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Declaration

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment on the programme leading to the award of the degree of Professional Master of Education, is entirely my own work and has not been taken from the work of others, save to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work. I further declare that this dissertation has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at this Institute and any other Institution or University. I agree that the Marino Institute of Education library may lend or copy the thesis, in hard or soft copy, upon request.

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Abstract
The purpose of the research is to ascertain fourth class students’ attitudes towards the Irish language in the context of an English-medium primary school. The researcher sought to evaluate students’ experience of the Irish language in their school environment, home environment and in the wider local community. Extensive research into the attitudes towards the Irish language have been conducted over the years in a variety of different contexts. These studies helped guide the researcher though this study and consideration was given to the relevant literature throughout. A qualitative framework with ethnographic elements was chosen for the purpose of this research. Twenty-two participants of the same fourth-class cohort were chosen to partake in the study. Using a reflective journal based of the programme Sceitimíní Gníomhachtáí Gaeilge agus Drámatochtá, written by Claire Dunne, the researcher was able to gather information about participants’ experience of Irish in their home environment, school environment and in the local wider community. The researcher analysed the data through thematic coding and the findings show that in line with findings from other national attitudes research, attitudes to learning Irish are distinct from attitudes to the language more generally. The majority of the participants currently hold a negative attitude towards learning the Irish language but despite this, are motivated to learn Irish because of its value as an ethnic symbol. However, some small signs of a more positive attitude towards the language were evident at the end of the research study. These findings were used by the researcher to make several recommendations for future practice and research in relation to the Irish curriculum, teaching methodologies, initial teacher education programs and the implementation of a Content and Language Integrated Learning approach.
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Chapter 1 Introduction

Research Aim

The aim of this research question is to investigate the attitudes of fourth-class students towards the Irish language and to learning it in the formal educational context. Irish is our country’s official language, yet a minority language. It is through the educational system that children have most contact with the language. Despite the fact students learn the language from junior infants all the way to sixth year in secondary school, students appear to have a strained relationship with the language. DES reports indicate that attitudes to Irish are significantly less positive than those for English or Mathematics (DES, 2013) and that a “significant cohort of children are not making appropriate progress in Irish.” (DES, 2018, p.49). Government policies have been introduced in order to promote the Irish language as a community language, and to promote it as a viable form of communication with the overall aim of promoting positive attitudes towards the language (Government of Ireland, 2010).

This piece of research seeks to study children’s attitudes towards the language by carrying out a qualitative study with ethnographic elements.

Research Question

The question at the heart of the research is:

- What are the attitudes of fourth-class students towards the Irish language in an English-medium primary school?

The research was also guided by the following sub questions:

- What are language attitudes and why are they important in language learning?
- What is a minority language and what are attitudes towards minority languages?
- What is the public’s attitude towards the Irish language?
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- What are primary school students’ experience of learning Irish?

**Personal Motivation**

The researcher grew up speaking English as their first language and learned Irish in English-medium schools from junior infants to sixth year. The researcher enjoyed learning the language in school but became passionate about learning the Irish language during the latter years of primary school when the researcher had a native Irish speaking teacher for fourth, fifth and sixth class. The researcher considers this era to be a pinnacle moment in their lifestyle, an era that sparked the researcher’s love for the language. Irish was the main language of instruction during those three years of the researcher’s school life and it was the researchers first experience of ever using the language as a primary form of communication. The researcher’s love for the language continued to grow when they attended third level and studied Irish to degree level. The researcher’s ability to speak Irish is one of their proudest achievements to date. During the research, the researcher hopes to gain a deeper understanding of the attitudes that pupils have towards the Irish language.

**Overview of Chapters**

The research consists of five chapters. The current chapter provides insight into the background and aims of the research. The second chapter considers the literature relevant to the study. The third chapter provides an outline of the research methodology employed in the study. In the fourth chapter, the researcher will present findings, analysis and discussion of those findings. Finally, chapter five is the conclusion where the researcher will provide a summary of the findings and provide some final recommendations.
Chapter 2 Literature Review

This study explores fourth-class students’ attitude towards the Irish language in an English-medium primary school. This literature review will pay reference to the following questions (1) what are language attitudes and why are they important in language learning? (2) what is a minority language and what are attitudes towards minority languages? (3) what is the public’s attitude towards the Irish Language? and (4) what are primary school students’ experiences of learning Irish?

What are Language Attitudes and why are they Important in Language Learning?

Sarnoff (1970) provides a concise explanation of the word attitude, describing it as a disposition to react favourably or unfavourably to a class of objects. Attitudes are important concepts when trying to understand individual and group behaviour and are of relevance when learning a language. Baker (1992) provides a simple analogy of attitudes explaining a positive attitude towards a healthy lifestyle, consisting of exercise and a balanced diet, will ultimately lead to a longer life. This analogy can be applied to languages. A positive attitude towards a language, will lead to more success in the language. Therefore, we can say that attitudes are very important factors that influence the use and preservation of a language. Attitudes are complex and involve cognitive and affective dimensions. The cognitive components detail the thoughts and beliefs held by individuals (Baker, 1992), whereas affective components of attitudes are conceptualised as a holistic evaluation asking individuals to offer their personal feelings towards the language (Peters & Slovic, 2007). In some instances, an individual may like one element of a language but have a strong hatred for another.
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Attitudes towards a language are important as they can be both a predisposing factor and an outcome for the learner (Baker & Jones, 1998). A positive attitude towards a language leads to proficiency in the language (predisposition) but also, a desired outcome of an individual may be to foster a positive attitude towards the language; “Attitudes are both an ingredient in language learning and also an important result” (Baker & Jones, 1998, p. 174).

There are many dimensions to language attitudes, an individual’s attitude towards language can be influenced by the target language audience, their culture or feelings of identification (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). Culture is seen as a critical influencer of language attitudes with Jabeen and Shah (2011) comparing attitudes and culture as “mutually dependent terms” (p. 605). As critical as attitudes are to the effective use and preservation of a language, attitudes can also have a detrimental effect on languages. If the attitudes held by society of a language are negative, this can lead to the death and eventual extinction of the language (Baker, 1992).

Some language attitudes can be difficult to change, however because language attitudes are learned, they can be prone to change (Dragoievic, 2017). Language attitudes may change in response to shifts in intergroup relations and government language policies, as well as more dynamically as a function of the social comparative context in which they are evoked (Dragoievic, 2017).

Language attitudes are not static and educational as well as personal experiences are important in developing, maintaining, and changing language attitudes. Language attitudes may change due to individual experiences. An example of this is the theory of ‘Mudas’.

Mudas is the linguistic term given to the specific language moments in the life cycle of a new speaker. Muda is a Catalan word that means change. Pujolar (2012) describes a linguistic Muda as being:

the specific biographical junctures where individuals enact significant changes in their linguistic repertoire. We use this neologism to express changes in language use that
are important for people's self-presentations in everyday life, but whose implications for ethnic ascription are open to negotiation and contestation. (p. 139)

Walsh and O’Rourke (2015) applied Mudas to an Irish context and identifies the following four Mudas as defining moments in the life cycle of non-native Irish speakers. These four moments changed their outlook and attitude of the language and inspired them to become proficient language users of the Irish language. The Mudas go as follows (1) Muda Scoile (2) Muda Gaeltachta (3) Muda Ollscoile (University Muda) and (4) Muda Teaghlaigh (Family Muda).

**What is a Minority Language and why are Attitudes towards Minority Languages important?**

Defining a minority language is complex. Thornberry et al., state a minority language as being:

languages that are traditionally used within a given territory of a state by nationals of that state who form a group numerically smaller than the rest of the state’s population and which is different from the official language(s) of that state. (2004, p. 141)

This definition can be viewed controversial as it only considers languages that were spoken before the foundation of the state to be a minority language. If we apply this theory to an Irish context and were to agree with this definition, Irish, Kant and Irish Sign Language would be considered the only minority languages in Ireland. However, we know this is not true as there are approximately 200 other languages present in the country (Dunne, 2020). These languages being predominately Polish, French, Lithuanian, Russian and Romanian, (O’Connor & Ciribuco, 2017). A more inclusive and rounded definition of a minority language is:
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‘languages traditionally used by part of the population of a state that are not dialects
of official languages of the state, languages of migrants or artificially created
languages” (Council of Europe, 2014)

There are many factors to consider when analysing the Irish language as a minority
language. Irish is one of almost 200 languages spoken in Ireland (Ó’ Laoire 2005) and is also
one of the three indigenous minority languages in Ireland along with Traveller Kant and Irish
Sign Language. Although the Irish language can be classified as a minority language in terms
of the number of people speaking the language, it cannot really be considered a minority
language due to language’s official status in Ireland (Ó’ Laoire 2005). As Irish is the
country’s first official language, it cannot be classified as a minority language under the
European Chart for Regional and Minority Languages (ECRML) (Dunne, 2020).

