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Journal of Celtic Language Learning is an international review for researchers and teachers of modern Celtic Languages. The official publication of the North American Association for Celtic Language Teachers, JCLL includes papers presented at the association’s annual conference in addition to manuscripts submitted by Celtic language scholars worldwide. It is also a forum in which Celtic language teachers can share insights into methodology with their peers.

JCLL’s mission, similar to that of NAACTL, is to provide another forum in which teachers and applied linguists can contribute to the literature presently available on second language acquisition as well as increase communication among Celtic language teachers and researchers.

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A Note on Welsh Demographics following the 2001 Census

Martin J. Ball

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This paper gives a brief history of language decline, revitalization, and maintenance in the context of Welsh. In particular, it focuses on the results of the 2001 census in the United Kingdom, which showed the first increase in numbers and percentages of Welsh speakers since records began. It concludes with some thoughts on the future development of the Welsh speech community.

Language Decline

Wales lost political independence in 1282, but the language in its literary form, which had been supported by the patronage of the princes, was still vigorous, as local nobility maintained the patronage system.\(^1\) However, the Act of Union between Wales and England in 1536 robbed the language of political and legal domains, and the poetic tradition went into a slow decline (DG Jones 1988). Such a loss of public domains can have a disastrous effect on a politically subordinate language (see, for example, the decline of Irish). However, the protestant reformation in England and Wales, with its push to provide the scriptures and prayer books in vernacular languages, provided what might be thought of as a lifeline to Welsh. The translation of the Prayer Book and New Testament in 1567, and the complete Bible in 1588, not only

\(^1\) The discussion in these first sections follows parts of Ball (forthcoming) and Ball, Müller and Munro (forthcoming).