

Staidéar agus Athbhreithniú Leantach ar Chur i bhfeidhm Shonraíochtaí Gaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí (T1 & T2)

TUARASCÁIL EATRAMHACH
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SEALBHÚ
Lárionad Taighde DCU
um Fhoghlaim agus Teagasc
na Gaeilge

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Acrainmneacha

- AFMÁ: Athbhreithniú ar Fhoghlaim agus ar Mheasúnú Ábhair
- CNCM: An Chomhairle um Náisiúnta Curaclaim agus Measúnachta
- MRB: Measúnuithe Rangbhunaithe
- PGSS: Próifíl Ghnóthachtála na Sraithe Sóisearaí
- T1: Teanga 1 (scoileanna Gaeltachta agus scoileanna/aonaid lán-Ghaeilge)
- T2: Teanga 2 (scoileanna a fheidhmíonn trí mheán an Bhéarla agus ina múintear an Ghaeilge mar dhara teanga)

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Nóta Buíochais

Ba mhaith linn ár mbuíochas a ghabháil leis na scoileanna ar fad a léirigh spéis sa taighde. Gabhaimid buíochas ó chroí leis na rannpháirtithe ó na scoileanna cás-staidéir. Roinn siad a gcuid ama agus a gcuid saineolais go fial agus go flaithiúil linn. Táimid iontach buíoch díobh as a bheith páirteach sa taighde.

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Míle buíochas libh go léir.

Achoimre Fheidhmeach

Cuirtear i láthair réamh-théamaí éiritheacha ó Chéim a hAon de staidéar trí bliana ar chur i bhfeidhm Shonraíochtaí Gaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí (T1 & T2) sa tuarascáil eatramhach seo. In 2017 cuireadh múnla soláthair idirdhealaithe ar fáil do theagasc agus d'fhoghlaim na Gaeilge sa tSraith Shóisearach. Cuireadh sonraíocht Ghaeilge ar leith ar fáil do scoileanna T2 (is iad sin scoileanna a fheidhmíonn trí mheán an Bhéarla), agus do scoileanna T1 (scoileanna Gaeltachta agus scoileanna/aonaid lán-Ghaeilge). Tá an taighde modhanna measctha ilghnéitheach seo coimisiúnaithe ag an gComhairle Náisiúnta Curaclaim agus Measúnachta (CNCM), ag tógáil ar an Athbhreithniú luath ar chur i bhfeidhm na Sonraíochtaí Gaeilge T1 agus T2 don tSraith Shóisearach (Athbhreithniú Luath) (Mac Gearailt & Ó Duibhir, 2023). Diríonn an taighde go háirithe ar an leagan de na Sonraíochtaí Gaeilge a foilsíodh i Meán Fómhair 2023, a ndearnadh uasdátú orthu le freagairt don Athbhreithniú Luath. Mar sin féin, is próiseas diaidh ar ndiaidh atá in aon athrú curaclaim agus baineann cuid den taithí agus de na tuairimí a nochtadh sa tuairisc seo leis na leaganacha de na sonraíochtaí Gaeilge (T1 & T2) a cuireadh i bhfeidhm ó 2017 ar aghaidh. Tá sé mar aidhm ag an taighde léargais spéisiúla a thabhairt ar gach gné de na sonraíochtaí, agus go n-eascróidh réitigh fhéideartha do chonstaicí a thagann chun cinn agus na sonraíochtaí á gcur i ngníomh. Tabharfar aird ar leith ar an taithí atá ag scoileanna ar an múnla idirdhealaithe don Ghaeilge sa tSraith Shóisearach, chomh maith leis na hathruithe sa chleachtas a d'eascair as Creat na Sraithe Sóisearaí (2015). Tabharfaidh an taighde léargais ar an tionchar a bhí ag na hathruithe a cuireadh i bhfeidhm ag eascairt ón aiseolas ón Athbhreithniú Luath.

Ag Céim a hAon den taighde, rinneadh iniúchadh ar an taithí a bhí ag ceannairí scoile agus ag múinteoirí ar chur i bhfeidhm shonraíochtaí Gaeilge

na Sraithe Sóisearaí (T1 & T2), i réimsí an teagaisc, na foghlama agus an mheasúnaithe agus ar na tuairimí a bhí acu ina leith. Rinneadh iniúchadh chomh maith ar an taithí a bhí ag rannpháirtithe ar na tacaíochtaí atá ar fáil maidir le cur i ngníomh agus soláthar na sonraíochtaí agus ar na constaicí a d'fhéadfadh a bheith ann. Bailíodh sonraí ó agallaimh le ceannairí scoile (n=18), agus ó ghrúpaí fócais le múinteoirí i 12 scoil chás-staidéir ar fud na tíre. D'úsáid na taighdeoirí sampláil bhreithiúnais chun a chinntiú go mbeadh réimse éagsúla foghlaimeoirí teanga agus réimse éagsúla comhthéacsanna ag leibhéal na hiar-bhunscoile san áireamh sa taighde. Ghlac sé scoil T1 agus sé scoil T2 páirt sa taighde. Bhí trí scoil Ghaeltachta, dhá Ghaelcholáiste agus iar-bhunscoil amháin ina raibh sruth lán-Ghaeilge (roinnt ábhar á dteagasc trí Ghaeilge) san áireamh. Bhain tábhacht leis an tsampláil bhreithiúnais le deimhniú go dtiocfadh léargais chun cinn ar an soláthar idirdhealaithe i gcomhthéacsanna T1 agus T2 araon. Rinneadh anailís ar bhonn téamúil ar na hagallaimh le ceannairí scoile agus baineadh leas as anailís teimpléid le hanailís a dhéanamh ar ghrúpaí fócais na múinteoirí.

Tháinig buanna agus dúshláin araon chun cinn maidir le cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí Gaeilge (T1 & T2) agus maidir leis an soláthar do na sonraíochtaí. Fiosrófar na réamh-théamaí atá curtha i láthair sa tuarascáil seo ar bhonn níos doimhne agus ar bhonn níos leithne le linn na dtrí bliana den staidéar. Tá sé le tabhairt faoi deara, gur thug na ceannairí scoile ar fad ardmholadh do dhíograis agus do ghairmiúlacht na múinteoirí Gaeilge agus iad ag cur na sonraíochtaí i bhfeidhm. D'aithin siad gurb iad na múinteoirí féin a bhí mar phríomhfhoinsé thacaíochta agus na sonraíochtaí á gcur i ngníomh. Téamaí éiritheacha a bhain le gnéithe dearfacha de chur i ngníomh na sonraíochtaí

agus leis an soláthar ná: (i) pleanáil na múinteoirí agus comhoibriú, (ii) teagasc agus foghlaim, (iii) úsáid téacsanna, agus (iv) tacaíochtaí don Ghaeilge.

Fuarthas go raibh múinteoirí Gaeilge ag pleanáil ar bhonn comhoibríoch agus go raibh siad ag roinnt áiseanna go rialta le múinteoirí eile laistigh agus lasmuigh den scoil. Thuairiscigh na múinteoirí gur ghlac siad páirt i gcomhráití gairmiúla go rialta, agus bhí mórchuid de na múinteoirí den tuairim gur bhain fiúntas leis na cruinnithe Athbhreithniú ar Fhoghlaim agus ar Mheasúnú Ábhair (AFMÁ) chun tacaíocht a thabhairt dá mbreithiúnais ghairmiúla. Úsáideadh raon leathan modheolaíochtaí teagasc chun tacú le foghlaim na scoláirí sa Ghaeilge.

Tá trí shnáithe sna sonraíochtaí: (i) cumas cumarsáide, (ii) feasacht teanga agus chultúrtha, agus (iii) féinfheasacht an fhoghlaimeora. Dhírigh múinteoirí i scoileanna T2 go príomha ar an snáithe cumas cumarsáide. Leag múinteoirí i scoileanna T1 béim ar gach ceann de na trí shnáithe, agus chuir siad béim ar leith ar chumas cumarsáide agus feasacht teanga agus chultúrtha a fhorbairt. Rinne na múinteoirí féin-thuairisciú ar shamplaí cruthaitheacha agus nuálaíocha den teagasc agus den foghlaim. Cuireadh fócas ar leith ar thascanna labhartha chun tacú le húsáid na Gaeilge sna scoileanna ar fad, sa chéad bhliain ach go háirithe. Tharraing mórchuid na múinteoirí ar théacsanna molta agus dualgais chun tacú le forbairt teanga agus litearthachta na scoláirí. Baineadh leas as téacsanna i réimse seánraí chun tacú le teagasc agus foghlaim na Gaeilge, agus thuairiscigh na múinteoirí gur thaitin gearrscannáin leis na scoláirí ach go háirithe. Tá samplaí de chleachtas ranga a léiríonn oideolaíochtaí atá foghlaimoírí-lárnaithe agus cumarsáideach léirithe sa tuarascáil - Féach Mír a Ceathair agus Mír a Cúig.

