Author(s): Vida Lorraine Kennedy

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A study to investigate the role of mother-tongue in counselling for Welsh speakers and its impact on the counselling relationship.

Vida Lorraine Kennedy

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Abstract

This research study investigates the role of mother-tongue in counselling Welsh clients and within the therapeutic relationship. It is a qualitative study using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as its mode of inquiry and analysis. Four participants who described Welsh as their mother-tongue from the North Wales region were interviewed individually using an in-depth semi-structured interview. Data analysis followed that described by Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009). The study found that all participants described mother-tongue as an important aspect of counselling and the counselling relationship. The results demonstrated that the more familiar a language is to the client the easier it is to talk about personal experiences and emotions. It also highlighted the role language plays in the client's identity and culture, and that it is important for the therapist to accept and understand the client's background and their struggle to communicate in order to create a facilitative relationship, and a safe environment for counselling. The study found that aspects such as searching for the right word or having meaning get lost in translation as barriers to counselling. In addition, and in particular with reference to the bilingual context of the Welsh speaking participants it was found that language was used to create closeness or distance to an issue, discovering hidden issues, and allow for flexibility and choice. This study provides an insight into the role of mother-tongue in counselling with Welsh clients and may have something to offer counsellors working in other bilingual contexts.

Key Words: Welsh; Counselling; Counselling Relationship; Mother-tongue; Bilingual; Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

<u>Declaration</u>

The work is original and has never been submitted previously in the context of counselling courses.

Name………………………………………….

Signature………………………………………

Date……………………………………………

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I would like to thank my family, Jay, Bronwen, Rhiannon and Sian for their support and patience during the last three years of the MA in clinical counselling at the University of Chester. I am grateful to Dr. Valda Swinton and Dr. Rita Mintz, University of Chester for their guidance, support and belief in me throughout my course of study. In particular I would like to thank Dr. Tony Parnell for his support and feedback in the development and writing of this dissertation. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank all my friends and family for all their support (in particular my Mother without who's childcare help I could never have completed my MA). And last, but certainly not least, I would like to thank all the participants who took part in this study, without whom this research could never have been done.

Contents

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

<u>Introduction</u>

I was born in North Wales in a small village into a large family. Our language at home, in the church, in the community, with my friends and at school has been Welsh, and Welsh only until I left for university at age eighteen. I learnt English at age seven and continued to study English as a subject until I was sixteen. All other subjects including those I studied at 'A' level were done through the Welsh language. After leaving the North Wales area for University I have then spent eighteen years in an English speaking environment, both at work and socially (apart from visits home to my family and friends in North Wales). In fact I have married a first language English speaker.

Although I do not feel that I have struggled academically when I shifted to predominantly speaking English, I did notice that communication in relationship and emotion related aspects were more difficult for me. Often I found that what I was trying to say didn't come out right, or that what I was saying wasn't fully understood. This quite often left me feeling stunted and frustrated. Although I would consider myself to be a fluent and confident English speaker, there was something missing when trying to express myself in an emotional sense. I often wondered if it was a personality aspect (that is conditions of worth that I grew up with that didn't encourage talking about feelings and emotions) or could it be a language issue?

Undertaking a Masters in Clinical Counselling I feel has been a big part of developing my comfort in talking about personal issues through the English language, however, I

still find it easier somehow in Welsh. My interest in this area therefore has been further fuelled by embarking on a career in counselling. In particular my interest in the role of language in counselling has been further increased by my placement at the Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre North Wales and from my own experience of personal therapy.

A Welsh speaking client of mine often said "I could never have said that in English", and "I wouldn't have been able to describe that in English". This rang a bell with me and indeed for my last ten sessions of personal therapy I chose a Welsh speaking counsellor. I did this because I have always felt more at ease in my mother tongue. I found my experience of personal therapy to be overwhelmingly more beneficial with my Welsh speaking counsellor than my previous English speaking counsellor, and began to wonder why?

The purpose of this study therefore is to increase my (and hopefully the counselling community's) understanding of the role of language, in this case, Welsh, in counselling and the counselling relationship.

Aim

My aim in this study is to explore the importance of mother-tongue in counselling. I do this in order to increase our knowledge of the issue and how it may impact on counselling and the therapeutic relationship. This will be important for those who provide counselling for Welsh speaking individuals, but also it will contribute to the wider literature on the role of mother-tongue in counselling and may provide insights in other bilingual settings.

I aim to do this by exploring the in depth experiences of people who consider Welsh to be their mother-tongue and use their experiences to help me learn more about the role of their language to them specifically in a counselling context.

In order to achieve my goal my key research questions will be: what is the role of mother-tongue in counselling, for welsh speaking participants? And, in what ways might it impact the counselling relationship?

Rationale

In the Gwynedd county of the North West area of Wales 69.0% of the population speak Welsh (Gathercole and Thomas, 2009; http://www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001). In terms of the provision of quality care services it has been said that language choice is crucial (National Assembly for Wales, 2003). This fundamental aspect of care has been further highlighted by a project providing psychological services in Wales as key in supporting Welsh individuals (Jones, 2007).

In a project commissioned by the Welsh Assembly, Pattison, Rowland, Richards, Cromarty, Jenkins, and Polat (2009) describes 10 recommendations for school counselling services in Wales. The seventh recommendation includes responding "flexibly to local needs in respect of diversity (e.g. language)" and that counselling through Welsh should be made available in Welsh when "appropriate/required" (p.172). Although providing services through the Welsh language have been described as important (Davies, 2011; Welsh Assembly Government, 2012a, and b),

I can find little research into its importance in the counselling setting. It has been said, however, that the inability of psychotherapists to speak in a client's first language can create barriers to communication between client and therapist (Verdinelli and Biever, 2013; Altarriba and Santiago-Rivera, 1994; Santiago-Rivera, Altarriba, Poll, Gonzalez-Miller, and Cragun, 2009). It has also been described that therapeutic interventions are twice as effective when provided in a clients' native language as opposed to their second language (Griner and Smith, 2006).

In the literature a person's first language has been described as the language of emotional expressiveness and the second language associated with emotional distance (Sutton, Altarriba, Gianico, and Basnight-Brown, 2007). The literature also suggests that language is an important aspect of the expression and processing of emotion and meaning, and on how individuals experience the world, events, and themselves (Altarriba, 2003; Costa, 2010; Iannaco, 2009; Tehrani and Vaughan, 2009). It has been said that emotional words may not always translate to another language and that it is impossible to translate identical meaning from one language to another (Damasio, 2003). In addition to findings such as these, the fundamental importance of language, as a means of communicating and relating within counselling, sometimes described as 'talking therapy' has also been emphasised (Clauss, 1998; Javier, 1995).

Such findings highlights the relevance of language in the counselling context and further knowledge as to its role in counselling and on the counselling relationship will be useful to those working with Welsh speaking clients. Furthermore it is possible that information from this study may contribute to the wider literature on the role of

mother-tongue in counselling and may provide useful insights in other bilingual settings.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

I identified a number of key words for my literature search based on their relevance to the research topic (see Appendix 1, p.79). Databases searched included PsychInfo, CINHAL, PubMed, SocIndex, and The University of Chester Library Catalogue. In addition a snowballing method was widely used. In searching the literature I have come up with seven sub-headings for the literature which are presented below.

Language and development

Language is a critical aspect of how we communicate with others. It has been described as an important aspect of our development, even before we are born, listening to sounds around us whilst in our mother's womb (Amati-Mehler, Argentieri, and Canestri, 1993; Maiello, 1997). Early on in life language has been described as an important aspect of the emotional attachment and relationship between mother and child (Dubinsky and Bazhenova, 1997). As well as participating in our sense of belonging, language, is thought to be fundamental in our separation and individualisation (Bowker and Richards, 2004; Hoffman, 1991; Stern, 1998).

There are many theories on the importance of language in development (Bowker and Richards, 2004; Shanahan, 2008), many of which arise from a psychodynamic perspective (Bowker and Richards, 2004). It is important to note, however, that from whatever perspective one considers language, it's influence on development cannot be ignored. For example this study comes from a phenomenological perspective and a person-centred approach to counselling (see methodology chapter). Within the

6

person-centred framework the influence of the environment in which we grow has been recognised, for example by conditions of worth (Merry, 2002). Language is part of that environment and therefore will have an influence on our development.

> " Just as any unique aspect of ourselves formed during our upbringing will impact the way we relate to ourselves and the world that surrounds us, so too a bilingual's languages will differentially impact his or her interactions with the social and emotional world" (Guttfreund, 1990; p.606).

<u>The Welsh Language, mother-tongue (or first language), and bilingualism</u>

Welsh is a Celtic language that, although having experienced a great historical struggle for survival, has been spoken in Wales for centuries. In the Gwynedd county of the North West area of Wales 69.0% of the population speak Welsh (Gathercole and Thomas, 2009; http://www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001). Although families in Wales vary in what language they speak at home, families in which parents grew up in only-Welsh-speaking homes use only (96.3%) or mostly (2.8%) Welsh with their own families (Gathercole and Thomas, 2009).

For the purpose of this study we will use the terms "mother tongue" and "first language" interchangeably, as they have been by others (Kokaliari, Catanzarite, and Berzoff, 2013). For this study a person's mother tongue will be seen as the language that they acquired first and were brought up in. It is important to note in the phenomenological spirit of this study, that we all experience things in different ways and attribute different meanings to things (McLeod, 2009). For this reason I will be open to the possibility that different persons may attribute different meanings to the above terms.

Although Welsh may be a person's mother-tongue, it is crucial to point out that it exists within a bilingual setting. By the age of four and a half, most children will be speaking both Welsh and English, as both languages are taught in schools (Gathercole and Thomas, 2009; Lewis, 2003). The Welsh context has been described by Gathercole and Thomas, (2009) as a 'stable bilingual community' (p.216). Including Welsh within a bilingual context is important as much of the current research with regards to the role of language in counselling comes from work with bilingual clients (Bowker and Richards, 2004; Kokaliari, Catanzarite, and Berzoff, 2013; Guttfreund, 1990; Javier, 2007; Marcos, 1976; Marcos and Urcuyo, 1979; Ramos-Sanchez, 2009; Santiago-Rivera, Altarriba, Poll, Gonzalez-Miller, and Cragun, 2009).

Bilingualism is recognised as being an important aspect in the lives of the majority of individuals around the world (Bowker and Richards, 2004), and therefore it is crucial to gain further information with regards to it's role in counselling. Not only for Welsh speakers, but also, in other countries where bilingualism exists, especially in the current climate of increased immigration, where counsellors might be faced with greater opportunity to work with clients where English may not be their first language.

<u>Language and Emotion</u>

Goncalves and Machado (2000) see emotion as crucial in understanding human change, human functioning and psychological disturbance, and therefore important within psychotherapy. Language is considered key in both accessing and creating emotions (in historical, social and cultural context), and therefore if emotion is important within psychotherapy, then so is language (Lupton, 1998).

In the literature a person's first language has been described as the language of 'emotional expressiveness', and the second language associated with 'emotional distance' (Dewaele, 2004; Dewaele and Pavlenko, 2002; Sutton, Altarriba, Gianico, and Basnight-Brown, 2007). Marcos (1976) and Rozensky and Gomez (1983) in particular describe patients as more 'emotionally withdrawn' when speaking their second language. Kokaliari, Catanzarite, and Berzoff (2013) describe it to be 'typical' for bilingual clients to switch from one language to another, returning to their mother tongue when "expressing strong affects, in their dreams, or when dealing with death and trauma" (p.97). Javier (1989) also says that the more difficult an experience was the more likely it is to be accessed using the language in which it occurred. Bilinguals are thought to switch to their first language to remember or describe emotion and experience in greater detail (Ramoz-Sanchez, 2007; Santiago-Rivera and Altarriba, 2002).

It has been suggested (although sometimes conflicting) that emotional words are processed differently in first and second languages of bilingual individuals (Altarriba, Bauer, and Benvenuto, 1999; Anooshian and Hertel, 1994; Sutton, Altarriba, Gianico, and Basnight-Brown, 2007). Anooshian and Hertel (1994) conducted a recall test with Spanish-English bilingual speakers and found that there was a higher rate of recall of emotional words in Spanish (first language) than English (second language). A different study by Altarriba, Bauer, and Benvenuto (1999), found that Spanish emotional words were more connected to context than their English counterparts. Emotional concepts have been seen to vary across languages, and that different languages and word types have different emotionality (Pavlenko, 2008).

Some have suggested that aspects such as the age each language was learnt; emotional context in which the language was learnt; proficiency; and nature of words (i.e. positive or negative) for example can impact on the processing of emotional words (Harris, Gleason, and Avcucegi, 2006.; Sutton, Altarriba, Gianico, and Basnight-Brown, 2007).

Language, Meaning and Translation

Iannaco (2009) is a psychoanalytic therapist who looked at the importance of mother-tongue where individuals have learnt a second language later on in life. He describes an extra process of 'inner translation' for bilinguals when speaking in their second language. This extra process of translation has been described to take extra effort in the process of communicating (Iannaco, 2009; Imberti, 2007; Marcos, 1976). Furthermore emotional words may not always translate to another language (Dewaele, 2004; Dewaele, 2008; Heredia and Altarriba 2001; Le Doux, 1998; Sutton, Altarriba, Gianico, and Basnight-Brown, 2007), and in fact it has been said that it is impossible to translate identical meaning from one language to another (Dewaele, 2004; Damasio, 2003; Iannaco, 2009).

The meaning of words has been said to go deeper than direct word translations (LeDoux, 1998; Tehrani and Vaughan, 2009), and that words are linked neurologically to memories of which they were heard and associated with different senses and experiences, all of which are a part of creating the meanings associated to that word (Kosslyn, Alpert, Thompson, Maljkovic, Weise, Chabris, Hamilton, Rauch, and Buonanno, 1993). For this reason clients have been described as switching to different languages in order to communicate what they want to say in

therapy (Kokaliari, Catanzarite, and Berzoff, 2013; Santiago-Rivera, Altarriba, Poll, Gonzalez-Miller, and Cragun, 2009). In fact it has also been noted that the increased effort needed to find the right word and/or meaning interfered with clients' emotional expression (Marcos and Urcuyo, 1979; Ramos-Sanchez, 2007).

