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The Effects of Institutional Support of Endangered Languages on Language Ideologies

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The Effects of Institutional Support of Endangered Languages on Language Ideologies

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ABSTRACT: Endangered languages are those that are spoken by a very small percentage of the population and are at risk of disappearing with all the knowledge and diversity they contain. Endangered languages often become endangered because the speakers and the society perceive the language as low status or of little use, and a positive change in perception of the language could aid in revitalizing the language. Institutions such as governments, businesses, and universities have recently begun supporting endangered languages in several areas, and this support could greatly affect language ideologies, perceptions of and attitudes about the language. In this research project, I intend to explore the effects on how an endangered language is viewed by both speakers and non-speakers when it is supported by linguistically dominant institutions such as business and higher education. This research was conducted in various areas of Scotland and Ireland and consists of survey data, ethnographic interviews, and participant observation. Specifically, this research aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between institutional support and language ideologies?
2. How do different forms of institutional support affect language ideologies?

Institutional support of endangered languages could provide these languages with validity and recognition as a language, as well as offer economic and status advantages to speakers, creating positive attitudes about speaking and learning the languages. This positive change in the way these languages are perceived could be a crucial step in revitalizing endangered languages and preserving the linguistic diversity of the world.

KEYWORDS: endangered languages; languages; language ideologies; Scotland; Ireland

..... *Republication not permitted without written consent of the author.*

INTRODUCTION

Endangered languages are those that are spoken by a very small percentage of the population and are at risk of disappearing (Harrison 2007:7). Most languages become endangered when the dominant society views these languages as low-status or useless. Thus, the society and its speakers develop negative language ideologies or beliefs about the endangered language (Fishman 1991:60). Antonio Gramsci's theory of hegemony maintains that those in power exert their authority to spread ideologies that members of society take for granted until they become "common sense." Hegemonic institutions such as governments, universities, and businesses can propagate specific language ideologies alongside other taken-for-granted ideologies (Gramsci 1999:625-629). These institutions influence everyday language use through power relations, as these are the institutions of success in the dominant society, coercing the speakers of non-dominant languages to conform (Ives 2004:662). Nevertheless, as some endangered languages come to be re-valued in hegemonic society, the following question emerges: will language ideologies become more positive and inclusive of endangered languages if hegemonic institutions support endangered languages alongside the dominant language? In this study, I will explore the effects of institutional support of endangered languages on language ideologies about Scottish and Irish Gaelic throughout the UK and Ireland.

BACKGROUND

Endangered Languages

Half of the world's 7,000 languages are considered endangered (Harrison 2007, 3-7). Loss of languages can lead to disastrous effects on peoples' lives. These effects include loss of the archive of cultural knowledge contained within a language and erosion of other areas of traditional culture. Cultural knowledge that a society has collected throughout history is contained within languages in a way that is transmitted along with the language. This cultural knowledge includes information about the environment, plants and animals, places, and concepts that are designed to be transmitted within the matrix of the language (Harrison, 2007). Moreover, loss of language often leads to a loss of other areas of traditional culture. As Joshua Fishman states, "[M]ost cultures reveal the 'domino principle' is in operation and when any of their main props, such as language, are lost,

most other props are seriously weakened and are far more likely to be altered and lost as well" (1991:17). Conversely, the revitalization of language often accompanies the reintroduction of other aspects of traditional culture, as in the revitalization of Native American rituals, worship, dances, songs, and crafts when indigenous languages were reintroduced on reservations (Fishman 1991:18). In short, languages provide an important link to a valuable cultural past that may otherwise be lost.

Loss of language also leads to loss of ethnic and cultural identities. When minority communities are dominated by another culture, minority languages can provide a link to cultural identity. This linguistic link to identity becomes a unifying force for a minority culture (Fishman, 1991). Governments in many parts of the world have tried to stamp out unassimilated identities by penalizing the use of minority languages (Harrison, 2007). Language loss thus leads to the loss of archives of knowledge, traditional culture, group identity, and cultural expressions.

Language Ideologies

Language ideologies are attitudes about and perceptions of languages, and these ideologies can play a large part in the endangerment of languages. Linguistic anthropologists define language ideologies as "ideas about language and its place in social arrangement or its use and usability for social and political ends" (Haviland 2003:764). Language ideologies are elsewhere defined as language beliefs articulated as a rationalization for perceived language structure and use, or ideas a group holds about the role of language in social experience (Woolard and Schieffelin 1994:57). The common ground of these definitions is that language ideologies are ideas about language and its place within a society. Language ideologies are also considered "mediating link[s] between social structures and forms of talk" (Woolard and Schieffelin 1994:55). Language ideologies provide structure to everyday life and practice (Briggs 2002:493). In the past, anthropologists have viewed ideology as a distraction from primary linguistic data, and some linguists still hold that language ideologies have little significant effect on language and speech, but beginning with the work of Michael Silverstein in the 1980s, language ideologies have been considered an essential element of understanding language and linguistic structure. Language ideologies can both explain and affect linguistic structure. (Schieffelin, Woolard, and Kroskrity 1998:31).

