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Cornish

The Cornish language in education
in the UK



* numerically small language communities

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Glossary

Kernow	Cornwall
Kernewek	Cornish
Kesva an Taves Kernewek	The Cornish Language Board
Gorseth Kernow	The Gorsedd of Cornwall (College of Bards)
Cussel an Tavaz Kernuack	The Cornish Language Council
Kowethas an Yeth Kernewek	The Cornish Language Fellowship
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
SCAA	School Curriculum and Assessment Authority
GROW	Government Office for the South West
DETR	Environment, Transport and the Regions
LEA	Local Education Authorities
FE	Further education

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Foreword

background

For several years now, Mercator-Education has made efforts to achieve one of its principal goals: to gather, store and distribute information on minority language education in European regions. Regional or minority languages are languages which differ from the official language of the state where they are spoken and which are traditionally used within a given territory by nationals of that state who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the population.

To date, Mercator-Education has been successful in establishing a computerised data bank containing bibliographic data, information about people and organisations involved with minority language issues. It has published data collected during four inventory studies on pre-school education, primary education, learning materials and teacher training. In addition there is a need for documents which give a brief outline of the most essential features of the educational system of regions with an autochthonous lesser-used language. With the establishment of regional dossiers we intend to meet this need.

aim

Regional dossiers aim at providing concise descriptive information and basic educational statistics about minority language education in a specific region of the European Union. This kind of information, such as features of the educational system, recent educational policies, division of responsibilities, main actors, legal arrangements, support structures and also quantitative information on the number of schools, teachers, pupils and financial investments, can serve several purposes.

target group

Policy makers, researchers, teachers, students and journalists may use the information provided to assess developments in European minority language schooling. They can also use a regional dossier as a first orientation towards further research or as a source of ideas for improving educational provision in their own region.

link with EURYDICE In order to link these regional descriptions with those of national educational systems, it was decided to follow the format used by EURYDICE, the European education information network in the European Union. EURYDICE provides information on the administration and structure of education in member states of the European Union. The information provided in the regional dossiers is focussed on language use at the various levels of education.

contents The remainder of this dossier consists firstly of an introduction to the region being studied, followed by six sections which each deal with a specific level of the educational system. These brief descriptions contain factual information presented in a readily accessible way. Sections eight to ten cover research, prospects and summary statistics. For detailed information and political discussions about language use at the various levels of education, the reader is referred to other sources.

1 Introduction

language Cornish is a Celtic language, just like Welsh and Breton, for example, and not to be confused with the Anglo- Cornish dialect also spoken in Cornwall. Cornish is spoken by a very limited number of people in Cornwall in the extremity of the United Kingdom's south-west peninsula and is a direct descendant of the language that was spoken by Celtic settlers long before the Roman conquest. The Celtic languages are divided into two distinctive branches: Goidelic and Brythonic. Cornish belongs to the Brythonic branch, alongside Welsh and Breton. It is not very common for speakers of one Celtic language to understand speakers of the others, not even when the languages are part of the same branch. The Cornish language (referred to as Kernewek by its speakers) stands out among other lesser-used languages of

Europe because it is a language that has been revived after having died out in the 18th century.

population

According to the MacKinnon Report (2000)¹ there are about 300 effective speakers of Cornish with up to 3,000 people able to have simple conversations in the language. The area of Cornwall is just over 356,000 hectares. The population was 496,600 according to an estimate made by Cornwall County Council in 2001. The two main groups who inhabit Cornwall are of Cornish and English descent. Rapid population growth and counter urbanisation has resulted in a situation where the percentage of indigenous Cornish people (not necessarily Cornish speakers) declined from between 70 and 80% in the 1950s to somewhere between 40 and 50% today. Copper and tin mining were the traditional industries of Cornwall; today the county is largely dependent on tourism.

There is no concentrated area of Cornish speakers; Cornish speakers live spread throughout Cornwall. Since Cornish has been revived and the language is not bound to certain concentrated areas, Modern Cornish does not have distinct dialects. Variety in vocabulary and pronunciation does occur, depending on where and with which teacher students have learned the language. But this variety is minimal.

Modern Cornish is spoken by a wide variety of people, male and female, young and old. The arts are an important domain for Cornish language use. There are poets who write in the Cornish language and more recently the language has also been used in pop and rock music. There is a weekly Cornish Language column in the regional daily, the Western Morning News. Most towns and villages in Cornwall have retained their original Cornish name, although the spelling and pronunciation have been anglicised. There are a few bilingual road-signs, for instance in Seaton and Camborne. Some sports teams have slogans in Cornish.

The meetings of most Cornish language movements are held in Cornish. The meetings of the Cornish Department of the European Bureau for Lesser Used Language (EBLUL) are in Cornish. This department features members from all

prominent Cornish Language organisations and the County Council. A translation is made available for those who do not understand Cornish.

language history

The Cornish are a Celtic people who once inhabited the entire region covered by present-day Cornwall, Devon and West-Somerset. They are probably the descendants of the Celtic people who have lived in this area ever since the introduction of farming around 3000 BC. A Celtic language known as Brythonic (British) was the language of the British Isles prior to the Roman occupation. The language survived the Roman period and crossed the Channel due to the extensive migrations of the 5th and 6th centuries. In Britain itself, the Anglo-Saxons drove the Celts to the further corners of the British Isles following the Roman period. In the fifth century, the Celts regained some territory when the Irish Celts invaded Scotland and the Celts from Cornwall invaded Armorica (Brittany). Although they did not establish a Celtic state, they did sow the seeds for the Breton language that is still alive in Brittany today. The Saxons eventually overran Cornwall in the ninth century. In 936 AD, King Athelstan's settlement established the river Tamar as the border between England and Cornwall and the Cornish and the Welsh were separated. From then on, their languages developed independently. Cornwall has been a Duchy since 1337.

