



CHAPTER 5: COMPARABILITY OF WRITTEN QUESTIONNAIRE DATA AND INTERVIEW DATA

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As a supplement to the interviews, we also sent out written questionnaires, to gauge the generality of the results obtained from the interviews. The written questionnaires were designed to be as similar as possible to the interviews.

METHOD

Participants

The participants for the written questionnaire were recruited from two primary sources: (1) from those respondents who filled in the Initial Response Sheet and who were not selected for an interview and (2) from forms made available over the web to interested Welsh speakers. For the first of these, all respondents who were not selected for an interview, as long as they indicated some knowledge of Welsh, were sent a written questionnaire. One hundred and ninety-six forms were sent out requesting that participants fill them in and return them to us. Of these, 79 were returned. In addition, we placed a click-on button on the UWB Psychology website, linked to the Welsh Language Board website, for interested parties to download the questionnaire and return it to us either via mail or e-mail. We also made questionnaires available through personal contacts with Welsh-speaking parents of children. Thirty-five questionnaires were returned to us via these alternative routes.

Questionnaire Design

The written questionnaire was a slightly modified version of the interview questionnaire, modified to make it appropriate for a respondent to fill in him- or herself. A sample of the written questionnaire is supplied in Appendix 5.1. One difference between the written questionnaires and the interviews was that in the former, we did not ask respondents to think of a 'target' child, but any of their children seven years of age and under.

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Responses were coded and entered into Excel and SPSS files as in the case of the interview data. The coding used followed the same principles as for the interview data. The main question of interest is whether the patterns of

responses reflected in the written questionnaires differ in any significant way from those from the interviews. In order to examine this, χ^2 analyses were conducted concerning primarily the major factors of the study, comparing the responses of the written questionnaires with those of the interviews.

Adult Categories

First, the distribution of parents across the five main home language patterns for the parents was examined. A comparison of the respondents in the written questionnaires and the interviews shows a significant difference in the patterns, Pearson's $\chi^2 = 61.589$, $df = 5$, $p < .000$. The percentages from each category for the written questionnaires and the interviews are shown in Figure 5.1, as well as the distribution across the total number of respondents.

It can be seen that the two groups with the majority of respondents filling in the written questionnaires were from the W-W and E-E group. There were few respondents from the W-E and E-W categories ($Ns = 4, 2$, respectively). This differs from the interview data, which was taken more equally from parents across the five parent types.

This difference in the populations from which the two sets of respondents came is not surprising, given the design of the Interviews. For the Interviews, we purposely targeted approximately equal numbers of parents from the five major categories, in order to be able to compare patterns of language transmission in the five groups. For the written questionnaires, we targeted the remainder of respondents from the Initial Response Sheets, as well as anyone else who responded to our website questionnaires, in order to obtain a fuller picture from a random selection of respondents. The totals shown in Figure 5.1 (and in Table 3.1) should be taken as representative of the patterns of parental categories across all respondents if the interview study had been conducted with a random set of parent respondents.

Language(s) Spoken by the Children

In the case of the written questionnaires, there was no single 'target child', but we did have information on the language(s) spoken by any children under 4;6 and any children between 4;6 and 7;11 in each family. The patterns for all children in the family in these two age groups were entered.

Pearson χ^2 analyses were conducted comparing the children's languages at the two ages by adult category in the written questionnaire versus throughout interview data. (In this and all analyses that follow involving the individual parental categories, the E-W group is excluded, as there were only two respondents in this group in the written questionnaire. In some cases, the data from the W-E group were similarly insufficient for χ^2 analyses, as will be noted in the report of each set of data. For analyses not separated by adult category, however, the data from all respondents were included.)

The χ^2 values for children's language(s) at the two age groups across the written questionnaires and the interviews are shown in Table 5.1. The only significant differences in the children's reported languages were in the cases of the older W-W children and the younger E-E children. The percentages of children in each of these two groups speaking each language type are shown in Figure 5.2. It can be seen in both cases that the written questionnaires show a greater percentage of 'W&E' speakers than the interviews. It should be remembered, however, that the data for the written questionnaires represent a composite of all the children in the family at the given age group, while the interview data represent only a single child. Thus, the greater 'W&E' responses in the case of the written questionnaires may be due to the fact that several children may be reported (e.g., one could be a W speaker, another an E speaker) instead of just one.

On the whole, then, the written questionnaire data are compatible with the interview data concerning the languages spoken by the children at each age in each adult category. Only further analyses can confirm that the differences for the older W-W and younger E-E children is due to the fact that the written questionnaires report the languages for several children whereas the interviews report the language(s) of a single child.

Language(s) spoken by the Mother and Father to the Child

χ^2 analyses compared the language(s) spoken by the mother and the father to the child in each adult category as reported in the written questionnaires and the interviews. The general data are shown in Table 5.2; the BIL group is broken down further in Table 5.3.

The data shown in these Tables make it clear that there was no significant difference in the patterns of responses in the written questionnaires and the interview concerning the language(s) spoken by the mother and father to the child across the distinct adult language categories.

Language abilities of the Interviewee

One of the findings of the Interview data was that the language abilities of the interviewee parent was an important factor in language transmission. To examine whether there was a difference in the abilities of the respondents in the written questionnaires and the interviews, χ^2 analyses were conducted comparing responses to Question 2 concerning knowledge of Welsh across the two sets of respondents. The data are shown in Table 5.4. It can be seen that there is again no significant difference in abilities in Welsh between the respondents of a given Adult Category in the written questionnaires and the interviews.