Bhí cuid mhaith de na múinteoirí sásta leis an réimse téacsanna a bhí sna téacsanna molta (don chéad bhliain) agus sna téacsanna dualgais (don dara agus tríú bliain). Ag eascirt ón Athbhreithniú Luath, rinneadh leasuithe ar na sonraíochtaí i Meán Fómhair 2023 agus laghdaíodh líon na dtéacsanna molta agus dualgais; déanfar monatóireacht ar an laghdú seo le linn an staidéir. Cé go raibh roinnt múinteoirí sásta leis an laghdú ar líon na dtéacsanna, a raibh ar na scoláirí staidéar a dhéanamh orthu sa tSraith Shóisearach, bhí múinteoirí eile den tuairim go raibh tuilleadh laghdaithe ag teastáil.

Tháinig sé chun solais gur thacaigh tacaíochtaí inscoile agus tacaíochtaí taobh amuigh den scoil araon le teagasc agus foghlaim, agus úsáid na Gaeilge a chur cinn sna scoileanna. Bhain fiúntas le naisc leis na ceantair Ghaeltachta do scoláirí a raibh cónaí orthu taobh amuigh den Ghaeltacht. Thacaigh imeachtaí inscoile (m.sh. Seachtain na Gaeilge, imeachtaí trí Ghaeilge) le húsáid na teanga agus le dearcthaí dearfacha a chothú i leith na Gaeilge. Cuireadh cur chuige uile scoile i bhfeidhm sna scoileanna T1 agus bhí naisc níos láidre ag na scoileanna siúd leis an bpobal taobh amuigh den scoil i gcomparáid leis na scoileanna T2. Léiríodh dearcthaí dearfacha ar an réimse áiseanna atá ar fáil agus ag dul i méid don Ghaeilge (m.sh. áiseanna ó COGG, TG4), chomh maith leis na scéimeanna tacaíochta atá ann don Ghaeilge (m.sh. Gaelbhratach, Gaeilge 24, tacaíochtaí atá mar chuid den scéim aitheantais do scoileanna Gaeltachta) sna scoileanna ar fad.

Léiríodh dearcthaí éagsúla maidir leis na Measúnuithe Rangbhunaithe (MRB). Mar thoradh ar an bpaindéim Covid-19, rinneadh leasuithe ar an measúnú, agus mar gheall air seo, ní raibh mórán taithí ag scoileanna ar MRB1: An Phunann Teanga. Cé gur léirigh cuid de na rannpháirtithe an tuairim go raibh fiúntas ag baint le MRB2: An Tasc Cumarsáideach, chun deis a thabhairt do scoláirí tasc a chur i gcrích, thuairiscigh rannpháirtithe eile gur chuir MRB2 na scoláirí faoi strus agus nár thacaigh an tasc le forbairt scoileanna idirghníomhaithe cainte na scoláirí. Bhí go leor de na rannpháirtithe den tuairim gur cheart marcanna suimitheacha a bhronnadh ar na tascanna MRB. Bhí gach uile rannpháirtí (múinteoirí agus ceannairí scoile), go láidir den tuairim nár cheart go dtiocfadh MRB2 in áit scrúdaithe cainte shuimithigh sa tSraith Shóisearach. Ag eascirt ón Athbhreithniú Luath (Mac Gearailt & Ó Duibhir, 2023), cuireadh leagan athshamhlaithe de MRB2: Ag Idirghníomhú trí Ghaeilge ar fáil i Meán Fómhair 2023. Fiosrófar taithí rannpháirtithe ar chur i ngníomh MRB2 athshamhlaithe i gcéimeanna eile den taighde.

Tháinig dúshláin chun cinn maidir le cur i ngníomh na sonraíochtaí agus leis an soláthar don Ghaeilge sa tSraith Shóisearach maidir le: (i) labhairt na Gaeilge, (ii) an scrúdú suimitheach deiridh, (iii) an t-oideachas ionchuimsitheach, (iv) tacaíochtaí don teagasc agus foghlaim, agus (v) pointí aistrithe. D'fhéadfaí smaoineamh ar na dúshláin atá ag teacht chun solais ag

Céim a hAon mar dheiseanna le breis tacaíochta a chur ar fáil do theagasc agus foghlaim na Gaeilge sa tSraith Shóisearach.

Príomhthéama éiritheach a tháinig chun cinn ag an gcéim seo den taighde ná imní na rannpháirtithe maidir leis an easpa aitheantais atá ag dul do labhairt na Gaeilge sa tSraith Shóisearach i bhfoirm marcanna suimitheacha. Fuarthas go raibh drochthionchar aige seo ar an gcleachtas ranga. Mhol gach uile rannpháirtí go láidir go gcuirfí scrúdú cainte ar fáil sa tSraith Shóisearach chun spás a chruthú le díriú ar scileanna cainte sa rang, chun cur le hinspreagadh na scoláirí Gaeilge a labhairt agus chun tacú leis an nGaeilge mar theanga bheo. Chuir rannpháirtithe in iúl go dtabharfadh scrúdú cainte deis d'fhoghlaimeoirí éagsúla rath a bhaint amach san fhoghlaim, agus go dtacódh measúnú suimitheach ar scileanna cainte sa tSraith Shóisearach leis na scoláirí agus iad ag ullmhú don scrúdú cainte sa tSraith Shóisearach. Léiríodh míshástacht faoin scrúdú suimitheach deiridh i ngach scoil chás-staidéir. De réir dhearthaí na rannpháirtithe, níl an scrúdú suimitheach deiridh oiriúnach do na scoláirí uile, mar gheall go leagtar an príomhfhócas ar scileanna léitheoireachta agus scríbhneoireachta sa Ghaeilge. Bhí rannpháirtithe i scoileanna T1 go háirithe, thar a bheith buartha faoin titim i líon na ngrád arda ó cuireadh an measúnú idirdhealaithe i bhfeidhm. D'fhéadfadh na measúnuithe éagsúla do scoláirí T1 agus scoláirí T2, na bandaí grádála leathan sa tSraith Shóisearach agus an measúnú deiridh é féin a bheith mar chúis leis na deacrachtaí seo. Thuairiscigh rannpháirtithe i scoileanna T1 go raibh na scoláirí faoi mhíbhuntáiste anois mar gheall ar an measúnú idirdhealaithe agus gur chóir athbhreithniú a dhéanamh air seo.

Tháinig sé chun solais go raibh breis tacaíochtaí ag teastáil ó scoláirí a bhfuil riachtanais oideachais sa bhreis acu i scoileanna T1 agus T2. Mhol cuid de na rannpháirtithe i scoileanna T2 go gcuirfí cúrsa bonnleibhéil ar fáil chun freastal ar scoláirí a bhfuil réimse cumais iontu sa Ghaeilge. Tháinig sé chun cinn go raibh níos mó tacaíochtaí ag teastáil sa soláthar do scoláirí atá nuathagtha i scoileanna T1. Chuir cuid de na rannpháirtithe i scoileanna T2 béim ar leith ar an mbearna sa soláthar do scoláirí atá nuathagtha mar gheall nach mbíonn deis ag na scoláirí seo Gaeilge a fhoghlaim. Tháinig castacht na ndíolúintí chun cinn i scoileanna T2 agus d'fhéadfaí tuilleadh iniúchta a dhéanamh air seo i staidéar eile.