Traditionally it was considered that there are two types of language attitudes;
integrative and instrumental. Integrative attitudes are associated with an open or willing
perspective with respect to other ethnic groups in general and the target language group
specifically (Gardner, 1985). Sometimes, people make a conscious decision to use a minority
language in order to identify with that culture. These people are called ‘new speakers’. The
term ‘new speaker’ is a person who acquired a second language in any other context but the
home, such as bilingual education or as an adult, and who uses the language proficiently and
with fluency (Walsh & O’Rourke, 2015). In an Irish context, the concept of the new speaker
and Mudas may be more useful in describing contemporary attitudes to Irish. Instrumental
attitudes detail the learning of a second language for a specific useful purpose.

More recent research has highlighted many key factors that can impact on language
attitudes. According to Devitt et al., (2016), attitudes toward a language are strongly
influenced by achievement. This is particularly relevant in an Irish context as up until the
1970’s, bonus points for proficiency in Irish in Public service employment and promotion were rewarded to suitable candidates (Watson & Nic Ghiolla Phádraig, 2011). During this time, the agricultural sector was the country’s main source of employment, these strict language policies for civil service jobs meant that many people could not find work outside of the agricultural sector (O’Rourke, 2005). Therefore, the ability to speak Irish was seen as a way of succeeding in Irish society. Socio-economic factors play a critical role in how likely a language will prosper or diminish in a country (Darmody & Daly, 2015). The attitudes towards languages spoken in a country are likely to diminish if one language in particular is associated with the country’s economic and political power (Darmody & Daly, 2015).

Language policy and planning are examined as important influencers toward the attitude of a minority language. O’Rourke et al., (2012) state that policy and planning facilitate the acceptance of a language by society and are important in making attitudes more positive.

Research has also shown there is a critical age where attitudes to minority languages become more unfavourable. In the context of Welsh, attitudes towards the language appear to become less favourable during the early adolescent years, whilst attitudes towards the English language become more favourable (Price et al., 1983). Baker (1988) found that ages of 11 and 12 to be the primitive years when attitudes towards the language tend to sway negatively. Thomas et al., (2013) found that children felt they had sufficient opportunities to speak Welsh in school but felt “embarrassed” to speak it and opted to speak in English because it was “easier” (p.350). Reasons for a decline in positive connotations during the adolescent years can be traced to a shift in popular or group opinions that the minority language is old fashioned or embarrassing (Dunne, 2015).
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The Public’s Attitude Towards the Irish Language

There have been many studies undertaken over recent years in order to ascertain the public’s attitude towards the Irish language, and the attitudes of certain populations e.g. teachers and primary school children. Notable studies worth mentioning are those carried out by the Committee on Irish Language Attitudes Research (1975), Institiúid Teangeolaíochta Éireann (1984; 1994), Irish National Teachers’ Organisation (1985), Teaching and Learning Irish in Primary School (Harris & Murtagh, 1999), Irish in Primary School: Long-Term National Trends in Achievement (Harris et al., 2006) and data gleaned from the Growing Up in Ireland longitudinal study (Devitt et al., 2016).

The historic context of the language certainly plays a role in language attitudes held by Irish people today. The 19th century is perhaps one of the most critical centuries in the history of the Irish language. The 19th century brought a lot of change to Ireland in both social and educational contexts. Prior to the Great Famine, the English Government had used the education system to impose social control on the Irish people (Fernández-Suárez, 2006). Due to penal law legislation, most Irish people (Catholics and middle ranks) were prevented from enrolling in formal education (Raftery et al., 2007). As a way around this, Irish was taught on a confidential basis by very committed Irish language advocates, rather than in the formal education context. The national school system was established to support British assimilation policy for Ireland and according to many, the system “effectively erased the Irish language, history and culture from the curriculum” (Raftery et al., 2007, p. 451). The system fought tirelessly to eradicate the Irish language and placed a huge emphasis on promoting the English language. Anyone heard or seen to be using the Irish language was subject to extreme physical punishment, therefore a stigma of shame began to be associated with the language (Dunne, 2015).
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There is a distinction between attitudes towards Irish and towards learning Irish (Devitt et al., 2016). Studies show that over 65% of the Irish population are in favour of the Irish language (Lasagabaster & Huguet 2007). The language is commonly referred to as a critical element in the maintenance of Irish culture and Irish identity (Lasagabaster & Huguet, 2007). The idea of the Irish language as a symbolic ethnic identifier continues to be an important element towards the attitudes of Irish. However, attitudes towards learning the language are overwhelmingly different. Over two thirds of respondents in the language survey 1993 stated they resented having to learn Irish in schools. These respondents agreed that Irish should be taught in schools however disagreed with its compulsory status within the education system (Ó Riagáin & Ó Gliasáin, 1994) (Harris et al., 2006).

The school system continues to be the predominant method in which the Irish Government hopes to achieve a bilingual society (Murtagh, 2007). The government set out to change this custom in their 20-year strategy for the Irish language 2010-2030. One of the chief aims of the strategy is to increase on an incremental basis the use and knowledge of the Irish language as a community language. The strengthening position of the language as a living language, a language with functions and purpose in the home and outside of the home is at the core of the strategy (Government of Ireland, 2010)

“The future of the language depends on people who make a positive choice to embrace opportunities that this strategy will create” (Government of Ireland, 2010, p. 3).

It is hoped that if the strategy is implemented correctly that the Irish language will have a more social position in Ireland by promoting positive attitudes aimed at making people feel less self-conscious about speaking Irish in public and making it a routine form of communication. Government support, such as the 20-year strategy is necessary for a minority
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language such as Irish as this kind of support helps to promote the language and foster positive attitudes. Darmody et al., (2015) comments on results from The Irish Language survey 2013 which found over two-thirds of respondents in the Republic of Ireland (67 per cent) and almost half of respondents in Northern Ireland (45 per cent) indicate they feel positive about the Irish language (Darmody et al., 2015). These figures are in line with the results from previous national attitudes research such as CILAR 1975. Contributing to these positive attitudes are several key factors. O’Rourke (2005) identifies three key influencers in people’s attitudes towards the Irish language, these being gender, political identity and career path. Career path has been proved to have a strong influence on people’s attitudes towards Irish and many educational polices and other explicit language policies have affected people’s attitudes towards the language. In order to gain entry to all Irish universities, bar Trinity College Dublin, Irish is a necessity. At present, a competence of the Irish language is necessary to become a member of An Garda Síochana and to enter the primary school teaching profession (O’Rourke, 2005). A third of the sample measured in the 1993 survey were opposed to the policy of Irish being an entry requirement to third level education and to entering the teaching profession.

These policies have had very profound effects on the attitudes towards the Irish language (O’Rourke, 2005). The language went from being associated with low social classes and affiliated with little to no prestige, to being linked to people with status such as police officers, teachers and other government workers (O’Rourke, 2005). Murtagh (2007) highlights that motivation towards the Irish language is strongly linked to achievement and seeing as many people view having the ability to speak the Irish language as a way of achieving in Irish society, we can say that is a very true statement.

In Ireland the political dimension of attitudes to the Irish language is of significance. Ó Riagáin (2007) states that “attitudes are seen to reflect the positions individuals occupy in
social structures” p.369. In this study, attitudes towards the Irish language amongst Catholics and Protestants in norther Ireland are examined. The study yielded results proving that attitudes towards Irish correlate with social class and religious affiliation. In Northern Ireland, over 70% of Protestants see Irish as a “dead language” with 23.8% going as far as saying the language should be discarded (Ó Riagáin 2007). On the contrary, 74% of northern Irish Catholics disagreed with these views. Ó Riagáin (2007) proposed the following statement to the participants “To be Irish must you speak Irish”, only 4% of Protestants in Northern Ireland agreed with this statement and virtually zero Protestants in the republic agreed. Therefore, the Irish language is not a critical element of their ethnic identity. 90% of the Republic of Ireland population are Catholic and almost 50% regard the Irish language as an integral part of their identity with 70% wishing to see it continued in school. In contrast, Protestants in Northern Ireland identify themselves as British, and would be opposed to government intervention towards the promotion and use of the Irish language in Northern Ireland.