Language, Identity and culture

Clauss (1998) says "The relationship between language and culture is inextricable and jointly bound to psychotherapeutic processes" (p.188). The Whorfian theory (Whorf, 1950) is one of the earliest influential theories of language. This theory suggests that language impacts both thought and perception. Based on this theory others have suggested that people of different cultures and languages think and perceive things in different ways (Klineberg, 1980) and that language can be a symbol of group identity (Haugen, 1995). In fact reality itself has been attached to language (de Zulueta, 1990; de Zulueta, 1995). This phenomenon has been described by Ervin (1964) as a shift from one way of being to another when changing from one language to another. This shift has also been described by others whereby language is linked to the context it was learnt and that this context is attached to a particular set of attitudes, values, and associations (Guttfreund, 1990).

> *"Mother-tongue, as it is called, will be the one in which a child's early years will be enveloped. This mother tongue will most likely be associated with a particular set of thoughts and feelings. The child's associations will depend on the experiences per se" (Guttfreund, 1990, p.604)*

Burck (1997) says that "different languages encompass different world views makes it understandable that bilingual persons report that they have very different experiences in different languages" (p.71). it has also been suggested that a person

may experience different aspects of the self in different languages, and therefore the existence of dual self or dual identity (Altarriba, 2003; Amati-Mehler, Argentieri, and Canestri, 1993; Burck, 2004; Marcos and Urcuyo, 1979; Perez-Foster, 1996; Tehrani and Vaughan, 2009; Tummala-Narra, 2001). Perez-Foster (1996) describe bilinguals as living in a "dual-reality" (p.99). Greenson (1950) was one of the first to describe the existence of different identities in different languages. He described a bilingual patient who when speaking German felt like a 'scared, dirty, child' and whilst speaking English felt like a 'nervous, refined woman' (Bowker and Richards, 2004, p.464).

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This idea of dual identity may be supported by other descriptions of how different languages come with different emotional and cultural dimensions (Altarriba and Santiago Rivera, 1994; Altarriba and Soltano, 1996; De Zulueta, 1995). Drawing on Hoffmann's (1991) work Bowker and Richards (2004) says "National identity as well as self-identity can be very strongly rooted in the maintenance of a particular language" (p.463).

Tehrani and Vaughan (2009) describe how each language allows a person to show and experience different aspects of the self. This importance of language in identity may be particularly relevant to Welsh clients. Giles, Taylor and Bourhis (1974) describe language as the most important dimension of ethnic identity for Welsh individuals. Although their sample was small for a quantitative study, it remains one of the few studies into the role of the Welsh language in Welsh identity. More recently a study by Livingstone, Spears, Manstead and Bruder (2009) has supported their findings.

Language and creating a distance in therapy

Bilingual clients are said to switch from one language to the other during therapy (Kokaliari, Catanzarite, and Berzoff, 2013). Psychoanalytical work with bilingual clients have dominated the platform from which we learn about language in therapy. Early psychoanalysts such as Buxhaum (1949) and Greenson (1950) describe how bilingual clients used their second language within therapy as a means of defence (although unconsciously) against the emergence of repressed fantasies or difficult feelings. Therefore using a second language was used to create emotional distance in therapy (Bowker and Richards, 2004).

The work of Buxhaum (1949) suggested that effective therapy is not possible when a therapist does not speak the clients' language, that if experiences are encoded within a certain language they cannot be accessed in the same way by another. Others such as Marcos and Alpert (1976), however, say that there is no evidence to support this. The role of language in creating closeness and/or distance remains of great importance within counselling. Whether seen as a negative or positive aspect of therapy the idea that language can influence access to emotional reactions, and act as a defence against painful material has been supported by many (Burck, 2004; Costa, 2010; Damasio, 2003; Kokaliari, Catanzarite, and Berzoff, 2013; Kosslyn, Alpert, Thompson, Maljkovic, Weise, Chabris, Hamilton, Rauch, and Buonanno, 1993; LeDoux, 1998; Marian and Neisser, 2000).

This aspect of language (creating distance) in therapy relates to safety. Safety is often described as an important aspect of creating an effective environment for therapy (Merry, 2002). There are those who describe the use of mother tongue in

therapy as an aspect of creating a safe and trusting environment (Damasio, 2003; LeDoux, 1998; Marian and Neisser, 2000; Tehrani and Vaughan, 2009; Sprowl, 2002). Gilbert (2005) suggests that a child exposed to physical and verbal soothing develops an enhanced self-soothing neuro-pathway. This suggests that the language you were soothed in as a child will act as a soother later on in life. There is, however, more to this than meets the eye.

Tehrani and Vaughan (2009) describe a case study of a therapeutic process of a bilingual lady who had experienced bullying. The study supports the idea that language is crucial in accessing the emotions related to an event. It describes that "the full intensity of the traumatic experience had been lost in the translation" (p.13). Although it suggests this acts as a barrier to accessing the felt emotions, the therapist here saw it as beneficial because "on this occasion it appeared that the dilution of the emotional response to translation of the trauma story was helpful as it assisted in the narrative retrieval without triggering the emotional response held in the preconscious trauma memory" (p.13). Caution in using mother-tongue to access traumatic experiences have also been highlighted by others (Paradis, 2008). Sprowl (2002) described therapists' switch to clients first language to create a safe environment and access deeper emotions, but then switching to clients second language to help them distance themselves when emotions become too powerful.

Language and the therapeutic relationship

Language has also been described as something that can create closeness or distance within the therapeutic relationship. Bowker and Richards (2004) for example describes how in their qualitative study of therapists working in English with bilingual

clients found that participants felt varying degrees of distance and separation from their clients. They described needing to pay extra attention to communication aspects to make a good connection with their clients. Santiago-Rivera, Altarriba, Poll, Gonzalez-Miller, and Cragun, 2009 found that switching to their clients first language was used to increase communication, connection, trust and bonding in the relationship. Kokaliari, Catanzarite, and Berzoff (2013) also described language as an important factor for creating a therapeutic alliance. The participants in their study described issues of trust, idealization and hostility towards the psychotherapist.

Transference and countertransference within psychotherapy has been discussed in the literature with relation to language. The language of clients and therapists, have been linked to associations of historical and cultural perceptions, awareness and prejudices and that this may impact the therapeutic relationship via transference and countertransference (Comas-Diaz and Jacobsen, 1991). Possible results have been described to include mistrust, hostility, lying, idealisation, and power issues (Comas-Diaz and Jacobsen, 1991; Kokaliari, Catanzarite, and Berzoff, 2013). Further information can be found elsewhere (Clauss, 1998; Comas-Diaz and Jacobsen, 1991; Kokaliari, Catanzarite, and Berzoff, 2013; Perez-Foster, 1998). This issue may be worth considering in this study due to the historical struggle for power and language that exists between the Welsh and English (Livingstone, Spears, Manstead, and Bruder, 2009).

Findings with regards to impact of therapist ethnicity on therapy effectiveness is mixed (Ramoz-Sanchez, 2009; Verdinelli and Biever, 2013). Clients whose therapist language and ethnicity match, however, have been found to be more satisfied and less likely to drop out (Campell and Alexander, 2002; Griner and Smith, 2006). More

importantly interventions done in a person's native language has been found to be twice as effective as that in their non-native language (Griner and Smith, 2006).

What has been made clear so far is that when it comes to working with bilingual clients, it is considered beneficial for the therapist to be aware of aspects related to bilingualism that can impact therapy (Clauss, 1998; Kokaliari, Catanzarite, and Berzoff, 2013). For example that client's can use language as a defence against painful material (Buxbaum, 1949; Bowker and Richards, 2004; Kokaliari, Catanzarite, and Berzoff, 2013). Costa (2010) learns from bilingual therapists and suggest being aware of client's linguistic history, expression of emotions differently in different languages, impact of language on identity and culture, how meaning is conveyed, and relating to peoples experiences of learning or and speaking in a second language can be helpful for therapists working with bilingual clients. Language is how clients and therapists connect (Kokaliari, Catanzarite, and Berzoff, 2013) and therefore it will be crucial in the therapeutic relationship.

It should be noted that much of the above research is based upon psychodynamic approaches and **none** of which focus specifically on the case of Welsh speakers or person-centred approach to counselling. This highlights a large gap in knowledge with regards to the role of Welsh (as a mother-tongue) in person-centred counselling and the counselling relationship. With this study I hope to fill some of this knowledge gap. The following methodology chapter describes how I aim to do this.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Research Design

> " In the main, we choose a qualitative method if our research question is oriented towards the exploration and understanding of meaning, rather than the direct testing of a concept or hypothesis". (Dallos and Vetere, 2005, p.49).

There are two main types of research described in the literature, including quantitative and qualitative (Bowling 2002; McLeod, 2003). Quantitative research is more commonly described in relation to positivist assumptions of the existence of one universal truth. Objectivity and value 'freedom' are important and the belief that bias can be minimised is central (Bowling 2002; Seale 1999).

Qualitative research on the other hand believes "knowledge is contextualised and local" (McLeod, 2003, p.71). It takes an inductive (knowledge from data not from preconceived hypothesis) and interpretative approach whereby it is recognised that "meaning emerges through interaction and is not standardised across social and cultural groups" (Bowling, 2002, p.129). It is interested in deepening our understanding of meaning and experiences of individuals rather than seeking to establish fact, quantification and measurement (Dallos and Vetere, 2005). Qualitative research has many characteristics (McLeod, 2003; Dallos and Vetere, 2005), one of which is flexibility (McLeod, 2003; Stiles, 1993). Among many other reasons including the one quoted above by Dallos and Vetere (2005), it's flexibility makes it suitable for use in the current study as there is little current research available, and qualitative approaches have been described as useful when 'opening up' a new field of study and to identify and conceptualise salient issues (Fitzpatrick and Boulton, 1994).

There are many philosophical approaches to qualitative research (Creswell, 1998; Maykut and Morehouse, 1994; Schwandt, 2000), this study takes a phenomenological approach. Phenomenology believes that knowledge and understanding can be gained from peoples experiences and that there is no one fixed objective (McLeod, 2009). This approach is appropriate for the current study as it places individuals experiences at centre stage and fits well with the phenomenological philosophy underpinning person centred counselling (which I am studying) (McLeod, 2009).

Where quantitative research seeks larger samples and focuses on generalisations, qualitative studies tend to be smaller in scale (Patton, 1997). While quantitative measures seek generalisations qualitative research allows for deeper understanding at an individual level (Elliott, Fischer, and Rennie, 1999). It has been suggested in fact that starting with the particular may be helpful in avoiding inaccurate generalisations and allows for the discovery of non-expectant issues (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin, 2009). It may be important to note that smaller samples do not rule out generalisations it mearly arrives at them from a different viewpoint. The following quote from Hermans (1988) comes to mind: "The particular eternally underlies the general, the general eternally has to comply with the particular" (p.785).

Another advantage for qualitative research is that it has been said to allow for greater self-evaluation in its results than that of quantitative research due to the more reflexive nature of the interpretation of data (McLeod, 2001).

Another important difference between qualitative and quantitative research is how the participant is seen. Qualitative research (and therefore this research) sees the participant as active in the generation of knowledge, whereas a more quantitative or positivist approach sees the participant more as a subject, passive in the generation of knowledge. A more active view of the participant is more consistant with the phenomenological approach of this study which is interested in learning about peoples individual experiences.

<u>Sample</u>

> *"In qualitative research the purpose is not to establish a random or representative sample drawn from a population, but to identify specific groups that either possess characteristics or live in circumstances relevant to the phenomenon being studied"* (Strang 2000, p. 912).

For this study purposive (non-probability) sampling is adopted where participants are selected in accordance with the needs of the study (Denscombe, 2010; Strang 2000). This will allow for accessing individuals with particular relevance to the research topic. Criteria for inclusion included being over the age of 18; speaking Welsh as their first language/mother-tongue; having experienced counselling; being counsellors or trainee counsellors who have access to supervision to ensure that they have the necessary support; being individuals who are not counsellors and have been out of therapy for two years

The goal of this criteria was to ensure that my participants had experience in the area of interest and ensures minimal risk for distress through participation. Sample was recruited using posters (see appendix 2, p.80). Placement of posters was to gain maximum access to target population including local Universities with access to

Welsh speaking students; and also organisations offering counselling services in Welsh Speaking areas including RASA North wales and BACP. All institutions was sent a cover letter about the study asking for permission to advertise (see appendix 3, p.81). A secondary method of snowballing was also used as recruitment rates were low, in order to more effectively target the sample group (Denscombe, 2010).

Interested individuals contacted me via the contact details on the poster and a pre-interview questionnaire (appendix 4, p.82) was conducted to ensure inclusion criteria were met and a more detailed information sheet (appendix 5, p.83) was provided. With respect to the Welsh Language Act (1993) participants should have the right to choose what language they receive the information. Therefore all documents was available in Welsh and I am bilingual. Participants were given time to consider whether they wished to be involved in the study and offered opportunities to discuss any issues.

Four participants volunteered for the study, this is in line with Smith, Flowers, and Larkin's (2009) recommendation that between three and six participants is ideal for a Masters study. It allows scope for detailed analysis of individual participants as well as manageable shared analysis. All Four participants were female and were either trained or in training counsellors. All currently lived in the North Wales area.

Data Collection

> *"The interview is a conversation, the art of asking questions and listening. It is not a neutral tool, for at least two people create the reality of the interview situation. In this situation answers are given. Thus the interview produces situated understandings grounded in specific interactional episodes. This method is influenced by the personal characteristics of the interviewer, including race, class, ethnicity, and gender" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000, p.48).*

This study will employ semi structured interviews for data collection as this style of interviewing allows the participant to talk about what is important to them as well as allowing the researcher to have a schedule of topics to discuss that are related to the research interests (Britten, 1995). Interview schedule development was guided by McLeod, 2003, Smith, Flowers, and Larkin, 2009; and Spong, 2011. The interview schedule can be found in appendix 6, p.86. A topic based interview schedule was chosen in order to allow flexibility within the interview setting. This meant that I (the researcher) can phrase the question on particular topics within the context of the interview and based on the type of language used by the participant.

