



# Language, Policy and Territory

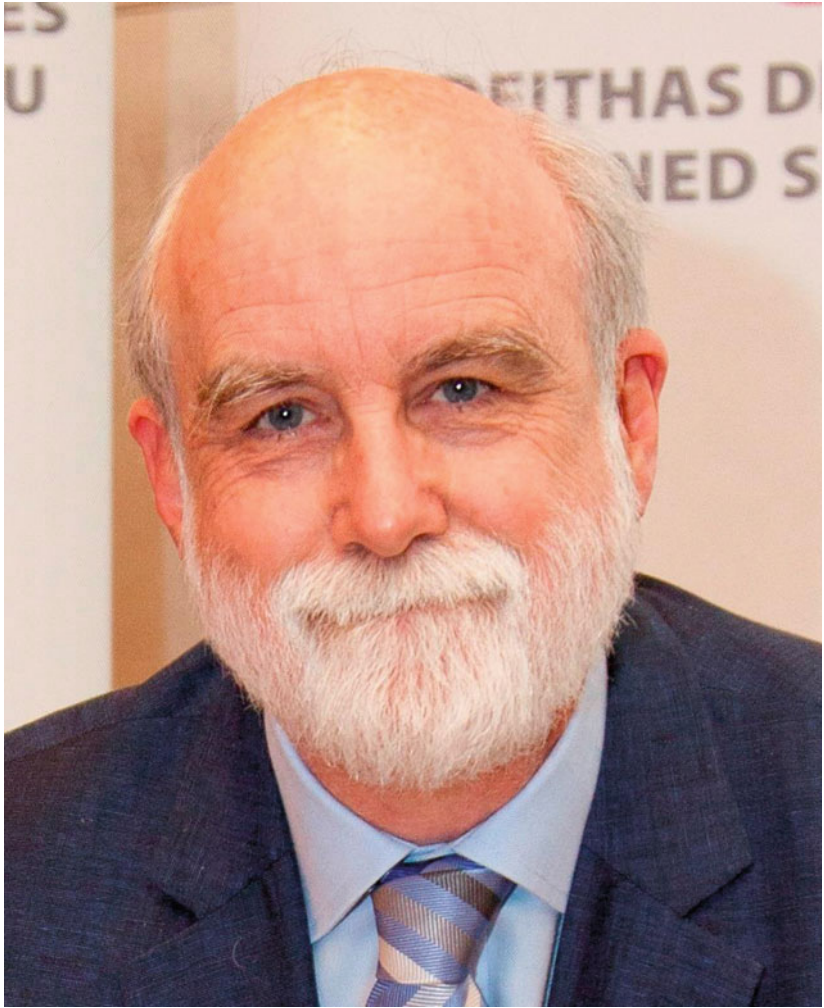
A Festschrift for Colin H. Williams

*Edited by*  
Wilson McLeod · Robert Dunbar  
Kathryn Jones · John Walsh



palgrave  
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# Anadl Enwau

(Er anrhydedd i Colin Williams, a wŷyr)

Beth yw iaith? Peirianwaith rhad  
annynol, dieneiniad.

Enaid? Nid oes dim yno  
ond gwynt a thamaid o go'  
a cheg yn agor a chau  
yn dymestl sain a 'stumiau.

Hyn yw iaith: gobaith a gwae;  
chwerwedd a phlant yn chwarae;  
ein cof hir a'n cyfeiriad  
ymlaen; hi yw'n hamlhad  
a'n hedwino; cadwynau  
mawr o ddur, ac ymryddhau;  
tir hawdd yr anturio rhwydd  
a thir egr ei lithrigrwydd;  
ein gorawen yn griwiau  
a'n swildod ir fesul dau.

Hyn yw iaith: y gyfraith gudd  
a lunia'n byw aflonydd,  
ein crëwr trefn anhrefnus  
mewn canu mawl, mewn brawl brys;  
ein dawn hud, a dynodydd  
ein byd oll a'n bod bob dydd;  
y chwa a'n dynoda ni  
ein hunain, a rydd inni  
ein pŵer oes, ein parhau  
drwy ddadl; ein hanadl enwau.

