the latter will respond in Welsh because the shop owners have a tendency to converge to their customers. Another aim was to find out the motives behind the language choices.

The method consisted of eliciting data on the language choices as an active participant observer and a follow-up interview. The interviews were conducted to find out the reasons behind the language choices. In total, 40 shop owners were greeted and interviewed: 20 in Bangor and 20 in Caernarfon.

The results showed that when English was spoken in the greeting, the shop owners responded in English, and, when Welsh was used by the interviewer, the shop owners responded in English as well. The reasons for the language choices were diverse and ranged from the inability to speak Welsh to the interviewer's accent .

Hypothesis 1 turned out to be problematic. Although it seemed correct at first, it cannot be said that the shop owners' use of English is convergence. Hypothesis 2 should be rejected since the majority of the participants used English to a Welsh greeting. Even when the shop owners responded in Welsh, the reasons for the language choice did not suggest that there was convergence involved.

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## 1. Introduction

In comparison to some other countries in Great Britain, Wales has a unique characteristic: it has two official languages, Welsh and English. “Welsh [...] is spoken by about 20 per cent of the country’s population” (Melchers and Shaw 56) with high percentages of Welsh speakers in the north-west and centre of Wales. Only specific parts of Wales are known for their use of Welsh; in southern and eastern parts not much Welsh is spoken. Gwynedd is an area in which “61 per cent of the people over three years of age claimed that they could speak, read and understand Welsh” (Melchers and Shaw 57). Welsh plays a significant role in the lives of people living in Gwynedd, which is noticeable when walking on the streets in, for example, Bangor and Caernarfon and even in Bangor University. Signs and street names are in Welsh, and Bangor University has a bilingual policy in their correspondence with students. Some modules are taught in Welsh, and there are official days to promote the Welsh language: students receive free coffee if they greet in Welsh. Researchers at Bangor University research bilingualism extensively, since Gwynedd is a fertile research area in this respect. This is also the reason for choosing Wales to carry out this study. This thesis focusses on Bangor and Caernarfon. While Bangor is a city with a multicultural society due to its university, Caernarfon is known for its extensive use of Welsh in everyday life.

Giles, Taylor, and Bourhis have argued that “[a]n individual’s speech patterns are dependent on the person to whom he is talking, the topic of the discourse and the setting in which the conversation takes place” (177). This research will therefore examine the language used by shop owners and personnel in Bangor and Caernarfon when they are greeted by a customer in either Welsh or English. The topic of the discourse is thus a greeting and the setting in which the conversation takes place is shops in Bangor and Caernarfon. The participants of the greeting are shop owners or staff members and a customer. The main aim is to discover what

language shop owners and personnel in Bangor and Caernarfon choose when they are greeted by a customer: do they use English or Welsh? The data have been collected by entering 40 shops and greeting the shop owners and staff using Welsh in some cases and English in others. Afterwards, the participants were interviewed.

This research will also deal with the reasons for the language choices made by the participants. Other research on language choice among bilinguals has, for example, focussed on possible clues that might influence the language choices of bilinguals (Baker 6) and on accommodation, in which one speaker adjusts his/her speech to the other person (Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor 177). This research aims to discover if these theories can be applied to this context as well. The reasons for the use of a certain language will be deduced from the interviews conducted with all participants.

Chapter 2, the theoretical framework, will consist of a discussion of earlier research on the use of Welsh in shops in Bangor and Caernarfon, bilingualism and language choice, and the Accommodation Theory. The hypotheses will also be formulated in this chapter. In chapter 3, the method used for gathering the data will be explained. This chapter will discuss the selection of the shops, the selection of participants, the collection of the data, and the processing of the data. In chapter 4, the results of this study will be analysed and the hypotheses will be evaluated. Chapter 5 will then consider the findings by linking them to the theory. Chapter 6 will consist of the conclusion. The limitations of this research will also be explained, and there will be recommendations for further research.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

### 2.1 The Use of Welsh in Shops

Although Welsh is the language originally spoken in Wales, English was established “as the new official language in courts of law and public office” (Carter et al. 164) from the 16<sup>th</sup> until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This had some far-reaching consequences, mostly affecting education (Carter et al. 164). Nowadays,

Wales is a bilingual country with two official languages, English and Welsh, and since 1999 Welsh has become a compulsory subject in schools (Jones 9).

According to Carter et al., “[a]bout 21% of the current Welsh population speaks Welsh [...], although proportions of Welsh speakers today vary from area to area, from a high proportion in Gwynedd in the north

(69%) to much lower proportions in other

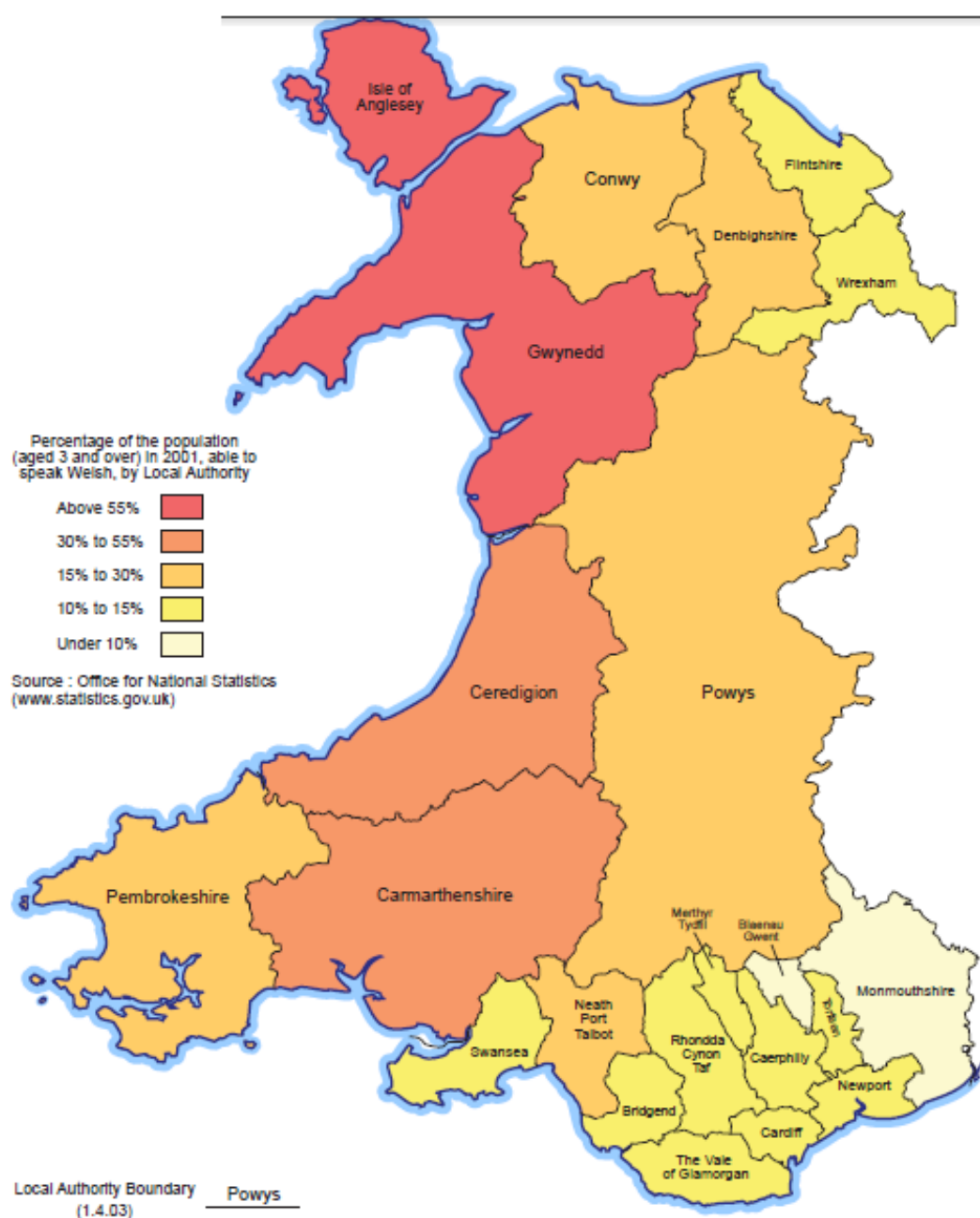


Figure 1: Percentage of the Population (Aged 3 and Over) in 2001, Able to Speak Welsh, By Local Authority

regions” (Carter et al. 165). Welsh speakers were defined as those who could speak Welsh but not necessarily write or read it. Some parts of Wales are known for their extensive use of Welsh. This area is called the Welsh heartland and is mostly comprised of Anglesey, Gwynedd, Ceredigion, and Carmarthenshire. Figure 1 shows the percentage of the population that was able to speak Welsh in 2001. It can be concluded from the map that more than 55% of the people living on Anglesey and in Gwynedd are able to speak Welsh (“Percentage”).