**Primary School Students’ Experience of Learning Irish**

Pupils are generally well disposed towards the Irish language and towards the idea of integrating with an Irish language group (Harris et al., 2006). However, students are less motivated to learn the language. Students tend to have a poor estimation of their own competence in the language compared to their self-concept of other subjects (Harris et al., 2006). A substantial minority of students also report being anxious about the thought of speaking Irish in class and believed they had no support from teachers or parents (Harris et al., 2006). DES inspectorate reports also provide an insight into primary school students’ experience with the Irish language. In the chief inspectorate report 2010-2012, Inspectors’ findings regarding Irish are significantly less positive than those for English or Mathematics (DES, 2013). The report highlighted that the quality of teaching was problematic in over one
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fifth of lessons observed. It also highlighted that the quality of students learning was less than satisfactory in a quarter of all lessons observed. The report noted how students’ quality of learning benefited from having teachers who adopted a well-planned, whole-school approach to fostering learning in Irish and that encouraged regular informal use of Irish throughout the school. In the Chief Inspector’s Report (2013-2016), the same issues are once again highlighted; there are more positive connotations associated with English and Mathematics. The number of unsatisfactory lessons rose by 4% which is a significant increase given the short time period between the two reports. The report even stated, “A significant cohort of children are not making appropriate progress in Irish.” (DES, 2018, p.49)

Harris and Murtagh (1999) embarked on a study called ‘Teaching and Learning Irish in Primary School: A Review of Research and Development’. The aim was to evaluate the teaching and learning of Irish, within their report they made several comments on students’ attitudes towards the language. Based on the data, it was discovered that there are two aspects related to students' attitudes towards the Irish language. The first aspect depends on how motivated the student is in learning the language, motivation has been described as the “determinant of achievement” (Harris & Murtagh, 1999, p. 68). The second aspect is the actual primary school system itself, with Harris and Murtagh (1999) stating that the system has many other functions than just teaching the language. The evoking of a love and awareness for the language are also huge parts of the system and this will influence the students’ attitudes towards the language. The study was conducted just before the introduction of the 1999 curriculum which was centred off a communicative approach. Key goals of the curriculum were to promote a positive attitude to learning Irish and to make the learning process itself more enjoyable and interesting. Games and tasks in which students must use Irish in a purposeful way featured heavily in the methodologies of the new curriculum. Activities incorporating social interactions were also a key feature (e.g. role-play,
sketches and drama) that aimed to make students’ experience with the language meaningful. Another influencer of attitude uncovered in the study was that there was a gender factor in the learning of Irish; with girls being more favourable to SAL languages, (Dunne, 2020). Achievement was also linked to general academic ability, smaller class sizes, school location and social class and to a lesser extent parental encouragement and use of Irish in the home (Dunne, 2020).

In the paper ‘An Maith leat an Ghaeilge’ by Devitt et al., (2016) a contemporary analysis of primary school students’ attitudes to the Irish language within the Republic of Ireland is examined. The study, which is based on a question in the Growing up in Ireland study, embarks on examining factors that may relate to the level of disengagement with Irish in school. Such factors examined were social, cultural, cognitive and organisational (Devitt et al., 2016). Surprising factors were yielded from the study, uncovering that disengagement with Irish is not linked to factors such as socio–economic background, ethnicity or teacher profile. The study found that students who are exposed to Irish at home outside of the school grounds are more likely to engage in and express more favourable attitudes towards the Irish language (Devitt et al., 2016). The factors identified as being influencers of attitudes towards the language were literacy activity, special educational needs and school patronage.

**Conclusion**

Minority languages are difficult to define. A language can be classed as a minority language due to the small pool of people speaking the language, because of the limited economic value associated with the language or even the lack of social prestige associated with the language. Irish is a unique minority language as it is the country’s first official language. The language isn’t technically a minority language; however, it can be viewed as one due to the small number of people speaking the language and historically due to the lack of social prestige associated with the language. Attitudes are a valuable tool when assessing
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individual and group behaviour and are of significant relevance when learning a language. There are many dimensions to minority language attitudes and attitudes towards minority languages are influenced by many factors such as the target language audience, culture, feelings of identification, socio-economic factors, historic factors and achievement. The attitudes towards the Irish language are generally positive with the Irish language acting as a major ethnic identifier. However, there is a stark contrast between the attitudes towards Irish and the attitudes towards learning Irish. There seems to be a sense of anxiety when it comes to using Irish in the local environment and the school environment. Governmental policies such as the 20-year strategy, and educational polices such as the introduction of the 1999 curriculum and more recently the new Primary Language Curriculum, are aimed at making people feel less self-conscious about speaking Irish in public and making it a routine form of communication.
Chapter 3 Methodology

This chapter of the research paper gives an overview of the aims of the study, the theoretical framework used, the participants involved, the stages of the research process, the research instrument used, and the ethical concerns addressed in the study. The aims of the study section outlines the premise of the study whilst the theoretical framework section outlines the theoretical basis of Ethnography and reflective journals. The participant section describes the steps involved in approaching the participants to partake in the study. The stages of the research section describe the order of events in the research process. Next, the aims of the reflective journal, the design of the reflective journal and the content of the reflective journal will be discussed in the research instrument section. Finally, the ethical concerns section deals with the precautions and concerns surrounding the reflective journal and the participants.

Aim of the Study

The main aim of this study was to explore fourth class students’ attitudes towards the Irish language in the context of an English-medium primary school. In particular this research aimed to examine students’ experiences of Irish in their daily lives through the completion of simple but meaningful daily language tasks, and to document their language journey in the form of a reflective journal over two weeks. The tasks in the reflective journal required the students to use the Irish language in different contexts - in school, at home and in the community, and through engaging in these tasks to reflect on the significance of the language for them personally.

Theoretical Framework

This section of the paper comments on the theoretical framework of the research which is a qualitative approach with ethnographic aspects. A qualitative approach was taken
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in order to allow students to reflect more deeply on their own experiences of the Irish language in their daily lives. The researcher felt that an ethnographic approach would give the participants the best chance to reflect on their experience of the language in different contexts. First an overview of qualitative research, and then ethnographic approaches, will be presented.

Subjectivity and the authenticity of human experience are at the core of qualitative research (Silverman, 2014) and the researcher felt these features would best suit the research. Qualitative research also allows for a thick rich description which is suitable for the study of language attitudes. Qualitative methods have been used in other studies exploring the attitudes to the Irish language. Harris et al., (2006) opted to conducted face to face reading, listening and speaking tests with the participants and carry out field work procedures in their study. These procedures were chosen as the researchers felt they provided the best opportunity to gather any relevant information that may help in the interpretation of the data and assisting in the planning of future surveys. Qualitative research methods were also employed by Harris and Murtagh (1999) in the study ‘Teaching and Learning Irish in Primary School: A Review of Research and Development’. Face to face interviews were conducted when administering the Irish speaking section of the Twenty-Class Study. Face to face interviews were also conducted as part of the parents’ questionnaire in the pupils’ attitude and motivation part of the study.

Ethnography is one of the principal forms of qualitative research and has a long-lasting tradition of being used in the social sciences as a form of research (Brewer, 2000). Etymologically, ethnography can be defined as writing about people or writing an account of the way of life of a particular people (Hammersley, 2015). The study of people in a certain setting or field are the foundations of ethnography as is capturing and recording social meanings and ordinary activities carried out by a group of people. Ethnography is a unique
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form of qualitative research as it involves the researcher actively participating in the research (Brewer, 2000). Ethnographic research requires the researcher to participate directly in the activities of the research in order to gather data. In the context of this study, the researcher actively participated in all research activities where it was possible to do so. Some of the activities took place in the classroom where the researcher could participate. However, others took place in the participants home therefore rendering it impossible for the researcher to partake in these activities. Poke et al., (2003) do not offer a direct definition of ethnography, instead, they state that an ethnographic study can be classified by having a certain criterion. They suggest the principal common characteristics of ethnography being:

1. A focus on a discrete location(s)
2. Concern of the full range of social behaviour within the location(s)
3. The use of different research methods which may combine both qualitative and quantitative approaches
4. An emphasis on data & analysis that moves to identifying concepts and theories
5. The complexities of the discrete location(s) are of greater importance than overarching generalisations

Ethnography, though not a common approach employed in the examination of attitudes to the Irish language was chosen for this study because the researcher wishes to focus on three discrete locations, seeing whether the experiences of Irish within the classroom differ from experiences in the home and the community. Ethnography takes into consideration that participants engagement with the task may depend on whether they are in school or at home. This is significant to the research in question and hence why the approach was chosen. The data collected from the journal moves to identifying the concept of do children’s attitudes or experiences of Irish in school vary from their experiences at home or in the community?
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Participants

Fourth class students were chosen for this research. Students of a similar age have been studied in other research e.g. Harris and Murtagh (1999) and Harris et al., (2006). By this age, students have experienced learning Irish in the formal school context for 6 years and so have basic communicative skills necessary to engage in the tasks. They can also read independently and could follow written instructions, and could record their viewpoints in written form. Research on attitudes to minority languages also shows that favourable attitudes decline in the teenage years (Garrett et al., 2003), and so this age group was chosen to see how positive attitudes could be nurtured. The participants of the study were also known personally to the researcher. The researcher had previously taught the class for a four-week period and therefore had a personal relationship with the class. The researcher felt having a personal connection with the participants would aid the overall research process. Consent forms were issued to the Principal and the Board of Management in order to gain permission to conduct the research in the school. Consent and assent forms were also issued to the guardians of the participants and the participants themselves. The participant and their guardians were made aware that involvement in the study was optional, and that they may withdraw themselves from the study at any given time.

Stages of the Research

The first stage of the research process took place in the form of an informal discussion between the researcher and the participants. This discussion centred on the attitudes and experiences of Irish in the daily life of the participants. The researcher then explained to the participants that they were to complete a two-week reflective journal, asking them to reflect and comment on their use if Irish in their day to day life. The researcher explained the format of the journal, what the symbols of the home, community and school represent, displayed a
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sample of tasks to the participants and explained to the students that the journal was in no means any form of assessment.