The flexible nature of semi-structured interview has been described as less likely to cause distress (Koenig, Back, and Crawley, 2003). Furthermore a pilot study was conducted in advance of interviewing participants in order to see how long the interview would take, check clarity of instructions, make sure main issues included, and to test if it is likely to bring up difficult emotional reactions (McLeod, 2003). The semi structured style of interviewing is also said to have the advantage of "facilitating rapport/empathy, allows greater flexibility of coverage and enables the interviewer to enter novel areas", all of which were important factors for this study (Smith 1995: 12). I was aware, however to be careful of blurring the line between counsellor and researcher (Denscombe, 1983).

Each interview took around 30-60 minutes and were arranged at a mutually convenient time, and conducted in a safe location. All interviews were conducted through the English language due to no Welsh speaking examiners being available at the University of Chester (see limitations section). At each interview it was

emphasised again that the participants were free to terminate the interview at any point, without giving a reason, in accordance with 'process consent' (Elliot and Williams, 2001). Interviews were transcribed verbatim and field notes written to record context.

Data analysis

There are many ways to analyse qualitative data (McLeod, 2003; Willig, 2008). For this study I have chosen interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA). IPA is located within the phenomenological perspective, which means it is interested in understanding a person's world view and what it is like for them. This perspective is drawn from Heidegger's idea of person-in context, that is a person is seen as part of the world and the world as part of the person (Larkin, Watts, and Cliffdon, 2006). In contrast to more transcendental phenomenological approaches to analysis that believe in the ability to suspend assumptions, IPA adapts a more hermeneutic view where interpretation is seen as part of knowledge creation (McLeod, 2001; McLeod, 2003; Smith, Osborn, and Jarman, 1999; Willig, 2008). It has been in-fact describe as being double hermeneutic as it sees the researcher trying to make sense of the participant trying to make sense of what is happening (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin, 2009). Although the role of the researcher in the interpretation is highlighted, I will be careful not to loose the participants voice in the analysis (Willig, 2008), by trying to 'bracket off' my assumptions and strive for reflexive and transparent practice (Etherington, 2004). I believe this approach secures consistency in philosophical underpinnings considered important in research design (McLeod, 2001 and 2003).

IPA is, therefore, a systematic idiographic (concerned with detail) approach to exploring lived experience (phenomenology) that highlights the role of interpretation (hermeneutics and the role of the researcher). It starts by analysing in detail each individual case and then moving towards integration in later stages (Dallos and Vetere, 2005; Smith Flowers, and Larkin, 2009; Wallig, 2008). This is in contrast to other approaches such as grounded theory that integrates at an earlier stage (McLeod, 2003), possibly allowing for the loss of individualized findings. This method is suitable to small scale studies, an important aspect of an MA study, other approaches such as grounded theory need larger sample population in order for theoretical sampling (Dallos and Vetere, 2005).

The analysis was conducted in accordance with that described by Smith, Flowers, and Larkin, (2009). After an initial period of immersing myself in the data listening and reading the transcripts I analysed each participant separately. First by doing a line-by-line analysis and then moving on to developing emergent themes searching for connections and differences within cases. This stage involved more interpretation from me, however, I stayed close to the data by using quotes from the transcripts to support theme development. Once detailed analysis was completed for all participants I moved on to searching for patterns across cases developing common themes for the group and considering each theme for each participant. At this stage I was "moving from the particular to the shared, and from the descriptive to the interpretative" (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). This then developed into the results chapter. A detailed account of the stages of analysis can be found in Appendix 7, p.88 (and accompanying appendices 8-12, p.89-93).

<u>Framework for understanding validity</u>

There are many frameworks for understanding validity or criteria for describing rigour in research. It is considered important, however, to choose a criteria for evaluating the quality of research that reflects the methodological approach taken by the study (Ballinger, 2004). This study will use the guidelines of Elliott, Fischer, and Rennie (1999) in evaluating the validity of my study, as these guidelines were developed within the phenomenological-hermeneutic paradigm (Willig, 2008). Please see Appendix 13, p.94 for further detail of this framework of validity.

<u>Ethics</u>

The topic of ethics is very complex (Stevens, Wilde, Paz, Ahmedazi, Rawson and Wragg, 2003), but I endeavoured to make sure that the welfare of the participant was at the forefront of my research. I did so in accordance to the ethical considerations put forth by Bond (2004); McLeod, (2003); and Willig, (2008); and by abiding to the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy Ethical Framework, 2010. I made sure that ethical issues were considered at all stages of the research process (McLeod, 2003) and that the project was approved by the University of Chester Research Ethics Committee before work commenced.

In order to ensure ethical practice I informed participants of the research procedure and obtained informed consent (see appendix 14, p.96 for consent form) initially and also throughout the process. In addition I ensured participants were aware that they could withdraw at any point, including if any material were to emerge that they did not want me to use. Participants' anonymity was ensured by using

pseudonyms and removing identifiable information from transcripts. Furthermore participants will be asked to check transcripts and analysis to make sure that their views are not misrepresented. Furthermore in case of any signs of distress as a result of participating I had at hand numbers of helplines e.g. Samaritans.

Limitations

Although the inclusion criteria allowed for variability in both gender and experience the sample did not include any male participants or any non-counsellor or trainee counsellor participants. I originally felt that it would be important to include such participants as it was my belief that trainee counsellors or counsellors have been given the opportunity to develop their ability in talking about emotions and feelings to a greater level than other individuals in the population might. In particular Welsh Speaking trainee counsellors or counsellors will have had to do this through their second language (English) due to the lack of counselling courses that are taught through the Welsh language. For this reason their experience of talking about emotional issues may be different to others who may not be as comfortable talking English or even about feelings. What I found however was that although participants agreed that there were others in Wales less confident in Welsh, within the sample itself I discovered various degrees of comfort and this turned out to be an interesting aspect of the findings.

Another limitation to consider may be the use of IPA. Although there are many benefits of IPA (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin, 2009), some of which are discussed above, there are also limitations that need to be recognised (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin, 2009; Willig, 2008). One limitation is its dependency on language as its main

tool of access, although there is no room here to do this justice (see Willig, 2008), it may be important to keep a close eye on this limitation, in particular in this study due to the importance of language in the topic matter.

In light of the findings (described in chapter 4), and particularly I refer to those describing difficulties that first language speakers have in expressing themselves in English I recognise that an obvious limitation to this study is that the interviews themselves were conducted in English. Due to the difficulties described by Sian and Gwenno in particular, and by some of the literature (Bowker and Richards, 2004; Kokaliari, Catanzarite, and Berzoff, 2013) it may be that due to the interviews being conducted in English this particular study may not have had access to some experiences.

The reason however why I chose to interview in English as opposed to interviewing in Welsh and then translating the data into English for presentation is that the process of translating would increase the likelihood of meaning loss and because there are not always direct translations (Iannaco, 2009; Sutton, Altarriba, Gianico, and Basnight-Brown, 2007). As described previously, member check ensured validity and pick up any loss of meaning or miss-interpretation. Furthermore it is important to note that meaningful knowledge has been obtained in similar situations by conducting interviews in English (Costa, 2010).

Time will also be a limitation in this study as it is an MA research study with a limited timeframe to complete the work. The small scale nature of the study could be considered a limitation, however, this has been discussed previously under research design.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

All four participants met the required criteria as described in chapter 3. Participants consisted of 4 females, all of which have been given pseudonyms for confidentiality reasons.

The first participant Gwenno, aged 31 was a qualified person-centred counsellor working within North Wales. She described her background, current work, social, and family settings as being predominantly Welsh. She described Welsh as both her mother tongue and first language from the outset, and described throughout her interview difficulties in expressing herself (even in the interview) in English. She had experienced person-centred counselling through the medium of English, although describes the majority of her current work as a therapist to be through the medium of Welsh.

The second participant, Sian, aged 32 was a trainee person-centred counsellor, currently in her second year at a university in England. She describes her background, current working, social, and family settings as being predominantly Welsh speaking. She is currently living in North Wales. She described Welsh as both her mother tongue and first language from the outset. She had and is experiencing person-centred counselling through the medium of Welsh. She has also, however, experienced some English counselling settings at University E.g. triad work.

The third participant, Ffion, aged 33 was a trainee person-centred counsellor, currently in her third year at a university in England. She describes having a predominantly Welsh upbringing until the age of sixteen but then describes living and

working in an English environment and becoming more confident speaking English than Welsh, although she still describes Welsh as both her mother tongue and her first language. She has recently moved back to North Wales and now most of her working and social contexts are Welsh. She had and is experiencing person-centred counselling through the medium of Welsh, however, in the past she has experienced counselling through the medium of English also. She has also experienced some English counselling settings at University. In addition she has started a counselling placement in wales and has experienced being the counsellor in both Welsh and English.

The fourth participant, Cadi, aged 66 is a fully qualified person-centred counsellor who has been working as a counsellor in both English and Welsh settings. She currently lives in North Wales, however, she has lived away from Wales for the majority of her life since leaving for university. Although initially describing Welsh as her first language and mother tongue, during the interview she then described that actually by now her first language is probably English, although her mother tongue remains to be Welsh. She currently feels most comfortable speaking English. She has always had her own counselling through the medium of English but does offer counselling to others through the medium of Welsh.

Next I will highlight the main themes I felt were most prominent for the above participants. See Table 1 (overleaf) for theme headings and then below for my interpretation of the data using quotations from the participants as support. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin, 2009 state that it is important to include evidence from each participant for each theme, for quality purposes I have ensured this has been done.

How the findings relate to current literature will be addressed in the discussion chapter.

Table 1: Table of super-ordinate and sub-ordinate themes identified by cross sample

Theme Number	Super-ordinate theme name	Sub-ordinate themes
1	Access to feelings, emotions, and experiences	• Familiarity • Identity and Culture • Flowing from within (Natural)
2	Getting in the way of therapy	• Thinking and finding the words • Meaning lost in translation • Feeling miss-understood
3	Creating a trusting and facilitative relationship with the counsellor	• Pre-existing connection and bond • Acceptance • Safety • Understanding
4	Extras that come with having two languages	• Choice and flexibility • Hidden issues

1. Access to feelings, emotions and experiences

Familiarity

All participants described the language they were currently most familiar with as the easiest language to communicate about their feelings, emotions and experiences. For Gwenno and Sian they both described Welsh as the language they were most familiar with, used in all aspects of their lives and felt more confident using. It allowed them more effortless access to their emotions than when they spoke a less familiar second language.

> *My emotions would be easier in Welsh. Erm..., it's just what's in you really, isn't it? And what you know and what you've always spoken, I suppose. And it's just, erm..., more real isn't it, I think. Personal things and personal emotions and feelings and thoughts are more real and here and now and it would be better or easier to do that in Welsh really (178-185, Gwenno)*

> *during sort of (..)heightened emotion and maybe, you know, really expressing feeling and doing that easily without having the risk of not remembering words and all that type of things that... I think it's very, very important that people are able to do that in their mother tongue. (216-221, Sian)*

Cadi describes her younger years as being Welsh speaking but then as she grew and moved away from Wales, English became easier for her.

> *Welsh is my first language. I was brought up in a very rural... on a farm. I obviously learnt English in school when I was about... when I was eight onwards. But, I must say, I do feel more comfortable in English now (..)I suddenly switch to English when I want to say what I want to say, you know, something a bit deeper. (8-19, Cadi)*

For Ffion it is less clear cut, although she described speaking Welsh as easier for her when she was younger, her more English based educational history and development changed to her feeling more comfortable speaking English. Unlike Cadi

however since her return to Wales not all of her experiences continue to be easier in English. Although personal and deeper emotions are easier in English, those experiences that occurred within a Welsh speaking context were easier for her to talk about in Welsh.

> *I think maybe sometimes things to do with my relationship, because my partner's Welsh and, you know, all our interactions, all our connections are in Welsh language. It makes sense to me, it seems easier to talk about that in Welsh. Erm... whereas, maybe stuff that's to do with myself, the way I feel about myself and some of those other... sort of, maybe more hidden things. That feels like it's easier in English. Like an internal/external thing almost (79-84, Ffion)*

The most currently familiar language appears to be easiest for communicating emotions and deeper issues, and therefore language is important. It also, however, describes that this language may not always be what the individual considers to be their mother tongue and that context as well as familiarity may have a role to play in what language is easiest for communicating.

Identity and culture

Language seems to play an important role within the participants identity and culture and therefore in how they see and express themselves. The participants describe how what language they speak can provide an insight into who they are as a person and where they came from. Gwenno for example describes how being Welsh and speaking Welsh is part of who she is and maybe if she is not speaking Welsh she is not being herself.

> *I feel different. I feel me, I suppose, when I speak Welsh. It feels comfortable. I'm able to express myself clearly. It's, you know, natural. I feel more confident. (206-215, Gwenno).*

She also describes the importance of her therapist understanding what being Welsh means and what the culture involves, in order to feel understood as a person. Below Sian also describes how understanding her culture gives an understanding of who she is.

> *Welsh culture's a very important part of who I am, my family, my friends, you know, the fact that, you know, you're a minority I suppose. Erm..... and I suppose... I suppose, with regards to the therapist, what I would want, always, is that there would always be understanding there (170-176, Sian)*

Ffion (and also Gwenno and Sian) sees the Welsh language as a part of who she is, a part that cannot be explained, only felt. And this again is linked to how unless she can explain or feel understood that *she* as a person cannot be fully understood.

> *because it is **so** integral to who I am and how I see myself in the world. It's not something that I'm always aware of myself. And so to explain that to someone else... it's like me asking an English person "what does it mean to you to be speaking English?" It's just... it just is, you know (43-46, Ffion)*

In addition to being a part of who she is it also impacts her personality, she describes how she is more formal when speaking English but more 'friendly and jokey' speaking Welsh. For Cadi however, although being Welsh and speaking Welsh was part of her younger identity, she doesn't see it as part of her adult identity. In-fact she feels more in tune with English culture.