State-Sponsored Language Revitalization and Its Effects on Language Ideologies

Recent literature indicates institutional support might engender positive language ideology shifts (Barakos 2012, Gu 2014, Lockwood and Saft 2015, Snyder-Frey 2013). Elizabeth Barakos' work in Cardiff explains that speaking Welsh has become an advantage in the labor market in recent years, increasing its status in the institutions of business and education, but her work does not explore the accompanying shifts in language ideologies (2012:178). Alicia Snyder-Frey's research indicates that language ideologies about the Hawaiian language shifted positively after its inclusion in classes at the University of Hawaii (2013:235). Hannah Lockwood and Scott Saft research the language ideologies about Hawaiian Creole among university faculty in Hawaii and report a positive shift in language ideologies after exposure to the language in the university, measured through interviews with 18 faculty members revealing this pattern of change through time (2015:9-10). Mingyue Gu's research with college students in a multilingual Chinese university also explores how exposure to a language in the university over the course of student education can positively shift perception of the language. Although the language in question, Putonghua, is not endangered, it was considered useless and low-status to the students until they were exposed to its use within the university (2014:321). The literature strongly supports the idea that institutional support can positively affect language ideologies. My proposed research will explore the nature of this shift and its bearing on endangered language revitalization, specifically in the cases of Scottish and Irish Gaelic.

Scottish and Irish Gaelic

Scottish Gaelic is a threatened minority language on the spectrum of language endangerment (Armstrong 2014:570). In the 2011 census of language in Scotland, only 32,000 people, 0.6% of the population, could speak, read, and write Scottish Gaelic, while only 87,000 people, 1.7% of the population, reported being able to understand it. The census data show slight increases in the number of speakers in age groups under 45 since the 2001 census, but the overall number and percentage of speakers of Gaelic remains low (National Records of Scotland 2011:26-27). Gaelic has been losing preeminence in Scotland for roughly a thousand years, beginning in the 12th century. Between the 15th and 17th centuries, the Scottish Parliament passed several acts attempting to eradicate Gaelic and replace it with

English, especially among the aristocracy. This legislation was followed by the end of the Scottish Clan system and the Highland Clearances (McKinnon 2014:2). During the 18th and 19th centuries, the population of the Highlands dwindled due to both forcible removals and voluntary relocations to more prosperous parts of the country. The Highland Clearances are associated with a sharp decline in Gaelic culture and language (Richards 2007:7, 45-48). The historical suppression of the language and connection between Scottish Gaelic and "barbaric" or "backward" characteristics still affects language ideologies today (McEwan-Fujita 2010:38-39, 48). In the last decade, however, positive language policy for Scottish Gaelic has been increasing. In 2005, the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act legally prioritized the importance of the development of Scottish Gaelic. This was followed by the creation of Scotland's language planning body, the Bord na Gaidhlig. Recently, the Bord na Gaidhlig invited organizations to create language policies, and a few companies have voluntarily created language policies following the board's encouragement. These language policies are designed to promote the use of Gaelic alongside English in an organization (Milligan et al. 2009:192-193).

Prior to 1922, the Irish language was also suppressed in various ways under English rule. Beginning in 1601, when the last Gaelic Irish attempt to overthrow the English conquest failed, the Irish aristocratic world collapsed. English became the language of power. Irish Gaelic had no official status and was discouraged by the British-controlled government. Following this collapse, the Irish language was no longer used by anyone with political, economic, or social power. Active suppression was compounded by famine and emigration out of poor rural areas. Many Irish families began to believe their children should speak English in preparation for leaving the area. This conflagration of government suppression, economic constraints, emigration, and changes to the legal, economic, and education systems led to a drastic decline of Irish Gaelic. These circumstances also created a societal ideology that the Irish language was associated with poverty, ignorance, and backwardness (O'Donnaile 2014:2).