The number of Cornish speakers during the late Middle Ages remained steady at around 33,000. In 1300, this made up nearly three-quarters of the entire population but, as the population grew, the number of Cornish speakers remained constant while English speakers ultimately became more numerous.

The Middle Cornish period (1200-1575) was the heyday of Cornish literature and this period also saw a maximum number of Cornish speakers (approximately 38,000). By 1362, the English tongue had become the first language for matters of the state but the Cornish people still used their own language in other domains. The language began to lose ground in the east of Cornwall during the late Middle Ages

but remained important in the west of the county. Commerce and cultural interaction with the Bretons stimulated the use of Cornish.

In the 14th century, monks wrote miracle plays in Cornish known as 'the Ordinalia' intended to teach people about the church. The initial revival of Cornish in the early 20th century was based on texts such as these.

Tudor centralism caused the Celtic languages, including Cornish, to decline. Cornish revolts against the English in 1497 and 1549 led to the end of the halcyon days of Cornish culture. At the time of the Reformation, English replaced Latin as the language of the church. The Cornish speaking population was against English replacing Latin as the local language of the church instead of Cornish. However, there was never to be a Cornish translation of the Bible.

After the Prayer Book Rebellion of 1549, over half of Cornwall's able-bodied men were slaughtered. The death of so many indigenous men set the course for the language's extinction.

Another major blow for the Cornish language was severance of the connections with the Breton language group.

Around 1700, Cornish was only spoken in the furthest reaches of Cornwall. It remained in these last areas for almost another century.

English finally supplanted Cornish as vernacular speech in the late 18th century. The last native speakers reportedly died in the late eighteenth century but there are incidental references to people with some degree of knowledge of the language throughout the 19th century.

Other elements that led to the final decline of the language: Cornwall's early industrialisation, changing a previously autonomous speech community into a bilingual Cornish/English community.

Economic change that brought about a process of emigration in the late 18th century. Many Cornish people moved to Australia or North America.

The introduction of English as the language of commerce.

The negative stigma of Cornish. The people regarded it as a language of the poor.

revival of Cornish

At the turn of the 20th century, however, Cornish was revived by Henri Jenner, a scholar who was a bard of the Welsh and Breton Gorsedd². In 1904, he published an instruction book that formed the basis for the effective writing and teaching of Cornish. Jenner based his revival of Cornish on Middle Cornish. It was Robert Morton Nance who was the main impetus behind updating the spelling and pronunciation of Cornish. He based his work on the spoken language of its last semi-speakers whereas Jenner's work was based upon the relatively abundant Middle Cornish texts. The early revivalists corresponded and wrote in Cornish but the language was hardly ever spoken.

The key institutions in the revival were established between the world wars, such as the *Gorsedd* of Cornwall as well as classes in Cornwall and in London. The Gorsedd was founded in 1928 on the model of those already established in Wales and Brittany. Originally, it was the chief centre of the revival and it provided examinations for language learners until that function was taken over in 1967 by the newly founded Cornish Language Board (*Kesva an Taves Kernewek*). The Gorsedd is a Celtic cultural organisation and one can become a bard for important contributions to Cornish culture. Cornish is used in Gorsedd ceremonies today but only an approximate one in twenty of the bards has an active knowledge of the language.

In the 1930s, a standard Cornish was developed from Jenner's work by a team under the supervision of Robert Morton Nance. This led to the first full set of grammars and dictionaries. Slowly, and with some delays, the language advanced in both public esteem and use. However, it took several decades before Cornish was able to resurface as a living spoken language. People with Cornish language ability lived far apart and it was probably the introduction of the car as a common means of transport that boosted the use of spoken Cornish. Today, the *Kowethas an Yeth Kernewek* (the Cornish Language Fellowship) organises a variety of language events to give people the opportunity to communicate in Cornish; for example, meetings like the *yeth*

an werin, usually held in local pubs across Cornwall every week, and Fun Days (*Dydhadow Lowender*) where all the activities are in Cornish. Since the late 1970s, there have been annual Cornish Language Weekends (*Pennseythun Gernewek*), which are full board weekends attracting around 150 speakers.

spelling debate

Whereas spoken Cornish hardly varies, different spellings of the language do exist.

According to some, the debate about the various versions of Cornish being revived led to public awareness of the language being stimulated. Many Cornish people, unaware of their own historical language, learned about its existence and relevance because of the spelling debate that appeared in articles and letters in local newspapers.

The Cornish drawn from Nance's revision of Jenner's work is referred to as "Unified Cornish" (1935). During the 1980s, Ken George addressed linguistic disquiet with Unified Cornish. He tackled spelling, pronunciation and lexical problems in developing his own Common Cornish, referred to as "Kemmyn" (1986). Another proposed version of standard Cornish, "Late Cornish" (1990), was developed by Richard Gendall who based his Cornish upon its later vernacular and written forms. The Cornish Language Board, the language institute that has since produced most language activity, has adopted Kemmyn and approximately 80% of the Cornish speaking population now use it.

Number of Cornish Speakers (MacKinnon Report) Table 3.1

This table shows the impressions of the various language groups (Kemmyn, Unified and Late Cornish) on the number of Cornish speakers and the degree to which they speak it.

Cornish Language Ability Levels	Impressions of Members of Focus Groups			Impressions of Activists
	Kemmyn	Unified	Late/Modern	All Forms of Cornish
On complex /special topics	200	150	100	445
Fluent everyday conversation	200	585	363	840
Simple conversations	3,000	1,000	500	2,900
Simple sentences	5,000	1,500	4,000	5,437
A few words and phrases	300,000	175,000	55,000	2,275
Number in group	26	14	20	17

The levels of ability found extend from the minimalist position of 'a few words and phrases' (for example, knowing that Kernow means Cornwall) to speaking on complex or special topics.

language status

The Cornish language does not have an official status in the United Kingdom. There are no laws referring to the position of the Cornish language.