> *I suppose I've lived in England for so long I've become half English really. And I've lived in America as well. So I don't feel Welsh anymore, and when I came back here, I had counselling because I couldn't settle because I didn't feel that I belonged (41-44, Cadi)*

For Gwenno, Sian, and Ffion speaking Welsh is part of feeling as if they belong and part of expressing their identity and feeling fully understood as a person. For Cadi however speaking Welsh does the opposite it makes her feel as if she doesn't belong and it doesn't give understanding of who she is now as a person.

Flowing from within/Natural

This theme has close links to the above two themes but describes how communicating about emotions and feelings are impacted by where the information is coming from. Familiarity may come with practice or fluency however there is an element of speaking about emotions and personal issues that comes from a deeper place. Gwenno for example describes speaking Welsh as something that feels natural and that happens without effort as if it flows out of her when she speaks Welsh.

> *I think it just comes natural in your first language doesn't it? It's something...*
> *erm…it's your first language and it's just natural and it's just happens and your*
> *able to express yourself I think better, maybe (135-138, Gwenno)*

A similar phenomena is described by Sian where it feels more instinctive and natural.

> *I find it easier talking in my mother tongue compared to if I'm speaking in*
> *English, for example. And it seems to be more... Yeah, I suppose instinctive.*
> *And, there's less effort involved too, I suppose when I speak in Welsh,*
> *compared to when I speak in English (13-16, Sian)*

Ffion seems to describe aspects of herself that cannot be accessed through English, a place that feels deep within her soul.

But then there's that aspect of speaking Welsh where there are certain things that I just can't say in English. It sort of comes from somewhere else almost (65-67, Ffion)

Cadi on the other hand, although describing a part of her deep inside as being Welsh, she doesn't feel it is inaccessible through English.

I do feel more in touch with my ground and my being, I suppose, in Welsh. But, …….yeah... it doesn't really count for that much really, because of all my developments since I was five say. You know, there is an area, I suppose, deep inside me somewhere which is a little Welsh girl, you know, five years old who stood on the chair to speak in English, you know. But really, I don't have ……..to talk in Welsh to access that little girl really, even though she's Welsh (179-185, Cadi)

2. Getting in the way of therapy

For the participants in this study there were elements of language that got in the way of therapy or allowed therapy to feel successful. This super-ornate theme describes areas in which therapy was impeded and/or facilitated by the language used.

Thinking and finding the words

In the above theme of familiarity we have seen that how familiar or comfortable the participants feel with a language can impact upon how easy it feels to communicate within therapy. A more specific aspect of this familiarity that has been described as having an impact on therapy is that of searching for words. Gwenno describes how her difficulty in searching for the right word can act as a barrier to exploring the issues she needs to explore.

And I suppose, I think in Welsh first as well. So I think and then I'd speak Welsh wouldn't I, really what I was thinking. So... it would maybe stop things as well I suppose... with... because there's so many distractions isn't there? Thinking and translating maybe, or... a lot of thinking before saying something really. And that maybe has affected the session in the way of what I was going to talk about maybe (169-173, Gwenno)

Sian describes how searching for the words can impact the counselling session because it blocks access to how she is feeling and in-fact changes the feeling from what she was trying to explain to that of frustration.

I'm so busy trying to find particular words, that actually how I'm feeling – the emotions and feelings actually get lost in the process of searching, I suppose, which can be quite frustrating (109-111, Sian)

For Ffion, she describes some particular words, relevant to counselling, easier in English, therefore not being able to access these words in Welsh can be a barrier for her.

I don't know what, you know, person centred therapy even would be in Welsh particularly (157-160, Ffion)

Cadi describes a similar problem with Welsh. This was more unexpected as there is little written about those who have difficulty speaking what they themselves describe as their mother-tongue. She feels that searching for Welsh words can feel like a 'chore' and this could act as a barrier in therapy.

I wouldn't know how to express some deep words in Welsh without having to look in the dictionary. And then it becomes a chore really (112-119, Cadi)

Therefore searching for words and thinking have been described as aspects that can interfere with the process, with the flow of the counselling session. It can be distracting, frustrating, tiresome, and it can take away the immediacy of it.

Meaning lost in translation

A strong theme described by the participants was one connected to how language can impact on the meaning of what they want to say. Gwenno describes her struggle in feeling that what she is saying is what she means.

> *What I noticed with words, they're not quite the same. Erm.., so maybe translating an emotion or a word – feeling word or something – isn't quite the same to what I was trying to express, if that makes sense. Maybe they are the same words, but they don't mean the same. Erm..., that's quite hard to explain as well really. The meaning, I suppose, is different. Or, to me, it feels different. I suppose if I can't get that meaning across to what I feel or think, it's not quite the same (…) it goes back to the... me not being able to express the right feeling, maybe, or not getting that across to what it actually really does feel or mean to me (190-201, Gwenno)*

For Sian a problem is that she doesn't feel that the gravity that comes with a particular word in Welsh gets carried with its English translation.

> *obviously, you know, you've got a range of words to describe sadness, but it's that extremity of it maybe that maybe gets lost sometimes(97-99, Sian)*

Ffion describes a similar phenomenon where there are some words that carry so much meaning in Welsh but not in English, and how this can have an effect on the impact a word has on you.

> *She will be speaking in English and a little bit of Welsh creeps in and she'll say one word and it's like something has hit you, like a stake through your heart. It's just so....packed with meaning (17-23, Ffion)*

Cadi however, although she recognises there are some words that do not have a direct translation, she doesn't feel that this causes any problems for her.

Apart from something like "hiraeth" which is the obvious one. You know, and there might be one or two words, but they're just the same in any language. You can't quite translate them, (and did you think that that impacted you at all?) Not at all! Not at all. (169-173, Cadi)

Feeling miss-understood

This theme is closely linked to the above theme about loss of meaning. This theme however focuses more on how not being able to get across what something means to you or how you are feeling (feeling miss-understood) can impact the counselling session. Gwenno for example describes it as frustrating.

not being able to explain myself properly maybe, or the counsellor not getting what I was trying to say or whatever. So frustrating I think more than anything (75-79, Gwenno)

Sian describes it as confusing, where the confusion she already feels inside can be amplified by the confusion of feeling mis-understood and not being able to get across what is going on with her:

because I've got it here in Welsh, but I'm trying to work out, maybe sometimes, what it is in English. And maybe the therapist will pick up on something, but that's not really what I'm saying, but there's confusion within me anyway, so it's sort of... it can be quite confusing (76-84, Sian)

For Ffion, because the weight of what she is trying to say has not been understood, she feels dismissed, without a voice.

it does have a direct translation, but it meant more to me – the Welsh word. It was "blaguro" It's like everything was blossoming….. Erm..... budding, and sort of full of potential. And I remember saying it in the group (laughter) and just, you know. I knew they understood, but I did feel a little bit dismissed maybe (273-285, Ffion)

Again on the other hand Cadi has never experienced feeling miss-understood, and felt her counsellor got exactly what it is she was trying to say, and that this felt good (tone of voice).

> *and she asked me about my childhood, which suddenly….. just went straight there, and I described it to her - on a Welsh farm, you know. And she just got it, immediately (217-219, Cadi)*

3. Creating a trusting and facilitative relationship with the counsellor

Pre-existing connection and bond

This theme focuses on how having a Welsh speaking therapist can be seen as a having a head start in the relationship building aspect of counselling because of the feeling that there is already a level of understanding from the outset, that there is something connecting the client and the counsellor before they even begin. Gwenno describes how this understanding allows the relationship to go further.

> *I think there's, erm..., maybe a deeper understanding. I wouldn't say better. There's sort of a deeper understanding of each other in the relationship and in the counselling process. Erm... I think it helps or it adds to the relationship a lot, to build on the relationship and go further really (320-324, Gwenno).*

Sian and Ffion also describes the importance of feeling understood and how it creates a bond between them and their therapist from the start.

> *it's like being in tune with someone. So, it's that sort of, really feeling, yeah, in tune and being understood from the offset, I suppose (155-157, Sian)*
> *people that maybe are from Wales or do speak Welsh, you know, there's a natural, erm..... connection there anyway (323-325, Ffion)*

Ffion (as does Gwenno and Sian) also describes how it relates to culture and identity and the importance of having shared experiences that create a bond between client and counsellor.

> *if I was to talk about experiences of going to Eisteddfod as a child, no one else would understand what that entailed or what it means or, you know, just certain... em...certain life event sort of things, that happen. You know, I was able to share everything like that with her and all these different words and things that meant stuff to me, that I couldn't have done. (215-222, Ffion)*

Although personally for Cadi she doesn't feel the need for this understanding in her own counselling she does recognise its existence and how important it is for other welsh speakers.

> *when they knock on the door and they say "Oh, you know, I'm Jane", and I say "Dewch I mewn da chi isho panad", or something, and I can see them visibly relaxing, and I think a lot of work is done in that very moment, you know, by the fact that I'm... and you know, I've got quite a local accent really. I can... They can think "Oh right, she's not one of them, you know, anonymous, Ysbyty G (local hospital) people." (253-263, Cadi)*

Acceptance

This theme relates to a strong feeling that if a person accepts the Welsh language and culture then they feel accepted as a person. Furthermore a sense of their struggle with language difficulties being accepted feels important for the relationship. For Gwenno the fact that her struggle was understood and accepted actually helped the relationship.

> *I wouldn't refuse to see somebody because they weren't Welsh speaking. It's just that understanding or knowledge and acceptance I suppose which, you know, I received which helped the process (108-112, Gwenno)*

Sian also highlights the importance of having a therapist who understands the importance of Welsh in her life and that this contributes to feeling accepted as a person.

> *Welsh culture's a very important part of who I am, my family, my friends, you know, the fact that, you know, you're a minority I suppose. Erm..... and I suppose... I suppose, with regards to the therapist, what I would want, always, is that there would always be understanding there. (170-176, Sian)*

In addition for Ffion is the perception that people may be prejudiced to the Welsh, and therefore to her, and how this could result in her closing down.

> *I do feel like sometimes I am perceived negatively because, just as, you know, people carry prejudices of different things – I know there's some people that are quite anti-Welsh (311-313, Ffion)*

> *I know that's their issue, but then that makes me feel, sort of, closed down, like I don't have a voice then (293-295, Ffion)*

For Cadi acceptance is important but is experienced in a different way, she describes not feeling accepted within her Welsh relationships and therefore feels greater acceptance within an English context.

> *But I can see it's a sensitive point, you know, that my children don't speak English because they were brought up in England, you know. But we get on fine, but there's that little thing there. "Why don't your children speak English - Welsh?" (355-357, Cadi)*

Safety

This focuses on how language can be used as a message of safety and in the development of trust between client an counsellor. For Gwenno the feeling of safety is closely linked to familiarity and comfort.

*Erm..., feels comfortable, safer, **clearer** really. Erm...(pause)... It just feels better and safe and more comfortable to, for me anyway, to speak it. Because that's the language I've been brought up with really, isn't it, and that's I think the reason, but, definitely, I feel more...(pause)... more me. More myself, speaking it (296-300, Gwenno).*

Sian describes how language can be used as a tool to manage how safe she feels when talking about different issues. If it becomes unsafe she can always switch to English, which can create a distance between her and a painful issue.

I suppose if you want a bit of distance from something, I sometimes find it easier doing that in English. So, if I'm trying to distance myself somehow, for whatever reasons, erm.....then sometimes it's easier to do that in English compared to Welsh. So really, when I'm trying to get really close to something, I find it easier doing that in Welsh (41-45, Sian)

For Ffion it is an important aspect of the relationship development and trust, enabling her to feel safe.

so it was just part of the process of getting to know her and trusting her I guess...(201-205, Ffion)

For Cadi, although she doesn't describe feeling safer using Welsh herself she does describe it as an important aspect of offering safety to her own Welsh speaking clients.

I meet people for initial meetings or counselling if they want it in Welsh, and I can see the relief on their face when I say "do you want a panad (cup of tea)", or something in Welsh. And I think that's a huge thing for them. I can tell! And I like giving that to them and I speak to them in Welsh then. (96-102, Cadi)

41

For Cadi it may be that actually speaking English feels safer for her because she does describe negative associations and past experiences within a Welsh context, suggesting that language is related to safety for Cadi too.

Understanding

This theme has a strong link to the above themes of pre-existing connection and acceptance but also to the super-ornate theme 'Getting in the way of therapy'. It focuses on how feeling understood by their therapist is crucial to the relationship and therefore therapy. Gwenno is left feeling frustrated and disappointed when she doesn't feel understood by her therapist.

> *Disappointing, yes. That's the word, really. Erm..., trying to get something across or trying to really explain something and knowing maybe that the other person or the counsellor doesn't understand (127-135, Gwenno)*

Sian has described how being 'stunted' searching for words can impact the relationship, but further than this it can cause a problem in feeling that the therapist understands what it is she is trying to say.

> *because I maybe don't get to that particular word, that then the therapist picks up on something which I'm not really getting at. (76-84, Sian)*

It can also cause difficulties with regards to understanding from the client side. Ffion for example felt she miss-understood what to expect from therapy which impacted her experience negatively.

> *But there was a language problem in that there was a miscommunication, erm.... in terms of what was provided to me and what I knew of the service and my expectation, and all that sort of thing (125-127, Ffion)*

What is important for the client is that what they feel that what they are trying to say is understood. For the above three this isn't always the case when speaking English. For Cadi however it is just as important that what she is trying to say is understood, but for her language has not been a barrier to this.

> *and I described it to her - on a Welsh farm, you know. And she just got it, immediately (218-225, Cadi)*

4. Extras that comes with having two languages

Choice and Flexibility

Having a choice was an important issue described by all, the importance of having a choice themselves and/or being able to offer this choice to others. Gwenno for example felt disappointed by the lack of choice she had in choosing the right therapist for her.

> *So, there wasn't a choice really, either. So that's... that was a frustration before starting the process, if that makes sense? (85-89, Gwenno)*

Having a choice of languages has been described as allowing flexibility with regards to staying close or creating distance to issues. Sian and Ffion, highlight this below.