The revitalization of the Irish language is primarily attributed to The Gaelic League, a movement in the 1890s to revive the language. The movement was founded on the promise that the Irish language was central to Irish national identity and a spiritual counter to the English way of life (Christ 2012:399). Since Ireland's

political independence in 1922, state policy has focused on maintaining the Irish language in the Gaeltacht areas—the areas already heavily Irish-speaking—and reviving the language elsewhere in Ireland. Irish-speaking communities have been in decline, but new speakers have increased outside of the Gaeltachts due to the public school system offering the Irish language as an academic subject. The most recent Irish census showed that 41% of the population of Ireland consider themselves Irish speakers, though only approximately 4% of Ireland’s population uses the language frequently outside of the education system (O’Rourke and Walsh 2015:63-64).

METHODOLOGY

Over the course of my research, I collected 25 survey responses and four ethnographic interviews and visited six communities across different regions of Scotland and Ireland. I collected participant observation data and analyzed regional changes in language situations across most major regional divisions in Scotland and Ireland (i.e. West Ireland, East Ireland, Northern Ireland, the Scottish Highlands, and the Scottish Lowlands).

I conducted an online survey, interviews, and participant observation with speakers and non-speakers of Irish and Scottish Gaelic in Ireland and Scotland. These countries were chosen for their support of endangered languages in institutions (Milligan et al. 2009, O’Rourke and Walsh 2015). My focus centered on hegemonic institutions, such as universities and businesses. For universities, support of an endangered language consisted of offering advanced classes in the language or classes taught entirely in medium of the endangered language. For businesses, support was defined as using the endangered language in business dealings or in the office setting.

The identification of institutions was completed through Internet research and contact with the language boards of Scotland and Ireland and other endangered language advocacy organizations. After initial contact with qualifying institutions, I sent a survey to these institutions to gather data about the use of the language and to identify potential candidates for full ethnographic interviews. Contacts within qualifying institutions disseminated the survey to participants, who consisted of university students and staff and business employees. The survey included 25 participants overall, but participants were not required to answer all questions, and some participants chose to leave certain questions unanswered.

The survey collected quantitative data about language ideologies. Participants were asked the same questions for rating their ideologies both at the time of the survey and in the past before they entered the institution. The survey collected data on whether the respondents were exposed to Scottish or Irish Gaelic and whether this exposure was at a university or business. Participants were allowed to select more than one option if they were exposed to both languages or exposed to a language at both institutions. Welsh was initially included as an option on this survey, but due to low response from Welsh institutions and participants, this language was not included further in my study.

In summary, the survey first asked whether the participant thought about the language more positively now than they did before entering the institution, then asked the participant to rate that change using a scale from 0 to 10 to determine how their ideologies had changed during the participant’s time they were at the institution. The following sections split the participants into answering separate questions about Scottish Gaelic or Irish Gaelic, then separate questions about universities or businesses depending on their previous answers about their language and institution. One set of questions asked which language policies or services were available at their institution to determine the kind of institutional support available to them. Another set of questions asked them to agree or disagree with statements about their language ideologies, asking first for their ideologies when they entered the institution and then for their ideologies currently to further explore how their ideologies changed. Another section allowed participants to add their own comments and leave contact information for an interview. Full survey data is available in the appendix. Excerpts from the survey are discussed in the results.

The ethnographic interviews explored how the participants perceive the endangered language and how that perception has changed over time. Interview participants were recruited when they provided optional contact information on the survey, and the interviews were carried out either remotely via Skype or on-site. The interviews asked participants to describe their exposure to the language and language ideologies in earlier life, then compare that previous exposure to their exposure and ideologies at their present institution. They were also asked what most affected their perceptions of the language at the institution as well as what could be done to make their perception more positive. I completed four ethnographic interviews of 30 to 60 minutes in length,

three with participants in universities and one with a participant in a business.

The participant observation explored how the endangered language is used in the institution and how the use of the language is perceived in this setting. For this section of the research, I visited two universities in Ireland, one university in Scotland, one business in Ireland, and one business in Scotland. The businesses were both in the tourism industry, as these were the most accessible and the most amenable to my research. Participant observation took place upon invitation of university and business officials. Data was collected at multiple sites in Ireland and Scotland, which provided me with participant observation data and local knowledge of language situations.

RESULTS

Survey Data

The survey collected responses from 25 participants. These responses included 21 speakers and 4 non-speakers. Of these respondents, 19 were exposed mainly to Scottish Gaelic, 5 to Irish, and 1 to Welsh. Data also showed that 23 respondents were exposed to the language at a university and 3 respondents at a business. The survey gauged both language ideologies at the time the respondent entered the institution and current language ideologies. Five questions gauged the overall change in positivity or negativity.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Responses	10	3	7	1	1

Responses to question: I think about this language more positively than I did before entering this institution.