The next stage in the process of conducting research took place in the form of a mini pilot study. The mini pilot study took place in the participants’ classroom, in the presence of the researcher and the class teacher. Participants were given two tasks to complete. Though these tasks were not included in the actual reflective journal, they accurately mirrored the format and style of the activities in the reflective journal. The researcher ought to conduct a pilot study to “eliminate ambiguities or difficulties in wording” (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 341). Upon completion of the two activities, the researcher asked the participants for feedback encouraging them to convey any difficulties they encountered during the tasks.

The next stage was the distribution and completion the reflective journal. Participants completed a daily task and corresponding reflection. This process took place over two-week period. Participants were told not to spend more than twenty minutes on filling out the reflective journal every day and that priority should be given to schoolwork first. The task was discussed the next day in the form of a whole class discussion between the researcher and the participants. The final stage of the research process was the gathering and analysis of the journals by the researcher.

The Research Instrument

Aim of the Reflective Journal

A key aim of this research is to implement a research instrument that will effectively capture the essence of the research question, which is the attitudes of fourth-class students towards the Irish language. After considering a variety of data collection methods, the researcher decided to employ a reflective journal in order to answer the research question. The reasons for choosing the reflective journal are as follows. Diary and journal writing have
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long been used in academia but predominately in ethnographic research (Cook & Crang, 1995). Journal writing allows the participants to keep record of their day by day learning process, track how they came to certain understandings/misunderstandings. Their responses can also represent the doubts and fears the researcher has during the stages of the his/her work. Gleaves et al., (2007) state that diaries and journals have been used for years as an effective means of monitoring reflective capacity; the ability to think critically, write argumentatively and use inquiry-based skills. Consequently, we can conclude that journal writing, diary writing and other auto-ethnographic styles of writing can “enable critical self-reflection, engage students both intellectually and emotionally in their learning process, and by doing so help realize the higher order pedagogic goals of critical, deep and transformative learning” (Anderson, 2012, p.614)

Reflective journals offer students the chance to be at the centre of their own learning. McManus (2001) comments on the Learning Centre Paradigm, a model that situates the learner at the centre of their own experience, motivates them to assume responsibility of their own learning and encourages students to see themselves as active thinkers and problem solvers. Reflective journals offer students the chance to engage in this pedagogical paradigm. Students who are engaged in what they are learning tend to understand more, learn more, remember more and are more able to appreciate the relevance of what they have learnt (Park, 2003). One could say, that a major objective of the reflective journal is to ensure the students are not passive vessels in his or her learning.

**Design of the Reflective Journal**

A reflective journal can be defined as a type of writing assignment that requires the participant to think about something and record his/her disposition towards it (Park, 2003). Hedlund et al., (1989) state that journals fall between diary and a log that require regular
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entries by the participant focusing on or reflecting upon a given theme, topic or series of events. The researcher included ten activities in the reflective journal to be completed over the course of two weeks. The researcher created some of the activities in the journal. However, other activities were taken from the recently published programme *Sceitimíni Gníomhachtáí Gaeilge agus Drámaíochta*. The researcher had permission from the author of *Sceitimíni*, Claire Dunne, to use these activities in this research. The activities that were taken from the *Sceitimíni* programme are clearly referenced underneath each activity.

During the design phase of the reflective journal careful consideration was given by the researcher to ensure that the activities were easily understood and easy to answer for the participants (Bell, 2007). First, the questions are written in both Irish and English. The purpose for having the English translation of the questions is so that parents, or anyone else at home, can help the participants with the activity. Key visuals helped the participant to understand where each activity will take place as was done in *Sceitimíni* i.e. a picture of a couch for activities in the home, a picture of a school for in-school activities, and a picture of a gate for activities that are associated with the local community.

**Content of the Reflective Journal**

Table 1

*Activities used in the reflective journal*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity no.</th>
<th>Name of activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Irish around me at school. *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Irish around me at home. *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Irish around me in the community. *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Interview about place names in your local area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Nice words. *</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The reflective journal was comprised of 10 activities. Four of the activities are associated with language awareness, some are related to the use of ‘nice’ or ‘special’ words in Irish, whilst others relate to short and quick rhymes using Irish and interviews through Irish. A full list of activities is available in Appendix D.

The purpose of the language awareness activities was to draw attention to the Irish that the students encounter in their daily life. This purpose complements the aims of the government’s 20-year strategy for Irish that aims to strengthen the position of the language as a living language, a language with functions and purpose in the home and outside of the home (Government of Ireland, 2010). For the other activities, the purpose of these activities was to encourage the students to interact socially through Irish in a positive way with members of their family, neighbours etc. This aim complements the government’s aim of the 20-year strategy that hopes to increase the social position of Irish in Ireland by promoting positive attitudes aimed at making people feel less self-conscious about speaking Irish in public and making it a routine form of communication. (Government of Ireland, 2010). The aim also addresses some of the weaknesses reported in the teaching of Irish (DES, 2013; 2018).

*Taken directly from Sceilimíní Gnóimhachtaí Gaeilge agus Drámaíochta.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Special words *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Irish greetings *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Irish rhymes and songs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Interview with an adult at home*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Reflecting on the journal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ethical Concerns

All researchers have a responsibility to protect research participants from harm, but also to have regards for their rights (Murphy & Dingwall 2001). Beauchamp et al., (1982) outline the following four principles as the main bodies of thought for research that contain ethnographic elements:

1. Non-maleficence: that researchers should avoid harming participants.

2. Beneficence: that research on human subjects should produce some positive and identifiable benefit rather than simply be carried out for its own sake.

3. Autonomy or self-determination: that the values and decisions of research participants should be respected.

4. Justice: that people who are equal in relevant respects should be treated equally

The first two principles are commonly combined to argue that the research is ethical if the benefits or outcomes of the research outweigh its potential for harm (Murphy & Dingwall 2001). The researcher is confident that the outcomes of this research will not pose any threat to the participants and adheres to these two principles. The participants were guaranteed self-autonomy throughout all stages of the research. Participants were made aware that they may withdraw themselves from the study at any time and that their decisions would be respected by the researcher.

The issue of a fair dealing is an expression of the final principle justice. In ethnographic research, it is essential that all participants feel they are being treated equally and that the researcher is warned against a “deferential posture, privileging the perspective of the elite or powerful in the research setting and paying scant
every type of research has its own specific ethical considerations and ethnography is no different. participants may feel embarrassed about the opinion they hold or may be fearful that their opinions won’t match with the opinions upheld by the researcher. (kelman, 1982). in this study, participants may have felt embarrassed or even nervous of expressing their true feelings towards the irish language to the researcher. the researcher had taught the participants for a four-week period before conducting the research and therefore knew the participants personally. the researcher was aware that participants may be reluctant to share any negative feelings they had towards irish for fear of disappointing the researcher. the close relationship between the participants and the researcher in ethnography can allow for these types of issues to arise, however the researcher assured the participants that everyone’s different opinions and values would be respected during the research. appropriate measures were put in place by the researcher to ensure full confidentiality and anonymity for participants. these are two important elements in research as ”the notion of confidentiality is underpinned by the principle of respect for autonomy and is taken to mean that identifiable information about individuals collected during the process of research will not be disclosed without permission” (wiles et al., 2008, p.417). participants of the study were guaranteed that they could not be identified by their name, school or location and were fully aware of the purpose of the class discussions and reflections for this study.
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Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter has discussed the methodological framework underpinning the research which is a qualitative approach with ethnographic elements. An ethnographic approach was chosen for the research as the researcher felt it offered the participants the best chance of reflecting on their language experiences in different contexts. This method of research is suitable for the study of language attitudes as it allows for rich and original responses from the participants, two elements which are critical in the study of language attitudes.
Chapter 4 Findings

This chapter presents the findings of the data collected using a qualitative approach with ethnographic elements. The reflective journal offered participants a chance to comment and reflect upon the use of Irish in their daily lives, in their home environment, local environment and school environment. The process of coding the research data and identifying key themes will first be discussed. The attitudes of the participants and the origins of these attitudes will also be examined. Comparisons will also be made between the children’s attitudes of Irish to the public’s attitudes towards Irish. Next, consideration will also be given to children’s experiences of learning Irish. Finally, the researcher will compare the findings with the finding of other minority language studies.

How the Data was Coded and Key Themes that Emerged

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Representative quotes.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irish is a boring subject.</td>
<td>“Irish is my least favourite subject, it’s boring all we do is learn words from our book”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is little value to learning Irish.</td>
<td>“Irish is pointless because everyone in Ireland speaks English”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish is difficult to learn.</td>
<td>“Irish is hard because I never know what the teacher is asking me to do and I don’t have enough Irish to ask my teacher a question in class”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish is seen as a way of achieving in school.</td>
<td>“I try to speak in Irish as much as I can because my teacher gives dojo points to anyone who speaks Irish throughout the day”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An affection towards Irish as a language but not a subject</td>
<td>“I understand why we have to learn Irish because it is our country’s language, but I still don’t like learning it”.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Experiences of Irish outside of the school environment are virtually non-existent.

“I only speak Irish in school because no one in my family can speak Irish.”