—Emyr Lewis

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# Introduction

**Wilson McLeod, Robert Dunbar, Kathryn Jones,  
and John Walsh**

It is with great pleasure that we present this Festschrift honouring the work of Professor Colin Williams throughout his distinguished career as an academic and a committed advocate for minority language rights in his native Wales and in other bilingual jurisdictions. The volume aims to do justice to the many strands of his work, both in terms of its theoretical and philosophical foundations and its application to

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language policy on the ground. There is hardly an aspect of the broad canvas of the social sciences that has not influenced Colin's perspective on language, from nationalism, political science and geography to public policy, governance and sociolinguistics itself. Colin's mastery of connecting language to so many other fields of study gives his work a unique depth and breadth of perspective, crucial requirements for our contemporary understanding of language policy and its application across society. His enduring legacy is his multidisciplinary approach that has so enriched the fields of sociolinguistics and language policy both academically and practically.

While Professor Williams's huge contribution to scholarship and to public policy in relation to minoritised languages, and particularly Welsh, forms a large part of his remarkable legacy, a no less important part of that legacy is the personal impact that he has had on students, colleagues and friends. He has been an outstanding mentor and friend to many, including most of those who have contributed to this collection of essays. His willingness to comment on work, his advice on the many challenges and opportunities that are thrown up in the course of a career and by life more generally, his ready encouragement, and his support for career and personal development have all been of great benefit to many. In spite of his talents and accomplishments, Professor Williams is a man of great humility. In whatever circumstances, he is a calm and composed presence, generous to and forgiving of the foibles of others, and he always maintains his focus on 'the bigger picture', providing a sense of perspective when such is most needed. He is a person of great personal warmth and charm, and his gentle, playful sense of humour has always made time spent in his company a great pleasure. It is with an enormous sense of gratitude to him that we offer Colin Williams this collection of essays.

Following his initial appointments in England and Canada, and his long career at Cardiff University where he developed various aspects of the teaching of Welsh and research into sociolinguistics, Colin has also served as a visiting fellow in the University of Oxford and more recently, the University of Cambridge. His exceptional national and international standing is reflected in the periods spent at universities abroad, including South Africa, Slovenia, Romania and especially

Canada. Colin's lifelong interest in language policy in Canada dates from the 1970s and over the decades he has held research roles at the University of Toronto, the University of Western Ontario and the University of Ottawa. While in Canada, he worked closely with the former Commissioner for Official Languages, Graham Fraser, one of the contributors to this *Festschrift*. Both were founding members of the International Association of Language Commissioners, a contribution of which Colin is particularly proud.

Beyond the academy, Colin's career has been characterised by distinguished public outreach and dedicated service for state and voluntary organisations promoting minority languages. These include the Welsh Language Board, where he served as a member for many years, the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages, Linguamon and the Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity. He has been an associate consultant with IAITH: Welsh Centre for Language Planning since 2015. He has also contributed to the resolution of conflict in various parts of the world by advising international organisations such as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe. In particular, policy in relation to the Irish language on both sides of the border has benefitted from Colin's input over the past twenty-five years. He advised on the language provisions of the Good Friday Agreement of 1998, contributed to a draft Irish Language Act for Northern Ireland, and advised the Republic's government on its Irish language strategy.

The range of contributions to this *Festschrift*—both in terms of geographical provenance and disciplinary or theoretical orientation—shows the extent of Colin's influence and reflects the multidisciplinary perspective that has guided his work for the past five decades. Demonstrating this broad impact, the 18 essays presented here have been written by academics from a variety of fields and by practitioners engaged with the practical application of language policy in a range of contexts. We divide the *Festschrift* into four broad themes spanning theories of language policy and regulation and the challenges specific to the countries with which Colin is most familiar: Wales, Canada, Ireland, Scotland and Catalonia. We are particularly pleased that Colin himself

has provided a characteristically insightful Afterword to complete the volume.

\*

Part I presents four chapters concerning the theorising of language policy and regulation.