Cé gur tharraing múinteoirí ar réimse leathan áiseanna agus tacaíochtaí, chuir siad in iúl go bhféilteoidís roimh bhreis tacaíochtaí agus forbartha gairmiúla. Bhí deacracht ag scoileanna T1 rochtain a fháil ar na téacsanna a bhí ar an liosta de théacsanna molta agus dualgais agus bhí deacracht acu teacht ar théacsanna i gcanúint an cheantair. Rinneadh athbhreithniú ar an liosta de théacsanna litríochta sa tSraith Shóisearach T1 agus T2 le linn na scoilbhliana 2023/2024 agus cuireadh liostaí leasaithe ar fáil (Ciorclán 0086/2024). Déanfar monatóireacht ar dhearthaí i leith na liostaí athbhreithnithe de théacsanna le linn an staidéir seo.

Léiríodh go raibh dúshláin ar leith ann mar gheall ar an aistriú ón mbunscoil go dtí an iar-bhunscoil sna scoileanna cás-staidéir. Bhain na dúshláin le leibhéil éagsúla inniúlachta na scoláirí sa Ghaeilge sa chéad bhliain, chomh maith leis an athrú ó Churaclam Teanga na Bunscoile ina leagtar béim láidir ar an teanga ó bhéal go curaclam na hiar-bhunscoile, ina leagtar béim níos mó ar scileanna léitheoireachta agus scríbhneoireachta sa Ghaeilge. Cuireadh in iúl chomh maith go raibh drochthionchar ag Covid-19 ar mhuinín na scoláirí Gaeilge a labhairt. Léirigh rannpháirtithe i scoileanna T2 go háirithe, go raibh bearna ann anois idir an tSraith Shóisearach agus an tSraith Shóisearach, agus bhí breis tacaíochtaí curtha ar fáil sa tSraith Shóisearach i roinnt scoileanna chun tacú le scoláirí. Den chuid is mó, bhí an bhearna a bhraitear idir an tSraith Shóisearach agus an tSraith Shóisearach nasctha leis an mbéim níos lú a cuireadh ar an nGaeilge labhartha sa tSraith Shóisearach.

Tá na réamh-théamaí éiritheacha a chuirtear i láthair ag Céim a hAon den staidéar seo bunaithe ar shonraí a bailíodh ó 12 scoil chás-staidéir agus ní féidir a rá gurb amhlaidh an scéal i ngach scoil go náisiúnta. Leanfaidh na chéad chéimeanna eile den taighde leis an iniúchadh ar chur i ngníomh Shonraíochtaí Gaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí (T1 & T2), agus ar na leasuithe a rinneadh ar na sonraíochtaí i Meán Fómhair 2023 ó dhearthaí réimse níos leithne de rannpháirtithe. Tá sé i gceist go ndéanfaí tuilleadh iniúchta ar na réamhthéamaí le linn an staidéir agus go n-eascróidh téamaí eile ón taighde. Cuirfear suirbhé náisiúnta ar fáil do mhúinteoirí agus reáchtálfar grúpaí fócais le scoláirí i scoileanna cás-staidéir i gCéim a Dó den taighde. Glacfaidh tuismitheoirí/caomhnóirí agus réimse leathan de gheallsealbhóirí páirt i gCéim a Trí den staidéar.

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Mír a hAon: Réamhrá

Cuireadh múnla soláthair idirdhealaithe ar fáil do theagasc agus d'fhoghlaim na Gaeilge sa tSraith Shóisearach in 2017. Rinneadh idirdhealú idir na sonraíochtaí Gaeilge do scoileanna T2 (is iad sin scoileanna a fheidhmíonn trí mheán an Bhéarla agus ina múintear an Ghaeilge mar dhara teanga) agus do scoileanna T1 (scoileanna Gaeltachta agus scoileanna/aonaid lán-Ghaeilge) ag leibhéal na Sraithe Sóisearaí. I Meán Fómhair 2023, chun tógáil ar an méid a cuireadh i láthair in *Athbhreithniú luath ar chur i bhfeidhm na Sonraíochtaí Gaeilge T1 agus T2 don tSraith Shóisearach* (Mac Gearailt & Ó Duibhir, 2023), choimisiúnaigh an Chomhairle Náisiúnta Curaclaim agus Measúnachta (CNCM) grúpa taighdeoirí ó SEALBHÚ: Lárionad Taighde DCU um Foghlaim agus Teagasc na Gaeilge chun tabhairt faoi staidéar agus athbhreithniú leantach ar chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí Gaeilge. Cuirtear i láthair na sonraí taighde a bailíodh ag Céim a hAon den taighde sa tuarascáil eatramhach seo. Tá sé tábhachtach le cur san áireamh go dtugann na téamaí atá curtha i láthair sa tuarascáil seo léargas ar pheirspictíochtaí a tháinig chun solais ag tús an tionscadail leantaigh. Is tionscadal taighde trí bliana a bheidh sa taighde. Éascóidh dearadh fadtréimhseach an taighde tuilleadh plé le réimse geallsealbhóirí i mbliain 2 agus i mbliain 3, a thabharfaidh léargais níos doimhne ar chur i bhfeidhm shonraíochtaí Gaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí ó réimse eispéireas agus peirspictíochtaí.

Tá sé mar aidhm ag an taighde staidéar agus athbhreithniú leantach a dhéanamh ar chur i bhfeidhm Shonraíochtaí Gaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí (T1 agus T2) i scoileanna iar-bunleibhéil i réimse an teagaisc, na foghlama agus an mheasúnaithe. Dírionn an taighde go háirithe ar chur i bhfeidhm an leagan de na sonraíochtaí Gaeilge a cuireadh ar fáil i Meán Fómhair 2023 agus leanfaidh

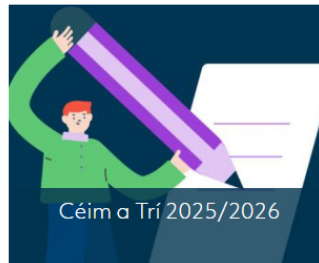
an taighde cohórt scoláirí i scoileanna cás-staidéir a thosaigh sa chéad bhliain in 2024-2025. Mar sin féin, is próiseas diaidh ar ndiaidh atá in aon athrú curaclaim agus tugann cuid de na sonraí a bailíodh léargais ar thaithí agus ar thuairimí a bhain leis na leaganacha 2017 de na Sonraíochtaí Gaeilge T1 agus T2. Mar a cuireadh i láthair san iarratas ar thairiscintí, tabharfaidh an taighde léargais spéisiúla ar gach gné de na sonraíochtaí, agus cruthófar deis do rannpháirtithe réitigh fhéideartha a mholadh d'aon chonstaicí atá ann do chur i ngníomh na sonraíochtaí (CNCM, Iarratas ar Thairiscintí, lch. 21). Breathnófar go háirithe, ar an taithí atá ag scoileanna ar an múnla idirdhealaithe don Ghaeilge sa tSraith Shóisearach, chomh maith leis na hathruithe sa chleachtas de bharr Chreat na Sraithe Sóisearaí (2015).

Is iad seo na príomhcheisteanna a threoróidh an taighde le linn na dtrí bliana:

- 1. Cad é an taithí atá ag ceannairí scoile, múinteoirí agus scoláirí ar chur i bhfeidhm shonraíochtaí Gaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí (T1 & T2) i réimse an teagaisc, na foghlama agus an mheasúnaithe agus cad iad na tuairimí atá acu ina leith?*
- 2. Cad é an taithí atá ag páirtithe leasmhara ar na tacaíochtaí atá ar fáil maidir le cur i bhfeidhm an tsoláthair agus na sonraíochtaí, agus cé na constaicí, más ann dóibh, atá ann dá chur i bhfeidhm?*
- 3. An dtagann cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí le réasúnaíocht agus le haidhmeanna na sonraíochtaí uasdátaithe (T1 & T2) don Ghaeilge sa tSraith Shóisearach, agus leis an gCreat don tSraith Shóisearach (2015) ar bhonn níos leithne?*

Freagraíonn na ceistanna taighde go díreach do na critéir a leag an CNCM síos san iarratas ar thairiscintí. Beidh trí chéim sa taighde:

- **Céim a hAon 2023/2024:** Grúpaí fócais/agallaimh le múinteoirí iarbhunscoile Gaeilge agus le ceannairí scoile i scoileanna cás-staidéir.
- **Céim a Dó 2024/2025:** Suirbhé náisiúnta ar líne do mhúinteoirí iarbhunscoile Gaeilge agus grúpaí fócais le scoláirí i scoileanna cás-staidéir.
- **Céim a Trí 2025/2026:** Grúpaí fócais le scoláirí i scoileanna cás-staidéir, grúpaí fócais/agallaimh le múinteoirí agus gairmithe eile scoile i scoileanna cás-staidéir, suirbhé anaithnid le tuismitheoirí/caomhnóirí i scoileanna cás-staidéir agus aighneachtaí scríofa ó pháirtithe leasmhara a bheidh cuireadh faighte acu.