### *2.1.1 Welsh in Shops in Bangor<sup>1</sup>*

The use of Welsh and English in shops in Bangor has been researched before by Cora F. Lindsay. According to her, “[t]he country of Gwynedd forms part of what is termed the heartland of the Welsh language, with a high proportion of Welsh speakers” (1), and Bangor is part of this area. In her research, Lindsay “considers the ways in which the Welsh and English languages are currently used in Bangor, a cathedral and university city in North Wales” (1). Due to the presence of Bangor University, many different cultures come together there since students from the United Kingdom but also international students from all over the world study there. Lindsay investigated language use in Bangor in different domains, such as religion, education, media and entertainment, and social and domestic situations. Lindsay also focusses on commercial institutions and claims that “larger chain stores in the town [...] do not have a consistent policy of employing only bilingual staff” (12). However, much of the staff is able to speak both languages. In smaller shops, on the other hand, “there is a greater mixture of the two languages” (Lindsay 13). While much of the written communication in smaller shops is in English, “much of the oral communication is conducted in Welsh” (Lindsay 13). Lindsay concludes that most larger shops tend to use English, while smaller shops use English for signs and receipts and Welsh when communicating with customers

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<sup>1</sup> The information discussed in this paragraph is based on a paper handed in at Bangor University for the module Language Contact & Bilingualism.



(17). Although Lindsay did not focus on shops specifically in her research, she provided some information on the way English and Welsh are used in shops in Bangor. Lindsay's findings also influenced the selection process of the shops for the present paper since she concluded that, in smaller shops, the oral communication is often in Welsh, while this is not the case in larger shops. The present paper will concentrate on the languages used in shops only and not in other domains.

### ***2.1.2 Welsh in Caernarfon***

The second town that was selected for this study was Caernarfon, a coastal town that is situated in the “Welsh language ‘heartland’ country of Gwynedd” (Williams 63) about nine miles from Bangor. Caernarfon was selected because little Welsh was used by the shop owners in Bangor, and, during the interviews there, many participants indicated that there is a high percentage of Welsh speakers in Caernarfon. Moreover, it was mentioned that Caernarfon is different from Bangor due to its authenticity and Welsh heritage. Williams confirms that Caernarfon is “remarkable in having a very high percentage (87.6%) of Welsh speakers” (71). These Welsh speakers were defined as being able to speak Welsh, but they were not able to read and write it. According to Williams, “Welsh is used by all age groups, and throughout the social classes” (71) in Caernarfon. Welsh is very much part of daily life in Caernarfon, as can be deduced from the interviews Williams conducted. For example, in one of the interviews with a non-Welsh speaker, the interviewee, Barry, does not have a positive attitude towards Caernarfon:

Barry: People in Caernarfon don't like English people — simple as that. They don't.

EW: Do you think Caernarfon is special in that respect?

Barry: Definitely. It's not like that in Bangor. It's not like that anywhere else.

Caernarfon is pretty unique [...] I've seen it. It's always been the same. I've only been

in Caernarfon 10 years, I've got to admit that, but I've never experienced the hatred I've had here. (Williams 81-2)

Moreover, according to another interviewee, "Welsh is a strong language in Caernarfon" (Williams 81), and even the young people speak Welsh (Williams 81). The people living in Caernarfon also want to promote the Welsh language: they set up an organisation that brings people who are interested in Caernarfon, its heritage and the Welsh language together.

Although there is no research on the way Welsh is used in shops in Caernarfon, shop owners might be expected to speak Welsh to their customers as Welsh plays a significant role in the daily lives of people living in Caernarfon.

## ***2.2 Bilingualism and Language Choice***

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines bilingualism as the "ability to speak two languages" ("Bilingualism"). This is a broad definition since bilinguals can be grouped in different ways. A distinction can be made between individual bilingualism and societal bilingualism. Since Wales is a bilingual country, societal bilingualism will be important in this thesis. However, this study will also focus on individual bilingualism as some participants might be bilingual, while others are monolingual. Baker explains that "in communities where two or more languages are widely spoken, bilinguals may use both their languages on a daily or frequent basis" (6). When both languages are used, language choice becomes significant. Baker claims that "[i]f the other person is already known to the bilingual, a relationship has usually been established through one language" (6), and in case both are bilingual in the same languages, there is the option of changing the language. However, in case the other person is unknown to the bilingual, there might be some clues that indicate which language would be most appropriate to use (Baker 6). These clues include "appearance, age, accent, and command of a language" (Baker 6). Moreover, language choice is also influenced by individuals' preferences and attitudes (Baker 6). Another way of distinguishing between different sorts of

bilingualism is between early and late bilingualism. The former means that someone “learns the second language before the age of 12” (Lenneberg qtd. in Ardila 131). Late bilinguals acquire a language after the age of 12 and “the acquisition of [this] second language will be mediated through the first language” (Ardila 131). People who acquire a language after the age of 12 are bilingual, although their proficiency might be lower than that of people who were raised bilingually from birth onwards. Both types of bilingualism are expected to be encountered in this study. Some participants might be English, and they might have acquired Welsh at a later age either at school or because they attended Welsh classes; others might be raised with Welsh and English spoken to them equally often, or with Welsh only. In this latter case, they most likely acquired English in school.

Research on language use among bilinguals has, for example, focussed on the language use of bilingual Puerto Ricans who could speak English and Spanish. The participants were interviewed and “were asked to rate what proportion of their talk at school, at work, in the neighbourhood, at church and at home was in Spanish, when speaking to other Puerto Ricans who knew both languages” (Cooper and Greenfield 167). It was concluded that “[s]ince in talking to other bilinguals, younger members of the community both used and received less Spanish than older people, and since younger people were also relatively more proficient in English than older people, it would seem that the linguistic proficiency of the speaker and interlocutor each played a role in determining language in this community” (Cooper and Greenfield 171). Moreover, the younger people used English more often in all domains. However, when they were talking to older members of the community, Spanish was primarily spoken, and this seems to suggest that they only used Spanish “as a tool of communicating with people who are less proficient in English than themselves” (Cooper and Greenfield 172). This suggests that the speakers were influenced by their interlocutor when making their language choice.

### *2.3 Accommodation Theory<sup>2</sup>*

Language choices among bilinguals can be researched by looking at the accommodation that might occur between a customer and shop owner during a greeting. Howard Giles proposed a theory on accommodation, and its “essence [...] is derived from social psychological research on similarity-attraction, which claims that an individual can induce someone else to evaluate her or him more favourably by reducing the number of dissimilarities between her or himself and the other” (Appel and Muysken 28). Accommodation is broad, and “[a] number of features of speech may be affected in the process of accommodation (including convergence and divergence) such as phonology, speech rate, turn length and language choice” (Giles, Coupland & Coupland qtd. in Prys, Deuchar, and Roberts 422). The present research will only focus on language choice. Two different forms of accommodation exist: there is convergence in which “the speaker uses the language the hearer knows or likes best” (Appel and Muysken 28) or divergence in which “the speaker tries to create distance between himself and the hearer by maximising differences in language use” (Appel and Muysken 28).