Huw Lewis and Elin Royles set out to analyse the political origins of specific language policies and trace their development over time, focusing on two examples related to the Welsh language in Wales. They argue that the existing literature on language policy fails to identify how and why particular choices emerge and how these are related to political factors. In order to provide a conceptual framework to guide analysis of this question, Lewis and Royles examine historical institutionalism and its focus on how political institutions influence policy decisions and interact with other institutions. They introduce the concepts of ‘path dependence’ and ‘critical juncture’ and consider their usefulness for understanding language policy formation. The authors then apply a neo-institutionalist approach to their analysis of two key policy milestones for the Welsh language: the *Iaith Pawb* national language strategy of 2003 and the *Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011*. In the case of *Iaith Pawb*, Lewis and Royles argue that the Welsh party system allowed the nationalist party Plaid Cymru to exercise key influence over a minority Labour government and in the case of the Measure, they highlight the importance of the United Kingdom’s legal and constitutional position as an institutional factor. They conclude that the neo-institutionalist approach facilitates a greater understanding of how policy is formed but is only one such theory that can be used to this end.

Emyr Lewis considers what he refers to as ‘the right to chat’, arguing that the simple right of speakers of minority languages to talk to whomever they want to is not as clearly, effectively or universally guaranteed in law as it should be. He argues that although there is some debate about the concept of ‘linguistic human rights’, this ‘right to chat’ is rooted in universal human experience and should therefore be considered a basic human right. In spite of this, he demonstrates that the right is frequently limited, for example, by restrictions placed on employees and their customers to converse in their language or the frequent request not to converse in a minority language when there are non-speakers of

that language present. He then considers domestic and international law to show that the ‘right to chat’ is not as clearly guaranteed as it might be. He then provides an analysis of Part 6 of the *Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011*, now the single most important piece of language legislation in Wales, which was intended in part to address cases of limitations which had been imposed on the right to chat in Welsh. He concludes by noting that although Part 6 is in some respects inadequate to guarantee a ‘right to chat’—it does not create a fully justiciable right, and in any case only seeks to protect Welsh, and not all languages—it does have features which could be adopted more generally, and it is therefore a signpost towards an explicitly recognised right to chat which could benefit not only speakers of indigenous minority languages but of all languages.

Bernadette O’Rourke argues that disciplines such as human geography, sociology and political science have marginalised questions of linguistic diversity and failed to recognise links between language, identity and ethnicity. She reminds us that Colin Williams urged geographers more than thirty years ago to resolve this problem, calling for greater attention to the relevance of language to a range of geographical issues including population, communications, the physical environment and the urban context. O’Rourke also contrasts the Anglocentric nature of much of geography with the bilingualism of Williams and other geographers in countries such as Wales, which gives them greater understanding of the social context of speakers of Welsh and other minoritised languages. The chapter proceeds to analyse the ways in which minority language sociolinguistics has in recent years engaged with geographical concepts such as space, place, territory and community. Williams has shown that such ideas have been fundamental to past activism related to language revitalisation, but the territorial principle has been criticised as promoting bounded notions of language within delimited spaces and is linked to nineteenth-century notions such as ‘one language, one nation’. Supporting calls for a more speaker-centred approach, O’Rourke analyses the geographical dimensions of the ‘new speaker’ framework that she has developed over the past decade through the European COST Action on ‘New Speakers in a Multilingual Europe’ in which Colin Williams and other sociolinguists participated.

In his reflections on language as a vehicle of economic value, François Grin reviews public and academic discourses concerning linguistic diversity and the concept of language as a ‘public good’ or ‘hyper-public good’. Despite the proliferation of discourses using economic metaphors to describe multilingualism as a ‘treasure’, ‘asset’ or ‘wealth’, Grin argues that the suggestion of a connection between language and economics as a discipline was rejected until about three decades ago. Advancing the concept of ‘linguistic environment’, he maintains that language can be conceived as a ‘public good’ as it shares the characteristics of ‘non-rival consumption’ and ‘impossibility of exclusion’. By these he means that a given language will not deplete even if more and more people use it, and cannot be avoided by people in the linguistic environment where it is situated. The notion of language as a ‘hyper-public good’ refers to the fact that a given language may increase its status and dynamism according to the numbers of people who learn and use it. However, Grin cautions against over-emphasising the ‘hyper-public good’ argument in the case of minority languages, because of the disproportionate amount of resources required even to maintain their current position. He maintains that it is necessary to clarify concepts such as ‘linguistic environment’, ‘public good’ and ‘hyper-public good’ in order to assist language policymakers to devise more effective interventions in favour of particular languages.