The UK Government signed the European Charter on Regional and Minority Languages in March 2000 and ratified it later that year but excluded Cornish. Moreover, the national government has decided that the Cornish are not a national minority for the purposes of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National minorities. The exclusion from both documents has probably occurred because Cornish is considered an artificial language as defined in the UNESCO Redbook of Endangered Languages. This source considers Cornish to be extinct and calls the Cornish

language artificial (a language spoken today by about 2000 Cornish people). The absence of government recognition means that the government has made no provisions for the Cornish language.

The Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR), through the Government Office for the South West (GOSW), has the responsibility for co-ordinating advice on government policy for the Cornish language in relation to the European charter. The GOSW commissioned an independent study on behalf of the DETR to establish a position on the historical and present-day use of the Cornish language and on its currency. The purpose of this is to inform government departments and to provide them with a sound basis of fact when considering various policy issues. However, nothing has been done with this report (the MacKinnon Report (2000)). The report provides information concerning the historical position of Cornish up to the present day, the way in which the language is used, the availability of and enrolment in the teaching and study of Cornish at each level, Cornish literature, organisations that promote Cornish and details of sources, funding and support available in the UK and in the EU. Generally, the report concludes that Cornish is a living language with a growing number of speakers but that it suffers from a huge lack of funding and support. In 1999, a steering committee, with members drawn from the Cornish language movement and the county council, produced a report called *The Cornish and the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities*. County Counsellor Colin Lawry stated in his introduction that: "the Cornish people deserve to be recognised and celebrated. This report addresses the issue of the identity of Cornwall and the Cornish people within the context of the UK Compliance Report...".

The Cornish-speaking community protested in the report against the absence of any recognition. Obviously, this community does not consider Cornish to be an artificial language.

The local authority, the Cornwall County Council, has a policy statement on the Cornish language which states that the Council sees the Cornish language as a vital part of Cornish heritage and that it welcomes the work that has been done towards promoting its revival. A campaign is currently afoot to establish a Cornish Regional Assembly (*Senedh Kernow*) to bring key aspects of government to a local level. The present Cornwall County Council has no legislative powers. An Assembly may have limited powers to make local laws, including language laws.

The improvement of the Manx language serves as an example for the Cornish speakers in this campaign. A Cornish assembly may stimulate the Cornish language in the same way that the similarly revived Manx language has been stimulated. On the Isle of Man, several peripatetic teachers are paid to teach the revived Manx language with the help of the Manx government, which has more influence than Cornwall's local government. The Cornish Constitutional Convention³ is the driving body behind the campaign and includes members from all political parties, business and the voluntary sector, including the Cornish language movement.

*status of language
education*

There are no laws concerning the Cornish language in education. There are no legal provisions either for or against Cornish as a subject or as a language of instruction insofar as Cornish is simply not mentioned. Cornish can be taught as a subject if parents demand it or if the headmaster/headmistress wishes to include it in the curriculum.

The language policy of the Cornwall County Council states that the council will endeavour to give the language proper attention within the teaching of local, social and language studies. Where Cornish is taught at school, it is often as an extracurricular activity during lunch clubs or after regular school hours. However, it does also happen (albeit very incidentally) that children learn Cornish as a part of the regular school curriculum. Cornish prayers are used in some schools and songs are sometimes also sung in Cornish.

education system

The education system in Cornwall comes under that pro-

vided for England and Wales. Statutory education lasts from age 5 to age 16. Education after the age of 16 is not mandatory but most young people either follow some kind of course of education or undertake training before entering full time work. Education between the ages of 5 and 16 is in two major stages: pupils attend primary schools up to the age of 11 and secondary schools from 11 to 16. Each stage is divided into year groups, although it is possible for a school with a very large annual intake to divide groups according to ability. The vast majority of schools are publicly funded and the funding is channelled through Local Education Authorities.

Local Education Authorities

Local Education Authorities (LEAs) support and monitor schools and ensure high standards of educational provision and achievement. The Cornish LEA reviews the Cornish community's need for education and then advocates, plans, specifies and funds appropriate provisions to meet those needs.

Pre-school education (playgroups)	Age 2-4 years
Infant schools (compulsory)	Age 5-6 years
Primary education	Age 7-12 year
Secondary education	Age 13-16 year

Cornish-medium education

No schools use Cornish as a teaching medium outside of Cornish subject classes. Cornish is taught in only a few schools in primary education (either as a curricular or extra-curricular activity) and is taught as an extracurricular activity in secondary education.

administration

The National Education Reform Act of 1988 and all subsequent acts legislate for England (including Cornwall) and Wales. The 1988 act defines the curriculum, governance and administration of maintained or state schools in England and Wales. The national and local inspectorates are responsible for inspection.

The curriculum is mainly under the control of head teachers. Since Cornish is not usually taught as part of the curriculum,

it does not fall under the jurisdiction of the national and local inspectorate.

support structure

Funding is drawn from a school's general budget whenever a head teacher decides to include Cornish in the curriculum. There is a small but indirect contribution from the *Kesva an Taves Kernewek*. The board's private funds provide materials that can be used by teachers in primary schools. The Cornwall County Council states in its language policy that, within the limits of its overall resources, it will seek to provide funding to teach the language and help individual schools obtain the maximum benefit from their own spending. The council will co-operate with institutions of higher education to carry out work on the language with the resources available. The County Council annually reserves a sum of £5,000 for the Cornish language. This money is distributed over several projects and is not necessarily invested in Cornish language education.

Cornish organisations

Gorseth Kernow (The Gorsedd of Cornwall) used to produce examinations for language learners until this function was taken over by the *Kesva an Taves Kernewek* (The Cornish Language Board). The Board was set up in 1967 by the Gorseth and the Federation of old Cornwall societies in order to operate as an independent language planning and examining authority. In 1987, the Board adopted Kemmyn as its standard but it also provides examinations in the Unified version of the language as well.