In research on accommodation, Coupland focussed on one shop assistant’s speech when she talked to her clients. The assistant worked in a travel agency and was expected to help her customers over the phone. In this case, the female client on the phone was “a speaker of Cardiff English – a number of features in her speech resemble[d] [the assistant’s] less standard form” (Coupland 11). The assistant normally used the standard form “with clients and with other travel-agents on the telephone” (Coupland 6). However, in this case, she was not able to help her client, and she changed her style of speech to her client by using the non-standard variety. According to Coupland, “[she] emphasises her affinity with her client by accommodating her speech-style to that of her interlocutor” (11). The convergence was well-received by the client because she starts joking (Coupland 11). When the assistant adjusted

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<sup>2</sup> The information discussed in this paragraph is based on a paper handed in at Bangor University for the module Language Contact & Bilingualism.

her speech to her client by changing some phonological features, the former perceived her more favourably, and in this case accepted the situation. Acceptance is not necessary for someone to converge; it may be a consequence of convergence. Moreover, Prys, Deuchar, and Roberts proposed “a method to measure bilingual speech accommodation between pharmacists and patients about the use of regularly prescribed medication” (419) in Wales. In their research, they used the Accommodation Theory. Prys, Deuchar, and Roberts recorded consultations between pharmacists and patients. After transcribing the conversations, the transcripts were split into equal segments, and the number of English and Welsh words in each segment was determined. This way “the proportion of English versus Welsh words was [...] calculated” (Prys, Deuchar, and Roberts 428). Furthermore, “for each segment except the first [...], the accommodation of each speaker to the interlocutor was calculated using the proposed formula” (Prys, Deuchar, and Roberts 428). Prys, Deuchar, and Roberts conclude that their formula is a suitable way of measuring the accommodation because they are able to measure the convergence and divergence between the pharmacist and the patient in detail. The pharmacist tended to converge to his/her patient, while the patients diverged more often (Prys, Deuchar, and Roberts 430). This may be explained by “the degree of motivation a speaker has to converge, interpersonal affinity between speakers and a speaker’s linguistic and perceptual ability” (Prys, Deuchar, and Roberts 432). According to Prys, Deuchar, and Roberts, “[t]he pharmacist [...] has a consistent, personally professed motivation to engage in a strategy of reciprocation and convergence” (432). With regard to the present study, shop owners might have a similar motivation since they would like to help their customers as good as possible. This motivation could influence the shop owners’ language choices. The above-mentioned researchers suggest that staff sometimes accommodate to their clients to show their sympathy. The present study will consider whether accommodation occurs between shop owners and a customer in a bilingual society when there is a choice between two languages.

## ***2.4 Hypotheses***

Earlier research has focussed on the use of Welsh and English in shops in Bangor, language choice among bilinguals, and accommodation between two speakers. The present paper will examine the language used by shop owners in Bangor and Caernarfon when they are greeted by a customer in either English or Welsh. Earlier research will thus be combined here. Based on the theory discussed above, the following hypotheses have been formulated:

### *Hypothesis 1*

*When the customer greets the shop owners in English, the latter will respond in English because the shop owners have a tendency to converge to their customers.*

### *Hypothesis 2*

*When the customer greets the shop owners in Welsh, the latter will respond in Welsh because the shop owners have a tendency to converge to their customers.*

Earlier research has shown that convergence occurs in situations similar to the one that will be researched here. Coupland concludes that a staff member converged to her client to show her affinity (11). Furthermore, Prys, Deuchar, and Roberts found that pharmacists in Wales tended to converge more to their patients than patients converged to them (430). These two examples led to the assumption that shop owners might converge to customers as well.

Coupland's conclusion is in agreement with Prys, Deuchar, and Roberts's findings: the differences in accommodation could be explained by "the degree of motivation a speaker has to converge [and] interpersonal affinity between speakers [...]" (432). Additionally, the pharmacists have "a consistent, personally professed motivation to engage in a strategy of reciprocation and convergence" (Prys, Deuchar, and Roberts 432). As for the present study, the shop owners are expected to converge to their customers by using the same language since they have a motivation to converge: helping their customers as good as possible. Shop owners

who converge might also be perceived more positively by their customers (Giles, Bourhis, and Taylor 1977), which could have a positive influence on the sales numbers.

### **3. Method**

#### ***3.1 Selection of Participants***

The participants that were selected for this study were shop owners or assistants working in shops in either Bangor or Caernarfon. They needed to be present when the participant observer entered the shop. Moreover, the participants spoke English, Welsh, or both. The experiment of observing and interviewing was performed with the person who was greeted. The experiment was carried out during week days because during weekends it was busier in the shops, which is a disadvantage when interviewing. In total, 40 people were greeted and interviewed: 20 in Bangor and 20 in Caernarfon. When the observer entered the shops, the participants were not aware that their language choice was observed so the responses they gave are likely to represent the way they normally respond when greeting a customer.

#### ***3.2 Selection of Shops***

The shops were selected on the basis of their size, the products they sold, and on the number of people present in the shop at the time of the experiment. Besides, the shops had to be situated in either Bangor or Caernarfon. In smaller shops, there is often more contact between a customer and a shop owner. This contact is important, especially when researching language choice during a greeting. In larger shops and supermarkets, shop owners are less likely to greet a customer. Most of the shops that were entered were specialist shops selling one particular product, for example, jewellery, books, or decorations for houses. Moreover, the number of customers present in the shop was an important factor in the selection of the shops. When focussing on the contact a customer and shop owner have in a greeting, it is important that the shop owner or staff notices the customer when the latter enters the shop. Consequently, there should not be too many other customers present. Timing was thus key.



### ***3.3 Data Collection***

The method for collecting data was twofold. The first part consisted of eliciting data by acting as an active participant observer; during the second part the participants were interviewed.

Using two or more different methods in one research is a form of methodological triangulation (Morse 120). A participant observer “gathers data by participating in the daily life of the group or organization he studies” (Becker 652). Two kinds of participant observation can be distinguished: active and passive. The active observer “maximises his participation with the observed in order to gather data and attempts to integrate his role with other roles in the social situation” (Schwartz and Schwartz 349), while the passive observer “interacts with the observed as little as possible” (Schwartz and Schwartz 348). The method of active participant observer thus makes it possible for a researcher to be part of his/her own research.

There are some limitations to participant observation that should be considered. For example, it is important for research to be authentic, and the use of participant observation could undermine this because there will be an observer who is part of the research. There is a possibility that the observer unconsciously provokes certain answers which makes the response unnatural. Moreover, the observer cannot abandon his/her role during his/her investigation (Schwartz and Schwartz 347). The observer might get carried away and forget the nature of his/her research.

Furthermore, to gain insight into the participants’ perspectives, the participants will be interviewed. According to Firestone, “[t]he aim of qualitative research is to understand and view reality from the actor’s perspective” (qtd. in Sahragard 259). Sahragard argues that “[i]f examination of social interaction and first-hand information about social processes is required, participant observation and interviewing are essential and appropriate research methods” (259). In this case, “researchers try to reduce the distance between themselves and

the case” (Bryman qtd. in Sahragard 259). The combination of these two methods, participant observation and interviewing, will be appropriate to elicit data and find out more about the motives.

The experiment was carried out in Bangor first on 25 November and 15 December 2014. After doing the experiment in Bangor, it was decided that the research would be extended to Caernarfon. The experiment was carried out in Caernarfon on 8 January 2015. In each location, ten of the greetings were in Welsh and the other ten in English. The participant observer initiated the greeting, after which the observed had to decide which language to use.

After the greeting, the participants were approached. It was explained to them that they were part of a research on language choice in their town or city, and they were asked for a short interview. In total, three participants decided they did not want to take part. In two cases, the participants were attending the till and did not have time for an interview. In the third case, the participant was not allowed to participate in any questionnaire or survey. This was the shop’s policy. All other participants that were approached agreed to participate.