Part II consists of five papers that consider a variety of language policy challenges and possibilities in Colin Williams’s native Wales.

Drawing upon his experience working for the Welsh Language Board between 1994 and 2012, firstly as its Education Officer, then with responsibility for language planning in general and latterly as its Chief Executive, Meirion Prys Jones provides a personal account of the way in which the Board played a key role in developing the scope of language policy and planning in Wales following the enactment of the *Welsh Language Act 1993*, with input from key Welsh academics, including Colin Williams. Jones describes how the Board interpreted its remits (i) to agree Welsh language schemes with public bodies and (ii) to promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language, which included agreeing Welsh Education Schemes with all local education authorities and other educational bodies and investing in interventions to promote

the use of Welsh through, for example, the Twf (transmission within families) project, the Mentrau Iaith (community language initiatives) and Area Development Plans in key areas of Wales. Jones also provides an account of the circumstances that led to the end of the Welsh Language Board and the division of its work between the Welsh Government and the Welsh Language Commissioner. He argues that there has been an over-emphasis on regulation since the enactment of the *Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011* and concludes by emphasising the importance of a multifaceted approach to language planning that involves the speakers themselves and the communities in which they live as well as positive encouragement by local, regional and national authorities.

Colin Williams has written of the ‘legislative turn’ in minority language policy, by which he means the securing in law of certain basic rights as a means of allowing for the use of minority languages in important domains (Williams 2013: 101). Robert Dunbar reviews key elements of this legislative turn in both domestic and international law, noting that such rights as have been secured through this legislative turn tend to be rights held by the individual against the state. Against this backdrop, he analyses three recent pieces of legislation in Wales, the *Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011*, the *Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015* and the *Planning (Wales) Act 2015*, all of which impose obligations on government to consider the impact of a potentially very wide range of policy decisions on the language itself. He argues that this is an important development in minority language legislation, as it recognises that policymaking in areas which are not obviously related to language, such as economic development, transport, communications, health and social care, housing and spatial land-use planning, can have a significant impact on the vitality of a language. As such, these enactments move beyond the focus on the individual rights of speakers and recognise a broader communal interest in the language which needs to be considered by policymakers.

Rhys Jones takes inspiration for his consideration of networked territories of language and nation from a seminal article that Colin Williams wrote with Anthony Smith in 1983 in which they examined ‘the national construction of social space’ (Williams and Smith 1983). Jones reminds us that this publication inspired geographers and others to chart different

approaches to nations and nationalism, marking a shift from an academic focus on the histories and times of a nation to a geographical attention on landscapes, the importance of specific sites and places, and the significance of territory as the fundamental spatial manifestation of nations and national distinctiveness. For Jones, the most innovative aspect of Williams and Smith's argument was that national territories are not uniform but consist of a series of infrastructures and nodes. Jones uses this more networked interpretation of national territories to examine the territorial extent of a sense of Welshness that is defined according to Welsh language ability as this is imagined in Wales. He proceeds by detailing the dominant geographical imaginations that exist in relation to Welsh linguistic territory, which tend to conceive uncritically of a 'homogenous and definable territorial entity' (p. 141). He then highlights some of the ways in which these visions of a homogenous and uniform linguistic territory can be complicated by drawing on more networked understandings of social and spatial relations, signalling as he does so the significance of such alternative conceptions of the Welsh linguistic territory for language policy in Wales.