Thematic analysis was conducted following Braun and Clarke’s (2006) approach. This approach is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns in the data. First the descriptions that children gave of their experiences in learning Irish were read and analysed. Key themes emerged from the data by analysing the choice of vocabulary the participants used when reflecting on their daily activities. Words such as ‘fun’, ‘interesting’, ‘enjoyable’, ‘boring’, ‘useless’ and ‘difficult’ gave the researcher an insight to the children’s attitudes towards the language. These words act as ‘codes’ and combine to form overarching themes. In examining the children’s contributions to class discussions, attention was paid to key features of their reported language learning experiences. The findings of the thematic analysis and class discussions indicate that the vast majority of the participants are negatively disposed to the Irish language. The key themes that emerged from the data are presented in table 1 above with representative quotes. The themes are;

1. Irish is a boring subject
2. There is little value to learning Irish
3. Irish is difficult to learn
4. Irish is seen as a way of succeeding in school
5. An affection towards Irish as a language but not a subject
6. Experiences of Irish outside of the school environment are virtually non-existent

Some of these themes were interrelated. A correlation between themes 1, 2 and 3 where observed by the researcher. When participants were asked the question ‘What do you
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think of Irish as a subject’ the majority of participants confessed they found the subject to be ‘boring’ and ‘pointless’ with an almost unanimous vote that the subject is ‘difficult’.

Children Report Similar Attitudes to the Irish Language as the General Public

Data from participants in this study can also be situated within national data on the public’s attitude to Irish. School children have more exposure to the Irish language compared to the public. The findings of this study yielded that the attitudes of the participants mirror the attitudes held by the public towards the language. Despite the vast majority of the participants expressing a negative attitude towards learning Irish during class discussions and reflections, there was a unanimous agreement amongst the participants that there is a place and need for Irish as our national language (CILAR, 1975; ITÉ, 1984, 1994). Participant 1 remarked “I don’t like learning Irish in school but I know it’s important for us to be able to speak Irish because it’s our own language” whilst participant 2 said “Irish was the only language spoke hundreds of years ago so it’s important that we learn how to speak it to honour the people form our past”. This mirrors the findings of Devitt et al., (2016) that state there is a distinction between attitudes towards Irish and towards learning Irish. It also mirrors the findings of the TCS that where it was concluded that children’s attitude towards the language were positive however their level of commitment to learning the language was low. More than half (52.5%) of the respondents stated they did not enjoy learning Irish but were motivated to do so due the importance of the language (Harris & Murtagh, 1999).

During class discussions, participants expressed their views on the compulsory nature of Irish as a subject. This view was significant as all subjects in primary school are compulsory. The fact that Irish is singled out as a compulsory subject is revealing of deeper negative attitudes. As previously mentioned, participants remarked they did not resent having
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to learn Irish in school, however some said they did resent the amount of Irish they had to
learn during their schooling life. Participants stated they wished they had a choice as to how
much Irish they want to learn in school. Students expressed their desire to only learn ‘the
basics of Irish’ as they ‘don’t need to know the words for a lot of things because everyone in
Ireland speaks English’. One participant further commented saying the only reason one
would have to learn Irish in a detailed sense would be “anyone who wants to become a
teacher” P3, making the connection that only teachers need to be able to speak Irish fluently.
These findings complement the findings of the language survey 1993 in which over three
quarter (76%) of the participants were in support of Irish being an obligatory subject but were
opposed to the amount of emphasis placed on the language within the education system.

Findings of other minority language studies mirror the attitudes reported in this study.
Children’s main desire to learn the Irish language stems from the language’s affiliation as an
emblem of Irish nationality. Experiences of Irish in the home and the opinion that speaking
Irish will result in personal gain are also influencers of children’s decision to learn Irish. In
the Welsh context, these findings are strikingly similar. Thomas et al., noted children learning
wanting to learn Welsh for practical and cultural reasons (2013). The research also uncovered
children display more favourable views towards English (2013, p.347). These findings are
consistent with the findings of DES inspectorate reports in which students’ views on Irish
were “significantly less positive” than those for English or Mathematics (DES, 2013).
Learning Welsh for instrumental and integrative reasons, such as cultural reasons and
practical reasons such as career securing and progression, were also reported by Lyon and
Ellis (1991). These findings are very similar to the findings of Darmody et al., (2015) and
O’Rourke (2005) who stated motivation to learn Irish was associated with the securing of
important jobs such as teachers, Gardaí and to become a civil servant.
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Children Report Negative Attitudes Towards the Teaching and Learning of Irish

Reported attitudes of children in this study can be compared to the attitudes reported by children of a similar age in the Harris and Murtagh (1999) and Harris et al., (2006) study. Like the findings of Harris et al., (2006) the findings indicate that the participants are generally well disposed towards Irish as a language, but view Irish through a negative lens when faced with learning Irish as a subject. When asked ‘What do you think of Irish as a subject’ the majority confessed they found the subject to be ‘boring’ and ‘pointless’ with an almost unanimous vote that the subject is ‘difficult’. These results are consistent with the finding of the Twenty Class Study in which 41% of the participants agreeing with the statement “I think Irish is boring” (Harris & Murtagh, 1999, p.107). A very small number of participants viewed Irish as being ‘fun’ ‘enjoyable’ and ‘different’ from all the other subjects they learn. These participants remarked that Irish is fun when ‘we play games like bingo and cluiche kim, but we don’t play these games very often’ whilst others noted that they enjoy Irish most ‘when we do role plays and have to act out scenes from our book’. These findings mirror DES findings stating that children play lots of games, however there is not necessarily a linguistic focus (DES, 2007). These remarks also complement the findings of the Twenty Class Study which found that over a quarter (25.7%) of the respondents enjoyed participating in conversations, drama, songs and poems in their Irish lessons (Harris & Murtagh, 1999).

Achievement was seen to be a force influencing the participants attitudes towards Irish. During the discussion, students stated they found the subject difficult due to their ability, or lack thereof, to understand what is being asked of them to and their inability to speak the language back to their teacher. “Irish is hard because I never know what the teacher is asking me to do and I don’t have enough Irish to ask my teacher questions in class” P4. Participants reported their lack of achievement in the language, makes them view the learning of the language in a negative light. These findings go hand in hand with the findings of Harris
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and Murtagh (1999) that stated over half of the participants in their study felt anxious or embarrassed about their ability to speak and understand Irish leading them to view the language negatively. It is interesting to note that one participant stated that they felt motivated to learn Irish in order to please the teacher because their teacher offered rewards for students making the best effort to speak Irish. Participant 5 stated “I try to speak in Irish as much as I can because my teacher gives dojo points to anyone who speaks Irish throughout the day”. This finding complements the findings of Murtagh (2007) and Devitt et al., (2016), who state that motivation to learn Irish is strongly associated with instrumental purposes. This finding also compliments the finding of Walsh and O’Rourke (2015) who state that new speakers are motivated to learn Irish to be associated with proficient Irish speakers and to not feel embarrassed around them.

Attitudes towards Irish were seen to be influenced by the participants’ experience of Irish in their home environment. Participants that stated they enjoyed Irish had some exposure to the language in their home environment. In total, four students expressed positive attitudes towards the language during the class discussion. Three of these participants parents worked as teachers and receive a lot of help at home with their Irish homework and are encouraged to speak the language as much as possible. Participant 6 stated “My mom is an Irish teacher in a secondary school and would always help me with my Irish homework and reads stories to me and my siblings in Irish”. The fourth participant stated they had relatives who live in a Gaeltacht area and has received encouragement at home to learn the language for when they visit their family in the Gaeltacht, “My granny and grandad live in the Gaeltacht in Kerry and when I was younger my mom spoke a lot of Irish to me so that I could speak to my grandparents in their language” P7. The remainder of the participants stated they receive very little help or guidance regarding Irish at home due to their parent’s inability to speak and understand the language, “Both of my parents don’t have a word of Irish so I can
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never ask them for help if I get stuck on question. I have to text a friend for help or else just leave it blank until the teacher corrects the homework the next day” P8. These findings agree with the literature, with Harris and Murtagh (1999) stating that children whose parents use some Irish at home will foster a positive attitude towards the language. Similarly, Hickey and Stenson (2016) considered children’s negative attitudes towards the language to be linked with the lack of support children receive in the home with Irish homework. In their survey, 77% of the participants stated they received no help with Irish due to their parents not having much knowledge of the language. The fact that the four participants who stated they enjoyed Irish were firstly, exposed to Irish in their home environment and secondly, received additional support with the language assert the ideology that children who have parents who promote Irish as a valid form of communication will have a positive attitude towards the language (Harris & Murtagh, 1999).

Children’s Attitudes can Change Provided they are Exposed to Engaging Methodologies

Language attitudes research shows that language attitudes are relatively stable. Over the course of the two-week period, the researcher did notice a slight change in attitudes towards the Irish language. The researcher was aware that it would be very difficult to change, in the long term, any attitudes held by participants towards the language given the short-time frame of the study. The participants engaged extremely well with the activities of the journal, offered very detailed responses in their reflections and had a lot to offer during the class discussions. As the research process progressed, the researcher did notice subtle changes in the participants responses. An increase in the use of positive adjectives such as ‘fun’ and ‘enjoyable’ were noticed by the researcher as the research process progressed. The choice of these adjectives employed by the participants in describing their experiences of the activities such would indicate a positive outlook towards the research which would hopefully
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translate into a positive attitude towards the Irish language. However, extensive research would have to be conducted in order to evaluate if the participant attitudes have been changed for the long term.