The interview consisted of seven questions in total:

1. What do you consider to be your mother tongue?
2. Do you speak both Welsh and English?
3. From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?
4. Why did you learn a second language?
5. Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?
6. If you had been addressed in the other language, what language do you think you would have used?
7. Could you hear that the interviewer was not a native speaker of either English or Welsh?

The first two questions were included to find out which languages the participants were able to speak, and which language they regarded as their mother tongue. The third and fourth question concerning the reason for learning a second language and the age of language acquisition were asked to give insight into what kind of bilingualism, early or late, applied to this participant. When the participant was monolingual, the fourth question was skipped. Question five focussed on the participant's reason for choosing a particular language to greet the observer. This allowed the observer to determine why Welsh or English was used. The sixth question asked the participant to think about the way he/she would have reacted if he or she was approached in the other language. It also shows to what degree the participants were influenced by the language used by the observer. The last question was asked to see if the participants noticed that the interviewer/participant observer was not a native speaker of either English or Welsh. This will also be discussed later in the limitations of this research. The questions were semi-structured, which means that although there was a fixed set of questions, both the interviewee and the interviewer could diverge from the question and bring new ideas into the conversation.

The interviews were not recorded because the first participants were hesitant when they were asked if the conversation could be recorded. Notes were taken instead as recording also would have taken more time, and shop owners and their personnel often have limited time due to other customers. Some participants were very talkative and provided the interviewer with useful background information. Most interviews lasted approximately five minutes. After the interview, the participants were thanked for their cooperation, and the languages used during the greeting and the initiator of the conversation were written down.

### 3.4 Data Processing

Immediately after the data collection, the answers to the questions were transcribed into full sentences based on the notes that were taken during the interviews. The notes were detailed so the transcriptions are a faithful representation of what was said during the interviews. The transcriptions can be found in the Appendix. The information deduced from the interviews, and the data on language choice were then put into tables. The tables provide information on the initiator of the greeting, the language choice of the first speaker, the language choice of the second speaker, and the reason for the language choice of the shop owners. An example of the table is provided in figure 2 below:

Shop	Initiator Greeting	Language choice first speaker	Language choice second speaker	Reason
Shop 1	Interviewer	English	English	Inability to speak Welsh

Figure 2: Language Choice Shop 1 in Bangor

These tables served as an overview on what information had become available during the experiment and which data could be used for the analysis on language choice. In some cases, the initiator of the greeting was the shop owner rather than the observer. Although the shop owners made a language choice when being the first ones to greet as well, the hypotheses focus on the accommodation that might occur when the observer greets the shop owners first. Consequently, only the data in which the observer started the greeting have been considered. However, the interviews held with the participants that started the conversations will be used since these contain useful information about the use of Welsh and the participant's bilingualism.

## 4. Results

The next chapter will present the results obtained from the greetings and interviews. The results from Bangor and Caernarfon will be combined. Tables have been created for language choices, mother tongues, and bilingualism. The reasons for the language choices will also be discussed, and the hypotheses will be considered. A final paragraph will compare Bangor and Caernarfon, respectively.

### 4.1 Results Bangor and Caernarfon

Figure 3 shows the language choices made by shop owners in Bangor and Caernarfon when they were greeted in English or Welsh. The vertical axis lists the languages used by the interviewer. The shop owners' language choices are on the horizontal axis.

Interviewer's Greeting	Languages Used by Shop Owners		
	English	Welsh	Mix
English	9	0	0
Welsh	15	2	1
Total	24	2	1

Figure 3: Greeting-Response in Bangor and Caernarfon

The interviewer used greetings such as *Hello*, *Good morning/afternoon*, *S'mae* (Hello), *Bore da* (Good morning), and *Pnawn da* (Good afternoon). In response, most of the shop owners used *Hi* or *Hello*, the mix form of English and Welsh [haɪə], or *Bore da*. The possible combinations in the greeting thus were: English-English, Welsh-English, English-Welsh, Welsh-Welsh, English-Mix, and Welsh-Mix.

In nine cases, the interviewer started the greeting in English, and an English response was given by the shop owners. When the interviewer greeted in Welsh, in 15 cases, the shop owner answered in English. In total, two participants responded in Welsh to a Welsh greeting, and one mix answer was given after a greeting in Welsh.

Figure 4 shows whether participants from Bangor and Caernarfon were monolingual or bilingual and their mother tongues. The table is based on the information obtained from the interviews. The vertical axis lists the participants' mother tongues. The horizontal axis indicates whether participants were monolingual, early bilingual or late bilingual. The early bilinguals include shop owners who acquired English and Welsh before the age of 12. The late bilinguals include participants who acquired Welsh after the age of 12; their proficiency was lower.

	Monolingual	Early Bilingual	Late bilingual	Total
English First Language	10	2	9	21
Welsh First Language	0	18	0	18
Both Welsh & English First Language	0	1	0	1
Total	10	21	9	40

*Figure 4: Bilingualism and First Language Among Participants in Bangor and Caernarfon*

Two of the nine participants responded in English on an English greeting because they were unable to speak Welsh. Even when they were asked what language they would have used if they had been addressed in Welsh, the answer was English. Five late bilingual participants, who were native speakers of English, felt more comfortable speaking their mother tongue and thus spoke English. Most monolingual and late bilingual participants chose English based on their own preferences and abilities. This cannot be considered convergence, although they used the same language as the interviewer. Moreover, one participant was raised bilingually and considered her mother tongue to be Welsh. She chose English because she did not know who entered the shop. However, if she had been addressed in Welsh, she would have spoken Welsh (Participant 6 Bangor). An early bilingual native speaker of Welsh spoke English out of courtesy. If she had been addressed in Welsh, she would have responded in Welsh (Participant 6 Caernarfon). The reasons given by early bilingual participants can be considered accommodation: they changed their speech to the customer, sometimes, even before they knew who entered the shop. Shop owners tend to speak Welsh only when they

know the other person is Welsh. All shop owners and staff thus used English when they were greeted in English by the interviewer. However, it cannot be said that the shop owners used English because they converged. No participants listed the language that was used by the interviewer as their reasons for choosing a certain language. Due to this, hypothesis 1 seems to be true but remains problematic because the use of English here cannot be called convergence.

Five participants who responded in English to a Welsh greeting were native speakers of Welsh and early bilinguals. Two of these participants indicated that they had not heard that the interviewer spoke Welsh, otherwise they would have responded in Welsh. Instead, they used their automatic response, which was English. Another participant indicated that most customers that enter the shop speak English, so she uses English unless she knows that the other person is Welsh (Participant 18 Caernarfon). The interviewer's accent and appearance also played a role: one of the participants thought the interviewer's accent sounded English (Participant 16 Caernarfon), and another participant thought the interviewer looked English (Participant 14 Bangor). Consequently, both participants answered in English. It seems as if the early bilingual participants expect their customers to be mainly English, so they accommodate automatically to English unless they know that the other person is Welsh. They also changed their speech because, in some cases, they noticed that the interviewer was not a native speaker of Welsh, and this is convergence. Moreover, the other ten participants who responded in English were all native speakers of English and could speak no or a little Welsh. For the monolinguals, their English reaction was an automatic response since they did not know any Welsh. The others, who could at least speak some Welsh used English as an automatic response or because they felt more comfortable speaking that language. One participant became agitated when she was asked why she used English. She thought the question sounded aggressive and felt as if the interviewer blamed her for not replying in

Welsh (Participant 12 Caernarfon). Most monolingual and late bilingual participants thus chose the language they preferred, and this is not accommodation.

Two participants that responded in Welsh to a Welsh greeting were native speakers of Welsh and acquired English at school. One chose Welsh because she thought it is very important to use Welsh: she values her mother tongue (Participant 5 Bangor). The other indicated that she always speaks Welsh first because it is her first language (Participant 5 Caernarfon). Both participants would switch to English if necessary.

One participant responded by using the mix form on a Welsh greeting. She had spoken Welsh from birth onwards, and acquired English at the age of three. She would switch to English if her customer was English because speaking Welsh in that situation would be rude, according to her (Participant 20 Caernarfon).