In summary, out of 22 responses, 13 participants indicated a positive change in language ideologies, but 7 respondents indicated no change in positive feelings toward the language and two respondents indicated feeling less positive about the language than they did before entering the institution.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Responses	8	2	6	1	1

Responses to question: I think about Scottish Gaelic more positively than I did before entering this institution.

Out of 18 responses, 10 respondents indicated a positive

change in language ideologies toward Scottish Gaelic. Six respondents indicated no change in positive feelings, and two respondents indicated feeling less positive about Scottish Gaelic since entering the institution.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Responses	1	1	1	0	0

Responses to question: I think about Irish Gaelic more positively than I did before entering this institution.

Out of three responses, two indicated a positive change in language ideologies toward Irish Gaelic. One response indicated no change in positive feelings toward Irish Gaelic.

Answer	Responses
10	9 (36%)
9	0 (0%)
8	6 (24%)
7	3 (12%)
6	5 (20%)
5	1 (4%)
4	0 (0%)
3	1 (4%)
2	0 (0%)
1	0 (0%)
0	0 (0%)
Total	25 (100%)

Responses to question: On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being the most negative and 10 being the most positive, how would you rate your overall perception of the language when you entered this institution?

Answer	Responses
10	12 (48%)
9	2 (8%)
8	4 (16%)
7	1 (4%)
6	2 (8%)
5	0 (0%)
4	0 (0%)
3	2 (8%)
2	2 (8%)
1	0 (0%)
0	0 (0%)
Total	25 (100%)

Responses to question: On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being the most negative and 10 being the most positive, how would you rate your overall perception of the language currently?

Participants at all levels of this study indicated that institutional support did change their perceptions of the language in many cases. In analyzing the numerical survey responses measuring negativity or positivity toward the language on a scale of 0 to 10 when entering the institution compared to the present, there was a modest positive change in the mean response from 7.88 when entering the institution to 7.96 currently. In addition, the median response positively changed from 8

when entering the institution to 9 currently.

Another question asked for additional comments on their perceptions of the language, which will be discussed alongside interview results.

Interview Data

Interviews were undertaken with four participants, three Scottish Gaelic speakers and one Irish speaker.

All interview participants regarded a social circle of Irish or Scottish Gaelic speakers as a significant factor in changes of their language ideologies. One Irish participant defined the social group as at least two other speakers. A Scottish Gaelic speaker regarded the influence of older speakers as influential in language ideology change. In the university setting, as older students used the language more or less, so would the younger students. Another speaker stated that a social group that included native speakers to converse with helped in improving confidence and fluency. An Irish Gaelic speaker similarly stated that native speakers, usually from the Gaeltacht (Irish-speaking areas), would bond with new speakers and sometimes take them to the Gaeltacht to visit. The participant believed students' attitudes changed positively once involved in these social circles.

Two Irish participants noted the importance of business support of the language as influential. For university students, language ideologies are most likely to change when economic opportunities based on language use are available after graduation. An Irish speaker related how students' attitudes would change toward the language once they figured out how it would be useful for their career. For business employees, exposure within the business is likely to result in an increased feeling of usefulness of the language.

Both Irish and Scottish participants mentioned discouragement of native speakers upon encountering the language in an institutional environment. An Irish speaker noted that native speakers who have not had to use the language as an academic language sometimes begin to like the language less as they have to use it in a new way. A survey respondent also commented about this phenomenon, stating, "I always liked Gaelic because it wasn't institutional. Hearing exam info and formal discourse in it puts me off it." A Scottish Gaelic speaker also discussed how native speakers did not like

being questioned about their language use departing from established grammar. In fact, when questioned about changing perceptions of Scottish Gaelic speakers, this participant stated she now pictures speakers as defensive about grammar and language. This discussion may account for some of the responses indicating more negative language ideologies over time.

Participants went on to discuss the institutional support that is available at their institution. A diploma in Irish is available at one university for various fields, such as medicine, journalism, and business, allowing students to show their Irish language qualifications to future employers who might require such language skills. An Irish speaker explained that the language can be useful for a number of careers, such as becoming a doctor in a Gaeltacht area or a journalist in an Irish language media company. Irish is also important for obtaining a job in the Irish government, as some government jobs favor Irish speakers. A Scottish Gaelic speaker noted that students from their Gaelic program go on to careers such as teaching, media, and community development. There are competitive programs available in both Irish-medium and Scottish Gaelic-medium education for teachers. The participant felt faculty and staff were more willing to speak with learners at the university than people in a native community would be, allowing learners to better develop their language skills within the institution than they might elsewhere. Interview respondents brought up a wide range of institutional supports, but one Scottish survey respondent also remarked, "The language is in dire straits as a community language. Education at a tertiary level, Gaelic in the media and official status can only do so much. Radically different policies and action are required to support Gaelic as a community language..."