Cuirfear tuarascáil taighde ar fáil don CNCM go bliantúil ag deireadh gach céime. Táthar ag súil go rachaidh na sonraí taighde a bhailítear chun tairbhe do chur i bhfeidhm agus do sholáthar Shonraíochtaí Gaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí trí phróiseas an taighde. Tá sé meáite san iarratas ar thairiscintí gur chóir go gcabhródh na torthaí a eascraíonn ón taighde seo leis an CNCM cinntí a dhéanamh maidir le cúrsaí curaclaim agus measúnachta, agus go bhféadfadh an taighde tionchar a imirt ar pholasaithe oideachasúla ar bhonn níos leithe.

Is í seo an chéad tuairisc eatramhach. Cuirtear i láthair na sonraí cáilíochtúla a bailíodh ag Céim a hAon den taighde ó ghrúpaí fócais le múinteoirí agus ó agallaimh le ceannairí scoile in 12 scoil chás-staidéir. Freagraíonn an t-eolas seo príomhcheistanna a haon agus a dó go príomha mar go dtugtar léargas

ar thaithí agus ar thuairimí múinteoirí maidir le cur i bhfeidhm shonraíochtaí Gaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí (T1 agus T2). Tugtar léargas chomh maith ar an taithí atá ag ceannairí scoile ar chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí, chomh maith lena dtaithí agus lena dtuairimí maidir leis na tacaíochtaí atá ar fáil do chur i bhfeidhm an tsoláthair agus na constaicí atá ann dá chur i bhfeidhm.

Ghlac 12 scoil chás-staidéir páirt sa taighde ag Céim a hAon. Ghlac rannpháirtithe ó sé scoil T1 agus sé scoil T2 páirt sa taighde. Cuireadh 17 bpríomhoidí/príomhoidí tánaisteacha agus comhordaitheoir Gaeilge amháin faoi agallaimh (N=18) agus ghlac 42 múinteoirí páirt i ngrúpaí fócais. Díriodh ar shampla de scoileanna T1 agus ar shampla de scoileanna T2 le hiniúchadh a dhéanamh ar thaithí na rannpháirtithe ar an soláthar idirdhealaithe ar bhealach cuí.

Tá cúig mhír sa tuairisc seo. Is réamhrá atá sa chéad mhír. Breathnaítear i Mír a Dó ar amlíne stairiúil na sonraíochtaí, ar ábhar na sonraíochtaí féin agus ar an taighde atá déanta go dáta ar chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí T1 agus T2. Déantar cur síos ar mhodheolaíocht an taighde sa tríú mír. Cuirtear i láthair na torthaí ó scoileanna cás-staidéir T1 agus ó scoileanna cás-staidéir T2 a d'eascair ó na hagallaimh le ceannairí scoile agus ó na grúpaí fócais leis na múinteoirí sa cheathrú mír, agus déantar plé agus suimiú ar na torthaí. Déantar suimiú ar théamaí éiritheacha ó Chéim a hAon den taighde sa chúigiú mír, cuirtear réamh-mholtaí na gceannairí scoile agus réamh-mholtaí na múinteoirí i láthair, agus mínítear na chéad chéimeanna eile a bheidh san athbhreithniú leantach.

Mír a Dó: Comhthéacs an Taighde

Déantar cur síos sa mhír seo ar chúlra agus ar chomhthéacs shonraíochtaí Gaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí. Baineann tábhacht leis an mír seo leis an taighde a lonnú i gcomhthéacs agus i bhfianaise taighde eile atá déanta ar an ábhar cheana. Breathnaítear ar dtús ar chúlra stairiúil na sonraíochtaí T1 agus T2 i gcomhthéacs chur i bhfeidhm Chreat na Sraithe Sóisearaí. Tugtar eolas ansin faoi ábhar na sonraíochtaí féin. Féachtar ina dhiaidh sin ar na príomhthorthaí a d'eascair ón gcéad athbhreithniú ar luath-chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí Gaeilge sa tSraith Shóisearach agus ar thorthaí taighde eile ar an ábhar céanna go dáta.

Cúlra agus Comhthéacs Shonraíochtaí Gaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí

D'fhógair an tAire Oideachais Ruairí Quinn an chéad leagan den Chreat don tSraith Shóisearach i mí Dheireadh Fómhair 2012 (An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna, 2012). Bhí an Creat bunaithe ar chomhairle a thug an CNCM don Roinn Oideachais agus a cuireadh i láthair sa tuairisc *Towards a Framework for Junior Cycle* (Samhain, 2011), agus ar thaighde oideachasúil ar ár ndaoine óga ag aois 12 - 15/16. Moladh sa tuairisc gur cheart aitheantas eile a thabhairt do scoláirí sna blianta sóisearacha den iar-bhunleibhéal nár bhain le torthaí scrúduithe suimitheacha amháin. Tharraing an Creat ar staidéar náisiúnta fadtéarmach faoi fhoghlaim scoláirí sa tSraith Shóisearach (Smyth, 2009), ar léirbhreithniú ar dhea-chleachtas idirnáisiúnta agus ar thréimhse chomhairliúcháin leis an CNCM (CNCM, 2010; CNCM, 2011). Bhí an Creat chun tacaíocht a thabhairt do chúrsaí aistrithe, ba iad sin, an t-aistriú ón

mbunscoil agus an t-ullmhúchán don tSraith Shinsearach, ag cur san áireamh riachtanais éagsúla agus dhaonlathacha na scoláirí ag an gCéim seo. Bhí fíis ann go mbeadh an Creat lárnaithe níos mó sa scoláire ná mar a bhí an Teastas Sóisearach agus go mbeadh deiseanna ann measúnú a dhéanamh ar réimse níos leithne d'eolas, scileanna, tuiscintí agus luachanna trí chur chuige défhócasaithe don mheasúnú a chuirfeadh measúnú suimitheach agus foirmitheach san áireamh. D'aibhsigh an Creat gur cheart athrú ón gcleachtas a leag an príomhfhócas ar scrúdú suimitheach deiridh mar go raibh olltíonchar aige seo ar theagasc agus foghlaim.

Bhain an-chuid dúshlán leis an gCreat a chur i ngníomh ó pholasaí go cleachtas le linn na chéad trí bliana eile. Cuireadh an phríomh-bhéim ar chúrsaí measúnaithe, ach léiríodh inné faoi thábhacht áiseanna agus forbairt ghairmiúil do mhúinteoirí chomh maith. Ag eascairt as an Tuairisc Travers (2015), foilsíodh an Creat don tSraith Shóisearach i mí Dheireadh Fómhair 2015 (An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna, 2015). Tá torthaí foghlama mar bhonn ag an gCreat agus ag na sonraíochtaí. Is éard is brí torthaí foghlama ná "ráitis i sonrúcháin churaclaim a dhéanann cur síos ar an eolas, an tuiscint, na scileanna agus na luachanna ar chóir do scoláirí a bheith ábalta a léiriú tar éis tréimhse foghlama" (An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna, 2015, lch.12). Dearadh na sonraíochtaí don Ghaeilge T1 agus T2 laistigh de chomhthéacs achrannach an Chreata don tSraith Shóisearach.

Cuireadh páipéar cúlra agus doiciméad treorach maidir leis an athbhreithniú ar Ghaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí faoi chomhairliúchán idir mí an Mhárta agus mí na Bealtaine 2015 (CNCM, 2013; CNCM 2015a; CNCM, 2015b). Tháinig

moladh chun cinn ó gheallsealbhóirí oideachasúla agus geallsealbhóirí na Gaeilge gur chóir idirdhealú a dhéanamh sa churaclam idir foghlaimoirí a bhí ag foghlaim na Gaeilge i scoileanna T1 agus i scoileanna T2 (CNCM, 2015b). Cuireadh curaclam teanga idirdhealaithe T1 agus T2 i bhfeidhm sna ranganna sóisearacha sa bhunscoil in 2015 agus sna meánranganna agus sna hardranganna in 2019. Moladh go gcuirfeadh curaclam idirdhealaithe san iar-bhunscoil le foghlaim na scoláirí agus le leanúnachas ina n-aistear foghlama ón mbunscoil go dtí an iar-bhunscoil.