Books and learning materials can also be acquired from *Kowethas an Yeth Kernewek* (The Cornish Language Fellowship).

Kernewek Dre Lyther (Cornish by Post) is a correspondence course provided in either Common or Unified Cornish.

Dalleth ('beginning') was established in 1979 to provide support and provide language material for children learning the language at home, and to press for bilingual education and nursery provision. *Dalleth* still exists under the umbrella of the *Kowethas an Yeth Kernewek*.

Cussel an Tavaz Kernuack (the Cornish Language Council) received a sum from the Cornwall County Council for evening class support and for a language course project. They use the Late/Modern Cornish variety.

Agan Tavas (Our Language) aims to promote unified Cornish and they organise events, support classes and campaigns for the use of the minority language. It provides postal tuition and has a website through which people can learn Cornish via the Internet.

Teer ha Tavas (Land and language) currently organises language classes at Truro and St Austell Colleges. They also provide postal tuition.

*Teacher
Qualifications*

There is no special qualification for teachers of Cornish. The absence of officially recognised examinations for primary and secondary schools makes it more difficult to include Cornish in the curriculum. In schools, Cornish is introduced or taught at lunch clubs by qualified teachers of other subjects who have a knowledge of Cornish ahead of their students and are motivated to teach it. Some teachers are very fluent in Cornish while others have just enough knowledge for basic communication. Teachers are relatively free to organise their own evening classes but, when recommending teachers, the *Kesva an Taves Kernewek* only recommends those who have passed the Fourth Grade examination of the *Kesva*. The Fourth Grade is the highest exam that can be taken in the Cornish language and people who have passed it are fluent in speaking and writing the language. They also become Language Bards of the *Gor-sedd*. In 1989, the *Kesva an Taves Kernewek* organised a teachers' language weekend. A group of 30 teachers signed up for a crash course in the Cornish language that would help them introduce the language at school. The initial plan was to organise this weekend annually but this fell through, mainly due to lack of funding.

examinations

All students of Cornish can take the examinations provided by the *Kesva an Taves Kernewek*, the highest of which is the Fourth Grade (first year university level). In 1997, the

examinations run by the *Kesva* were officially recognised by the Schools' Curriculum and Assessment Authority (SCAA). An assessment system is currently being considered in addition to the traditional examination system. Instead of studying for an exam, students will create a body of work over a certain period that will then be assessed.

The *Kesva an Taves Kernewek* also instituted a Grade Five examination with the Institute of Linguists⁴; a professional qualification accepted by degree awarding bodies as the equivalent of a degree course. However, after a year, the Institute of Linguists decided to cut the smaller languages because they were not financially viable.

Cornish-language GCSEs (General Certificates of Secondary Education) have not been available since 1996 because there were too few students to maintain it.

The school sub-committee of the County Council gave the *Kesva an Taves Kernewek* a grant to develop an examination system at secondary level (1988). Only two years later, Cornish was cut as a GCSE subject by the Southern Examining Group because too few students (less than 10 a year) were taking the examination to make it financially viable. The Welsh Joint Education Committee stepped in and took over the exam in 1992. However, as a result of new government rules that stipulated a minimum of 800 students to maintain an exam, one of the GCSEs to be abolished was Cornish. With only a handful of students taking the exam each year, it was also said that it would be difficult to ensure that the standard they reached was comparable with other GCSE results. Despite protests from the *Kesva an Taves Kernewek*, the GCSE was scrapped after 1996 with virtually no hope of it ever being reinstalled.

2

Pre-school education

target group

Prior to statutory education, which commences at 5, there is a range of pre-school educational provisions for very young children. There are two county nursery schools in Cornwall, one in Truro and one in Camborne. Schools are able to

admit pupils before the statutory age in nearly all areas; this can depend on historical factors and available space. Cornish is sometimes included in primary schools and sometimes not.

Cornish medium

Cornish is not currently used in playgroups. In 1979, Dalleth was established to press for bilingual education and nursery provision and between 1979 and 1982 there was a monthly playgroup for children of Cornish-speaking parents. The problem was that the parents lived too far apart for a more frequent playgroup and a group that met once a month proved too infrequent to stimulate the children's natural use of the language. The absence of a concentration of Cornish speakers with children of playgroup age still constitutes a problem. Besides Dalleth, Agan Tavas has also provided language material for playgroups.

statistics

No information is available on the number of children participating in pre-school education.

3

Primary education

target group:

Child age for statutory primary education is 5-11. Generally, infant departments in primary schools are responsible for nursery provision (age 3-5) and for Key Stage 1 (age 5-7); junior departments for Key Stage 2 (age 8-11), and the national curriculum is followed by all pupils between the ages of 5-11.⁵

Cornish-medium education

The Cornish language is not used as a medium for other subjects

Cornish as a subject

Cornish is not a core subject or a compulsory foundation subject in primary education in Cornwall. Cornish was taught in primary education as early as the 1930s when there

were teachers able and interested to teach it. However, before the 1980s the number of schools teaching Cornish was very small, involving only a handful of pupils. The 1984 State of the Language Report noted that there were seven schools where Cornish had been taught up until then, five of them primary schools. In 1988, learning material was limited. Dalleth prepared what was available. No more than six schools were involved in Cornish education but the number of pupils being taught the minority language amounted to approximately 150, mostly 3rd and 4th-year pupils, who received formal instruction for an hour a week. The twelve schools reporting Cornish-language activity in 2000 seem to indicate that the language is slowly on the rise in education.

The MacKinnon report (2000) states that some form of actual teaching of Cornish at primary level was reported as follows:

Wendron teaches years 3 and 4 topic-based classes for 20 minutes a week.

At Roskear the school has now been teaching Cornish for three years with a teacher paid for by Verbal Arts Cornwall⁶.

At St Mawes, Cornish is taught as part of the curriculum in years 3 to 6 and there is also a Cornish-language club.