Another Scottish Gaelic speaker discussed the policies they felt were helpful in developing their language skills and language ideologies. Their past exposure had been courses at another university in beginner Gaelic and Gaelic literature. Their exposure at this university was different from past exposure because Gaelic was the medium of instruction, the university afforded complete immersion in the language, and there was a focus on Gaelic used in daily interaction instead of only in class. They expressed that the immersion was overwhelming for the first couple of weeks, but over time confidence and fluency increased until they were comfortable even doing public speaking in Gaelic. They were also able to participate in social activities in Gaelic, such as a Gaelic choir. The substance of study also helped them develop

language skills, as classes were available on their interests in traditional music.

While respondents generally liked the university-based supports for the language, an Irish survey respondent explained how this university-based support is not always enough to change language ideologies in a positive way. The respondent commented, “It is only of use in the college, it is of no use daily in Irish society, improving teaching of languages that are actually relevant, i.e. used internationally would be a better use of resources, not trying to teach a language that is used rarely if at all.”

One Scottish Gaelic speaker stated the explicit language policy at the university of speaking Gaelic at every opportunity helps to overcome the tendency for students to switch to English in interactions. They explained that if there was even one English speaker among the group, the group would switch to English. Students are also accustomed to addressing non-native Gaelic speakers in English, so this policy helps overcome that tendency when addressing learners who are not native speakers of Gaelic. However, another survey respondent was discouraged by their university offering only token support for the language, explaining, “The language exists in a context which is precarious, on the one hand where it is the daily medium of communication and teaching, but on the other where the university (with a bilingual policy) fails to 'recognise' this and tends to communicate only in English, thus weakening the status of the language.”

Participant Observation

Exposure to an institution with an official language policy is generally different from exposure to the language in everyday life before entering such an institution. Outside of these institutions, the language policy is unwritten and based on social expectations of which language will be spoken within which groups (e.g. English with young age-mates, Scottish Gaelic or Irish with older members of the community). This policy can encourage students, faculty, and employees to think about which language they are speaking more than they might in daily community life.

Universities and businesses that successfully support endangered languages attempt to build support systems that address academic, social, and economic needs. Institutions that do not meet all of these areas often noted that they were in the process of addressing this gap. An Irish university was currently in the process of hiring

someone to hold more Irish-speaking social events. A staff member at another university pointed out that their writing center provided help on Gaelic academic writing, a special support for the language academically. In some businesses, merely the use of the language within the office fostered a feeling that the language was more useful and more of an asset.

The participation of staff at universities varied among institutions. An Irish university required their reception staff to be bilingual. This university also keeps a directory of employees who speak Irish to facilitate contact in Irish Gaelic. A faculty member related that if two or three Irish speakers work in the same office at the university, they might speak Irish Gaelic with each other. At a university in the Scottish Highlands, an explicit language policy encourages staff and students to speak Scottish Gaelic at every opportunity. This university also tries to hire staff with positive attitudes toward the language, and some staff come to work for the university for the free Gaelic language lessons provided to staff. At a Scottish Lowlands university, however, an interviewee stated the Gaelic language department is small and little-known, and the staff of the university at large are unlikely to speak Gaelic.

DISCUSSION

In summary, institutional support positively affects language ideologies by increasing feelings of usefulness and legitimacy, and the hegemonic influence from these institutions does influence perceptions of the language through the dissemination of ideas about the language. Both Scottish and Irish Gaelic languages historically declined due to drastic hegemonic changes that broke up Gaelic-supporting power structures, made English the language of circles of power and influence, and actively suppressed the use of Gaelic languages through British colonialism. The government passed anti-Gaelic legislation; the British-governed education system forced the use of English and punished the use of Gaelic; and business favored English speakers because the economy of the times made Gaelic seem useless in economic spheres. With these hegemonic influences, it is not surprising that many Gaelic speakers believed English was the common-sense language choice. At the same time, this research shows support from the hegemonic structure can create the opposite effect. The same structures of government, education, and economy that endangered these languages can aid in revitalization when substantial support is provided. In many cases

reviewed here, the hegemonic structures of government, universities, and business are directly influencing language ideologies by providing funding and resources relating to the language and by incentivizing use of the language. These institutions also more subtly change the views about the language and the people who speak it by creating ideologies of language accessibility, socioeconomic advantage, and cultural access about the language. Learning or otherwise supporting the language becomes more of a common-sense choice for many of these speakers in the context of the institution.