> *So, if I'm trying to distance myself somehow, for whatever reasons, erm.....then sometimes it's easier to do that in English compared to Welsh. So really, when I'm trying to get really close to something, I find it easier doing that in Welsh (41-45, Sian)*

And, at one point, I know the, sort of, first four sessions really, I was able to use that (using the Welsh formal 'chi' for you) as an excuse and not get close and to sort of avoid painful things (181-192, Ffion)

Having more than one language available can be seen as a positive when it comes to therapy. For example, Ffion and Cadi suggests further options of exploration when there are more than one languages available.

But, erm..... I would like to have a choice of, erm.... language. And I think actually, I would choose a Welsh counsellor just because then you've got more options, because I can change and throw in an English word or an English sentence if I need to, but I don't have that freedom if it's just a single language counsellor. So I think I would, yeah. It would be important.(406-410, Ffion)

I'm aware that people who are bilingual do have a slightly easier time of it because they've got the two ways of expressing things really. You know, that's... yeah. Two different cultures to work things through in (174-176, Cadi)

Hidden issues

For all participants the presence of more than one language in their lives allowed for discovery and/or exploration of unique hidden issues. For Gwenno a hidden issue was her lack of confidence in speaking English, she was able to identify this and explore it openly with her therapist which she found to be a beneficial aspect of her therapy. For Sian this hidden issue was in regards to the difficulties she experienced working in a small rural setting

the only disadvantage, but then again, I'm not sure if this is down to language, is the awareness that I have with my therapist that she may know the people that I work with and... So, there's a sense of, because we're a minority language and that we live in a very small place, there's that risk of, you know, they may know who I'm talking about. And then, because there's that risk, maybe I... Maybe I hold back a bit about what I say and how I say it in case that person knows (224-230, Sian)

For Ffion it seemed as if there were many hidden issues related to language. One of the most prominent issue I felt was the inner conflict she had with the historical part of her to which Welsh was so very important and the more recent part of her that felt most comfortable in English. This seemed to bring out feelings of guilt and betrayal. Because she may not be as 'Welsh' as she would like to be, demonstrating the hold that being Welsh has on her and her identity.

> *it's strange as well because then I've got this, sort of, historical side of me that is almost sad that there's been that change as I've grown up, because it does mean so much. You know, because I've never... I could never imagine my children for example not being able to speak Welsh or them not going to a Welsh school. And as I've grown up, (…) so there is a huge part of me that still wants to have that in my life and to, you know, really I would like to be as comfortable talking about myself in Welsh (85-93, Ffion)*

For Cadi as well there seems to be a hidden issue about what Welsh means to her. Often she associates Welsh with being backwards, bad experiences, having limits and being judged. English, however is associated with freedom, culture, and acceptance. Although each participant may have discovered a different hidden issue, it appears to be that if it wasn't for the presence of two languages, that issue may never have come into light.

Please see discussion chapter for a summary of the results.

CHAPTER 5: DISSCUSION

The following chapter aims to consider the above by summarising the findings and then considering them in light of current research and theory. Finally I will consider future research before my concluding remarks.

Summary of findings

This study has identified several aspects of mother-tongue that may be considered important for counselling and the counselling relationship, and that these aspects can influence how effective the counselling will be for individuals. The familiarity of the client with the language used in counselling has been described as having a role in determining how easy it is for individuals to access and talk about emotions, personal issues and experiences. The more familiar a client is with a language the easier it will be to access such aspects. Furthermore the study describes that a person's identity and culture can be linked to mother-tongue and that this can influence how they express themselves and believe themselves to be understood and accepted by others, including the therapist. Where a person feels that their therapist has knowledge of their language and culture they feel that they have a more complete knowledge of who they are as a person.

The study also highlights specific areas related to language that can cause difficulties in the counselling context. Examples of these include difficulties searching for words when the client is speaking in a language other than their mother-tongue or first language (English in this case); and difficulties in expressing the exact meaning of what they are feeling or trying to say due to not having direct translations available or

words having different meanings in Welsh and English. These issues can impact on the counselling process and on how an individual feels within counselling, in particular with regards to feeling understood.

The study describes how language plays a role in the counselling relationship, by contributing towards trust and acceptance, as well as feeling safe within the counselling relationship. The bilingual aspect of these participants (being able to speak Welsh and English) were described as creating 'extra' issues that may not be relevant for mono-lingual clients, and that these issues are important to be aware of. For example, how clients can manage how close or distant to keep themselves from an issue by choosing what language to use in therapy, and how having formal and informal ways of addressing others can impact the counselling session and relationship.

Finally the study also uses the idiopathic nature of the study methodology as a way of highlighting the individual nature of the role of language for clients in therapy and how being aware of these issues can be helpful for clients and therapist.

<u>Considerations of the findings in light of current research and theory</u>

The findings suggest that language plays an important role in counselling and in the counselling context. This supports findings of others for example Clauss (1998); Costa (2010); Iannaco (2009); Santiago-Rivera and Altarriba (2002); and Tehrani and Vaughan (2009) all suggest that language is important in counselling, in particular with regards to accessing emotions and experiences that were gained within a particular language context .

Firstly the finding's suggests that what language you use within counselling can impact access to emotions and personal aspects and experiences. Dewaele (2004); Dewaele and Pavlenko (2002); and Sutton, Altarriba, Gianico, and Basnight-Brown (2007) support this by describing a person's first language as the language of 'emotional expressiveness', and the second language associated with 'emotional distance'. The more familiar and comfortable participants were with a language then the easier it was to access emotions and personal, deeper issues and experiences. These findings reflect other research such as that of Harris, Gleason, and Avcucegi (2006), and Sutton, Altarriba, Gianico, and Basnight-Brown, (2007) who say that proficiency in a language can impact on the processing of emotional words.

What this study adds to such research is that at least for some (Cadi and Ffion in this study), the language they described as most familiar and comfortable was not always their mother-tongue or first language. Ffion described Welsh to be both her mother-tongue and first language yet due to spending much time speaking English in her early adulthood she found English easier to access emotions and more personal experiences. Cadi also initially described Welsh to be both her mother-tongue and first language, however after describing her comfort to lie with speaking English then changed to describing English as her first language. Dewaele (2009) also describe other cases of bilinguals who prefer to talk about emotion in a non-native language. This highlights not only the changing nature of comfort levels with different languages for these bilinguals but also suggests that there may be a difference of meaning (for some individuals) between mother tongue and first language.

In terms of the changing nature of what language feels most familiar, there is some relevant literature to be found. Gathercole and Thomas, (2009) studied bilingual speakers in Wales. They found that regardless of home language and background, individuals developed equal command of English. The command of Welsh, however, was found to correlate with the level of input of Welsh. This may go some way in explaining the change in ease of using mother-tongue described by Cadi and Ffion, that is, the command of Welsh was decreased due to lack of input of Welsh. But, it does not explain the difficulties Gwenno and Sian had in speaking English. Our findings suggest that Welsh speaking bilinguals may not in fact have equal command of the English language where talking about emotions and personal issues are concerned. Further research may be needed in this area.

Another aspect of language described as important by this study, was that of identity and culture. Speaking Welsh has been described by most of the participants as part of who they are, reflecting their culture and identity. Cloke, Goodwin, and Milbourne (1997) highlight the important role of the Welsh language in cultural identity for the Welsh, and this is further supported by the current study. Furthermore others such as Coupland and Aldridge (2009) have expanded upon the important role played by the Welsh language within rural Wales. In particular, this has a relevance to the participants in this study who are all from rural Wales. There may be more here upon the role of a rural upbringing within counselling and there may be cause for further research in this area. This aspect also suggests a limitation to the study in that all the participants came from the Gwynedd county of Wales, and it has been said that national identity in wales vary from region to region (Thompson and Day, 1999).

The importance of language in identity and culture, and the awareness of this by the therapist is supported in the literature (Clauss, 1998; Griner and Smith, 2006). It may be important particularly for the Welsh as it has been said that the Welsh see their fellow countrymen in an especially favourable light (Bourhis, Giles, and Tajfel, 1973). Although this study suggests a preference for a therapist of similar ethnicity, the literature on this is uncertain (Ramoz-Sanchez, 2009; Verdinelli and Biever, 2013). However, what has been found (as seen in this study) is that it can be beneficial to therapy when the therapist shows respect, humbleness, curiosity, and interest in a client's background and life experience (Verdinelli and Biever, 2013).

It may be that these participants feel that without the Welsh language they cannot be seen in full, that part of who they are is missing from the therapist's view. This aspect can be strongly linked to the feeling participant's describe of being understood and accepted by their therapist. Gwenno for example suggests it can be a barrier to the relationship when it is felt that a therapist does not understand and accept the part Welsh language and culture plays in who she is as a person. Participants describe a pre-existing bond with other Welsh people and therefore therapist, that contributes to enhancing their relationship with the counsellor. Sergott (2001) and Clifford (1997) support's this by associating Welsh culture and language as aspects that form strong bonds of belonging and means of connection to others.

Feeling understood and accepted are critical aspects of the therapeutic process (Merry, 2002). Rogers (1957) describes the therapeutic relationship and the delivery and receipt of six core conditions as being at the heart of person centred counselling and therapeutic change. Empathy is described as the counsellor's ability to enter the client's frame of reference and unconditional positive regard refers to the counsellor's

non-judgemental acceptance of the client as a person (Merry, 2002). Questions have been raised by this study's participants about whether or not they feel understood or accepted by a non-Welsh speaking counsellor. These questions imply that mother-tongue can play a crucial role in the delivery, and more so in the receipt of the core conditions, and therefore creating a barrier to therapeutic change.

It is important to note, however, that not all of the participant's felt that there was a lack of understanding by their therapist. Cadi for example felt that she was completely understood by her English speaking therapist and that her therapist didn't have to be Welsh to understand or see her. It may be important to note that Cadi was the only one who described not being in tune with Welsh culture, describing herself more in tune with English culture. This may suggest that although understanding of Welsh culture was not important to her, it may be that an understanding of her particular culture was. This may be an area for further research. The importance of culture sensitive therapy has also been described by others (Griner and Smith, 2006; Santiago-Rivera, 1995).

It has been suggested that a person may experience different aspects of the self in different languages, and therefore the existence of dual self or dual identity (Altarriba, 2003; Amati-Mehler, Argentieri, and Canestri, 1993; Burck, 2004; Perez-Foster, 1996; Tehrani and Vaughan, 2009). This idea of dual identity may be supported by other descriptions of how different languages come with different emotional and cultural dimensions (Altarriba and Santiago Rivera, 1994; Altarriba and Soltano, 1996; de Zulueta, 1995). These finding resonate to some degree with some of the study's participants in that they (although not all) describe feeling different when talking Welsh to when talking English.

This may further suggest that there are some aspects and emotions that are not accessible in one language and are in another. For example Ffion says:

> *But then there's that aspect of speaking Welsh where there are certain things that I just can't say in English. It sort of comes from somewhere else almost (65-67, Ffion)*

This aspect has been strongly supported by others (Kokaliari, Catanzarite, and Berzoff, 2013; Marcos and Urcuyo, 1979; Santiago-Rivera, Altarriba, Poll, Gonzalez-Miller, and Cragun, 2009).

The above considers more subtle aspects of language that may influence access to emotions and personal issues and experiences within counselling. The participants also, however, described more specific aspects of language that impacted on their therapy. Two predominant barriers to therapy where language is concerned for these participants were not being able to find the right words and the aspect of loosing the meaning of what they wanted to say. This study highlights in particular the gravity of what they mean can be lost, and that this may lead to feeling misunderstood.

This work supports research by others (Damasio, 2003; Dewaele, 2004; Dewaele, 2008; Iannaco, 2009; Imberti, 2007; Heredia and Altarriba 2001; Le Doux, 1998; Sutton, Altarriba, Gianico, and Basnight-Brown, 2007) that highlight the difficulty in translating identical meaning from one language to another, in particular emotional words. Again as described above feeling understood is a crucial aspect of effective counselling (Merry, 2002) therefore it will be important for the counsellor to be aware that a word may not hold the same meaning in English as it does in Welsh.

With further relevance to counselling, this study describes how difficulties finding words and expressing meaning can result in changing the felt feeling for example to one of "frustration" (Gwenno) or "confusion" (Sian).   Such interference may be problematic to the therapeutic process, preventing the development of insights and understanding, by not accommodating sticking with feelings as they arise considered important by person-centred counselling (Mearns and Thorne, 2007).

On the other hand it may be also worth noting that these feelings elicited by language difficulties that have been described by the participants, can in itself, open a whole new area of personal discovery and that this may be beneficial to the client. Gwenno for example described feeling less confident in speaking English (her second language), a feeling also described by others in the literature (Segalowitz, 1976). Although this was described as a negative aspect of therapy, it was also described as positive as it allowed her to identify this lack of confidence and explore it further, strengthening her relationship with her therapist. This phenomenon has also been described by Costa (2010). Hidden areas of personal issues have been described in the cases of all participants in this current study. This may be a useful insight for the counsellor working with Welsh clients, that is, there may be more to the struggle of searching for words than meets the eye.

An example of this might be the cases of Cadi and Ffion. It has been said that speaking in a second language "challenges early attachment relationships to the primary language and may lead to unconscious internal conflicts about ties to the past and the present" (Kokaliari, Catanzarite, and Berzoff, 2013, p.99). Some such conflicts were described by Ffion and Cadi and without considering the role of

language in therapy, such issues, that may be of great importance for personal development may have been overlooked.

Aspects important to developing a trusting and facilitative relationship with the counsellor have been described above. In particular with regards to feeling understood and accepted, and the role of culture and identity in this. Another important role of language in the therapeutic relationship is that of safety. All participants described language as a way of offering safety within the counselling relationship. For those who described Welsh as their first language speaking Welsh and having a Welsh therapist felt safer. For Cadi, English was safer, but what is important is that language (regardless of which language) was an important aspect of safety. As safety is a crucial aspect of counselling (Mearns and Thorne, 2007; Proctor, 2002) it will be important for counsellors working with Welsh speaking clients to consider this aspect in their work together.