Attitudes toward Welsh

In the Interview data, it was of interest that the W-W interviewees sometimes showed more pessimistic views towards Welsh and its relation with their child or its prestige. We examined whether similar patterns of opinions held in the written questionnaires. χ^2 analyses were conducted for Questions 23, 30, and 32.

Question 23 asked about the parent's general view of the child and Welsh. Results are shown in Table 5.5. These data clearly show that there were no significant differences between the written questionnaires and the interviews on this question.

Question 30 asked the respondent's opinion regarding the overall prestige of Welsh in Wales. Table 5.6 shows the χ^2 square results on this question. There was a significant difference in the W-W respondents' responses to this question in the written questionnaires and the interviews. The patterns of responses are shown in Figure 5.3. The respondents in the written questionnaires were clearly more positive in their assessment of the prestige of Welsh, and their answers are more in line with those of the respondents from the other categories.

Question 32 asked the respondents' opinions on the future status of Welsh and English in Wales. χ^2 results are shown in Table 5.7, and patterns of responses in Figure 5.4. While Figure 5.4 shows a trend for the W-W written questionnaires to express slightly more positive attitudes, there is no statistically significant difference between this group and the W-W interviewees.

IMPLICATIONS

The results coming from the written questionnaires, in comparison with those from the interviews, lead to a number of conclusions. First, the data for a given adult category group across the two types of questionnaires are on the whole comparable. In very few cases was there any statistically significant difference between the responses in the two sets of data. And in those cases where there were differences, these could be attributable to differences in the nature of the data (e.g., one child singled out in the interview data, all of the parent's children in the written questionnaires).

At the same time, the two sets of data reveal quite clearly that one must pay careful attention to the Adult Category of a respondent in the design of any study of this type. If a random collection of parents are interviewed, the data will be skewed in favour of one or two categories of parents (here, W-W and E-E parents), and crucial information from less populous categories would be missed.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

PR 19. For future studies of this type, a large portion of the data could be obtained through written questionnaires, as long as the respondents were selected instead of coming from a random group of parents.

PR 20. The comparison of the interview and written questionnaire data underline the crucial importance in a study of this kind of delineating parents according to their origin-home-language backgrounds. A representative sample of parents from each group must be obtained in order to gain a full picture of language transmission practices, or else critical parent types (e.g., of the E-W type here, for which there were few respondents to the written questionnaires) may well be overlooked.

TABLE 5.1
Written Questionnaires versus Interviews:
Comparison of children's language(s) at each age for each adult category

Adult Category	Age Group	Number	χ^2	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
W-W	< 4;6	56	3.093	3	.378
	> 4;6	71	10.074	2	.006
W-E	< 4;6	n.a. ³			
	> 4;6	n.a.			
BIL	< 4;6	38	2.244	3	.523
	> 4;6	40	.171	2	.918
E-E	< 4;6	43	9.886	3	.020
	> 4;6	48	2.454	2	.293

TABLE 5.2.
Written Questionnaires versus Interviews:
Comparison of Mothers' and Fathers' speech to children

Parent	Adult Category	Number	χ^2	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
M's speech to child	W-W	135	5.334	4	.255
	W-E	50	1.414	4	.842
	BIL	83	7.595	5	.180
	E-E	84	2.835	4	.586
F's speech to child	W-W	135	1.839	3	.607
	W-E	50	5.186	4	.269
	BIL	85	2.757	4	.599
	E-E	84	7.170	5	.208

TABLE 5.3.
Written Questionnaires versus Interviews:
Mothers' and Fathers' speech to children in BIL group

Inter- viewee	M/F speech to child	Partner Language	Number	χ^2	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
BIL M inter- viewee	M to child		48	7.526	5	.184
	F to Child	F W background	1	n.a.		
		F BIL background	14	.294	3	.961
		F E background	19	6.465	4	.167
BIL F inter- viewee	M to Child	M W background	11	n.a.		
		M BIL background	5	.833	1	.361
		M E background	15	n.a.		
	F to Child		36	3.282	4	.512

³ Insufficient data from written questionnaires

TABLE 5.4
Written Questionnaires versus Interviews:
Mothers' and Fathers' reported knowledge of Welsh across Adult Categories

Interviewee	Adult Categ.	Number	χ^2	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Mother Interviewees	W-W	83	.397	1	.528
	W-E	29	.037	1	.847
	BIL	48	6.659	4	.155
	E-E	58	1.670	5	.893
Father Interviewees	W-W	35	.172	1	.679
	W-E	18	n.a.		
	BIL	34	.267	3	.966
	E-E	22	4.074	4	.396

TABLE 5.5
Written Questionnaires versus Interviews:
Responses to Question 23 regarding the parent's general view concerning the child and Welsh

Adult Categ.	Number	χ^2	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
W-W	139	.944	2	.624
W-E	49	.387	2	.824
BIL	82	1.797	2	.407
E-E	86	.077	2	.962

TABLE 5.6.
Written Questionnaires versus Interviews:
Responses to Question 30 regarding the overall prestige of Welsh in Wales

Adult Categ.	Number	χ^2	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
W-W	132	14.220	5	.014
W-E	49	2.102	3	.551
BIL	83	5.237	4	.264
E-E	86	.571	4	.966

TABLE 5.7.
Written Questionnaires versus Interviews:
Responses to Question 32 regarding the future status of Welsh and English in Wales

Adult Categ.	Number	χ^2	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
W-W	135	6.992	4	.136
W-E	49	1.596	2	.450
BIL	81	4.403	6	.622
E-E	84	4.892	4	.299