At St Michaels, Helston, Cornish is taught by a visiting teacher in a weekly after school class also open to all Key Stage Two pupils, staff and parents – with accreditation available.

There is a weekly club with a visiting teacher at Ludgvan.

At Heamoor, Cornish is taught at a lunch club to year 6 pupils

At Treyew the language is taught as part of the Cornish Studies module in year 5 (summer term)

Weeth organises an activity club weekly for two terms based on Language Board Grade One examination for years 3 to 6.

Coads Green integrates the language with Cornish dancing at Key Stage 2 and teaches words, phrases and greetings

St Neot has introduced Cornish to years 4, 5 and 6.

Godolphin has two half-hour lunchtime classes in Cornish and another in Cornish singing open to years 5 and 6.

At Brunel (Saltash), Cornish is used in assemblies and for registers with both Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils. There has been a weekly after school club that is to be restarted with opportunities for taking Language Board Grade One examinations. The school choir sings in Cornish.

Some primary schools (Such as Foxhole, Penryn and Lanlivery) reported past activity and would like to re-introduce Cornish. At Boskenwyn a Cornish grace is used at meals and pupils learn Cornish songs. The school has a Cornish motto.

statistics

In the school year 2000-2001, 39,000 students attended primary education. About 120 students received Cornish classes in one way or another.

4

Secondary schools

target group

Statutory education at the secondary stage extends from ages 11 to 16. This is divided into Key Stages 3 (11-14) and Key Stage 4 (14-16) and the National Curriculum is taught in all state schools to the age of sixteen. Cornish is not a core subject or a compulsory foundation subject in secondary education in Cornwall.⁷

teaching

In secondary schools, specialist teachers teach specific subjects; a variety of teaching strategies are used in each subject including whole class teaching, group work and oral work. A relevant degree is required in order to be appointed to teach in the secondary sector.

Cornish-medium education

Cornish is not used as a medium to teach other subjects.

Cornish as a subject

In 2000, four secondary schools offered Cornish as an extra-curricular activity. It is taught either by teachers who

are qualified in other subjects and already have a position at the school or by volunteers.

At *Liskeard Community College* and *Newquay Tretherras* there are lunchtime clubs where a handful of pupils prepare for the Language Board's *New Modular Examinations*; at *Pool* there are 15 students working towards the Kesva an Taves Kernewek's Grade One Exam (2000) and at *Truro* there is an after-school club for sixth-form pupils studying unified Cornish.

During the last couple of years, schools in the UK have been able to specialise in certain subjects. There are currently a number of language schools that are community schools which offer the regular curriculum but which receive extra funding for language education. There may be an opportunity for the Cornish language to be included as a modern foreign language at schools such as these. A language school in Hayle has plans along these lines to include Cornish in the curriculum.

statistics

In the school year 2000-2001, 32,000 students attended secondary education. Approximately 70 of them were involved in Cornish education.

5

Vocational education

In Cornwall, education after the age of 16 is available in years 12 and 13 of secondary schools, in tertiary colleges and at colleges of further education (FE Colleges). FE Colleges prepare students primarily for the worlds of industry and business, offering a broad range of education and training at all levels. Adult education and training on both full-time and part-time bases also form part of their provision; A-level and vocational courses are available, including NVQs (National Vocational Qualifications, not offered frequently in schools) as well as GNVQs (General National Vocational Qualifications) in all subjects and at different levels.

School leavers in Cornwall can attend a number of colleges after receiving their General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) or A-Level results. The largest college in Cornwall is Camborne Pool Redruth College with over 600 courses. Some studies, such as at the International School of Mining, attract a variety of students from all over the world. There are also colleges in Penzance, Falmouth, Wadebridge, Saltash, St Austell, Camborne, Launceston and Truro.

Cornish language

Cornish is not taught or used at vocational education level. The number of Cornish speakers is very low, there is no geographic concentration of Cornish speakers and those who do speak Cornish have learned it as a second language. Therefore there is no demand for learning Cornish when entering the workplace.

6**Higher education***structure*

Higher education includes third-level education at universities and teacher-training colleges.

After receiving GSCE or A-level results, adults and school leavers can study for a degree at any level, including university level, in Further Education Colleges (FE Colleges) at Penwith College in Penzance, Cornwall College in Redruth, St Austell College and Truro College. Cornish language courses are also organised in FE Colleges but not at vocational or university level.

Cornish as a subject

Cornish in primary and secondary school-level education does not provide a basis for Cornish as a subject area in its own right in higher education. There are no degree schemes in the Cornish language anywhere and Cornish is not used as a medium in higher education.

Cornish has been taught as a subject in the University of Wales at Aberystwyth and Lampeter.

Institute of Cornish Studies

In 1972 the University of Exeter and Cornwall County Council established the Institute of Cornish Studies. It is located in Truro and produces an academic journal, 'Cor-

nish Studies'. Its specialities are archaeology and history but language and culture are also included.

The University of Exeter has recently introduced two higher degree schemes through the Institute of Cornish Studies: an M.A. in Cornish studies and an M.A. in Celtic studies. These degrees may include Cornish language studies in the future.

7 Adult education

target group

Adult education is intended for students over compulsory school age and is provided by the Open University. Besides specific Cornish-language evening classes, the Cornish language has no place in other courses for adults.

Cornish-language evening classes

The language classes are for anyone who wants to learn Cornish. The Cornish classes are distributed over Cornwall and sometimes also elsewhere. It is also possible to learn Cornish online or via a correspondence course, offered by Agan Tavas (for Unified Cornish) and Kernewek Dre Lyther (for Kemmyn Cornish).

statistics

The Agan Tavas website shows a list of 30 (beginners) classes throughout Cornwall in 2001. There are 8 in Penwith (one advanced), 7 in Kerrier & Garrick, 13 in Mid & East Cornwall. Outside Cornwall, there is a class in Bristol and one in London. There is also a class in Australia. The MacKinnon Report (2000) indicates that there are 36 formal classes in Cornish at adult education level. These encompass all three language groups and it is estimated that 350 people attend these classes. The majority of these are organised by and held in FE colleges but are also sometimes held at venues such as teachers' homes, village halls and pubs. Since there are also other informal classes and self-help groups, the estimated total number of people involved in Cornish learning activities is about 450, taking all three language groups.