Moreover, the effect of institutions is more likely to be positive if the following factors are present: First, the individual institution must commit to supporting the use of the language in day-to-day interaction, providing structural support for language use. For example, the university or business would use Gaelic in official channels, such as classes or business communication, or encourage people through language policy to use the language instead of English.

Second, the effect is strongest when the language is supported at several institutional levels, including government, university, and business. The success in revitalizing the Irish language is partly due to its support at different institutional levels. The Irish language is better supported by the government of Ireland than Scottish Gaelic is supported by the government of Scotland. The Irish made more efforts in the Republic of Ireland for the Irish language to be visible and accessible through lower levels of education. This support accounts for the increased familiarity and positivity over the whole of Ireland, contrasting with the whole of Scotland, where Gaelic is only visible in the Highlands and Islands. Speakers of Scottish Gaelic expressed more frustration over having to fight to use and teach Gaelic. While lower-level education in Scottish Gaelic is available in Scotland, it is not as widespread as similar educational efforts in Ireland. Although universities and businesses have an effect in Scotland without this support, the support of the government does make a difference. Universities supporting the language have an effect on their own, especially when heavily supporting the language with multiple opportunities for immersion and interaction. At a university level, students have multiple languages to choose from that may help their career, such as German or French, so Gaelic should also have an economic benefit to speakers. Speakers interact with all these sections of the hegemonic structure throughout their daily lives. Without this support in

different institutional settings, speakers are more subject to conflicting language ideologies of usefulness or advantage within a certain institution.

Third, the support of Gaelic language communities is still important. Although new speakers' language ideologies are affected by the institutional structural support, newer speakers saw the language as more attainable and useful when exposed to native speakers and the Irish Gaeltacht or Scottish Gaidhealtachd areas. Two survey respondents stressed the importance of supporting the language as a community language. The support of the surrounding community can enhance the visibility of Gaelic languages within the institution. For example, the Republic of Ireland, particularly Western Ireland, makes an effort for Irish to be visible and used within the community, such as using the language for informational purposes and indicating which businesses speak Gaelic. This community support was lacking in both Northern Ireland and the Scottish Lowlands.

Participants discussed the importance of having both social interaction in the language and a use for the language in their career path. In both interviews and participant observation, participants indicated people in institutions like universities and businesses were more likely to speak with non-native speakers or speak in the language in general than people in the society at large. The increased likelihood of Gaelic-language interaction with others supported the creation of positive language ideologies, as the language was viewed as a social asset. In addition, several participants developed more positive language ideologies when they found the language useful in their career, as the language was viewed as an economic asset.

In certain cases, the institutional exposure negatively affected language ideologies. Participants expressed two reasons for this change. First, native speakers accustomed to speaking the language informally within a community can find it frustrating to use the language within the more rigid structure of academia. Second, some students do not expect to use the language once they leave the university and start a career. Despite these limitations, institutions still seemed to support a positive change in language ideologies overall.

Several respondents expressed that the people involved in Irish and Scottish Gaelic at institutions often already have positive language ideologies about these languages. Since Gaelic at a university or business level is not

required of all Irish or Scottish people, these institutions tend to draw people who already have an interest in the subject. Thus, it is difficult to extrapolate what these institutions might do for the language ideologies of those who feel more neutral or even negatively about the languages *ex ante*. This project could be continued with more involvement from non-speakers who are not directly involved in studying Gaelic. In any case, the project sheds light about the role institutions can play in changing language ideologies, as even those with positive views of the language generally became more positive about the language over time.

CONCLUSIONS

Universities and businesses can positively influence language ideologies by increasing the visibility, legitimacy, and opportunity related to a language. Their hegemonic structures promote a more attractive and accessible picture of the language through the use of the language within these realms of authority. These institutions can build a Gaelic speaker community of their own, allowing speakers the opportunity to use Gaelic where they would otherwise naturally use English.

The most influential language policies institutions can put forward are those that show the institution is committed to people using language for the main work of the institution. Commitment to the use of the language within the institution and explicit language policies and clear opportunities to use Gaelic over English can support the use of these languages within institutions.

The findings of this study suggest that institutions can positively influence language ideologies when supporting an endangered language. Even when the institution cannot influence the language ideologies coming from all aspects of life, it is usually successful in changing language ideologies within the institution itself. As languages are supported through multiple realms of institutional authority, the positive effect on language ideologies can be even greater. If endangered languages are supported in this way by multiple sectors of the hegemonic structure, it could change the ideologies positively within the society by making speaking the languages a choice of common sense.