Children Report the Irish Language to be more Meaningful when they can Use and Explore the Language Outside of the Classroom

Engagement levels with the journal were extremely positive and participants seemed to enjoy partaking in the research. The overall aim of the research instrument was to increase the participants awareness of the Irish language, in their school environment, home environment and in the community. In line with the government’s 20-year strategy for the Irish language, which aims at promoting and increasing the use of Irish as a community language (Government of Ireland, 2010), the aim of the activities was to promote the Irish language, show the participants that the language is actively used in the world around them and that the language has a purpose. When asked to reflect on the first language awareness activity, which was to identify signs in Irish in their school, participants commented that they had ‘never even noticed these signs were in the school’ whilst another commented “I always thought the signs were written in Irish for the teachers to read but they are a really good way for us to learn words in Irish because we pass these signs everyday’” P9. When asked to reflect on the activity ‘place names’ participants stated they were ‘amazed’ when they researched the direct English translation of the place names in their local area such. The purpose of this activity was for the participants to understand that Irish place names more often or not can tell us information about the area. One participant commented in their reflection that “I’m always going to look up the direct translation of the Irish place name so that I’ll know why the area was called what it is” P10. This reflection captured the essence of this research perfectly. Increasing the children’s awareness of the Irish language in their everyday environment and making the connection that the language has a purpose today. This
increased awareness will hopefully encourage children to foster a positive attitude towards Irish as according to Devitt et al., (2016) students who are exposed to Irish at home outside of the school grounds are more likely to engage in and express more favourable attitudes towards the Irish language.

**Summary**

In this chapter the researcher discussed the findings of the reflective journal. The researcher discussed how they decided to code the data of the journals and analysed certain words such as ‘fun’ or ‘boring’ and how these words could help describe the attitudes held by the children. The researcher was guided by the research question throughout the rest of the chapter. Children’s attitudes towards Irish and where these attitudes stem from were discussed. Next, the researcher made a comparison between the children’s attitude of Irish compared to the attitudes of the General Public. Finally, consideration was given to the children’s experience of learning Irish.
Chapter 5 Conclusion and Recommendations

Research Question

The research question at the centre of this work is:

- What are the attitudes of fourth-class students towards the Irish language in an English medium primary school?

The researcher examined the participants’ experience of Irish in their school life, home life and their experience of Irish in the local community in attempt to ascertain their attitudes towards the language. The researcher examined the children’s attitudes and where these attitudes stem from. The researcher then compared the children’s attitudes towards Irish to the general public’s attitudes towards Irish. Finally, the researcher considered the children’s experiences of learning Irish.

Summary of Findings

The children in this study were very similar to participants in other key studies, such as Harris and Murtagh (1999) and Harris et al., (2006). A substantial amount of the participants in the study have negative attitudes towards learning Irish language as a school subject. Out of the twenty-two participants, only four participants expressed positive dispositions towards classroom experiences of Irish. The research instruments allowed participants to offer in depth and rich responses whilst stimulating opportunities for self-reflection. These elements are extremely effective in measuring language attitudes. The researcher has arrived at many conclusions based on the analysis of the data.

Attitudes to learning Irish are distinct from attitudes to the language generally. The attitudes towards the Irish language are generally positive with the Irish language acting as a
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major ethnic identifier. In general, children in this study report negative attitudes to learning Irish, as has been shown in other studies. Key themes that derived from the analysis of the data were: Irish is a boring subject, there is little value to learning Irish, Irish is difficult to learn, Irish is seen as a way of succeeding in school, an affection towards Irish as a language but not a subject exists and experiences of Irish outside of the school environment are virtually non-existent. A correlation between some of the themes was observed. Students who reported that learning Irish was ‘boring’ were also likely to believe it was ‘difficult’ These views were also linked to limited enjoyment in learning Irish. Despite these negative opinions, there was a unanimous agreement amongst the participants that there is a place and need for Irish as our national language. Like the findings of Harris et al., (2006) the findings indicate that the participants are generally well disposed towards Irish as a language, but view Irish through a negative lens when faced with learning Irish as a subject. A lack of achievement was another factor that lead the participants to view the learning of the language in a negative light.

Positive attitudes towards the language were, however, associated with games requiring the use of the Irish language. A small minority of participants viewed Irish as being ‘fun’ ‘enjoyable’ and ‘different’ from all the other subjects they learn. These participants remarked they enjoyed participating in Irish games and role plays requiring them to speak the language. Participants expressed a desire for Irish games and role plays to occur more often during Irish lessons stating that these activities do not occur “very often”. The DES (2007) states that although students enjoy engaging in these games, they learn very little from them as they are rarely associated with the specific language input therefore proving no real benefit to the students. These games may provide short term positive connotations towards the language but in the long run they add to the cycle of students viewing the learning of the language through a negative lens due to their lack of achievement in the language. Positive
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Attitudes were also associated with the participants’ experience of Irish in their home environment. Participants that stated they enjoyed Irish had some exposure to the language in their home environment.

Attitudes to a minority language are critical for language maintenance and revival. Despite all subjects being compulsory in Primary school, participants singled Irish out as a subject that they “have to learn”. This would indicate a deep negative attitude towards the language. Therefore, it is critical that the Government, the Department of Education and the people of Ireland take action in order to change this deep-rooted attitude that our primary school students are reporting. It was shown that some attitudes could become more positive through the implementation of an intervention such as the language awareness activities in Sceittimíní and others that related to the participants conducting interviews in Irish with people in their home environment, saying short poems and rhymes in Irish, using different Irish greetings and learning their favourite English words in Irish.

Recommendations

The researcher has made several recommendations based on the findings of the research.

- The researcher is of the opinion that attitudes towards learning Irish should be regularly tracked and children should be given opportunities to reflect on their attitudes. Seeing as the education system is the first point of contact that most people have with the Irish language, the Government and the Department of Education need to consider the voice and viewpoint of the child. Research has shown students enjoy the poems, songs, games and role plays of Irish lessons, yet these activities are not reported to be a regular or constant feature of an Irish lesson. Research also shows that students recognise the importance of Irish being taught in schools form both a cultural and practical point of view. The researcher recommends teaching
methodologies should change in order to mirror these attitudes held by students. This recommendation complements the recommendations of the DES that state teaching methodologies should place emphasis on creating situations where pupils would create language themselves through the medium of drama. (DES, 2007; 2015). The researcher also calls for teaching methodologies to be altered in order to provide more pair work opportunities for students. The DES also calls for more collaborative learning opportunities be created for students during Irish lessons. The DES (2007) found that collaborative opportunities for students were “very limited”. This is concerning as communication skills are critical to effective language learning (DES 2018).

- It is a decade since the Government published their 20 Year Strategy for Irish. The plan is halfway through its life span and extensive research should be conducted in order to ascertain whether the strategy has had any effect on the attitudes held by school students towards the Irish language. The plan aims at increasing the amount of families and local communities speaking Irish, however the education system continues to be the main place where Irish is spoken. More opportunities need to be created outside of the school environment if the Government wants the attitudes towards the language to change. Participants in this study enjoyed engaging in activities that required them to use Irish in their home environment and local environment. Perhaps curriculum changes could be made to incorporate activities such as projects or fieldwork that require students to use Irish outside of the school environment. Opportunities also exist for organisations such as the GAA and Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann to be involved in the promotion of Irish amongst the school going population outside of the school environment.
• Department of Education reports indicate a significant cohort of students are not making satisfactory progress in Irish, and that the quality of teaching was problematic in over one fifth of lessons observed (DES, 2013). It is recommended that extra supports be put in place for current and future primary school teachers in relation to their ability and proficiency in teaching the language. Initial teacher training colleges should provide greater scope in ensuring trainee teachers are fluent and competent in the Irish language before entering the profession. The researcher also recommends creative teaching methodologies targeting key areas of weakness in the teaching of Irish be implemented. Such weaknesses include limited opportunities for pair work (DES, 2013;2018) and very little chances for students to use newly acquired vocabulary in correct contexts (Harris et al., 2006). The researcher recommends that teaching methodologies should change in order to address these issues. The researcher commends the methodologies of the programme Sceitimíní: Gníomhaíochtaí spraíúla
Gaeilge agus drámaíochta that provides students opportunities to speak Irish accurately, with their peers in relevant and appropriate contexts. Similar opportunities, like the ones in this programme, should be provided for students.