Kathryn Jones's contribution focusses on current developments in land-use planning and language planning within the current trajectory of a devolved Wales. She argues that the concept of 'placemaking' provides an opportunity for collaboration that pushes the boundaries of both disciplines to respond to the challenges of planning for the Welsh language to thrive in times of intense social change. Her chapter reminds us of Colin Williams's contribution over four decades to forging closer links between land-use planning and language planning and how he played a key role in securing the principle that the Welsh language be a material consideration in formulating land-use policies in local development plans. Based on her work with colleagues at IAITH: Welsh Centre for Language Planning, Jones argues that placemaking for a thriving Welsh language requires a spatial plan for Welsh language growth as well as more and better use of land planning tools for assessing impact and maximising benefits.

Eleri James considers how place-names and the maps and signage that depict them are indicative of key developments in Welsh language

policy. Her chapter begins with examples to illustrate the range of languages and cultures that are reflected in the place-names of Wales. James goes on to provide an account of the early protests by *Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg* (the Welsh Language Society) in the 1960s against the widespread use of English-only road signs, which led to acknowledgement that Welsh language forms of place-names had a legitimate place in the linguistic landscape of Wales. She then charts the way in which various committees, firstly under the auspices of the Welsh Office, then the Welsh Language Board and now the Welsh Language Commissioner have approached and developed policy in relation to place-naming. James discusses how the Welsh Language Standards introduced by the *Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011* are influencing local authorities to undertake standardisation projects and to ensure that the Welsh language form of place-names are being used. She concludes with a discussion of the rising concern over the Anglicisation of private property, business and topographical names which are not covered by existing legislation.

Steve Morris is concerned with language planning in relation to adults who acquire a minoritised language in areas where that language is not widely used. Morris refers to studies of motivation among adult learners of Welsh over the past half-century, noting that the desire to integrate, the ‘integrative orientation’, is the prevailing impetus among these learners, who typically want to interact and become a part of the/a Welsh language community. This poses a particular challenge for those who live in areas where fewer than 20 per cent of the population speak Welsh—areas which Colin Williams terms ‘community without propinquity’ (e.g. James and Williams 1997: 295). Morris considers the role of *Canolfannau Iaith* (Language Centres) as inclusive and safe physical spaces where all users and speakers of Welsh can interact. He charts the ‘grassroots’ establishment of a number of *Canolfannau Cymraeg* in locations across Wales and then how, with Welsh Government funding, there developed a more ‘top-down’ approach to their establishment and funding. He concludes by emphasising the importance of embedding bottom-up approaches in government policy initiatives designed to encourage speakers of Welsh to become confident users of the language.



Part III presents four chapters that offer different perspectives on language policy challenges in Canada, especially the relationship between French and English.

Linda Cardinal and Anastasia Llewellyn consider the ways in which language policy and planning in Canada have informed Colin Williams's work. Firstly, they assess ethno-linguistic nationalism in Quebec, which was a particular focus of Professor Williams's work in the earlier part of his career. Secondly, they look at the ways in which minority language rights and regulation, and in particular Canada's regime of official bilingualism at the federal level, have influenced his thinking. Of particular importance has been the question of language in the provision of public services, and the territorial application of measures to ensure service delivery through the medium of minority languages. Such questions were of particular importance in Professor Williams's work in the 1990s and the early 2000s, in which he considered the application of these ideas in a Welsh context. Finally, the authors focus on Professor Williams's work on Canada's Commissioner of Official Languages, which provides a model for the office of the Welsh Language Commissioner, created under the *Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011*, a development which was in part inspired by his work. In assessing certain key themes in Professor Williams's work, the authors are able to identify the very significant contribution that his interest in the Canadian experience has made.

Graham Fraser explores the pioneering impact of F.R. Scott (1899–1985) on the development of language policy in Canada. Scott was one of Canada's foremost constitutional law scholars, a founder of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (the predecessor to Canada's social democratic New Democratic Party) and an accomplished poet. An anglophone Quebecer, he spoke French, was deeply interested in francophone culture and served as one of the commissioners on the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (1963–1970), which laid the groundwork for Canada's *Official Languages Act, 1969*. Scott recognised that language issues engaged both individual rights and group rights, and was passionately committed to the concept of official bilingualism and to the idea that language rights are human rights as a way of reconciling these two rights claims. However, his commitment to official bilingualism not only throughout Canada but also in his native Quebec

resulted in his opposition in the 1970s to legislation that sought to make Quebec an officially unilingual French province. This, together with his support of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's use in 1970 of a draconian piece of legislation in response to political violence in Quebec, resulted in an irreparable breach with many Francophone writers and poets whom he had befriended. In spite of Scott's fears that his vision for his province and country was a failure, Fraser traces the continuing influence of his thinking after his death, particularly in important court decisions on Canada's language regime.