Hypothesis 2 should be rejected since the majority of the shop owners did not use Welsh when they were greeted in Welsh so no convergence was involved. In the cases where Welsh was used, the shop owners chose Welsh because they preferred it. However, some native speakers of Welsh adjusted their speech to English because of the interviewer's accent and appearance. This can be considered accommodation.

#### ***4.2 Comparison Bangor and Caernarfon***

When comparing the results of Bangor and Caernarfon, no striking differences can be found. When English was used in the greeting, an English response was given, and the pattern of receiving English answers to Welsh initiations was noticeable in both locations. Moreover, in both locations, only one participant answered in Welsh when he/she was greeted in Welsh. The only difference between Bangor and Caernarfon was the use of the mix of English and Welsh as it only occurred in Caernarfon.



When considering the data that were left out because the shop owners were the first ones to greet the interviewer, it becomes clear that, in Caernarfon, some of the shop owners greeted first by using Welsh or the mix of English and Welsh. In Bangor, the shop owners never greeted the interviewer in this way. One of the participants in Caernarfon used the mix because it signifies both English and Welsh at the same time. She thought it makes customers feel more comfortable. In her shop, many of the books, the flyers, and the staff were bilingual. The bilingual greeting was used to inform people that the staff is happy to speak both languages (Participant 14 Caernarfon).

The same participant from Caernarfon commented on differences between Bangor and Caernarfon: Bangor is an unsettled society due to its university with students from all over the world, and, consequently, shop owners are not sure when they can speak English or Welsh. It is a confidence issue, according to her (Participant 14 Caernarfon). This could also explain why native speakers of Welsh do not speak Welsh in Bangor on a regular basis. Caernarfon, on the other hand, is a settled community so people are more used to speaking Welsh. It can be concluded from the interviews that Welsh is more alive in Caernarfon, although this is not noticeable in the results on language choice.

## 5. Discussion

This study aimed to discover what languages were used when shop owners were greeted by a customer in Welsh or English and whether convergence was involved. Consequently, the following hypotheses were formulated:

### Hypothesis 1

*When the customer greets the shop owners in English, the latter will respond in English because the shop owners have a tendency to converge to their customers.*

### Hypothesis 2

*When the customer greets the shop owners in Welsh, the latter will respond in Welsh because the shop owners have a tendency to converge to their customers.*

The results showed that hypothesis 1 was problematic because the shop owners' use of English cannot be considered convergence. Hypothesis 2 should be rejected since the majority of the shop owners did not respond in Welsh, and when they did, it could not be considered convergence.

The results were partly in agreement with the Accommodation Theory. This theory claims that a person adjusts his/her speech to the listener. A number of features can be changed during accommodation. However, in this study, the focus was on changing one's language only. As Appel and Muysken have observed, some participants tended to converge to "the language the hearer knows or likes best" (28): in the present study this was mostly English. English was often chosen by the shop owners because most customers that enter the shops are expected to speak English. Other participants indicated that they based their language choice on the interviewer's appearance and accent, and, consequently, used English. The use of English, in these cases, can be seen as accommodation. Just as in Cooper and Greenfield's research, the more proficient speakers adjusted their speech to the less proficient ones (171). In this study, the shop owners were more proficient since they were native

speakers, while the interviewer was not. On the other hand, this speech adjustment could also be interpreted as a way of humouring customers (Coupland 11).

The professional motivation for pharmacists to converge to their patients in Prys, Deuchar, and Taylor's research (432) has not emerged from this research to the same extent. Although shop owners converged to their customers in some cases, it cannot be said that this happened because pharmacists had a professional motivation to do so since no participants listed the language spoken by the interviewer as the reason for their language choice. Pharmacists have a more personal and longer relationship with their patients than shop owners have with customers. This could explain why a professional motivation played a more significant role in Prys, Deuchar, and Taylor's research. The greetings might have been too short for accommodation to occur. However, in some cases, the shop owners showed affinity by converging to the customer. This was also concluded by Coupland, who discovered that an assistant in a travel agency converged her speech to her client to show her affinity (6).

Many participants also indicated that they speak Welsh if they know that the other person is Welsh. Baker argues in this respect that when bilingual speakers know the other person, they are likely "to use one particular language since a relationship has been established through that language" (6). This is also confirmed by Trosset, who claims that "most people who choose to speak Welsh do so whenever they are with other Welsh speakers" (168). This might explain why Welsh was not used very often during the greetings. Trosset also argues that "Welsh speakers [...] tend to use English" (169) in the presence of someone whose first language is English (169), and "when in doubt, assume no knowledge of Welsh, and speak English" (170). Trosset's participants indicated that "they spoke English so as not to leave anyone out or make them feel lost" (171). This seems to resemble the answers given by some participants in the present study when they were asked whether they would speak Welsh when someone greeted them in English. They said that speaking Welsh in that

situation would be rude. This also explains why no one answered in Welsh when the language used by the interviewer was English. However, it was not considered rude to use English in response to a Welsh greeting.

The participants often listed reasons for the language choices that are in agreement with Baker's research on clues that determine language choices when the interlocutor is unknown to a bilingual. To recap, Baker argues that bilinguals focus on "appearance, age, accent and command of a language" (6) but also on personal preferences when choosing which language to use (6). For many participants in this study, their choice to speak English was based on their inability to speak Welsh: their command of Welsh was involved. Moreover, some participants also indicated that the interviewer looked English. The interviewer's appearance thus influenced their language choice. One participant mentioned that she could hear from the interviewer's accent that the latter was not Welsh, and, consequently, she decided to switch to English. Furthermore, the participants' preferences for a certain language were also given as reasons for the language choices. Many participants preferred to use their first language. The language spoken by the interviewer did not seem to influence the participants' language choices since no participants listed the language used by the interviewer as their reason for choosing a particular language.

## 6. Conclusion

### 6.1 Hypotheses

This study has aimed to discover whether shop owners in Bangor and Caernarfon converge to their customers by speaking the same language when they are greeted by a customer in Welsh or English. The data were collected by entering 40 shops in total in Bangor and Caernarfon and greeting the shop owners or staff in either Welsh or English as an active participant observer. Another aim was to discover the reasons for those language choices made by the participants. The participants were, consequently, interviewed to discover these reasons.

Based on the theory discussed in the theoretical framework, two hypotheses were formulated:

#### Hypothesis 1

*When the customer greets the shop owners in English, the latter will respond in English because the shop owners have a tendency to converge to their customers.*

#### Hypothesis 2

*When the customer greets the shop owners in Welsh, the latter will respond in Welsh because the shop owners have a tendency to converge to their customers.*

The results showed that when English was spoken by the interviewer in the greeting, the majority of the shop owners responded in English as well. An exception was one response in which Welsh and English were mixed. Hypothesis 1 remains undecided: the shop owners used English when they were greeted in English but it is unclear if they actually converged by doing this. Some participants accommodated but personal reasons played a significant role as well. Accommodation arised because shop owners expected their customers to be English. The reasons for using English were various and ranged from the inability to speak Welsh, having English as a first language, background noise, courtesy, and not wanting to exclude anyone.

Moreover, when Welsh was used by the interviewer, the majority of the shop owners responded in English as well. There were a few exceptions to this pattern: in total two Welsh responses were given by the shop owners to a Welsh greeting and there was one mix answer. Hypothesis 2 should be rejected because the majority of the shop owners did not use Welsh when they were greeted in Welsh. Even when they did respond in Welsh, there was no convergence involved. Other reasons for using English here include the interviewer's appearance and accent, and using English as an automatic reaction. Using English to a Welsh greeting could be interpreted as accommodation in some cases since many participants indicated that their customers are often English.