• The researcher recommends all English medium primary schools to implement a ‘Content and Language Integrated Learning’ approach. The researcher recommends that the teaching of a select number of subjects such as Music, PE and Art to be delivered through the medium of Irish with the hope of promoting a positive attitude towards the language. The concept of teaching content through a language that is not the main language of instruction in the setting is an idea supported by the Minister of Education Joe McHugh. The Minister stated “We have a duty and responsibility to try
FOURTH CLASS STUDENTS’ ATTITUDES TOWARDS IRISH

and make Irish relevant to the next generation. Seeing young people socialising and playing and having fun in a language is as good a test as there is of how vibrant and alive a language is. Through actions like this we can support our young people to connect with our language and own it” (DES, 2019). CLIL is currently in phase one of two phases with 22 starter schools piloting the initiative. The researcher recommends all schools to adopt the approach once the relevant research and findings have been conducted by the Department of Education.

**Conclusion**

To conclude, attitudes towards minority languages are of critical importance, they help experts to gauge the health of the language and are critical for language maintenance and revival. Indeed O’Rourke (2011) and Baker (1992) argue that attitudes are a better guide for the future ‘prosperity’ of the language than current behaviour and that language attitudes can help explain and predict language behaviour. Positive attitudes towards the Irish language can be encouraged by creating meaningful opportunities to use the language outside of the school environment. Positive attitudes can also be achieved through creative teaching methodologies. This is necessary in the case of Irish because children report it to be “boring” and “difficult”. It is unfortunate that a negative attitude towards the teaching and learning of the Irish language is mainstream. However, the researcher sees the positive side of the coin. Teaching and learning methodologies are always evolving, and in time, the key ingredient in swaying students’ negative attitudes to positive attitudes towards the Irish language will be found. We are lucky that our school students are aware of the language’s importance from a cultural standpoint, for this would be something very difficult to instil within our students. It is this awareness that continues to motivate students to learn the language in school. There is a need for further research in this area in order to identify additional ways in which we can motivate our students to learn the Irish language.
FOURTH CLASS STUDENTS’ ATTITUDES TOWARDS IRISH

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FOURTH CLASS STUDENTS’ ATTITUDES TOWARDS IRISH

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FOURTH CLASS STUDENTS’ ATTITUDES TOWARDS IRISH


FOURTH CLASS STUDENTS’ ATTITUDES TOWARDS IRISH


FOURTH CLASS STUDENTS’ ATTITUDES TOWARDS IRISH


FOURTH CLASS STUDENTS’ ATTITUDES TOWARDS IRISH


FOURTH CLASS STUDENTS’ ATTITUDES TOWARDS IRISH


Fourth Class Students’ Attitudes Towards Irish

Appendix A

Board of Management,
X School.

Dear Chairperson and Board of Management,

My name is Luke O’Halloran and I am currently engaged in my final year of the Professional Master of Education in Marino Institute of Education. I am presently undertaking a 10-week placement in X School. As part of my masters I am required to write a research thesis. The focus of my research thesis is “The attitudes of fourth-class students towards the Irish language”. I am writing to you in the hope of securing permission to use the 4th classes in your school as the sample for my research.

In order to gather my research, I will be asking the students of 4th class to complete a language journal. Over a two-week period, I will set simple and meaningful tasks that require the use of the Irish language. The tasks will be based off the newly published Irish language programme Sceitimí: Gníomhaíochtaí spráíúla Gaeilge agus drámaíochta, written by Claire Dunne. An example of tasks involved may require the students to have a simple conversation with people in the home, look at signs in Irish in the community or look for Irish signs in their school. All the tasks will be written in Irish and English, so that the parents may help. A copy of the tasks will be given to the class teacher and the principal. These tasks will take 10 minutes per evening and should not impinge too much on the usual time allocated to homework in Irish.

While collecting my data, I will adhere to utmost confidentiality. Participants will be guaranteed that their responses and contributions to the study will be completely confidential, no response will be attributed to an individual. Participants will be given a pseudonym throughout the research and there will be nothing that can identify them in the research paper. All data will be stored in a safe and secure location and I will be the only person who has access to this location and information. I have no intentions of presenting these findings at a conference, nor do I intend on publishing the findings in any form. The data will be destroyed after three years. However, findings from the research may be shared with other teachers and researchers via educational conferences but the school and children will not be identifiable.

I would be most grateful for your permission to use your fourth-class students for the purpose of my research. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at the e-mail address and phone number below.

Le gach dea-ghuí,

Email: XXX
Phone: XXX
FOURTH CLASS STUDENTS’ ATTITUDES TOWARDS IRISH

Research: The attitudes of fourth-class students towards the Irish language

Consent Form

We have read about the study on “The attitudes of fourth-class students towards the Irish language” and we understand what is involved. We give consent to students of fourth class in our school to take part in the research study.

Signed: _________________________________

Chairperson of Board of Management

Date: ___________________
Appendix B

A Thuismitheoir, a chara,

My name is Luke O'Halloran and I am currently engaged in my final year of the Professional Master of Education in Marino Institute of Education. I am presently undertaking a 10-week placement in X School. As part of my masters I am required to write a research thesis. The focus of my research thesis is “The attitudes of fourth-class students towards the Irish language”. I am writing to ask your permission for your child to take part in the study which will require your child to complete a learning journal over a two-week period.

In order to gather my research, I will be asking the students of 4th class to complete a language journal. Over a two-week period, I will set simple and meaningful tasks that require the use of the Irish language. The tasks will be based off the newly published Irish language programme Sceitimini: Gníomaíochtaí spraiúla Gaeilge agus drámaíochta, written by Claire Dunne. An example of tasks involved may require the students to have a simple conversation with people in the home, look at signs in Irish in the community or look for Irish signs in their school. All the tasks will be written in Irish and English, so that parents may help. A copy of the tasks will be given to the class teacher and the principal. These tasks will take no more than 10 minutes per evening and should not impinge too much on the usual time allocated to homework in Irish.

While collecting my data, I will adhere to utmost confidentiality. Participants will be guaranteed that their responses and contributions to the study will be completely confidential, no response will be attributed to an individual. Participants will be given a pseudonym throughout the research and there will be nothing that can identify them in the research paper. All data will be stored in a safe and secure location and I will be the only person who has access to this location and information. I have no intentions of presenting these findings at a conference, nor do I intend on publishing the findings in any form. The data will be destroyed after three years. However, findings from the research may be shared with other teachers and researchers via educational conferences but the school and children will not be identifiable.

All children will be given the choice whether to or not to participate in the study. It is entirely up to you whether to agree to allow your child to take part in the study. You and your child have the right to withdraw from the research at any time.

If you are willing to let your child take part in the study, please complete and sign the attached consent form and return it to your child’s class teacher. Your co-operation in this research is highly valued and greatly appreciated. If you have any queries, please feel free to contact me at the e-mail address below.

Le gach dea-ghuí,


Email: XXX
Consent Form (Parents)
I have read about the study “The attitudes of fourth-class students towards the Irish language”. I understand what is involved.

I am willing to give permission for my child to take part in the study.
Yes ______  No ______

Name of Child (print name): _____________________________

Parent (print name): _____________________________________

Signed: _____________________________  Date:  _____________________

Assent Form (Students)

Cuir “X” in aice leis an abairt cheart.

Tá mé sásta a bheith sa staidéar ☺ ______

Nil mé sásta a bheith sa staidéar ☹ ______

Ainm: _____________________________

Dáta: _____________________________
Appendix C

A Phríomhoide, a chara,

My name is Luke O’Halloran and I am currently engaged in my final year of the Professional Master of Education in Marino Institute of Education. As you are aware, I am presently undertaking a 10-week placement in your school. As part of my masters I am required to write a research thesis. The focus of my research thesis is “The attitudes of fourth-class students towards the Irish language”. I am writing to you in the hope of securing permission to use the 4th classes in your school as the sample for my research.

In order to gather my research, I will be asking the students of 4th class to complete a language journal. Over a two-week period, I will set simple and meaningful tasks that require the use of the Irish language. The tasks will be based off the newly published Irish language programme. Sceitimini: Gníomaíochtaí spraiúla Gaeilge agus drámaíochta, written by Claire Dunne. An example of tasks involved may require the students to have a simple conversation with people in the home, look at signs in Irish in the community or look for Irish signs in their school. All the tasks will be written in Irish and English, so that the parents may help. A copy of the tasks will be given to the class teacher and yourself. These tasks will take 10 minutes per evening and should not impinge too much on the usual time allocated to homework in Irish.

While collecting my data, I will adhere to utmost confidentiality. Participants will be guaranteed that their responses and contributions to the study will be completely confidential, no response will be attributed to an individual. Participants will be given a pseudonym throughout the research and there will be nothing that can identify them in the research paper. All data will be stored in a safe and secure location and I will be the only person who has access to this location and information. I have no intentions of presenting these findings at a conference, nor do I intend on publishing the findings in any form. The data will be destroyed after three years. However, findings from the research may be shared with other teachers and researchers via educational conferences but the school and children will not be identifiable.

I would be most grateful for your permission to use your fourth-class students for the purpose of my research.

Má tá aon cheist agat, ná bóidh dрогaill ar bith ort teagmháil a dhéanamh liom ag an seoladh ríomhphoist nó an uimhir thiosluithe

Le gach dea-ghuí,

Email: XXX
Phone: XXX
Appendix D

Mo dhialann

M’ainm ________________________

Mo rang ________________________

Tá gníomháíochtaí leis an tsiombail seo le déanamh sa scoil.