Drawing on data from successive Canadian censuses, Charles Castonguay traces the continuing vulnerability of the French language, not only outside of Quebec, where language shift away from French has been particularly dramatic, but also within Quebec itself. He argues that the federal official language regime, first devised by the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, has contributed to both trends. In particular, the language rights created as a result of official bilingualism were insufficient to withstand the assimilative pressures on French speakers outside Quebec. At the same time, official bilingualism, he argues, diluted the efforts of successive Quebec governments to protect the French language in Quebec through legislation such as the Charter of the French Language, which sought to replace English as the default language of public discourse in the province. He concludes that if Canada's English–French linguistic duality is truly a fundamental trait to be cherished, the federal government must radically change its policy, which, he argues, has been more focussed on countering Quebec nationalism than on effectively bolstering French.

Richard Bourhis also examines the linguistic situation in Quebec, employing the concept of 'linguistic vitality', a concept he helped to develop, which seeks to assess the degree to which the existence of a linguistic minority is threatened. The concept employs three variables, demographics, levels of institutional support and status—the level of prestige associated with the language—as well as an assessment of subjective vitality, how the minority and majority perceive the relative strength of the language. Bourhis provides an overview of the main legislative changes introduced by Quebec governments in the 1970s to strengthen the position of the French language, and in particular the Charter of the

French Language of 1977, before discussing mobilisation in the Anglophone community in response to these changes. In spite of this response, he argues that, while the English language is not threatened in Quebec, its vitality has been weakening in the province, focusing in particular on evidence of the declining demographic position of English and on challenges to its institutional support. With regard to demographics, he notes in particular the out-migration of Anglophones, particularly highly educated ones. He also notes that increasing percentages of Anglophones and Allophones—those with neither English nor French as a mother tongue—are bilingual in French and English, which he attributes to the language policies largely introduced in the 1970s. With regard to institutional support, he focusses particular attention on the increasing challenges faced by the English school system in Quebec.

Part IV addresses a range of language policy challenges in Ireland, Scotland and Catalonia, raising issues of territory and mobility, among others. Analysing the position of Irish in the Republic of Ireland, John Walsh traces the changing geographies of the language since the foundation of the state a century ago and considers how the discipline of linguistics could learn from conceptual developments in relation to 'space' and 'place' in geography. Although sociolinguistics and language policy have long had a strong territorial dimension, overt conceptual engagement between these disciplines and geography has historically been weak. Walsh reviews the contributions of Colin Williams to reinforcing this connection and argues that concepts such as 'relational space' are appropriate frameworks for understanding the current dynamism of the geographies inhabited by minority languages such as Irish. He then turns to the geography of the Irish language since the foundation of the state, focusing first on the development of the concept of 'Gaeltacht' and the emergence of new spatial categories as part of the 'language planning process' launched by the Irish government in 2012. For the first time, this process creates the statutory spatial categories of Irish Language Network and Gaeltacht Service Town to underpin language planning outside the Gaeltacht. Although the Irish Language Network concept in particular appears more fluid and dynamic than the static spatial conceptualisation of the past, Walsh criticises the new process for failing to engage with the

possibilities offered by ‘relational space’ as a way of analysing minority language use in the diffused networked society of late modernity.