Chomh maith leis na hathruithe a tháinig chun cinn mar gheall ar an gCreat don tSraith Shóisearach, bhí dúshlán sa bhreis roimh mhúinteoirí Gaeilge mar go raibh orthu curaclam idirdhealaithe a chur i bhfeidhm sa Ghaeilge den chéad uair riamh ag leibhéal sóisearach na hiar-bhunscoile. Cuireadh soláthar idirdhealaithe don Ghaeilge ar fáil sa tSraith Shóisearach den chéad uair in 2017. Cuireadh sonraíochtaí Gaeilge ar fáil do scoileanna T1 agus do scoileanna T2 (An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna, 2017a; 2017b). Tosaíodh ar chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí T1 agus T2 den chéad uair ag am a raibh go leor athruithe ag tarlú ag an iar-bhunleibhéal agus aighneas tionsclaíoch i measc múinteoirí. Cuireadh moill ar sholáthar na forbartha gairmiúla de bharr na ndeacrachtaí seo, moill a d'fhéadfadh drochthionchar a imirt ar thaithí múinteoirí ar chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí. Bhí sé i gceist go ndéanfaí athbhreithniú ar an nGaeilge sa tSraith Shóisearach nuair a bheadh timthriall de thrí bliana curtha i gcrích ag cohórt scoláirí i Meán Fómhair 2020. Chuir an phaindéim Covid-19 isteach ar na pleananna seo áfach, mar gheall go raibh scoileanna dúnta ar feadh tréimhsí fada agus cuireadh na scrúduithe Stáit ar ceal ach amháin do lucht luathfhágála scoile agus d'fhoghlaimoirí fásta.

Foilsíodh dréachtsonraíochtaí don Ardteistiméireacht i mí Feabhra 2021 a bhí bunaithe ar mhúnla idirdhealaithe na Sraithe Sóisearaí agus a raibh sé mar aidhm acu leanúnachas a chinntiú san fhoghlaim. I ndiaidh an chomhairliúcháin phoiblí, moladh eolas a lorg agus a chur ar fáil maidir le cur i bhfeidhm shonraíochtaí Gaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí mar chéad chéim a chabhródh le geallsealbhóirí cinntí a dhéanamh faoi athruithe curaclaim sa tSraith Shinsearach (CNCM 2023a). Choimisiúnaigh an CNCM beirt as SEALBHÚ (Mac Gearailt & Ó Duibhir, 2023) le tabhairt faoi *Athbhreithniú luath*

ar chur i bhfeidhm na Sonraíochtaí Gaeilge T1 agus T2 don tSraith Shóisearach. Déanfar plé ar na príomhthorthaí a d'éascair ón gcéad athbhreithniú níos déanaí sa mhír seo. Rinneadh leasuithe ar na sonraíochtaí ag eascairt ó na torthaí ón Athbhreithniú Luath.

Díríonn an taighde seo ar chur i bhfeidhm shonraíochtaí Gaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí T1 agus T2 (An Roinn Oideachais 2023a, 2023b) a cuireadh ar fáil i Meán Fómhair 2023. Breathnaítear ar aidhmeanna agus ar ábhar na sonraíochtaí féin anois.

Aidhmeanna agus Ábhar na Sonraíochtaí Gaeilge T1 agus T2

Tá sonraíochtaí Gaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí nasctha le príomhscileanna sa Chreat don tSraith Shóisearach. Tá ocht bpríomhscil aitheanta, is iad sin:

1. *A bheith cruthaitheach*

2. *A bheith uimheartha*

3. *A bheith liteartha*

4. *Cumarsáid*

5. *Eolas agus smaointeoireacht a bhainistiú*

6. *Mé féin a bhainistiú*

7. *Fanacht folláin*

8. *Obair le daoine eile*

Léirítear gnéithe na príomhscile agus samplaí de ghníomhaíocht foghlama an scoláire a dhéanann naisc leis an bpríomhscil sna sonraíochtaí Gaeilge T1 agus T2.

Sonraíocht Ghaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí (Scoileanna T1)

Tá an tsonraíocht T1 dírithe ar chainteoirí dúchais Gaeilge agus ar fhoghlaimeoirí Gaeilge i scoileanna Gaeltachta, i scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge (Gaelcholáistí) agus in aonaid lán -Ghaeilge. Baineann scoláirí T1 úsáid laethúil as an nGaeilge mar theanga chumarsáide na scoile, agus d'fhéadfadh an Ghaeilge a bheith mar theanga bhaile agus/nó mar theanga phobail acu. Tá líon teagmhála níos airde ag scoláirí T1 leis an nGaeilge i gcomparáid lena bpiaraí a fhreastalaíonn ar scoileanna T2 a mbíonn teagmháil shrianta acu leis an teanga de ghnáth. De réir na sonraíochta T1, is gá sonraíocht ar leith a chur ar fáil do scoláirí T1 a mbeadh scileanna ginchumais agus scileanna gabhchumais níos forbartha acu mar gheall ar an ngarthimpeallacht teanga. 'Is iad forbairt, saibhriú agus buanú scileanna teanga is aidhm don tsonraíocht' (An Roinn Oideachais, 2023a, Ich.3). Cuirtear béim sa tsonraíocht T1 ar úsáid chruinn chumasach na teanga agus ar inmheánú beochultúir na Gaeilge. Leagtar tábhacht ar leith ar riachtanais teanga cainteoirí dúchais agus moltar go dtabharfadh scoileanna atá ag lorg aitheantais mar scoil Ghaeltachta faoin *Polasaí don Oideachas Gaeltachta 2017-2022* (An Roinn Oideachais agus Scileanna, 2016) faoin tsonraíocht T1.

Tagann na torthaí foghlama a bhaineann leis na trí shnáithe sa tsonraíocht (Cumas Cumarsáide, Feasacht Teanga agus Chultúrtha agus Féinfheasacht an Fhoghlaimora) a bheag nó mhór le tuairiscíní leibhéal B2, is é sin úsáideoir neamhspleách teanga, ar Chomhchreat Tagartha na hEorpa um Theangacha (CEFR, Comhairle na hEorpa 2001, 2018). Aithnítear sa tsonraíocht nach gá go mbeadh scileanna teanga an fhoghlaimeora ar comhleibhéal thar na scileanna teanga.

Sonraíocht Ghaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí (Scoileanna T2)

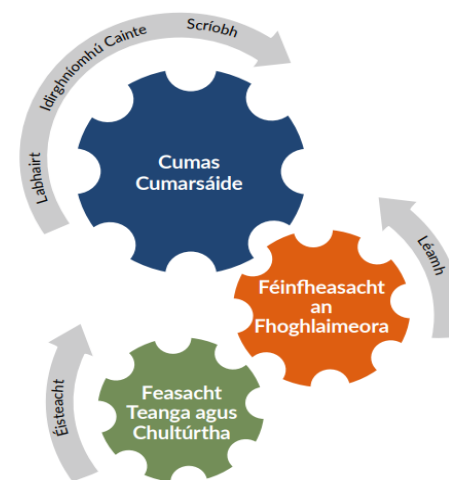
Bíonn foghlaimeoirí i scoileanna T2 ag brath cuid mhór ar an scolaíocht don ionchur teanga sa Ghaeilge agus do dheiseanna an teanga a úsáid. Leagann an tsonraíocht T2 béim ar dheiseanna teanga a chruthú, ar naisc a dhéanamh le pobal teanga agus ar theacht ar eiseamláirí cruinne dílse na teanga. I

gcás scoileanna T2, tá na torthaí foghlama a bhaineann leis na trí shnáithe (Cumas Cumarsáide, Feasacht Teanga agus Chultúrtha agus Féinfheasacht an Fhoghlaimora) ag teacht leis na tuairiscíní atá le fáil i mbandaí A2-B1 (ó bhonnúsáideoir go húsáideoir neamhspleách teanga) ar Chomhchreat Tagartha na hEorpa um Theangacha (CEFR, Comhairle na hEorpa 2001, 2018).