## ***6.2 Limitations***

Several aspects of this study could be improved. Firstly, the conclusions that were drawn are confined to the participants that were studied. Based on the results, little can be said about the language choices of shop owners in Bangor and Caernarfon in general. To be able to do that, more in-depth research is necessary, and more participants are needed. A second limitation was the background noise that sometimes interfered with the audibility of the greeting. This resulted in participants not noticing which language was spoken during the greeting, and this, consequently, might have affected the language choices during the responses. Moreover, the interviewer was not always the first one to greet the shop owners because the former was sometimes not fast enough. The results from these participants could not be used in the analysis of the hypotheses and were thus left out. Another limitation that needs to be considered is that the active participant observer was not a native speaker of either English or Welsh, and this was noticed by the majority of the participants. The results could be influenced by this, although only one participant listed the Welsh accent of the interviewer as the reason for her language choice. The last limitation is the formulation of hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1 turned out to be problematic. Although the hypothesis seemed correct, it remained undecided since there was not enough evidence to say that shop owners actually converged by responding in English. Although hypothesis 2 was rejected, it was still problematic to decide whether convergence occurred here as well.

### ***6.3 Further Research***

As a follow-up to this project, it would be interesting to repeat the research with a native speaker of Welsh or English as the active participant observer and interviewer instead of a non-native speaker to see if any differences in the language choices or reasons listed for the language choices are given. There were some indications in this study that different responses might have been given if the interviewer had been a native speaker of the languages. Examples of these indications are the interviewer's accent and appearance that were in some cases listed as the reasons for the language choices.

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## 8. Appendix

### 8.1 Overview Language Choices in Shops in Bangor

Shop	Initiator Greeting	Language choice first speaker	Language choice second speaker	Reason
Shop 1	Interviewer	English	English	Inability to speak Welsh
Shop 2	Shop owner	English	English	Not exclude anyone
Shop 3	Interviewer	Welsh	English	Multicultural town
Shop 4	Interviewer	Welsh	English	Inability to speak Welsh
Shop 5	Interviewer	Welsh	Welsh	Preserving Welsh language
Shop 6	Interviewer	Welsh	English	Automatic response
Shop 7	Interviewer	Welsh	English	Automatic response
Shop 8	Interviewer	English	English	Preference for first language
Shop 9	Shop owner	English	English	Preference for first language; multicultural town
Shop 10	Interviewer	English	English	Not exclude anyone
Shop 11	Interviewer	English	English	Mother language
Shop 12	Shop owner	English	English	Mother language
Shop 13	Shop owner	English	English	Not exclude anyone
Shop 14	Interviewer	Welsh	English	Interviewer looked English
Shop 15	Shop owner	English	English	Mother language
Shop 16	Shop owner	English	English	Mother language
Shop 17	Interviewer	Welsh	English	Time consuming
Shop 18	Interviewer	Welsh	English	Automatic response
Shop 19	Interviewer	Welsh	English	Automatic response/inability to speak Welsh
Shop 20	Interviewer	Welsh	English	Automatic response

### 8.2 Overview Language Choices in Shops in Caernarfon

Shop	Initiator Greeting	Language choice first speaker	Language choice second speaker	Reason
Shop 1	Shop owner	Welsh	English	Mother tongue; products are in Welsh
Shop 2	Shop owner	English	English	Automatic response
Shop 3	Shop owner	English	English	Interviewer looked English
Shop 4	Interviewer	Welsh	English	Automatic response
Shop 5	Interviewer	Welsh	Welsh	Mother tongue
Shop 6	Interviewer	English	English	Courtesy
Shop 7	Shop owner	Welsh	English	Mother tongue
Shop 8	Interviewer	Welsh	English	Mother tongue: more comfortable
Shop 9	Interviewer	English	English	Mother tongue: more comfortable
Shop 10	Interviewer	English	English	Mother tongue
Shop 11	Shop owner	Mix	English	Automatic response
Shop 12	Interviewer	Welsh	English	Automatic response
Shop 13	Shop owner	English	English	Didn't know interviewer
Shop 14	Shop owner	Mix	English	Make customer more comfortable
Shop 15	Interviewer	Welsh	English	Automatic response; mother tongue
Shop 16	Interviewer	Welsh	English	Interviewer's accent
Shop 17	Shop owner	English	English	Not exclude anyone
Shop 18	Interviewer	Welsh	English	Not exclude anyone
Shop 19	Interviewer	English	English	Mother tongue
Shop 20	Interviewer	Welsh	Mix	Mother tongue

### **8.3 Interviews**

#### **8.3.1 Interviews Bangor**

##### **Shop/participant 1**

Name shop: Snowdon Books

Sex interviewee: male

Languages in greeting: English – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

English.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

No, I can only speak English.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I did not learn a second language.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I learned English from birth onwards.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

I chose English because I cannot speak Welsh.

**(6) If I had addressed you in Welsh, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

I would have been able to understand the Welsh but I would have greeted back in English because I cannot speak Welsh.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes, I noticed you have a different accent.

**Shop/participant 2**

Name shop: Jo Putt

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: English – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

Welsh.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

Yes, I can speak both languages.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I was brought up speaking both languages, so I didn't really chose.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

Since I was brought up bilingually, I use both languages from birth onwards.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

Most of the time I greet my customers in both English and Welsh, so Hello, bore da.  
However, when you entered I was focussing on something so I just used English.

**(6) If I had addressed you in Welsh, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

It depends. Sometimes, you can hear that someone has a Welsh accent, and then I ask them if they can speak Welsh. If they do, I will start speaking Welsh to them.  
However, when someone greets me in English, I will respond in English because I do not want to exclude anyone.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes, I did notice that you have a slight accent.

**Shop/participant 3**

Name shop: Mudshark records

Sex interviewee: male

Languages in greeting: Welsh – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

English.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

No, I can only speak English. However, I did pick up some Welsh while living here.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I picked up a little bit of Welsh when I moved here from London. However, I am far from fluent.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I was raised with English, so from birth onwards.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

I spoke to you in English because Bangor is a multicultural town with many nationalities. I don't know what language the person who enters my shop speaks, so I tend to use English almost always.

**(6) If I had addressed you in English, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

I would probably talk English in all cases because my Welsh is not very good and because of the multicultural context here in Bangor.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes, I noticed you have an accent.

**Shop/participant 4**

Name shop: Age Cymry (charity shop)

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: Welsh - English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

English.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

I can speak a little bit of Welsh.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

My father is Welsh and I learned it at school but I do not use Welsh very often.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

From primary school onwards.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

I think it was an automatic response for me since I am not used to speaking Welsh.

**(6) If I had addressed you in English, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

If you had greeted me in English my response would have been in English, and when people speak to me in Welsh I will apologise and say that I am not able to speak Welsh. So my response would be in English as well.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes, I noticed your accent.

**Shop/participant 5**

Name shop: Palas Pendref (book shop)

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: Welsh – Welsh

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

Welsh.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

Yes, I can speak both languages.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

At home I only spoke Welsh with my parents. When I went to school, I started learning English because it was obligatory.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

Welsh from birth onwards, and English from the age of 8.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

I always speak Welsh to my customers first. Since Welsh is the first language in Wales, and we are in Gwynedd where Welsh is spoken excessively, I think it is important to speak Welsh. I value my mother tongue.

**(6) If I had addressed you in English, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

When a customer speaks English to me I will switch to English.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

No, I didn't notice anything.



**Shop/participant 6**

Name shop: More than Beds

Sex interviewee: male

Languages in greeting: Welsh – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

Welsh, and please also write down Cymraeg.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

Yes, I speak both languages.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

My parents are both Welsh, so I spoke Welsh until I was four. From then onwards, I started learning English at school because it was obligatory.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I learned Welsh from birth onwards, and English from the age of four.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

I didn't hear you greeting me in Welsh, probably because I was focused on my work. If I had heard you, I would have answered in Welsh.

**(6) If I had addressed you in English, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

If you had greeted me in English, I would also have responded in English. People who speak Welsh to me will in most cases receive an English answer.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes, I noticed you have a slight accent. I could at least hear that you are not from Bangor.

**Shop/participant 7**

Name shop: Cancer Research (charity shop)

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: Welsh – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

Welsh.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

Yes, I can speak both languages.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

My father is English, and my mother is Welsh so I was raised bilingually.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I learned both languages from birth onwards.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

It was very busy in the shop, so that is probably why I didn't notice you talking Welsh to me. If I had noticed, I would definitely have responded in Welsh, but because I didn't, I spoke English.