Janet Muller examines language policy measures in relation to Irish in Northern Ireland since the late 1990s, a period when vigorous debates about the future legal status of the language took centre stage in the context of political devolution following the Good Friday Agreement. Muller bookends this period with, on the one hand, the formation in 1998 of the non-governmental organisation POBAL, which she led, and on the other by the announcement of the *New Decade, New Approach* (NDNA) agreement in 2020, which proposed new policy measures relating to Irish. Colin Williams was among the international experts who advised POBAL on legislative proposals for Irish in Northern Ireland published in 2004. In this chapter, Muller traces the development of the campaign for language rights from the early POBAL proposals to the present day, including the failed commitment to legislation for Irish in 2006, other policy proposals and consultation exercises and the damaging restructuring of core funding of Irish language organisations by the cross-border body Foras na Gaeilge in 2014, a move that saw funding withdrawn from POBAL and other Northern language bodies. The link between political disputes over Irish and the collapse of the Stormont Assembly is also analysed, as is the Draft Agreement on language in 2018, criticised by POBAL as too weak. The chapter concludes with an analysis of the position of Irish in NDNA, which falls far short of the stand-alone rights-based Irish language act promised by Sinn Féin and demanded by campaigners. Muller concludes that the proposals are deeply flawed as they increase the dependence of the Irish language voluntary sector on governmental structures and have failed to deliver fundamental change.

The focus of Wilson McLeod’s contribution is the influence of Wales on Gaelic policy development in Scotland and, as such, continues a comparative approach to language policy of the kind that has been central to Colin Williams’s own work. McLeod’s chapter begins by considering the cases of Welsh and Gaelic to emphasise the considerable differences between the situation of the two languages, despite their shared commonalities. The density of Welsh speakers in the population

of Wales is roughly eighteen times that of Gaelic speakers in the Scottish population, and the sense of Welsh as a national language is much clearer than is the case for Gaelic. McLeod then assesses the influence of Wales on Gaelic language policy from the late nineteenth century onwards, paying particular attention to official status, signage, education and broadcasting. He also discusses issues concerning the design and implementation of language legislation, including the more recent move in Wales to create a Welsh Language Commissioner and enforce general language standards upon public bodies. In conclusion, McLeod argues that the challenges that face Gaelic policymakers must be understood as distinct to the context of Gaelic in Scotland and therefore, require particularised and specifically tailored approaches.

Maite Puigdevall examines the work of the Catalan organisation *Voluntariat per la Llengua (VxL)*, which she describes as an example of a best practice intervention in favour of minoritised linguistic groups. VxL was established by the Catalan government in 2002 as a scheme to promote the Catalan language, by facilitating partnerships between learners and speakers of the language. The first iteration of VxL took place in Cornellà del Llobregat, a Spanish-dominant city south of Barcelona, and it has since been extended throughout Catalonia. Most learner participants are migrants from outside Spain, particularly South America. Puigdevall reviews earlier quantitative data that underline the success of VxL, with large majorities reporting satisfaction with the programme, greater competence in Catalan and increased use of the language. These data are complemented by recent qualitative research by Puigdevall and others, showing that VxL goes beyond facilitating the learning of Catalan by giving participants symbolic resources such as deeper knowledge of Catalan culture and the ability to convert these into material resources such as employment, training and education.

The book comes to a close with an insightful Afterword by Colin Williams himself. He begins by highlighting important aspects of his personal background and professional career, then moves on to address salient points arising from the individual chapter contributions, connecting these to the wider concerns and aims he has addressed over the course of his career. These include the importance of disciplinary

pluralism and evidence-based analysis; the value of studying the interaction between space, place, context, networks and territory; the ways in which language legislation can function as a key mechanism in language policy; ways to effect the transfer of good practice from one jurisdiction to another and the challenge of ensuring that careful policy design is followed by effective implementation. In the final part, he presents a wider overview, giving ‘a brief reflection on some of the outstanding challenges which remain’ (p. 413). He emphasises the need to develop a ‘complex, multidimensional analysis’ of the context that minority language speakers find themselves in, placing particular emphasis on the transformative role of artificial intelligence and information technology (p. 413). Promoting minority languages, he argues, requires the ‘intelligent application of mutual respect, dignity and hard-headed realism’ (p. 417).

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As editors, we wish to pay tribute to Colin’s unstinting kindness, courtesy and generosity in our long friendships with him and extend our warmest wishes to him for the future. No doubt, he will continue to enrich our understandings of the topics covered in the pages that follow, but it is our hope that we have done justice to his ground-breaking and hugely influential contribution to research and scholarship about minority languages and to their promotion and regulation.

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