Finally the study also described 'extras' that language brought into the counselling context, in particular bilingualism. For example because a person had access to more than one language it was considered to give more flexibility within counselling. The first flexibility described was that of choice, being bilingual meant you could choose which language to undergo counselling in. Having a choice was felt important by the participants, however, when the choice was limited or taken away as it was for Gwenno this contributed to a negative experience of counselling.

Furthermore it was considered that having two languages felt like there were more options within the therapy, in the sense that an individual could switch from one

language to the other depending on what felt easier at the time or depending on how much distance they might want to put between them and the subject. For example:

> *So, if I'm trying to distance myself somehow, for whatever reasons, erm.....then sometimes it's easier to do that in English compared to Welsh. So really, when I'm trying to get really close to something, I find it easier doing that in Welsh (41-45, Sian)*

This aspect relates to research by (Sutton, Altarriba, Gianico, and Basnight-Brown, 2007) that describe second language as the language of 'emotional distance'. This switching form one language to another has been described by others (Kokaliari, Catanzarite, and Berzoff, 2013; Bowker and Richards, 2004). Another benefit of switching languages that has been described is that of strengthening the bond between client and therapist (Santiago-Rivera, Altarriba, Poll, Gonzalez-Miller, and Cragun, 2009). This benefit was described also in this study by Ffion, however it may be important to note that this positive aspect of therapy for bilinguals may be missing for some such as Gwenno where their therapist do not speak both languages. This difficulty has also been described from the perspective of the therapist and may be an area for further study (Verdinelli and Biever, 2009).

In evaluating the validity of this research and it's findings I would encourage the reader to look at the critique of the study using the framework of understanding found in Appendix 15, p.97. This brings attention to issues of reflexivity and personal influences and assumptions on the data.

Implications for practice

The study's findings may have important implications for counselling training and practice. I believe the study supports the importance of a counsellor's awareness of the possible implications of mother-tongue to counselling and the counselling relationship for Welsh speakers and /or bilinguals, and that this may benefit the therapeutic process and relationship.

The findings of the study can be useful for both monolingual and bilingual counsellors. For a monolingual (in this case English speaking) counsellor working with a Welsh speaking/bilingual client it will be important to be aware of the possibility that emotions and personal experiences are easier to access in the clients most familiar language (and that this may not always be the clients mother tongue). Recognising this struggle may be beneficial for the therapeutic relationship as well as allowing access to areas of important exploration. Being aware of the possibility of loss of meaning or gravity during translation and that this can be a barrier to the therapeutic process and relationship will be important. The study suggests that there may be a need for particular attention in making sure the true meaning and gravity of a word has been achieved. It may also be worth considering that some important material may be unavailable in a client's second language.

A therapist's interest, understanding, and acceptance of the Welsh culture and identity has also been found to be important. Where counsellors are Welsh and/or can speak Welsh there seems to be an automatic sense of trust and acceptance, for the non-Welsh speaking counsellor, therefore, demonstration of interest, acceptance, and understanding of the Welsh culture and the importance of Welsh in a client's identity may be (although not always) crucial in developing a trusting relationship.

The role of mother-tongue in safety and in creating closeness and distance in therapy will also be important for counsellors to be aware of. Clients may (but not always) feel safer using their mother tongue and may be speaking Welsh or English depending on their need to distance themselves from a particular issue or topic. It may be worth the counsellor considering the reasons behind their client's choice of language, for example are they keeping themselves safe or avoiding painful material? Coming from a person centred approach to counselling the suggestion may be not to act on the knowledge but to be aware that it may be part of the clients' process.

Awareness of the above will also be important for the Welsh speaking/bilingual therapist. In particular for these counsellors an awareness that the clients mother-tongue may not be the language that is easiest to talk about emotions and personal experiences and that there may be hidden issues related to a client's mother-tongue. Being open and accepting to these possibilities may be valuable to the therapeutic process and relationship. The study does not suggest that counselling with a non-Welsh speaking client will be ineffective or that a beneficial therapeutic relationship cannot be achieved. The importance of the therapeutic relationship to the outcome of therapy is well documented (Bender, 2005; Ramos-Sanchez, 2007; and Rogers, 1957), therefore any efforts to encourage the relationship will be important to consider.

A counsellor that is not aware of the possible implications of a person's mother-tongue/bilingualism in therapy may easily misunderstand clients and therefore hinder the therapeutic process and relationship. In the context of Welsh first language speakers, understanding the role of mother-tongue in therapy may prepare counsellors to provide a more culturally and language sensitive therapy and therefore

benefit the counselling experience of Welsh speakers. I would go further in suggesting that consideration of language issues at supervision level and exploration of their own relationship to language and culture, in this case Welsh, can only benefit the counsellors' awareness, and therefore the work they do with Welsh and/or bilingual clients. Although this study considers specifically Welsh speaking bilingual clients only, insights from this study may be relevant to therapists working with other bilingual clients where English is not their first language.

<u>Future research</u>

In the above text some references have been made with regards to future research. The lack of knowledge with regards to the relationship between mother-tongue and first language; the role of a rural upbringing in counselling; and the more specific role of culture in counselling were all highlighted as areas for future research.

As this research lacked both male and non-counsellor or trainee counsellor participants, future research will need to be done with these groups in order to gain further insight into the role of language in counselling and in the client-counsellor relationship for these groups.

Finally as described in the limitations and within the results themselves there may be some aspects of Welsh mother-tongue individual's experiences that cannot be accessed through the English language, and that some meaning may have been lost. I would like to believe that through using member checks, being Welsh myself, and being aware of the issue that these limitations have been minimised. However, it may

be relevant to conduct such studies about the importance of Welsh in the counselling context and the counselling relationship through the medium of Welsh.

<u>Conclusion</u>

In terms of relevance to practice this study has given a great deal of insight into the role of mother-tongue in counselling and in the counselling relationship. It appears that for this study's participants' mother- tongue is important in accessing emotional and personal experiences and an important aspect of their identity and culture. They have described that it can be a barrier to therapeutic change when absent (e.g. loss of meaning and words) and in creating a trusting relationship with the counsellor (e.g. not feeling safe or understood). It has also been described as benefiting counselling by providing flexibility and a deeper connection with their emotions and therapist when present. The participants in this study have also shown that issues around mother-tongue can be key in addressing hidden issues that may be crucial for personal development.

The results suggests that it will be important for the counsellor to consider a client's language, what it means to them, and how it might impact the material that is covered as well as the relationship. Although it does not suggest that no therapeutic benefit is possible when clients are not able to speak their mother-tongue, it does suggest (as does the literature) that it is important that they demonstrate interest and sensitivity in the client's language and in the struggle and difficulties that arise when they are not able to communicate using their mother-tongue.

The results of this study provides further support to the importance of mother-tongue in therapy and in the counselling relationship, however it highlights the individual nature of this importance. The case of Cadi in particular in this study goes far in suggesting caution with a one size fits all approach to the role of language in counselling. I hope that insights gained from this study can benefit the counselling and counselling relationships with Welsh speaking individuals, and inspire further research into the role of language within therapy.

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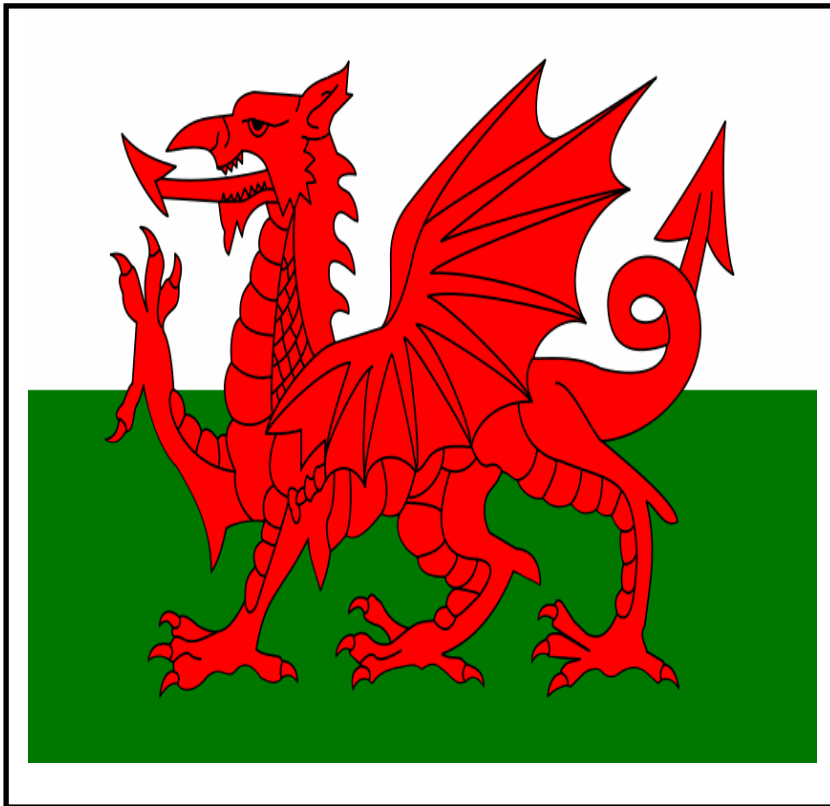
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Appendix 1: Table of Key word searches and Databases

Key Words	Databases/Websites/Search strategies
Welsh	PsycINFO
Mother tongue	CINHAL
First language	University of Chester Library Catalogue
Bilingual(ism)	Soc INDEX
Native language	PubMed
Counselling	
Counseling	
Psychotherapy	
Therapeutic	
Emotion	
Meaning	
Culture	
Identity	

Appendix 2: Poster for Recruitment

<u>Cwnsela drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg/ Counselling through the Welsh Language</u>

Rwyf yn fyfyrwraig yn Brifysgol Gaer ac rwyf yn cynnal astudiaeth i fewn i brofiadau siaradwyr Cymraeg o gwnsela. Os mae Cymraeg yw eich iaith gyntaf ac eich bod wedi cael cwnsela (efallai fel rhan o gwrs cwnsela), ac os oes diddordeb mewn cymeryd rhan ganddoch, byddwn yn falch i chi gysylltu a mi ar y manylion isod.

Bydd cymeryd rhan yn golygu cyfweliad sydd yn cael ei recordio a fydd yn para rhwng 30 a 60 munud yn trafod eich profiad o rôl iaith mewn cwnsela.

Diolch yn fawr.

I am a student at Chester University and I'm carrying out research into Welsh speaker's experiences of Counselling. If you are a first language Welsh speaker who has had counselling (possibly as part of the process of training to be a counsellor yourself) and are interested in participating, please contact me on the details below.

Participation will include a 30-60 minute audio-taped interview which will explore your experience of the role of language in your counselling.

Thank you.

Cysylltwch/ Contact: Vida Kennedy

Ffôn/ Phone:

Ebost/ Email/:

Appendix 3: Cover letter to establishments asking for permission to advertise

To whom it may concern,

I am a third year post graduate student at Chester University studying for an MA in Clinical Counselling. I am conducting a study to investigate the role of mother-tongue in counselling for Welsh speakers and its impact on the counselling relationship. This next month or so I am hoping to recruit participants for my study.

I wonder if you would be so kind as to allow me to advertise my study at your establishment/organisation. I enclose/attach a copy of my flyer and information sheet for you to look at. If you are happy for me to advertise I will bring flyers and hang them up or if you feel able to pass this email on to your colleagues/students/clients via email I would be very grateful.

If you would like further information please contact me at [(my email)](my email) or on (my phone number). Many thanks and hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely

Vida Kennedy

Appendix 4: Pre-interview questionnaire

Questions	Answers
Name and contact details (tel, email, address)	
Age	
Sex	
What is your Mother-tongue/First Language	
Are you a counsellor or a trainee counsellor	
How long since you completed your counselling (if not a counsellor)	

Appendix 5: Information Sheet

Research Information Sheet

Title of dissertation: A study to investigate the role of mother-tongue in counselling for Welsh speakers and its impact on the counselling relationship.

About me: I am a third year post graduate student at Chester University studying for an MA in Clinical Counselling. I speak Welsh as my first language and have experienced both being the counsellor using Welsh and receiving counselling through the Welsh language.

My Research: The need to provide counselling services through the Welsh language has been described as important; however, there is very little research as to why? A person's first language has been described as the language of emotional expressiveness and the second language associated with emotional distance. Furthermore the literature suggests that language is an important aspect of the expression and processing of emotion and meaning, and on how individuals experience the world, events and themselves. Such findings highlight the relevance of language in the counselling context and further knowledge as to its role in counselling and on the counselling relationship will be useful to those working with Welsh speaking clients.

Selection of Participants: For this study I will be looking to find participants who: are over the age of 18; speak Welsh as their first language; have experienced counselling; are counsellors or trainee counsellors or are not counsellors and have been out of therapy for two years. I will select on the basis of those offering the most variability to my sample. For example I would like to recruit both male and female participants and both counsellors/trainee counsellors and non-counsellors from a variety of settings.

What does participating in this research mean? If you choose to put yourself forward to participate and you meet the inclusion criteria your involvement will be an hour long audio-recorded interview which will offer the opportunity to explore your experience. The interview will be held at a mutually convenient, safe and confidential location. After the interview, I will transcribe the audio-recording and this will become my data. I will send you a copy of the transcript for you to check for accuracy. Your data will be analysed using interpretive phenomenological analysis methods and will then be compared to the data from other participants to identify themes.

What are the potential risks? This study does *not* aim to study the content of your counselling sessions but rather the language you used, however, there may be a risk that doing this may bring back some of the issues that you went to counselling for. This may be distressing for you. If this were the case, I will do my best to provide you with useful helpline numbers as well as ensure that you are able to access the list of BACP registered counsellors should you wish to do so. In addition I hope that having accessed counselling in the past you may feel able to do this again if you felt necessary. If you are a counsellor or

trainee counsellor yourself I hope that you can access the support of your supervisor to understand what this means for you.

Benefits of the research: Current research indicates that receiving counselling through your mother tongue is very important. There is, however, very little specific in relation to the Welsh language. Knowledge from this study will be useful in informing those who provide counselling for Welsh speaking individuals. It is also possible that information from this study may contribute to the wider literature on the role of mother-tongue in counselling and may provide useful insights in other bilingual settings.