**(6) If I had addressed you in English, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

If you had greeted me in English, I would have responded in English. I'm not ignorant, like other people are.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes, I noticed you have a different accent.

**Shop/participant 8**

Name shop: British Heart Foundation

Sex interviewee: male

Languages in greeting: English – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

English.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

Yes, I can speak both languages.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

My parents spoke English to me, but I learned Welsh at school.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I learned Welsh from primary school onwards.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

Because I am more comfortable with using my first language.

**(6) If I had addressed you in Welsh, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

I would probably have responded in Welsh if you had greeted me in Welsh.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.

**Shop/participant 9**

Name shop: Crystalise

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: English – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

English.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

Yes, I can speak both languages.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

My parents only speak English to me, but I moved here as a child so that's why I started learning Welsh as well.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I learned English from birth onwards and Welsh from the age of 13.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

I chose to greet you in English because I am more comfortable with using my first language, so English. Another reason for using English would be that Bangor is a multicultural town so it is safer to speak English here.

**(6) If I had addressed you in Welsh, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

I would probably have responded in Welsh.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes, I noticed you have an accent.

**Shop/participant 10**

Name shop: Fuji Film

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: English – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

Welsh.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

Yes.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

My father is Welsh and my mother is English so I was raised bilingually.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I learned both languages from birth onwards.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

I greet everyone in English because I don't know who enters the shop and what language they are able to speak. However, if I know that someone can speak Welsh, I will also talk Welsh to them.

**(6) If I had addressed you in Welsh, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

Yes, I would have responded in Welsh.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.

**Shop/participant 11**

Name shop: Calendar Club

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: English – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

English.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

No.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I didn't learn any other language.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I learned English from birth onwards.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

Because it is my mother language.

**(6) If I had addressed you in Welsh, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

No, I would have greeted you in English because I cannot speak Welsh.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

No.

**Shop/participant 12**

Name shop: Airplane shop

Sex interviewee: male

Languages in greeting: English – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

English.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

No.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I only learned English.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I learned English from birth onwards.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

Because my mother tongue is English, and I feel most comfortable with it.

**(6) If I had addressed you in Welsh, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

No, I would have spoken to you in English.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.

**Shop/participant 13**

Name shop: Castle Bakery

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: English (shop owner first) – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

Welsh

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

Yes.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I spoke Welsh at home with my parents, and I learned English at school.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I learned Welsh from birth onwards and English from the age of 4.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

Because most people understand English, and not so many Welsh.

**(6) If I had addressed you in Welsh, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

Not unless I had known that person could speak Welsh.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.



**Shop/participant 14**

Name shop: Pound Bakery

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: Welsh – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

Welsh.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

Yes.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I was raised speaking Welsh at home and learned English at school. I consider myself to be bilingual.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I learned Welsh from birth onwards and English from the age of four.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

Because you looked English for some reason. I would have spoken Welsh if I had known you are Welsh.

**(6) If I had addressed you in English, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

My answer would have been in English too.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.

**Shop/participant 15**

Name shop: Scope discount shop

Sex interviewee: male

Languages in greeting: English – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

English.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

No.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I didn't learn a second language.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I learned English from birth onwards.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

Because it is my native language.

**(6) If I had addressed you in Welsh, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

I would have apologised for not speaking Welsh in English, so no.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.

**Shop/participant 16**

Name shop: Timpson DC

Sex interviewee: male

Languages in greeting: English-English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

English.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

No.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I didn't learn a second language.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I learned English from birth onwards.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

Everyone speaks English where I am from so I am used to speaking English.

**(6) If I had addressed you in Welsh, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

I would apologise for not speaking Welsh in English, so no.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.

**Shop/participant 17**

Name shop: John Cobblers

Sex interviewee: male

Languages in greeting: Welsh– English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

English.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

I speak a little bit of Welsh but I am not fluent.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I learned Welsh at school.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I learned English from birth onwards and Welsh from the age of four.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

It would have taken me twice as long to answer in Welsh. I only greet customers in English because it is quicker.

**(6) If I had addressed you in English, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

In English because I am more comfortable with speaking English anyway.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes, I noticed an accent.

**Shop/participant 18**

Name shop: Health Store Dimensions

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: Welsh – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

English.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

No.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I didn't learn a second language.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I learned English from birth onwards.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

Since English is my mother language, I think it was an automatic response, and I didn't really hear you speaking Welsh because of the traffic.

**(6) If I had addressed you in Welsh, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

English because I am more comfortable with speaking English. .

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.

**Shop/participant 19**

Name shop: Christian Card Shop

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: English – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

English.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

No.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I didn't learn a second language.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I learned English from birth onwards.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

It was a natural reaction I think. And I cannot carry on in Welsh so I prefer English because of that as well.

**(6) If I had addressed you in English, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

In English because I am more comfortable with speaking that language. But I would speak Welsh if I could.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes even though your pronunciation is very good.

**Shop/participant 20**

Name shop: Mike's Music Shop

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: Welsh – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

English.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

Typin bach, a little bit of Welsh.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I learned Welsh for my children since they learned it at school but also for my business because we live in a bilingual society.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I learned English from birth onwards and when moving to Wales, I started learning Welsh as well.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

I couldn't hear you properly because of the cars, but I would have spoken Welsh if I had heard you.

**(6) If I had addressed you in English, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

In English because it is my mother language.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.

### 8.3.2 Interviews Caernarfon

#### Shop/participant 1

Name shop: Na-dôg: Welsh shop

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: Welsh – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

Welsh.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

Yes, I consider myself to be bilingual.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I learned English at school, and Welsh is my mother tongue.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I started acquiring English from the age of 8 at school and Welsh from birth.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

Since 95% of the books in this shop is in Welsh and besides, it is my mother tongue.

**(6) If I had addressed you in English, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

I always greet my customers in Welsh because this is a Welsh shop. So I never greet someone who enters in English.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

No.



**Shop/participant 2**

Name shop: Picamics a Petals

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: English – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

Welsh.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

Yes.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

Because I was raised bilingually at home. So my parents more or less decided.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I acquired both Welsh and English from birth.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

It was an automatic response.

**(6) If I had addressed you in English, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

It really depends on whether I know the person who enters the shop but I think that when someone greets me in English, I would respond in English and the same counts for Welsh.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.

**Shop/participant 3**

Name shop: Gwydaf Williams a'I Fab

Sex interviewee: male

Languages in greeting: English – English

- (1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**  
Welsh.
- (2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**  
Yes
- (3) Why did you learn your second language?**  
Because I was raised bilingually.
- (4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**  
I acquired both Welsh and English from birth.
- (5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**  
You looked English so that is why I started speaking English.
- (6) If I had addressed you in Welsh, what do you think would have been your language choice?**  
I would have answered you in Welsh.
- (7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**  
Yes.

**Shop/participant 4**

Name shop: Holland & Barrett

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: Welsh – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

English.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

Yes, I can speak Welsh but only the basics.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I started learning Welsh because of work and my children. My children weren't allowed to speak English at school and were bullied because of this. My son has really been traumatised and decided not to return to Wales any more. I went to classes, but it turned out that the Welsh they taught there was too formal. So for the fear of ridicule I stopped using it in the shop.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I acquired English from birth and started learning Welsh when I moved here in 1988.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

I only realised after you greeted me that you spoke Welsh, so my response must have been automatic.

**(6) If I had addressed you in English, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

If I greet my customers first, I will always use English first unless I know the customer is Welsh, then I will try to respond in Welsh. So my automatic response is in English.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.

**Shop/participant 5**

Name shop: British Heart Foundation

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: Welsh – Welsh

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

Welsh.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

Yes.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I learned English at school.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I acquired Welsh from birth onwards, and English from the age you go to school.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

I always greet my customers in Welsh because it is my first language.

**(6) If I had addressed you in English, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

I would have responded in English.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.