Forbhreathnú ar Ábhar na Sonraíochtaí T1 agus T2

Tá trí shnáithe chomhtháite sa dá shonraíocht: Cumas Cumarsáide, Feasacht Teanga agus Chultúrtha agus Féinfheasacht an Fhoghlaimora mar atá léirithe i bhFíor 1.

Fíor 1: Snáitheanna na Sonraíochtaí Gaeilge T1 agus T2 (Ich.12)



Táthar ag súil go gcaithfidh scoláirí íosmhéid 240 uair an chloig rannpháirtíochta ar an gclár ama thar trí bliana na Sraithe Sóisearaí. Cuimsíonn an cumas cumarsáide na cúig scil teanga: éisteacht, léitheoireacht, labhairt, idirghníomhú cainte agus scríbhneoireacht. Is scileanna teanga comhtháite iad na scileanna teanga agus tacaíonn cumas cumarsáide le forbairt an dá shnáithe eile. Leagtar béim ar leith sna sonraíochtaí ar úsáid chumarsáideach na teanga le húsáideoirí i bpobal teanga an scoláire.

Tá sé phríomhghné a threoraíonn teagasc agus foghlaim sna sonraíochtaí T1 agus T2 mar atá léirithe i dTábla A.

Tábla A: Gnéithe a threoraíonn teagasc agus foghlaim na sonraíochtaí

Cur chuige cumarsáideach	Tá béim ar úsáid chumarsáideach na teanga agus idirghníomhú trí mheán na teanga i dtascanna ranga.
Tábhacht na Muiníne	Cuirtear béim ar leith ar fhorbairt muiníne an scoláire.
Cur Chuige Comhtháite	Forbraítear na cúig scil teanga ar bhonn comhtháite.
Teanga an Ranga	Is í an Ghaeilge teanga chumarsáide an tseomra ranga.
Deiseanna úsáide teanga	Bíonn deiseanna aschuir teanga ar bhealaí éagsúla riachtanach do scoláirí.
Gníomhaíochtaí Tascbhunaithe	Forbraíonn an scoláire scileanna teanga trí pháirt a ghlacadh i dtascanna cumarsáideacha idirghníomhacha teanga.

Tábhacht na Litríochta

Cuirtear béim sna sonraíochtaí T1 agus T2 ar úsáid na litríochta. Tá sé i gceist go dtacódh an litríocht le forbairt teanga agus litearthachta, scileanna criticiúla agus cruthaitheacha, tuiscintí cultúrtha agus forás pearsanta. Baineann na téacsanna litríochta le réimse seánraí- scannáin, gearrscéalta, amhráin, drámaí, dánta, úrscéalta srl. Moltar go mbeadh ról ag na scoláirí i roghnú na dtéacsanna agus cuirtear liosta de théacsanna molta ar fáil chomh maith le liosta de sheánraí dualgais. Bíonn liosta de théacsanna molta ar leith don chéad bhliain agus liosta dualgais eile ann don dara agus don tríú bliain den tSraith Shóisearach. Faightear an sainmhíniú a leanas ar théacs sna

sonraíochtaí T1 agus T2: ‘Is féidir téacs a thabhairt ar gach toradh a bhíonn ar úsáid teanga; teanga labhartha, scríofa, físeach, nó ilmhódach. Is éard is téacs ilmhódach ann ná téacs ina bhfuil teanga agus córais chumarsáide eile in éineacht, leithéidí téacs clóite, íomhánna, fuaim agus an teanga labhartha’ (An Roinn Oideachais, 2023a, lch. 20; 2023b, lch 19). Bíonn rogha ag scoileanna na téacsanna is mó a oireann dá bhfoghlaiméoirí agus do chomhthéacs na foghlama a roghnú ó liosta molta de théacsanna. Tá liosta ar leith ann do scoileanna T1 agus do scoileanna T2. Is féidir le scoileanna T1 litríocht ó bhéal/ litríocht áitiúil a roghnú a oireann do shuímeanna na scoláirí agus don cheantar áitiúil. Chuir CNCM fáilte roimh léiriú spéise ó mhúinteoirí Gaeilge iar-bhunscoile T1 agus T2 a bhí ag iarraidh a bheith páirteach san athbhreithniú ar liostaí litríochta do Ghaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí T1. Cuireadh tús leis an obair sin i Meán Fómhair 2023.

Measúnuithe Rangbhunaithe agus an Tasc Measúnaithe

Eascraíonn na sonraíochtaí Gaeilge ón gCreat don tSraith Shóisearach a leagann amach fíis don mheasúnú foimitheach agus suimitheach sa tSraith Shóisearach. Tá dhá mheasúnú rangbhunaithe (MRB) mar chuid de chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí. Is Punann Teanga atá in MRB 1. Iarrtar ar na scoláirí trí phíos a oibre a roghnú. Is gá píosa amháin fuaime nó físe a roghnú agus is féidir litríocht bhéil/áitiúil a chur san áireamh. Moltar go mbainfí leas as an litríocht mar spreagadh do cheann amháin de na píosaí punainne. Déanann an scoláire cur síos ar an réasúnaíocht a bhain leis na trí phíos a roghnú.

‘Ag Idirghníomhnú trí Ghaeilge’ a thugtar ar MRB 2. Ullmhaíonn an scoláire píosa cainte faoi ábhar a bhfuil spéis aige féin ann nó trí phíos a cruthaitheach a chumadh agus a chur i láthair. Bíonn comhrá ag an scoláire ansin leis an múinteoir agus lena chomhscoláirí (scoileanna T1 amháin) faoin ábhar nó faoin bpíosa cruthaitheach.

Is iad na múinteoirí a thugann aiseolas foirmitheach do na scoláirí ar na tascanna MRB agus bíonn deis ag múinteoirí comhoibriú agus measúnú

a dhéanamh le chéile ar obair na scoláirí ag cruinnithe Athbhreithniú ar Fhoghlaim agus ar Mheasúnú Ábhair (AFMÁ). Baineann an múinteoir leas as na Gnéithe Cáilíochta chun teacht ar a bhreithiúnas ar chaighdeán oibre an scoláire agus tacaíonn an cruinniú AFMÁ leis na múinteoirí teacht ar léargais agus ar chomhthuiscint maidir le caighdeán na nGnéithe Cáilíochta do gach tuairiscín. Tá ceithre thuairisceoir leibhéil ghnóthachtála ann: ***Thar barr ar fad, Os cionn na n-ionchas, Ag teacht leis na hionchais, agus Níor chomhlíon na hionchais go fóill***. Bailítear samplaí de MRB 1: An Phunann Teanga agus de MRB 2: Ag Idirghníomhú trí Ghaeilge agus pléitear iad ag na cruinnithe AFMÁ. Roinntear an tuairiscín atá bronnta ar an scoláire le tuismitheoirí/caomhnóirí agus trí Phróifíl Ghnóthachtála na Sraithe Sóisearaí (PGSS).

Tugann na scoláirí faoi Thasc Measúnaithe nuair a bhíonn na Measúnuithe Rangbhunaithe curtha i gcrích acu. Bronnann an tasc measúnaithe deis ar an scoláire machnamh a dhéanamh ar MRB2 agus tá sé i gceist go gcuirfí an tasc measúnaithe faoi bhráid Choimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit lena mharcáil. Bheadh 10% de na mharcanna deiridh ag dul don tasc measúnaithe. Bíonn Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit freagrach as an scrúdú deiridh a chur ar fáil arbh fhiú 90% de na marcanna é. Cuirtear scrúdú Ardleibhéil agus scrúdú Gnáthleibhéil ar fáil i gcomhthéacsanna scoile T1 agus T2. Pléifear an t-athbhreithniú luath ar chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí T1 agus T2 sa chéad chuid eile.

Athbhreithniú Luath ar Chur i bhfeidhm na Sonraíochtaí T1 agus T2

Bailíodh sonraí ón athbhreithniú luath (Mac Gearailt & Ó Duibhir, 2023) idir Feabhra agus Meitheamh 2022. Bailíodh sonraí ó shuirbhé ar líne le múinteoirí (N=911); grúpaí fócais le scoláirí (N=94); grúpaí fócais le múinteoirí (N=31) agus ó aighneachtaí scríofa ó pháirtithe leasmhara. Bhí na múinteoirí a ghlac páirt sa suirbhé ag teagasc i gcomhthéacsanna éagsúla a d'áirigh scoileanna T2 (87% de fhreagróirí), Gaelcholáistí (11% de fhreagróirí), scoileanna Gaeltachta (4% de fhreagróirí) agus aonaid lán-Ghaeilge (1% de fhreagróirí). Tháinig buanna agus dúshláin chun cinn maidir le cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí.