Students learning Cornish in evening classes usually go through the Kesva an Taves Kernewek examination system.

8 Educational Research

There has been no specific research into Cornish-language education. The GOSW's study on Cornish (2000) had as objectives an investigation into the provisions available for learning and studying Cornish at each level in Cornwall and the rest of the UK, identification of how such teaching was provided and supported and examination of the reasons in places where Cornish was no longer available. The section on education was part of broader research. The study indicated the provisions available for learning the Cornish language at all levels of education. It noted that in 2000 there were twelve primary schools and four secondary schools that taught Cornish to some degree. It also noted that it was made very difficult for the Cornish language to advance within education due to the lack of Cornish-language playgroups, teaching materials, proper funding and remunerated, peripatetic teachers.

The results of this research have been incorporated in this dossier where relevant.

Cornish/Welsh

A socio-linguistic comparison between Cornish and Welsh was made by Ute Hirner of the Department of Language Development of the University of Graz (Austria). This study included a questionnaire on the motivations of people learning Cornish, the difficulties of learning and the demand for Cornish at schools. 300 questionnaires were sent out in Cornwall together with the February 1997 edition of *An Gannas (The Ambassador, principle organ for Kemmyn)*. 85 people responded. The results indicated that Cornish identity and culture were the main motives for learning Cornish, followed by linguistic interest and social/communicative factors. Cornish grammar, particularly morpho-syntax and mutations, presented the biggest problem to over half of the learners while (also due to the three different systems) pronunciation also caused some problems. 99% of the respondents wanted Cornish to be

taught at schools. Half of them agreed with the status of a foreign language and 20% wanted to see Cornish taught as a compulsory subject. In order to encourage the use of Cornish, 82% would have spent money primarily on education and, in particular, on salaries for a network of peripatetic teachers.

cultural heritage

The results of a 1997 survey by the academic Timothy James⁸ called for a higher profile of Cornwall's cultural heritage in the county's schools which included the compulsory teaching of Cornish.

9

Prospects

It is a great achievement for a people to revive their historical language. The fact that Cornish exists is the greatest achievement of the Cornish Language Movement that has been doing this work over the last century.

The number of Cornish speakers is very low. However, Cornish is one of the very few lesser-used languages with an increasing number of speakers. It is extremely difficult for the Cornish language to find a place in education but the number of schools where Cornish is taught is slowly increasing and several other schools have indicated that they would be interested in teaching Cornish as well.

The fact that the British government has not recognised the Cornish as a national minority, places the Cornish language in a position very different to the other Celtic minority languages in the United Kingdom. The most prominent problem of the Cornish language revival and therefore Cornish Language Education is this lack of funding. Nearly everything that has been done to revive the language and to introduce the language at schools has been done by volunteers. The little money that is reserved for the Cornish Language is distributed over several separate projects. Perhaps if the money were used as a lever to get more funding, a more ambitious long-term strategy to further the position of Cornish could be achieved. The lack of

long-term goals has been noted as slowing down the development of Cornish Language Education. The wish has been expressed for at least one full-time employer for the Cornish language who can use his/her time and expertise to apply for further funding and to construct a long-term language policy.

curriculum

Cornish is taught both during and outside school hours in primary education and as an extracurricular activity in secondary education.

Schools have difficulty finding a place for Cornish within school life and finding resources for it. Teaching Cornish at lunch clubs and during after-school classes is difficult to sustain because it demands commitment from pupils and parents over a long period of time. Especially at secondary level, the absence of a state-recognised school-level examination is a problem. There is no developed playgroup stage for the Cornish language, which means that children who learn the language at home do not usually hear the language anywhere else. The absence of a Cornish-language playgroup narrows the distribution of Cornish in further education.

spelling

The current existence of at least three different spelling systems causes some confusion. Although the debate about spelling seems to generate greater public awareness of the language, it is necessary for supporters of each version to work together in order to develop the language further and its place in education.

teaching

Funding and resources are required in order to provide teachers, without prior proficiency in the Cornish language, with the skills and materials necessary for introducing the minority language as a subject. With reference to Cornish, the Manx language on the Isle of Man serves as an example of how to take further action.

Within a few years, Cornwall will have a new university building at Penryn. This offers the possibility of bringing a Cornish Studies department into Cornwall itself. This de-

partment might possibly train (peripatetic) Cornish-language teachers.

The Kesva is also working towards a new teachers' language weekend to help teachers introduce Cornish at their schools. If possible, this will be organised annually.

Moreover, after the Institute of Linguists scrapped the Grade Five examination for Cornish, the Cornish sub-committee of the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages in the UK has not dropped the idea of creating an examination which will enable Cornish students to get a degree beyond the Kesva's Grade Four level.

10

Summary statistics

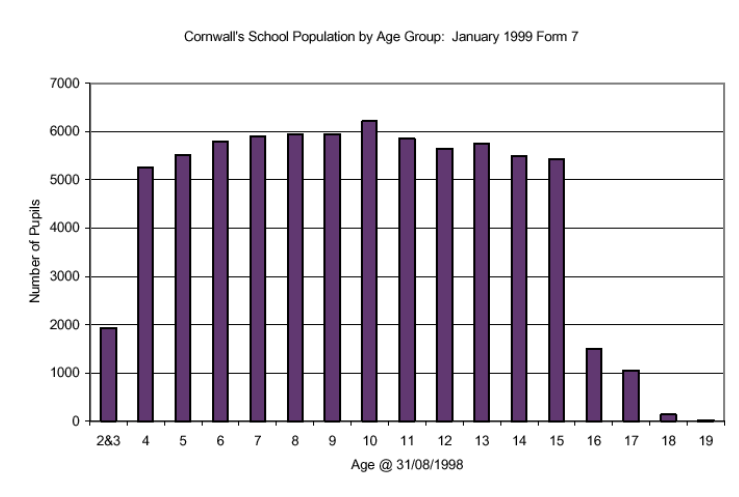
statistics

There are about 39,000 pupils enrolled in primary education and about 32,000 in secondary education in Cornwall. No more than a few hundred of them get some level of education in the Cornish language.