Activities with this symbol are to be done in school.

Tá gníomháíochtaí leis an tsiombail seo le déanamh sa bhaile.

Activities with this symbol are to be done at home.

Baineann gníomháíochtaí leis an tsiombail seo leis an saol sa phobal áitiúil.

Activities with this symbol are associated with life in the local area.
FOURTH CLASS STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS IRISH

Gníomhacht 1.

An Ghaeilge Mórtimpeall Orm sa scoil.
Irish around me in school.

- Bí ag faire amach d’aoi fhógra Gaeilge a fheiceann tú gach lá ar scoil. Déan an liosta de na fógraí Gaeilge.

- Look out for any Irish notices or sings you see every day in school. Make a list of these signs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fógra Gaeilge</th>
<th>Cá bhfuil sé?</th>
<th>Cad is brí leis?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irish sign</td>
<td>Where is it?</td>
<td>What does it mean?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. What did you enjoy about this activity?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

2. Why do you think your school has signs written in Irish?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
An Ghaeilge Mórthimpeall Orm sa Bhaile

Irish around me at home.

- Ag a baile, déan liosta d'aon ní a fheiceann tú scríofa as Gaeilge (mar shampla, paicéad siúcra, cartán bainne, seanfhocail, leabhair sa bhaile).
- At home, make a list of anything you see written in Irish. Make a list of the things you come across.

Líon isteach an bhileog seo le duine sa bhaile.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fógra Gaeilge</th>
<th>Cá bhfuil sé?</th>
<th>Cad is brí leis?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irish sign</td>
<td>Where is it?</td>
<td>What does it mean?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Did you enjoy this activity? Explain why.

2. Were you surprised your house had items written in Irish?

3. How would you describe this activity?
An Ghaeilge Mórthimpeall Orm sa phobal.
Irish around me in the community.

- Ar do chéad turas eile sa charr, ar an mbus, an traein nó ag an aerfort, bí ag faire amach d’fhógraí Gaeilge agus do logainmneacha a fheiceann tú agus déan liosta dóibh.
- On your next journey in the car, bus, train or at the airport, be on the lookout for any Irish signs and place names written in Irish. Make a list of what you see.

| Fógra Gaeilge (Irish sign) | Cábhfuil sé? (Where is it?) | Cad is brí leis? (What does it mean?) |
1. Were you surprised at how much Irish signs and notices you saw in your local community?

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

2. Would you like to see more Irish signs and notices in your local community?

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

3. Pick three adjectives (describing words) to describe this activity.

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
Agallamh faoi logainmneacha le duine fásta sa bhaile.

An interview about place names with an adult at home.

- Cuir ceist ar dhuine fásta faoi roinnt logainmneacha áitiúla as Gaeilge. Lean na leideanna thíos ma bhíonn cabhair uait.
- Ask any adult at home about local place names that are in Irish. You can follow the questions below for help.

1. What is your address in Irish?


2. Do you know the Irish translation of any surrounding townlands/ villages/ towns?


3. Do you know what the **direct** English translation is of any of these place names?


We will discuss your answers in class tomorrow.
Focail Dheasa

Nice words

- Déan iarracht as ceann de na frásaí thíos a úsáid ag am lóin, sa chlós, agus sa seomra ranga, mar shampla 'Coinnigh ort!', 'Tá sé go hiontach buaadh leat!' Déan iarracht an frása sin a úsáid trí huaire an lá sin le daoine éagsúla. Ansin, roghnaigh frása nua.

- Try to say one of the phrases below at lunch time, in the yard or in the classroom, for example 'Keep going' 'It's lovely to meet you'. Try say the phrase to three different people during the day. Then pick a new phrase.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is maith liom do</th>
<th>Rinne tú é sin go maith!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>________________</td>
<td>You did that very well!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like your</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>________________</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Tá sé go hiontach buaadh leat! | Tá áthas orm tú a fheiceáil! |
| It is lovely to meet you!      | I'm delighted to see you!    |

| Go raibh míle maith agat.       | Tá mé an-bhuíoch díot.       |
| Thank you.                      | I'm very thankful to you.    |

<p>| Tabhair aire duit féin!         | Coinnigh ort!                |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Take care of yourself!</th>
<th>Keep going!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maith thú!</td>
<td>Lean ort!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well done!</td>
<td>Continue!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ar fheabhas!</td>
<td>Go hiontach!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabulous</td>
<td>Wonderful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An-mhaith!</td>
<td>Thar cionn!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very good!</td>
<td>Brilliant!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


1. List the people you said your phrase(s) to.
   
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

2. Do you think you will continue to use these phrases in school or at home? Explain why.
   
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

3. Pick three adjectives (describing words) to describe this activity.
   
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
**Focal Speisialta**

Special words.

- At home, look in the Irish dictionary and pick out five words you would like to know how to say in Irish. Try your best to use these words throughout the rest of your day.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focal Gaeilge.</th>
<th>Cad is brí leis?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irish word</td>
<td>What does it mean?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **What did you think of this activity?**
   
   ________________________________________________________________
   
   ________________________________________________________________
   
   ________________________________________________________________

2. **Who did you say your new words to?**
   
   ________________________________________________________________
   
   ________________________________________________________________
   
   ________________________________________________________________

3. **Why did you choose these words?**
   
   ________________________________________________________________
   
   ________________________________________________________________
   
   ________________________________________________________________
Gníomhacht 7

Beannachtaí na Gaeilge

Irish greetings

- Déan cleachtadh ar na beannachtaí seo a leanas. Bain triail as an mbeannacht le haon chuirteoir a thagann isteach sa seomra ranga. Ansin, bain triail as an mbeannacht le triúr sa chlós.

- Practice the greetings below. Try to use one of the greetings to any visitor that comes into the classroom. Then try to say a greeting to three people in the yard.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gaeilge</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dia duit!</td>
<td>Hello</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cén chaoi a bhfuil?</td>
<td>How are you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aon scéal?</td>
<td>What's the story?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aon chraic?</td>
<td>Any craic?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conas atá tú?</td>
<td>How are you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bail ó Dhia ort!</td>
<td>God bless you!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maidin mhaith</td>
<td>Good morning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. In your own words, describe what you thought of this activity.

2. Are there any other greetings you would like to be able to say in Irish? What are they?
Rainn a rá sa bhaile.
Poems to say at home.

- Déan iarachta na rainn a rá ag am dinnéir n bricfeasta maidin amárach le do chlann. Cuir geatsáí agus guthanna éagsúla (guth feargach/eaglach/áthasach). Cuir cesit ar do chlann na rainn a rá in éineacht leat.
- Try your best to say these simple poems at dinner time or at breakfast time tomorrow morning with your family. Add actions and funny voices (angry/scared/happy voices). Ask whoever is at home to join in and say the poems with you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bí ag ithe</th>
<th>Is maith liom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bí ag ithe</td>
<td>Is maith liom bainne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bí ag ól</td>
<td>Is maith liom ubh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seas suas</td>
<td>Is maith liom im</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suigh síos</td>
<td>Is maith liom subh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slán go fóill</td>
<td>Is maith liom cáis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is maith liom práta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is maith liom arán</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Is maith liom cáca.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eat</th>
<th>I like</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eat</td>
<td>I like milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drink</td>
<td>I like eggs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stand up</td>
<td>I like butter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sit down</td>
<td>I like jam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodbye</td>
<td>I like cheese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I like potatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I like bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I like cake</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. **Describe this activity using three adjectives (describing words).**

2. **What did you enjoy most about this activity?**

3. **What did you least enjoy about this activity?**
**Interview**

- Roghnaigh duine eile sa teaghlach agus cuir agallamh air nó uirthi.
- Pick someone at home in your family and conduct an interview with him or her.

| **Céard é d’ainm iomlán?**  
**What is your full name?** | **An bhfuil aon chaiteamh aimsire agat?**  
**What are your pastimes?** |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Cén bia is fearr leat?**    
**What’s your favourite food?** | **Cá raibh tú ar laethanta saoire?**  
**Where did you go on holidays?** |
|                               |                                                               |

<p>| | |
|                               |                                                               |
|                               |                                                               |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Cá bhfuil tú i do chónaí?</strong></th>
<th><strong>An bhfuil aon deirfiúr agat?</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Where are you living?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Do you have a sister?</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>An maith leat brocailí?</strong></th>
<th><strong>Inis dom scéal greannmhar fút.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Do you like broccoli?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Tell me a funny story about yourself?</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


1. **Who did you interview?**

2. **Did you enjoy this activity? Explain why.**
FOURTH CLASS STUDENTS’ ATTITUDES TOWARDS IRISH

Gníomhact 10

- Ag féachaint siar ar na gníomhachtaí.
- Looking back on the activities.

1. Did you enjoy doing the activities? Explain your answer.

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

2. How would you describe your experience of doing the activities?

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

3. At the beginning of the two weeks, we discussed our attitudes towards the Irish language. Do you feel your attitude has changed or stayed the same? Explain your answer.

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________
FOURTH CLASS STUDENTS’ ATTITUDES TOWARDS IRISH