APPENDIX: SURVEY DATA

Responses to question: I think about this language more positively than I did before entering this institution.

Answer	Responses
Strongly Agree	10 (45.5%)
Agree	3 (13.6%)
Neither agree nor disagree	7 (31.8%)
Disagree	1 (4.5%)
Strong Disagree	1 (4.5%)
Total	22 (100%)

Responses to question: On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being the most negative and 10 being the most positive, how would you rate your overall perception of the language when you entered this institution?

Answer	Responses
10	9 (36%)
9	0 (0%)
8	6 (24%)
7	3 (12%)
6	5 (20%)
5	1 (4%)
4	0 (0%)
3	1 (4%)
2	0 (0%)
1	0 (0%)
0	0 (0%)
Total	25 (100%)

Responses to question: On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being the most negative and 10 being the most positive, how would you rate your overall perception of the language currently?

Answer	Responses
10	12 (48%)
9	2 (8%)
8	4 (16%)
7	1 (4%)
6	2 (8%)
5	0 (0%)
4	0 (0%)
3	2 (8%)
2	2 (8%)
1	0 (0%)
0	0 (0%)
Total	25 (100%)

Responses to question: Please indicate which of these policies or services you are aware are available at this university. Check all that apply.

Answer	Responses
Information delivered bilingually (i.e. websites, signage, etc.)	16
Bilingual university communication (i.e. emails, phone calls, etc.)	15
Bilingual staff	17
Improving staff and student language skills	14
Classes available in the medium of this language	18
Other (Text Responses: 1. Events outside of class taught through Gàidhlig, 2. Social activities using Gaelic; language buddies system)	2
Total	18

Responses to question: Please indicate which of these policies or services you are aware are available in this business or organization. Check all that apply.

Answer	Responses
Information delivered bilingually (i.e. websites, signage, etc.)	3
Bilingual business communication (i.e. emails, phone calls, etc.)	3
Bilingual staff	3
Improving staff language skills	1
Bilingual public and media relations	3
Other (Text response: Bi-lingual policies + articles of assoc. Gaelic book collection aimed at all ages & interests.	1
None of the above	1
Total	4

The following questions were asked of participants who were exposed to Scottish Gaelic:

Responses to question: I think about this language more positively than I did before entering this institution.

Answer	Responses
Strongly Agree	8 (44%)
Agree	2 (11%)
Neither agree nor disagree	6 (33%)
Disagree	1 (6%)
Strongly Disagree	1 (6%)
Total	18 (100%)

The following five questions asked participants to agree or disagree with a statement about Scottish Gaelic based on their perceptions when they entered the institution.

Responses to statement: This language is an asset when interacting with people socially.

Answer	Responses
Strongly Agree	7 (39%)
Agree	10 (55%)
Neither agree nor disagree	1 (6%)
Disagree	0 (0%)
Strongly Disagree	0 (0%)
Total	18 (100%)

Responses to question: This language is an asset for employment.

Answer	Responses
Strongly Agree	11 (61%)
Agree	3 (17%)
Neither agree nor disagree	4 (22%)
Disagree	0 (0%)
Strongly Disagree	0 (0%)
Total	18 (100%)

Responses to question: This language is as useful as English is.

Answer	Responses
Strongly Agree	4 (22%)
Agree	6 (33%)
Neither agree nor disagree	5 (28%)
Disagree	2 (11%)
Strongly Disagree	1 (6%)
Total	18 (100%)

Responses to question: I enjoy hearing this language spoken in my daily life.

Answer	Responses
Strongly Agree	14 (78%)
Agree	2 (11%)
Neither agree nor disagree	2 (11%)
Disagree	0 (0%)
Strongly Disagree	0 (0%)
Total	18 (100%)

Responses to question: I would like to improve my skills in this language.

Answer	Responses
Strongly Agree	13 (72%)
Agree	3 (17%)
Neither agree nor disagree	2 (11%)
Disagree	0 (0%)
Strongly Disagree	0 (0%)
Total	18 (100%)

The following five questions asked participants who were exposed to Scottish Gaelic to agree or disagree with a statement about Scottish Gaelic based on their perceptions *currently*.

Responses to question: This language is an asset when interacting with people socially.

Answer	Responses
Strongly Agree	8 (44%)
Agree	8 (44%)
Neither agree nor disagree	1 (6%)
Disagree	1 (6%)
Strongly Disagree	0 (0%)
Total	18 (100%)

Responses to question: This language is an asset for employment.