Ar an iomlán, léirigh múinteoirí míshástacht leis na sonraíochtaí i gcomhthéacsanna scoile T1 agus T2 sa suirbhé. Bhí cuid de na rannpháirtithe moltach faoi ghnéithe áirithe de na sonraíochtaí, mar shampla an litríocht, na tascanna MRB, an t-athmhachnamh, an fhéinfhoghlaim agus an scannán sa chéad bhliain. I measc na ndúshlán a tháinig chun cinn, aithníodh go raibh dúshlán ag pointí aistrithe agus scoláirí ag aistriú ón mbunscoil go dtí an iar-bhunscoil agus ón tSraith Shóisearach go dtí an tSraith Shinsearach. Chothaigh an leanúnachas ón mbunscoil go dtí an iar-bhunscoil deacracht mar gheall ar an athrú béime ó churaclam cumarsáideach sa bhunscoil go curaclam iar-bhunscoile inár leagadh béim níos mó ar léitheoireacht agus ar scríbhneoireacht. Léiríodh an tuairim go raibh an iomarca béime ar an litríocht agus go raibh an t-ualach litríochta a bhí le clúdach róthrom agus ag baint ó dheiseanna cainte na scoláirí dá bharr. Bhain dúshlán chomh maith le rochtain a fháil ar théacsanna agus oiriúnacht chuid de na téacsanna a d'éiligh caighdeán an-ard Gaeilge ó na scoláirí. Aithníodh an easpa béime ar scileanna idirghníomhaithe teanga sa mheasúnú mar dhúshlán. Cé go raibh sé i gceist go ndéanfadh MRB2 measúnú ar scileanna idirghníomhaithe cainte i gcásanna áirithe, foghlaimíodh sleachta de ghlanmheabhair agus rinneadh aistriúchán ó Bhéarla go Gaeilge ar na píosaí cainte. Maíodh go raibh an easpa béime ar scileanna idirghníomhaithe cainte sa mheasúnú suimitheach sa tSraith Shóisearach as riocht le measúnú na hArdeistiméireachta sa Ghaeilge ina bhfuil 40% de mharcanna ag dul don scrúdú cainte ó 2012. Sular cuireadh na sonraíochtaí i bhfeidhm, bhí tuairim is 40% de scoileanna ag cur scrúdú cainte roghnach ar fáil sa tSraith Shóisearach in 2016. Ní raibh múinteoirí sásta leis an treoir a fuair siad don scrúdú deiridh. Níor cuireadh páipéar samplach ar fáil go dtí an Fómhar sa tríú bliain agus ní raibh ach páipéar samplach amháin ar fáil don Ardleibhéal agus don Ghnáthleibhéal. Bhí múinteoirí den tuairim go raibh na torthaí foghlama deacair le tuiscint i gcásanna áirithe. Mhaígh údair na tuarascála nárbh mhór a bheith cúramach agus tátail á mbaint as an torthaí mar nach raibh timthriall iomlán curtha i gcrích ag scoláirí ag an am agus mar gheall go raibh na coinníollacha foghlama agus teagaisc curtha as riocht de bharr na paidéime.

Ag eascairt ón Athbhreithniú luath ar chur i bhfeidhm na Sonraíochtaí Gaeilge T1 agus T2 don tSraith Shóisearach (Mac Gearailt & Ó Duibhir, 2023)

rinneadh leasuithe ar Shonraíochtaí Gaeilge T1 agus T2 na Sraithe Sóisearaí agus Socruithe Measúnaithe do Mheasúnaithe Rangbhunaithe 1 agus 2 i Meán Fómhair 2023 in Imlitir 0015/2023 (An Roinn Oideachais, Márta 2023). Bhain na leasuithe leis na cohóirt scoláirí 2022/25 agus 2023/26. Ag freagairt don athbhreithniú luath agus le breis deiseanna a thabhairt do scoláirí scileanna labhartha agus idirghníomhaithe cainte a fhorbairt sa Ghaeilge, laghdaíodh an líon litríochta a bhí le clúdach. Scríobhadh san imlitir go dtabharfaí faoi Athbhreithniú agus Léirbhreithniú iomlán ar liostaí théacsanna Gaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí in 2023/2024. Rinneadh leasú ar théacsanna liteartha dualgais chomh maith. Tá na leasuithe ar na sonraíochtaí agus socruithe measúnaithe a leagadh amach sa chiorclán don chohórt scoláirí 2023-2026 léirithe i dTábla B.

Tábla B: Na príomhathruithe don chohórt scoláirí 2023-2026 (scoláirí a bheidh ag teacht isteach sa chéad bhliain) T1 agus T2 (Imlitir 0015/2023).

- **Laghú ar íoslíon na dtéacsanna liteartha a mholtar don chéad bhliain T2**
- **Laghú ar íoslíon na dtéacsanna liteartha dualgais don dara bliain agus don tríú bliain T1 agus T2**
- **Leasuithe ar an raon seánraí don dara bliain agus don tríú bliain T1**
- **Leasuithe ar an raon seánraí don chéad bhliain, don dara bliain agus don tríú bliain T2**
- **Bíonn MRB 1 ar siúl sa dara bliain**
- **MRB 2 athshamhlaithe i dtreoirínte measúnaithe athbhreithnithe**

Rinneadh leasuithe ar na treoirínte measúnaithe maidir le MRB1 & MRB2 i Meán Fómhair 2023 do scoileanna T1 agus scoileanna T2. Cuireadh breis ábhar tacaíochta ar fáil do MRB2 (CNCM, 2023b; 2023c).

Tá an t-íoslíon litríochta don dara bliain agus don tríú bliain léirithe i dTábla C (Imlitir 0015/ 2023).

Tábla C: Íoslíon na litríochta don dara bliain agus don tríú bliain

T1	T2
Úrscéal amháin (iomlán)	Úrscéal amháin (iomlán)
Dráma amháin (iomlán)	Ardleibhéal amháin
Dhá ghearrscannán	Dhá ghearrscannán nó dráma amháin (iomlán)
Cúig dhán/amhrán	Ceithre dhán/amhrán
Dhá ghearrscéal	Gearrscéal amháin
Cúig théacs áitiúla/béil	

De réir Imlitir 0015/2023, baineann tábhacht leis an athbhreithniú leantach ar chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí atá ar siúl sa taighde seo mar chur chuige a dhéanfaidh monatóireacht agus meastóireacht ar na leasuithe chomh maith le hiniúchadh a dhéanamh ar na hoideolaíochtaí atá á gcur i bhfeidhm ag múinteoirí agus torthaí foghlama na sonraíochtaí á gcur i ngníomh. Maíodh go leagfaí béim sa taighde ar na foghlaimeoirí uile atá ag foghlaim na Gaeilge agus go ndéanfaí iniúchadh ar bhealaí praiticiúla le cumas agus muinín na scoláirí a fhorbairt i labhairt agus in idirghníomhnú le daoine eile sa Ghaeilge le linn na dt trí bliana den tSraith Shóisearach. Díríonn an taighde seo ar na sonraíochtaí nuashonraithe T1 agus T2 Meán Fómhair 2023 agus ar an treoir a mbaineann leo go príomha. Féachtar anois ar thaighde ábhartha eile.

Taighde Ábhartha Eile

Is díol spéise é an taighde fadtéarmach ar chur i bhfeidhm Chreat na Sraithe Sóisearaí atá ar bun ag taighdeoirí in Ollscoil Luimnigh don taighde seo chomh maith. Léiríonn an tríú tuarascáil eatramhach (McGarr et al., 2024) go bhfuil múinteoirí Gaeilge, múinteoirí Matamaitice agus múinteoirí Eolaíochta níos diúltaí faoi Chreat na Sraithe Sóisearaí i gcomparáid le múinteoirí a mhúineann ábhair eile. Sonraíodh go raibh leibhéal sástachta níos ísle ag múinteoirí na Gaeilge lena bpost agus go rabhadar níos diúltaí faoi ábhar na sonraíochtaí i gcomparáid le mórchuid de na múinteoirí a mhúineann ábhair eile.

