

ramifications of the passing and enactment of this seminal piece of legislation. While the focus of the book is on Wales, its tenor is far from parochial; instead, this book would be a valuable resource to anyone with a specific interest in the political challenges and practical consequences of attempting to implement the UNCRC or, more generally, as a case study in policy enactment within the context of devolved governance.

### References

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*Parents, Personalities and Power: Welsh-medium Schools in South-east Wales*  
Huw S. Thomas and Colin H. Williams (eds), 2013  
Cardiff: University of Wales Press  
xxvii.+ 306 pp.  
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This substantial book addresses an important area, which has not received individual attention in the literature: the development of Welsh-medium education in south-east Wales. It contains original and unique accounts of how this has evolved, discussed from an insider perspective of policy-makers, researchers and practitioners; people who were there and lived through the times they are discussing. The book is dedicated to the memory of Gwilym E. Humphreys, who died a year before the book was published, for his contribution to Welsh-medium education and to revitalising the Welsh language in Wales. This dedication is fitting in a book

which has a strong expert witness element. One of the editors, in addition to his current research role, was Head of the first Welsh-medium secondary school in Cardiff. Other influential actors in Welsh politics and education policy contribute chapters. All this adds to an authentic and vivid reporting of events.

The book has twelve chapters with contributions by eight authors. It is supported by leading international figures in the field: a foreword by Colin Baker and preface and acknowledgements by Colin H. Williams. The latter also contributes two chapters to the book. Chapters 2–6 form a sequence, in that they are written by the other of the two editors, Huw Thomas. This has some effect on the overall shape of the book, confirming the sense of it being, as described in chapter 1, a book constructed in two parts. From chapters 7–12 there is a different tone, with contributions by ‘key players within the education system and political life offering their own perspectives of the state of play of Welsh medium challenges and advances of late’ (p. 6). The concluding chapter, while being written in one or two places in a rather abbreviated fashion with listed notes and bullet points, offers a thought-provoking overview and discussion of the challenges ahead for the future of Welsh-medium education in general.

*Parents, Personalities and Power* will be useful to scholars in Welsh language and education research in Wales and of interest to a wider set of readers studying minority languages education internationally, although the latter group might not wish to follow some of the micro-level detail. The editors identify their intended audience as ‘the interested lay reader, the informed parent and others who share an interest in social developments in Wales and beyond’ (p. 6). Other audiences will be those studying sociolinguistics, sociology and politics, who will find in the book much to reflect on regarding the enactment of language and power.

The book has some idiosyncrasies, which the reader might wish to be aware of. As noted in chapter 1, ‘a certain discrimination is needed’ (p. 12). This is mainly an insider view and, as such, there is a starting point of positive commitment to the Welsh language and Welsh-medium education, with the majority of authors being Welsh speakers and having played an active role in developing Welsh-medium education policy and practice. The exception is the author of chapter 7, whose commentary about ‘bridges to be built more strongly’ (p. 208) between Welsh-medium and other education sectors in Wales offers an interesting and thought-provoking ‘outsider’ perspective.

Similarly, it can be seen that only one woman contributes a chapter. Given that so many of the parents in the struggle for Welsh-medium education in south-east Wales were women, pushing prams as they walked in protest marches, this might be seen as an omission in a book bearing witness to such events. A third point is that, although there is extensive and well-documented reporting of the sequence of events that brought about the development of Welsh-medium education in the period under scrutiny, statistics discussion and data tables draw mainly on the 2001, rather than 2011, census data for Wales.

Finally, *Parents, Personalities and Power* offers an in-depth illustration of the link between language, society and politics. It plays an important part in showing, through its focus on south-east Wales, how a minority language – Welsh – came back from the brink of extinction, largely through the effect of bilingual and Welsh-medium education in the anglicised areas of Wales. This is a core theme and the backbone of the book: language survival and renaissance against the odds. The sense of the struggle that this has been is clearly and powerfully conveyed, along with the slight sense of shock that, by the present time, there is no longer a clear political fight to be had, an ‘us and them’; rather, a nuanced development of who ‘we’ are, as speakers of Welsh in the future. As is noted in the preface: ‘There will be newer and perhaps more challenging issues to face as we construct a bilingual society within an increasingly multicultural context in Wales’ (p. xiv).

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Egan, B. (1990). 'Design and technology in the primary classroom: equalizing opportunities', in E. Tutchell (ed.), *Dolls and Dungarees*, Milton Keynes, Open University, 36–45.

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