Answer	Responses
Strongly Agree	9 (50%)
Agree	6 (33%)
Neither agree nor disagree	2 (11%)
Disagree	1 (6%)
Strongly Disagree	0 (0%)
Total	18 (100%)

Responses to question: This language is as useful as English is.

Answer	Responses
Strongly Agree	5 (28%)
Agree	6 (33%)
Neither agree nor disagree	6 (33%)
Disagree	1 (6%)
Strongly Disagree	0 (0%)
Total	18 (100%)

Responses to question: I enjoy hearing this language spoken in my daily life.

Answer	Responses
Strongly Agree	15 (83%)
Agree	3 (17%)
Neither agree nor disagree	0 (0%)
Disagree	0 (0%)
Strongly Disagree	0 (0%)
Total	18 (100%)

Responses to question: I would like to improve my skills in this language.

Answer	Responses
Strongly Agree	12 (67%)
Agree	4 (22%)
Neither agree nor disagree	2 (11%)
Disagree	0 (0%)
Strongly Disagree	0 (0%)
Total	18 (100%)

The following questions were asked of participants who were exposed to Irish Gaelic.

Responses to question: I think about this language more positively than I did before entering this institution.

Answer	Responses
Strongly Agree	1 (33.33%)
Agree	1 (33.33%)
Neither agree nor disagree	1 (33.33%)
Disagree	0 (0%)
Strongly Disagree	0 (0%)
Total	3 (100%)

The following five questions asked participants to agree or disagree with a statement about Irish Gaelic based on their perceptions when they entered the institution.

Responses to statement: This language is an asset when interacting with people socially.

Answer	Responses
Strongly Agree	0 (0%)
Agree	1 (33%)
Neither agree nor disagree	0 (0%)
Disagree	2 (67%)
Strongly Disagree	0 (0%)
Total	3 (100%)

Responses to question: This language is an asset for employment.

Answer	Responses
Strongly Agree	0 (0%)
Agree	0 (0%)
Neither agree nor disagree	1 (33%)
Disagree	2 (67%)
Strongly Disagree	0 (0%)
Total	3 (100%)

Responses to question: This language is as useful as English is.

Answer	Responses
Strongly Agree	0 (0%)
Agree	0 (0%)
Neither agree nor disagree	1 (33%)
Disagree	2 (67%)
Strongly Disagree	0 (0%)
Total	3 (100%)

Responses to question: I enjoy hearing this language spoken in my daily life.

Answer	Responses
Strongly Agree	2 (67%)
Agree	0 (0%)
Neither agree nor disagree	1 (33%)
Disagree	0 (0%)
Strongly Disagree	0 (0%)
Total	3 (100%)

Responses to question: I would like to improve my skills in this language.

Answer	Responses
Strongly Agree	1 (33.33%)
Agree	0 (0%)
Neither agree nor disagree	1 (33.33%)
Disagree	1 (33.33%)
Strongly Disagree	0 (0%)
Total	3 (100%)

The following five questions asked participants who were exposed to Irish Gaelic to agree or disagree with a statement about Irish Gaelic based on their perceptions *currently*.

Responses to statement: This language is an asset when interacting with people socially.

Answer	Responses
Strongly Agree	1 (33.33%)
Agree	0 (0%)
Neither agree nor disagree	1 (33.33%)
Disagree	1 (33.33%)
Strongly Disagree	0 (0%)
Total	3 (100%)

Responses to question: This language is an asset for employment.

Answer	Responses
Strongly Agree	0 (0%)
Agree	0 (0%)
Neither agree nor disagree	1 (33.33%)
Disagree	1 (33.33%)
Strongly Disagree	1 (33.33%)
Total	3 (100%)

Responses to question: This language is as useful as English is.

Answer	Responses
Strongly Agree	0 (0%)
Agree	0 (0%)
Neither agree nor disagree	0 (0%)
Disagree	2 (67%)
Strongly Disagree	1 (33%)
Total	3 (100%)

Responses to question: I enjoy hearing this language spoken in my daily life.

Answer	Responses
Strongly Agree	2 (67%)
Agree	0 (0%)
Neither agree nor disagree	1 (33%)
Disagree	0 (0%)
Strongly Disagree	0 (0%)
Total	3 (100%)

Responses to question: I would like to improve my skills in this language.

Answer	Responses
Strongly Agree	1 (33.33%)
Agree	1 (33.33%)
Neither agree nor disagree	0 (0%)
Disagree	1 (33.33%)
Strongly Disagree	0 (0%)
Total	3 (100%)

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