**Shop/participant 6**

Name shop: Gemwaith

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: English – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

Welsh.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

Yes.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I learned English at school.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I learned Welsh from birth onwards, and English at school. My parents only spoke Welsh to me.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

I greeted you back in English out of courtesy.

**(6) If I had addressed you in Welsh, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

Yes, I would have greeted you in Welsh. People who work in Caernarfon have to be bilingual. This also includes working for the Council here.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.

Did you know there is a Welsh language centre in a town called Nant Gwyrtheyrn. If you go there, the only language you are allowed to speak is Welsh.

**Shop/participant 7**

Name shop: Occasions

Sex interviewee: male

Languages in greeting: Welsh – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

Welsh.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

Yes.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I was raised bilingually.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

In acquired Welsh from birth and English from a very early age but a bit later than Welsh.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

I always greet my customers in Welsh first.

**(6) If I had addressed you in English, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

I would greet people who speak English to me back in English, unless I know that they are Welsh. Then I would just answer in Welsh.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.

**Shop/participant 8**

Name shop: Cleopatra's Secret

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: Welsh – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

English.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

No.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I do not speak a second language.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I acquired English from birth onwards.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

English is my native language and so I feel more comfortable using it. However, we do intend to learn Welsh. We have had this shop for a month now, so that is a plan for the future.

**(6) If I had addressed you in English, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

I would have used English as it is my mother tongue.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.

**Shop/participant 9**

Name shop: Porth Mawr Jewellers

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: English – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

English.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

No, but I do understand Welsh.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I have lived here for 40 years and then you pick some things up. My family is also Welsh so I took some classes.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I acquired English from birth and Welsh from when I was 21.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

Because I am more comfortable speaking in English.

**(6) If I had addressed you in Welsh, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

No probably not.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.



**Shop/participant 10**

Name shop: Eifion

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: English – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

English.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

I can speak a little bit of Welsh but I understand more than I speak.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I have been living here as a child and went to school. So then you pick up Welsh. However, all people I have worked for were English.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I acquired English from birth; Welsh from the age of 4.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

Because it is my main language.

**(6) If I had addressed you in Welsh, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

I would have understood what you are saying but I would answer back in English.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.

**Shop/participant 11**

Name shop: Siop Iard

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: Mix – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

Welsh.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

Yes.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I learned English at school.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I acquired Welsh from birth, and English from television and at school. My parents only spoke Welsh to me.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

[harə] is an automatic response to me. It is also something that is said in Welsh. I prefer this because now I greet someone without specifying the language. A customer can choose the language.

**(6) If I had addressed you in Welsh, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

I would have answered you in Welsh.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.

**Shop/participant 12**

Name shop: Croeso i Cloud

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: Welsh – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

English.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

No.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I didn't learn a second language.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I acquired English from birth.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

It is an automatic reaction. I think your question sounds very aggressive as if I am deliberately not speaking Welsh to you. I would say croeso or diolch. I really don't like this question.

**(6) If I had addressed you in English, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

I would use English first.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.

Note: the interviewee was really angry about the 5<sup>th</sup> question. She felt as if I was judging her because she could not/did not speak English. This was the first time I encountered this. It could be the case that the interviewee felt confronted by her inability to speak Welsh. Maybe she felt bad about it.

**Shop/participant 13**

Name shop: Lotti & Wren

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: English – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

English.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

I can speak a little bit of Welsh.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I took some lessons, but the problem was that I didn't practise so I have forgotten a lot of it.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I was raised bilingually: Irish and English. So I acquired these two languages from birth. I started learning Welsh because I moved here so I have been using it for the last 30 years.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

It was an automatic response; besides I didn't know you.

**(6) If I had addressed you in Welsh, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

I would have answered in Welsh.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.

My daughter grew up here and she speaks Welsh fluently. Many customers say that they cannot hear any difference from a native speaker. I think my daughter being able to speak Welsh so well has been essential to this business.

**Shop/participant 14**

Name shop: Palas Print

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: mix – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

Welsh and English equally.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

Yes.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I acquired both Welsh and English from birth. I grew up around people from London and Wales.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

From birth onwards.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

For me [harə]is English and Welsh at the same time. By using a mix people feel more comfortable. Unless I know the person is Welsh and dependent on the age of the person, I would only use the Welsh greeting. Otherwise, I would use the mix form.

**(6) If I had addressed you in English, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

To local English speakers, I would still speak Welsh or if I know a customer. I use the mix with people I don't know.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.

Everything in the book shops including flyers are bilingual. When we would just use Welsh, we would shut out a whole audience. By using both Welsh and English and greeting with [harə]we inform customers that we are happy to use both languages. Besides, visitors often really appreciate hearing Welsh. Bilingualism is thus a central part of the shop. We sell books that are Welsh, English, or even bilingual. When people start speaking Welsh to me, I would respond in Welsh. If I notice that people are learning Welsh, I will speak Welsh to them.

Bangor is an unsettled society. This also means that people are not sure when people can speak English/Welsh. I think that if you dig a little deeper, many people can actually speak Welsh, but they are just not very confident. Caernarfon, however, is a more settled community.

**Shop/participant 15**

Name shop: Bazaar Bizarre

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: Welsh – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

English.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

I speak a little bit of Welsh.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I have lived here for 10 years now and I wanted to be able to speak to friends and customers in Welsh. I did an online free course at Bangor University.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I acquired English from birth, and Welsh from the age of 37.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

It was an automatic response because my mother tongue is English. Welsh is not automatic but I try to speak it a little bit.

**(6) If I had addressed you in English, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

I would use English, also because I prefer it.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.

**Shop/participant 16**

Name shop: Craft Cymru

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: Welsh – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

Welsh.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

Yes.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I was raised bilingually.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I acquired both Welsh and English from birth onwards.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

I could hear a different accent and consequently responded in English.

**(6) If I had addressed you in English, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

I would use Welsh when I was greeted in Welsh and English when I am greeted in English. I would never respond in Welsh to an English greeting because that is rude.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.

**Shop/participant 17**

Name shop: Roberts & Owen

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: English – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

Welsh.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

Yes.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I learned English at school. I consider myself to be bilingual.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I acquired Welsh from birth onwards; my parents spoke it to me. I started learning English at school.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

Because you never know who speaks Welsh and who doesn't. At least everyone speaks English.

**(6) If I had addressed you in Welsh, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

I would have responded in Welsh.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.



**Shop/participant 18**

Name shop: YLP Haberdashery

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: Welsh – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

Welsh.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

Yes.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I started learning English at school.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I acquired Welsh from birth onwards, and English from the age of 4. My parents only spoke Welsh to me.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

Most people that come into the shop speak English. I often just start the conversation in English because of this and then maybe switch to Welsh. When I know the customer is Welsh, I will also use Welsh.

**(6) If I had addressed you in English, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

I would always start off using English first, unless I know the person is Welsh.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

No.

**Shop/participant 19**

Name shop: Charlotte's gifts

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: English – English

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

English.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

I can speak a little bit of Welsh: I can carry a conversation.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

Because I married a Welshman.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I acquired English from birth onwards, and Welsh from the age of 20.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

Because it is my mother tongue.

**(6) If I had addressed you in Welsh, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

I would understand it and try to speak Welsh. However, if I don't know how to say something in Welsh, I would revert to English.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes, I heard an accent.

**Shop/participant 20**

Name shop: Tŷ Siocled

Sex interviewee: female

Languages in greeting: Welsh – mix

**(1) What do you consider to be your mother tongue?**

Welsh.

**(2) Do you speak Welsh and English?**

Yes.

**(3) Why did you learn your second language?**

I was raised bilingually.

**(4) From what age onwards did you acquire these languages?**

I acquired Welsh from birth and English from the age of 3. My father is bilingual so my parents speak English to each other and to their children Welsh.

**(5) Why did you chose to greet me in this particular language?**

I consider [haiə]to be Welsh, otherwise I would have said hi

**(6) If I had addressed you in English, what do you think would have been your language choice?**

I would respond in English. Speaking Welsh to someone who cannot speak it is rude.

**(7) Did you notice that I am not a native speaker?**

Yes.