The potential benefit for participants is that they gain a greater awareness of the role mother-tongue in their lives. For participants who may be counsellors themselves they may gain useful insights into the role of mother-tongue in counselling and may be able to enhance their practice. Furthermore it has been described that participants who participate in research may benefit from positive feelings of taking part and contributing to furthering knowledge in an area that may be beneficial to others.

Right to Withdraw: It is important to note that all participants have the right to withdraw without any negative impact, at any stage of their involvement.

Confidentiality Throughout the research and writing up of my dissertation I will ensure that your anonymity is protected by allocating a pseudonym to all information relating to your involvement in the project. Any information which may identify you or any of your clients will not be included in the project. Any parts of the interview which may identify you or one of your clients will not be used in the research. With your consent, verbatim sections of the interview may be used in the final dissertation.

What will happen to the results: The results of my research will form part of my MA dissertation which will be submitted to Chester University who will keep a copy and the dissertation may also be available electronically. The results may also form part of other works which are put forward for publication.

Data Protection: My data will consist of the audio recordings and transcriptions of interviews with my research participants. The interviews will be recorded onto a digital recorder which will be kept securely when not in use. Recordings will be transferred onto my PC and their file will be password protected. Files will be saved under a pseudonym so that individuals may not be recognised from the file name. These pseudonyms will be used throughout the research to protect the participants' anonymity. A back up copy of the files will be held on a pen drive which will be kept in a locked drawer.

Ethics: It is my intention to conduct my research in line with the British Association of Counselling and Psychology ethical framework for good practice in counselling and psychotherapy and the University's Research Governance Handbook in order to protect my participants from harm and loss and to enhance the trustworthiness of my study. I have also submitted my research proposal to the University's Ethics Committee and have gained their approval to undertake this project. I am aware that ethical issues are not resolved in the

planning stages but need to be kept in focus throughout; therefore I intend to work with my supervisor to look at ethical issues for the duration of the project.

Concerns or Complaints: If there are any concerns or complaints, these can be directed to the researcher's supervisor Dr. Tony Parnell (see below for details).

My details:

Supervisor's details:

Appendix 6: Interview Schedule

This is intended as a guide only, it is my intention to allow the interview to develop in the direction that the research participant leads whilst being mindful of the subject matter and the fact that there are questions that I would like answered.

Introduction: Thank you for coming – I would like us to spend the next 30 minutes or so exploring your experience of the role of language in counselling. – there are no right or wrong answers and I am happy to allow the interview to develop to get the best understanding of your individual experience.

(Ensure consent form is signed)

Do you have any questions about the process before we start?

Questions

What would you consider to be your first language or mother tongue and what does that mean to you? (*trying to establish the importance and meaning of mother tongue for the participant*)

Please could you tell me a little about when you learned your first and second language and the context in which you have developed and used both. (*gaining some information around the context each language was learnt*)

How comfortable would you say do you feel speaking in both your first and second language? (*trying to gain some information about proficiency in both languages*)

What aspects did you consider important in choosing your therapist? (if they do not mention language then), How important was the language of your therapist in your decision?

What was your reasoning behind choosing an English speaking or Welsh speaking therapist?

Having received counselling how important do you think language was/is in your therapy and/or relationship with your counsellor?

Would you say that some things are/were easier to talk about in Welsh than in English or the other way around (in a particular language)?

Would you say that there are some emotions that are easier or harder to express in a particular language?

Would you say that there were some words that were more difficult to explain/describe in one language or the other? Did you feel that what you meant was always understood? And that you could always express what you meant? (trying to gain further information about meaning…)

A client once said to me "until I said it in Welsh I don't think I ever understood it" , what do you think about this?

Would you say that you feel the same when you talk Welsh as when you talk English? (*Trying to get at identity and world view differences*)

Would you say that you experience things the same or differently depending on the language that it is experienced?

Do you think culture and language are linked and if so how important is this when communicating with your therapist?

What are your attitude towards speaking English/English speakers (*trying to gain some information about historical influences, cultural influences, power aspects of the relationships*)

Do you think that being Welsh influenced how your personal therapist interacted with you/perceived you? (reasoning as for above)

In general how important do you think language is in your relationships? In particular with your counsellor?

Can you describe any difficulties or benefits related to language in your therapy?

Some Welsh speaking individuals have said that they feel self-conscious or less confident when speaking English with a counsellor (or with other professional people) would you agree with this?

For those who have experiences counselling in both language and if not described in the above questions – how would you compare your experience of receiving counselling in Welsh and English? (for those who received Welsh counselling that are counsellors or in training can also ask about comparison with triad work at uni).

Having experienced counselling, if you were looking for a personal therapist in the future do you think that what language they were would play a role in who you chose?

Is there anything that you would like to add?

Closing: Thank you for you participation. I will now be transcribing the recording of this session so long as you are still happy for me to do that? I will then send you a copy of the transcription for you to check for accuracy. Once you have checked it I will begin my analysis and then compare it to the analysis of other data. Your anonymity will be maintained throughout.

Appendix 7: Summary Table of the stages of analysis based on Smith, Flowers, and

Larkin, (2009).

Step	Description of Step
Step 1	<u>Reading and re-reading</u> Here I immersed myself in the data by listening to the taped interview and reading the transcript. Initial striking observations were written down for later use to allow for me to focus on the data. The goal was to become familiar with the flow of the transcript and contradictions, paradoxes, richer, and more detailed sections
Step 2	<u>Initial Noting</u> This step was the most detailed and time consuming. It involved making notes and comments on anything of interest in the data, and considering how and why they were important for the participant (beginnings of interpretation). Comments might include descriptive, linguistic, and conceptual comments. Also comments on differences and similarities and asking questions about what it means. These notes were attached to the right side of the transcript. See appendix 8 for an example of this stage of analysis for Sian.
Step 3	<u>Developing Emergent Themes</u> Here I attempted to decrease the volume of detail, working from the initial notes and comments as opposed to the transcript itself. This stage involved more interpretation. Themes were developed by choosing words or statements that best captures what was important in the comments. The themes were noted on the right side of the transcript. See appendix 8 for an example of this stage of analysis for Sian.
Step 4	<u>Searching for connections across emergent themes</u> Here I tried to draw together the emerging themes based on the importance to the research question and scope of the study. I did this by writing a list of the emergent themes and then cutting them out. I moved themes around trying to find patterns and connections between themes. I organised similar themes under super-ordinate themes (abstraction), or promoted an emerging theme to be a sub-ordinate theme (subsumption), depending on what felt most representative. From this a new theme structure developed in the form of a table that included both super-ordinate and sub-ordinate themes. To aid in the process of keeping record of theme development I created a file of super-ordinate and sub-ordinate themes which included extracts form the transcript. See appendix 9 and 10 for an example of this stage of analysis for Sian.
Step 5	<u>Moving to the next case</u> Step 1-4 was repeated for all participants (one at a time). Effort was made to bracket off ideas emerging from previous participant in each case. See appendix 11 for photograph of completed Stage 2 and 3 for all participants, also appendix 12 for a photograph of each individual participant table of themes at step 4.
Step 6	<u>Looking for patterns across cases</u> This was done by looking at the table of themes for all participants at once and searching for connections between them. From this I developed a master table of themes. Each theme was then considered in relation to each participant. Development of this theme including further interpretation and support from the data formed the basis of the final results section. See Table 1 in the results for the final version of the Master table.

Appendix 8: An example stage 2 and 3 of analysis on a section of Sian's transcript.

| Emergent Theme	Original Transcript	Initial notes and comments
Searching for Words	sometimes I can't find the right word to express how I'm feeling. And when that happens, it's a bit of a stumbling block, I suppose. It sort of stops me in my tracks because I'm trying to think of that specific word, and if I can't find it, it sort of... yeah, it feels then quite stunted. And I find that it... I suppose it impacts the relationship to an extent, because I feel that I, sort of... yeah, stunted I suppose.	There is a struggle in finding the right words. She gets stopped in her tracks - Does this interfere with what is going on for her? Sounds like she is stopped from getting to the issue.
Barrier to therapeutic relationship		Block of communication= block to relationship development? Is the stunted feeling a negative feeling?
	R: Okay. And when you said it impacts the relationship, can you say a bit more about that?	
Access to feelings	**P2:** Erm.... I think because I'm concentrating on what, you know, what word – that specific word, and maybe I'm finding it difficult to find that specific word. I feel that, my confidence, you know, the effort goes into finding words instead of actually just expressing how I'm feeling. And I think maybe that does impact the relationship, because it doesn't feel, erm... I'm not really sure how to describe it. Erm... *(pause) ....*I suppose, it's sort of... it's more sort of stop and start, rather than just... you know, it stops the flow, I suppose.	A lot of concentration needed, and a lot of effort goes in to searching for the word, sounds tiring? How does this impact the session, the relationship? How she feels about therapy? Is the work involved helpful at all? What was she going to say about confidence (I felt at the time she was saying it knocked her confidence, not being able to find the words…?)
Barrier to therapeutic relationship		
Getting in the way of the process		Feels like she is wasting time searching for words while she is missing out on time spent on the issue? Barrier to expressing feelings and emotions The flow of the session is disturbed, she cants seem to get going on what she wants to say

Appendix 9: Example of step 4, trying to find patterns and connections between themes for Sian.
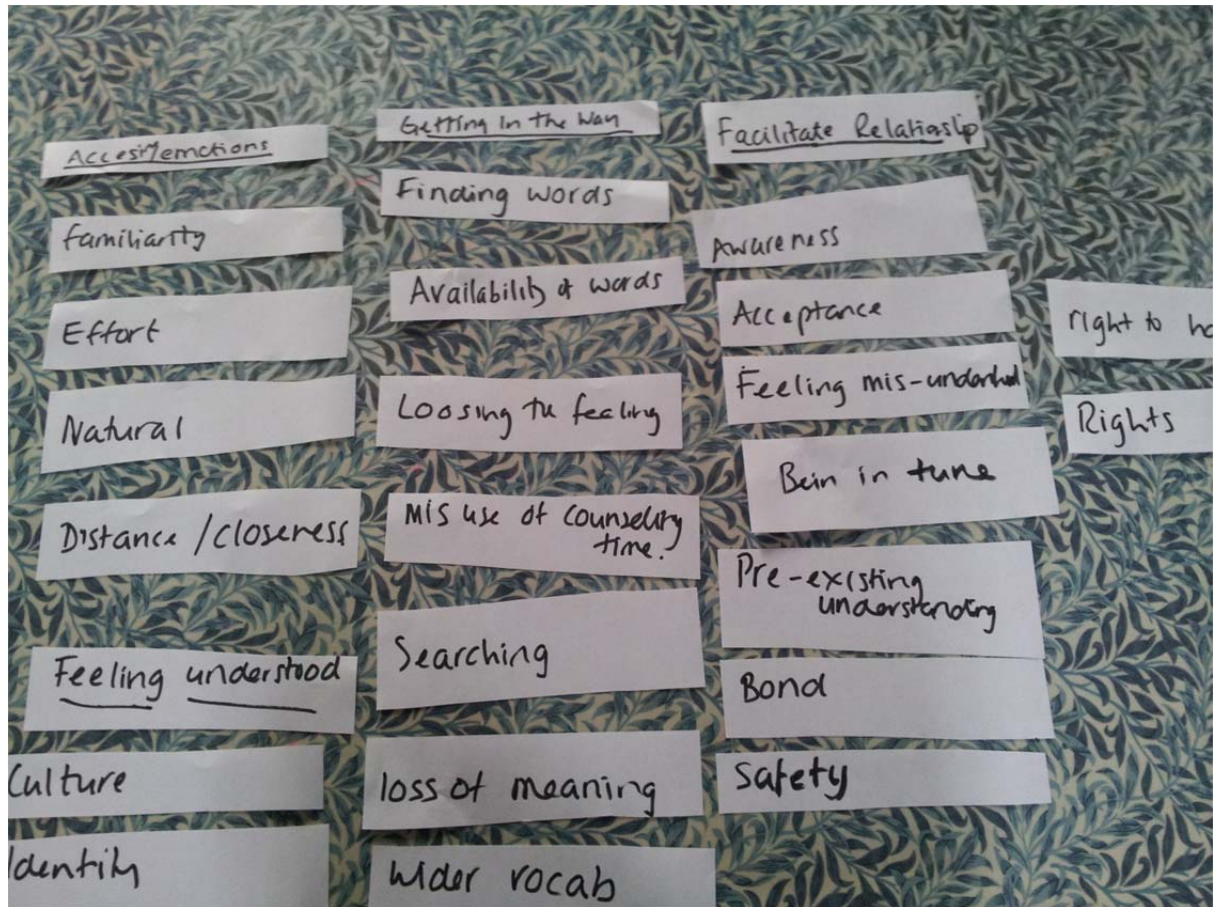
Appemdix 10: Table of themes at stage 4 for Sian

Supra-ordinate theme	Sub-ordinate themes	Supporting lines in transcript
Importance of Language in understanding who she is	• Identity • Culture • Pre-existing understanding	7, 176, 182 170, 182 164, 182, 186
Creating a facilitative relationship with therapist	• Barrier to therapeutic process • Feeling at ease • Feeling a bond • Feeling understood from outset • Safety • Acceptance • Stopping the flow • Being misunderstood	52, 54,62 164 183, 157, 156 157, 164, 186 218 175 54, 62 79
Getting in the way of the process	• Access to feelings • Expressing emotion • Effort • Loosing the feeling • Feeling misunderstood • Searching for words • Loosing meaning	52, 63 118, 61,99 193, 15, 29 53, 107, 109, 76, 84 52, 78, 48, 99, 111, 53, 60 77, 84, 97, 99
Ease of Communicating	• Familiarity • Comes from within, natural	9, 27 8, 15, 29,118,218
Having a choice	• Rights • preference	136, 191, 172 19, 219
Disadvantages	• rural context	226