Type of education	total	Cornish
Primary School	39,000	approx. 120
Secondary School	32,000	approx. 70
Evening Classes		365
Informal classes & self study		approx. 85

Table 1: Figures of students involved in Cornish language education in 2000-2001⁹

CORNWALL'S EDUCATION SERVICE IN CONTEXT



Cornwall's school population by age group: January 1999, Form 7¹⁰

Notes

1. This is a report from an academic study of Cornish that was undertaken on behalf of the Government Office for the South West (GOSW). The research was done between January and March 2000.
2. A Gorsedd is a gathering of Bards. In the Druid tradition the role of the bard is to mediate spirit through the word, whether spoken, chanted, sung or written on the printed page, or through music and other creative arts, such as painting, dance or sculpture. The term gorsedd (literally 'high seat') originally referred to prehistoric sacred mounds, often with single trees growing on them, which were places of assembly for festival celebration, law proclamation and the inauguration of kings. In pagan times, the sacred king was ritually wedded at such sites to a representative of the female spirit of the land. In later times, the assemblies themselves came to be known as gorseddau after the mounds on which they were held.
3. For further information, www.senedhkernow.freeuk.com
4. The Institute of Linguists is the UK's largest membership organisation for professional translators, interpreters, language educationalists and those using languages in industry and commerce. It is also an examining body, offering assessments and certification in a wide range of languages to suit candidates at higher levels (degree and post-graduate) seeking a

professional qualification.

5. Primary Schools

There are 234 primary schools in Cornwall maintained by the Local Education Authority:

168 County Junior and Infant Schools

14 County Infant Schools

13 County Junior Schools

34 Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior and Infant schools

1 C of E VA Infant School

1 C of E VA Infant School

8 C of E Voluntary Controlled Junior and Infant Schools

giving a total of 214 junior and infant schools, 15 Infant schools and 14 Junior Schools. There were 33 designated nursery units (23 attached to infant schools) and 17 schools with area special classes/units. There was also one grant-maintained school.

6. Verbal Arts Cornwall no longer exists.

7. There are 31 secondary schools in Cornwall maintained by the LEA:

16 County 11-16 Secondary Schools

15 County 11-18 Secondary Schools

Special schools

There were 4 special schools in Cornwall maintained by the LEA:

3 County 2-19 Special Schools

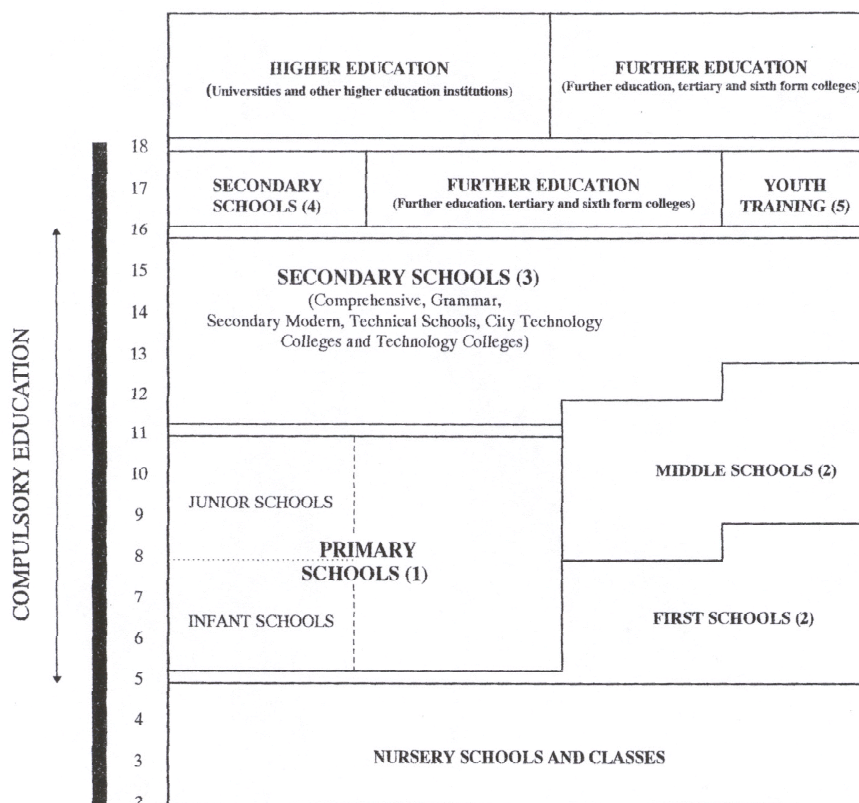
1 County 10-16 Special Schools

8. Call for teaching of Cornish, Cornwall Gazette, February 27,1997

9. The Kesva keeps a record of the number of evening classes and the number of students who enrol for these evening classes. The rest of the numbers are estimates by the author based on interviews with people involved with the Cornish language.