Appendix 11: Photograph of completed Stage 2 and 3 for all participants
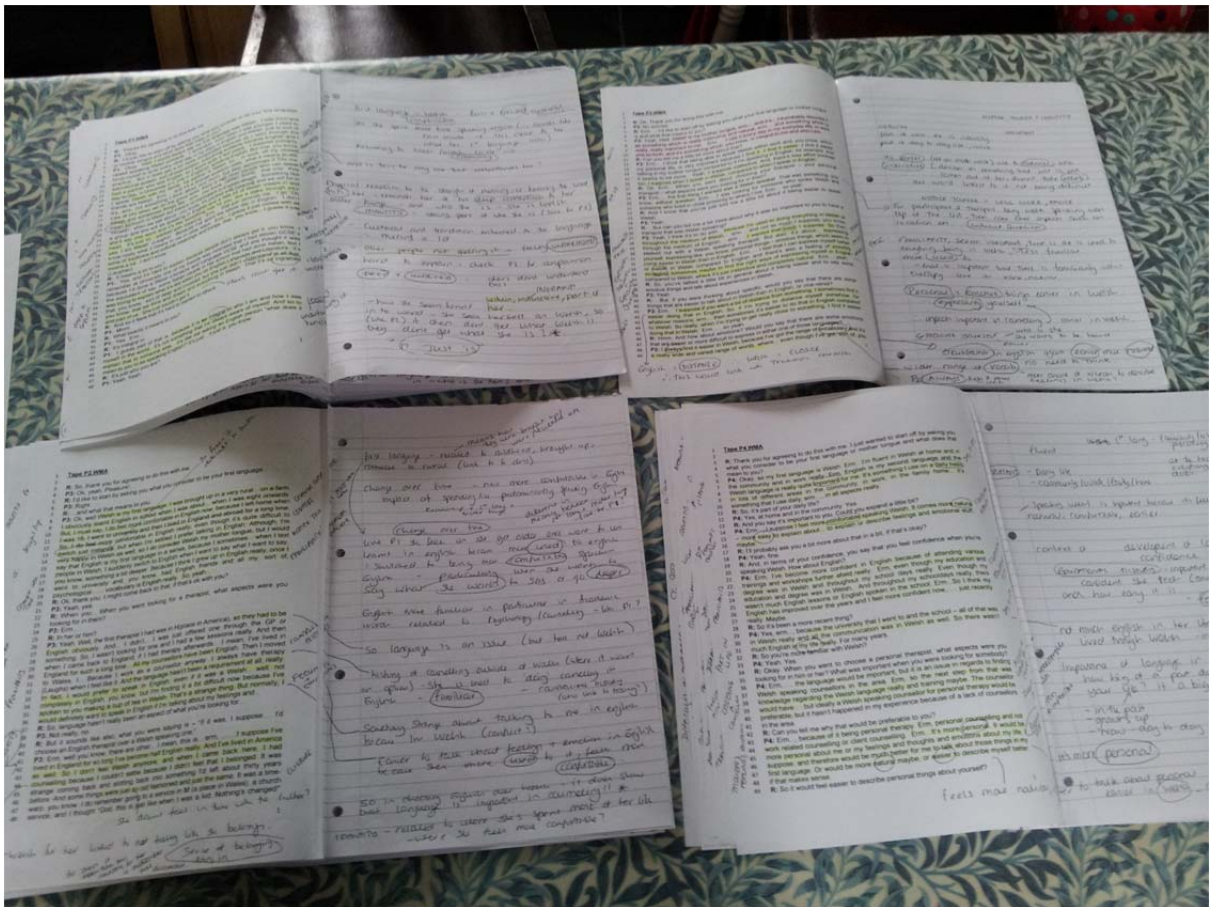
Appendix 12: Photograph of each individual participant's table of themes at step 4.
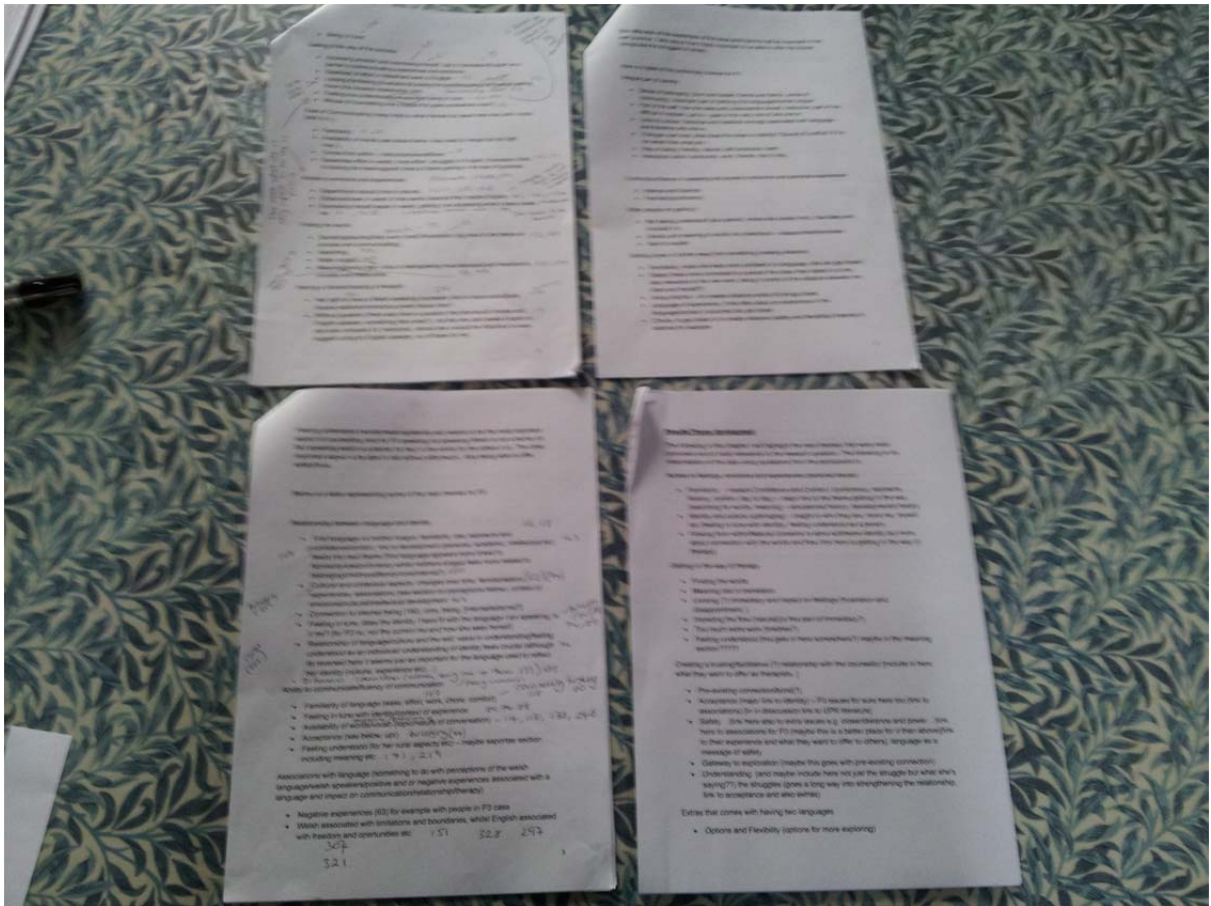
Appendix 13: Framework for measuring validity

In terms of assessing rigour in quantitative research concepts such as reliability, validity, and generalizability are well known, but often associated with realist and positivist positions, they assume the existence of a single truth (Ballinger 2004, Denzin and Lincoln, 2003; Guba and Lincoln, 1994; Mays and Pope 2000). For research frameworks that assume the existence of multiple realities, and that adopt a more interpretative position, these positivist concepts of reliability, validity, and generalizability are not compatible.

In order to continue consistency of philosophical underpinnings throughout I aim to use the guidelines of Elliott, Fischer, and Rennie (1999) in evaluating the validity of my study. I do so as these guidelines were developed within the phenomenological-hermeneutic paradigm (Willig, 2008). This evaluation guidelines includes seven criteria considered particularly relevant for evaluating qualitative research (Willig, 2008). The below table 2 describe these seven aspects, their goal and examples of how I aim to demonstrate this within my study (E.g. transparency, reflexivity, and journal keeping).

Table 2: Criteria for establishing validity based on Elliott, Fischer, and Rennie, 1999.

Criterion for validity	Purpose	Examples of how it will be demonstrated in this study
'Owning one's own perspective' (Elliott et al, 1999)	Acknowledging myself, my values and interpretations so that readers may be aware of other possible interpretations (Willig, 2008). Contributing to the trusworthyness, confirmability, and transparency of the study (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Guba and Lincoln, 1989; Seale, 1999).	• Reflexive practice (Etherington 2004; Henwood and Pidgeon, 1992; Mason, 2002; Seale, 1999). • Journal Keeping
'Situating the sample' (Elliott et al, 1999)	To allow the reader to consider the relevance of the findings (Willig, 2008). Similar to that of transferability described by Lincoln and Guba, 1985 and Henwood and Pidgeon, 1992)	• Using thick descriptions (Seale, 1999) • Obtaining some demographic data • Journal keeping, including context information.
'Grounding in examples' (Elliott et al, 1999)	To allow the reader to assess how the data fits with the researchers interpretation (Willig, 2008). Similar to dependability described by Lincoln and Guba, 1985.	• Using examples from the data • Transparency in data analysis and detailed and clear audit trail and memo writing.
'Providing credibility checks' (Elliott et al, 1999)	To demonstrate that the accounts given are credible. Credibility described by Lincoln and Guba, 1989 relates to the confidence between the constructed realities of participants and the reconstructions attributed to them by the researcher.	• Peer debriefing • Attempts to 'bracket off' assumptions (Elliott and Williams, 2001) • Member check • Negative case analysis
'Coherence' (Elliott et al, 1999)	To present the analysis in a coherent fashion that stays true to the data.	• Transparency in data analysis and detailed and clear audit trail and memo writing. • Transparency of rationale • Presentation using a narrative style • Using relevant links to current literature
'Accomplishing general versus specific research tasks' (Elliott et al, 1999)	To ensure that the research approach taken is appropriate for the research question at hand.	• Detailed account of research methods and rationale. • Consideration of the study's limitations
'Resonating with readers'	To ensure the reader is able to understand the research.	• Use accessible language • Relate to applicability to practice.

Appendix 14: Consent form

University of Chester

**<u>A study to investigate the role of mother-tongue in counselling for Welsh speakers
and it's impact on the counselling relationship.</u>**

<u>Consent Form</u>

I...hereby give my consent for the details of a written transcript
based on an audio recorded interview with myself and Vida Kennedy to be used in
preparation and as part of a research dissertation for the MA in Clinical Counselling at the
University of Chester. I understand that my identity will remain anonymous and that all
personally identifiable information will remain confidential and separate from the research
data. I further understand that the transcript will be seen by counselling tutors and the
external examiner for the purposes of academic supervision, assessment and moderation. I
also understand that all involved are bound by the British Association for Counselling and
Psychotherapy Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy.

I understand that I will be sent a copy of the transcript to check for accuracy. I am aware that
I can stop the interview at any point, or withdraw my participation up until the point of
submission, without there being any adverse effects to me. All copies of the audio recordings
will be deleted after the dissertation has been successfully completed. My electronic copies
of the transcriptions will also be deleted at that time; however a hard copy of the data will be
kept for 5 years in line with the University regulations.

Excerpts from the transcript will be included in the dissertation. Copies of the dissertation will
be held in the University of Chester Library and the Department of Social Studies and
Counselling. It may also be available electronically via the online research repository.

Without my further consent, some or all of the material may be used for publication and or
presentation at conferences and seminars. Every effort will be made to ensure complete
anonymity.

I have been provided with information about the nature of the research, including any
possible risks and have had a chance to check out any questions or concerns with the
researcher thus enabling me to offer my fully informed consent.

Signed (Participant)...Date......................

Signed (Researcher)...Date......................

Appendix 15: Critique of the study using my framework for understanding validity

As summarised in appendix 12, seven main criteria for validity were used to examine the quality of the study. I believe most of the ways in which this study achieved these criterion are clear in the study write up, for example using thick descriptions to 'situate the sample' can clearly be seen in the results section, and a detailed account of research methods and rationale for 'accomplishing general versus specific research tasks' can be found in chapter 1 and 3.

The use of reflexivity as an aspect of 'owning one's own perspective', however, has not been addressed so far. Reflexivity "facilitates a critical attitude towards locating the impact of research(er) context and subjectivity on project design, data collection, data analysis, and presentation of findings" (Gough, 2003, p.22). As I have made clear in the methodology section that the researcher is part of the knowledge production (e.g. interpretation), it is important to try and reflect on how I may have impacted the findings. In order to aid the reflexive process I kept a journal throughout the study. As the introduction and rational describes I have clear personal interest in this study, being Welsh first language speaker and having experienced counselling myself in both Welsh and English, I had my own ideas from the outset. I was aware that this may have an impact on the data in particular data analysis. The following is an extract from my journal:

> *"I had an interview today and my participant said that either though her mother-tongue is Welsh she feels happier speaking about her emotions and deeper issues using English, I don't like this because it feels like the study might not show what I was thinking it would show. I was so sure it would demonstrate clearly that Welsh speakers prefer Welsh counselling, that's how I feel, and now writing this I am aware that there is something coming deep from within me that needs this to be true, as if somehow I feel like I owe it to*

the Welsh to prove this, and feeling a bit scared that I might show something else." (Journal Entry July 14th)

The above extract show's clearly that I had my own assumptions and possibly agenda. In realising this from writing in my journal I could be particularly aware when analysing this participants' data not to allow my own desire, to see certain data, cloud what the participant was actually saying. Using IPA was particularly useful here, as each case is analysed individually, it aids in minimising the chances of drowning out the participant's voice with my own or other voices in the data. I could use this in my attempts to 'bracket off' my assumptions (Elliott and Williams, 2001), and furthermore the use of member check were useful in 'providing credibility checks', so ensuring that my interpretation did in fact reflect the data (as opposed to my own assumptions).

In the case of this particular study different experiences such as Cadi's, where she found talking about emotions being easier in English than Welsh due to familiarity, identity and culture aspects were able to be highlighted. This information can now contribute to current knowledge and provide scope for further research. I would also encourage the reader to read the limitation section (Chapter 3) when considering the validity of this research.