10. Table from Cornwall's Education in Context, fifth annual report.

Education system in the UK (Eurydice)



1. Some areas have separate schools, known as infant and junior schools, within primary education. Infant schools and primary schools may include pupils in nursery classes.
2. Two tier (primary and secondary schools) and three tier (first, middle and secondary schools) systems exist side by side according to the provision within each individual LEA (local education authority).
3. All secondary pupils in Wales and over 90% of secondary pupils in England attend non-selective comprehensive schools covering the 11 to 16 or 11 to 18 age group. Most other children attend grammar schools for the 11 to 18/19 age group or secondary modern schools for the 11 to 16 age group. There are also a few technical schools and, more recently, City Technology Colleges and Technology Colleges.
4. Classes in secondary schools for pupils over 16 are known as sixth forms, and are subject to Schools Regulations. Sixth form, tertiary or further education colleges also provide education for pupils over 16. All three types of colleges are now subject to Further Education Regulations, and offer a range of academic and vocational courses.
5. Youth Training is delivered through contracts with independent training providers (often private employers). It lasts two years and is organized in "units of competence".

..... = division in the level / type of education.

References and further reading

main official texts

Cornwall County Council's policy statement on the Cornish language:

States that the Cornwall County Council considers the Cornish language a vital part of Cornish heritage and that the Council welcomes the work that has been done towards promoting its revival.

Education Reform Act 1988:

Establishment of a national curriculum in which there is no place for the Cornish language.

This act makes it more difficult for schools to incorporate Cornish in their programme.

UK report on the Council of Europe framework convention for the protection of national minorities, 1999, Article 2, Article 3.

The Cornish and the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities report, Redruth, 1999.

Cornwall's education service in context, Fifth annual report, 1998/1999.

publications

Angarrack, John *Breaking the chains*, Cornish Stannary Publications, 1999.

Berresford, Ellis P. *The story of the Cornish language*, Tor Mark Press ISBN 0-85025-310-1 (1971).

Brown, Wella *The Cornish language in primary education in Cornwall*, Great Britain, Fryske Akademy / EMU-projekt, Ljouwert 1988.

Casey, A.M. *Cornish nationalism*, (World minorities volume I, 1977).

Dunbar, Paul and Dr. Ken George, *Kernewek Kemmyn - Cornish for the 21st century*, Cornish Language Board, 1997.

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Hirner, Ute (1999) *Language death and revival: a socio-linguistic comparison between Cornish and Welsh*, Department of Language Development, University of Graz, Austria, Agan Yeth #1.

Loze, Reg *Cornish exam to be abolished*, Cornwall news, Wednesday, September 29, 1995.

MacKinnon Report, *An independent academic study on Cornish*, GOSW, 2000.
On-line available www.gosw.uk/publications/Cornish.

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Williams, Nicholas *Cornish Today*, Kernewek dre Lyther, 1995.

Welsh to rescue, The Daily Telegraph, Tuesday, November 20, 1992.

Grand Bard in fight to save Cornish GCSE, Helston/Lizard Leader, 12 August 1995.

Last year of Cornish GCSE exam, Cornwall Gazette, October 10, 1996.

Call for teaching of Cornish, Cornwall Gazette, February 27, 1997.

Government recognises Cornish Language Board exams, St Ives Times and Echo, 15 August 1997.

Addresses

Cornwall County Council

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TR1 3AY
Telephone +44 (0)1872 322000
Fax +44 (0)1872 270340
www.cornwall.gov.uk

Kowethas an Yeth Kernewek + Dalleth

The Cornish Language Fellowship
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Top Hill
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TRURO
TR2 4DR
+44 (0)1726 882681

Cussel an Tavaz Kernuack

The Cornish Language Council
Tregenza Vean
Antron Hill
Mabe
Penryn
TR10 9HH
UK

Cornish sub-committee of the U.K. Bureau For Lesser Used Languages

Jori Ansell
65 Churchtown
Gwinear
Heyl/Hayle
+44 (0)1736 850878

Spyrys a Gernow

Cornish books and learning material

Agan Tavas (Our Language)

Gordon Villa

Sunnyvale Road

Portreath

Redruth

TR16 4NE

UK

+44 (0)1209-842394

Teer ha Tavas

Land and language

Tregrill Vean

Menheniot

Liskeard, UK

Cornish Studies Library

Clinton Road

Rysrudh/Redruth

+44 (0)1209 216760

websites

Kowethas an Yeth and Kesva an Taves Kernewek

(Cornish Language Fellowship and Cornish Language Board): www.cornish-language.org

News in Cornish on-line: www.geocities.com/cornishnews

Cornwall College: www.cornwall.ac.uk

The Institute of Linguists: www.iol.org.uk

Cornish Language Advisory Service (CLAS)

www.clas.demon.co.uk

Kresemm an Yeth Kernewek,

The Cornish Language Centre

www.homepages.newnet.co.uk/lindamarriot/kernewek/cornish.html

Institute of Cornish Studies

www.info.ex.ac.uk/~cnfrench/ics

Other websites on minority languages

- Mercator* **www.mercator-central.org**
General site of the Mercator-project. It will lead you to the three specialized centres:
- Mercator-Education* **www.mercator-education.org**
Homepage of Mercator-Education: European Network for regional or minority languages and education. The site contains the series of regional dossiers, a database with organisations and bibliography and many rated links to minority languages.
- Mercator-Media* **www.aber.ac.uk/~merc/**
Homepage of Mercator-Media. It provides information on media and minority languages in the EU.
- Mercator-Legislation* **www.troc.es/ciemen/mercator**
Homepage of Mercator-Legislation. It provides information on minority languages and legislation in the EU.
- European Union* **<http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/langmin.html>**
At the website of the European Union an explanation is given of its support for regional or minority languages.
- Council of Europe* **<http://conventions.coe.int/>**
European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. (1992) and *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* (1995) European Treaty Series/Série des traités européens ETS 148 and 157, Strasbourg.
- Eurydice* **www.eurydice.org**
Eurydice is the information network on education in Europe. The site provides information on all European education systems and education policies.
- EBLUL* **www.eblul.org/**
Homepage of the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages. This site provides general information on lesser used languages as well as on projects, publications and events.

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website

www.mercator-education.org

network

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