Rinne Barnes et al. (2024) anailís ar shonraí ón staidéar fadtréimhseach 'Growing Up in Ireland' le hiniúchadh a dhéanamh ar dhearchtaí scoláirí i leith na Gaeilge. Léiríonn an anailís ar shonraí a bhain le 7,000 scoláirí go mbíonn dearchtaí níos dearfaí ag scoláirí a fhreastalaíonn ar scoileanna T1 i leith na teanga i gcomparáid le scoláirí a fhreastalaíonn ar scoileanna T2. Léiríodh chomh maith nach dtagann athruithe móra ar dhearchtaí scoláirí i leith na Gaeilge idir an bhunscoil agus an iar-bhunscoil. Bíonn dea-thionchar ag oideolaíochtaí atá soláire lárnaithe agus caidrimh dhearfacha le múinteoirí ar dhearchtaí scoláirí i leith fhoghlaím na Gaeilge. Aibhsíonn Barnes et al. (2024) gur gá béim a chur ar thaitneamh a mhéadú agus dúshláin a laghdú chun foghlaimeoirí a spreagadh. Aithníodh ról na dtuismitheoirí maidir le hinspreagadh teanga chomh maith leis na toisc níos leithe a mbíonn tionchar acu ar an nGaeilge. Aithníodh féidearthachtaí na Gaeilge mar chuid de stóras teanga ilteangach chun tuiscint idirchultúrtha a mhéadú chomh maith.

Conclúid

Rinneadh cur síos sa mhír seo ar chúlra stairiúil na sonraíochtaí T1 agus T2, taighde atá déanta go dáta agus ar réasúnaíocht agus ar ábhar na sonraíochtaí féin. Breathnaítear ar mhodheolaíocht an taighde sa chéad mhír eile.

Mír a Trí: **Modheolaíocht an Taighde**

Déantar cur síos sa mhír seo ar mhodheolaíocht an taighde. Mínítear dearadh an taighde agus na céimeanna a glacadh le Cuid a hAon den taighde a chur i gcrích. Tugtar aird ar an bpróiseas anailíse a cuireadh i bhfeidhm ar na sonraí cáilíochtúla ag Céim a hAon den taighde agus tugtar eolas faoi na scoileanna cás-staidéir rannpháirteacha.

Dearadh an Taighde

Is taighde modhanna measctha ilghnéitheach atá sa mhórstaidéar seo. Bainfear leas as réimse uirlisí taighde cainníochtúla agus cáilíochtúla leis na ceisteanna taighde a fhreagairt le linn na dtrí bliana den staidéar. Is réamhthorthaí ó 12 scoil chás-staidéir atá curtha i láthair ag Céim a hAon agus ní mór sin a chur san áireamh agus an tuairisc á léamh. Trí leas a bhaint as an dearadh taighde seo beidh sé d'acmhainn ag an taighde eolas a thabhairt ar an taithí atá ag scoláirí, ag múinteoirí agus ag gairmithe eile scoile ar chur i bhfeidhm shonraíochtaí Gaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí (T1 agus T2). Tabharfaidh an taighde seo léargas ar an taithí atá ag páirtithe leasmhara ar na tacaíochtaí atá ar fáil maidir leis an soláthar agus cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí, agus ar na constaicí, más ann dóibh, atá ann don chur i bhfeidhm. Tabharfar léargas, chomh maith leis sin, sa taighde seo ar an gcaoi a dtagann cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí leis an réasúnaíocht agus leis na haidhmeanna atá ann don leagan uasdátaithe de na sonraíochtaí Gaeilge (T1 agus T2) ag leibhéal na Sraithe Sóisearaí agus leis an gCreat don tSraith Shóisearach (2015) ar bhonn níos leithne.

Díríodh ar mhórchéist a haon agus ar mhórchéist a dó ag Céim a hAon den taighde, ba iad sin:

- 1. Cad é an taithí atá ag ceannairí scoile, múinteoirí agus scoláirí ar chur i bhfeidhm shonraíochtaí Gaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí (T1 agus T2) i réimse an teagaisc, na foghlama agus an mheasúnaithe agus cad iad na tuairimí atá acu ina leith?*
- 2. Cad é an taithí atá ag páirtithe leasmhara ar na tacaíochtaí atá ar fáil maidir le cur i bhfeidhm an tsoláthair agus na sonraíochtaí, agus cén constaicí más ann dóibh, atá ann don chur i bhfeidhm?*

Fiosrófar taithí agus tuairimí na scoláirí i scoileanna cás-staidéir maidir le cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí uasdátaithe i mBliain a hAon (2023-2024) agus i mBliain a Dó (2024-2025) ag Céim a Dó. Beidh scoláirí páirteach sa taighde ag Céim a Trí agus beidh deis acu a gcuid taithí agus a gcuid tuairimí a roinnt faoi Bhliain a Trí (2025-2026) ag Céim a Trí agus iad ag teacht chun críche na Sraithe Sóisearaí. Éascóidh an dearadh taighde fadtéarmach rannpháirtíocht ó réimse leathan geallsealbhóirí le linn na dtrí bliana, mar shampla, múinteoirí, scoláirí, gairmithe scoile, tuismitheoirí/caomhnóirí agus eagraíochtaí Gaeilge. Tá sé tábhachtach a aithint go bhféadfaí na réamhthorthaí atá curtha i láthair sa tuarascáil eatramhach a iniúchadh níos mó ó réimse peirspictíochtaí le linn na dtrí bliana den staidéar. Freagraíonn príomhcheisteanna an taighde do na critéir a leag an CNCM síos san iarratas ar thairiscintí. Déantar cur síos sa mhír seo ar mhodheolaíocht an taighde ag Céim a hAon. Bailíodh na sonraí ó agallaimh leath-struchtúrtha le ceannairí scoile agus ó ghrúpaí fócais le múinteoirí i sé scoil chás-staidéir T1 agus i sé scoil chás-staidéir T2.

Earcaíocht Scoileanna Cás-staidéir agus Sampláil

Fuair an fhoireann taighde faomhadh eitice ó Choiste Eitice Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath tabhairt faoin taighde i mí Eanáir 2024. Seoladh cuireadh chun spéis a léiriú sa taighde chuig gach iar-bhunscoil (N= 735) ó ríomhphost SEALBHÚ ag baint úsáid as na sonraí a bhí ar fáil go poiblí ar shuíomh gréasáin na Roinne Oideachais. Léirigh 33 scoil spéis sa taighde. D'úsáid na taighdeoirí sampláil bhreithiúnais (Maxwell, 2009; Teddlie & Yu, 2007) chun a chinntiú go mbeadh scoileanna ionadaíoch ar réimse foghlaimoírí teanga agus réimse comhthéacsanna foghlama ag an iar-bhunleibhéal. Dar le Teddlie & Yu (2007, lch.83), 'a purposive sample is typically designed to pick a small number of cases that will yield the most information about a particular phenomenon'. Bhí modh taighde an chás-staidéir an-oiriúnach don taighde seo.

Díríonn cás-staidéar ar chás ar leith atá lonnaithe i gcomhthéacs ar leith agus is minic go ndéantar cur síos saibhir ar an gcás agus go dtugtar mionsonraí faoi (Yin, 2009). D'fhéadfadh cás-staidéar a bheith éifeachtach le léargas a fháil ar pheirspictíochtaí daoine i gcás ar leith (Cohen et al., 2018). Ba dhearadh cas-staidéir iolrach a bhí sa taighde seo (Yin, 2009). D'fheidhmigh gach scoil mar chás inti féin agus rinne na taighdeoirí anailís ar gach scoil chás-staidéir mar aon chás amháin, ansin rinneadh anailís ar na scoileanna T1 ar fad le chéile agus ar na scoileanna T2 ar fad le chéile. Rinneadh comparáid ar deireadh idir na scoileanna cás-staidéir T1 agus scoileanna cás-staidéir T2.

Rannpháirtithe an Taighde

Roghnaíodh 12 scoil le bheith ina scoil chás-staidéir, ghlac sé scoil T1 agus sé scoil T2 páirt sa taighde. Roghnaíodh na scoileanna cás-staidéir le léargas a thabhairt ar thaithí scoileanna éagsúla ar chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí. Ghlac scoileanna i ngach cúige in Éirinn páirt sa taighde.

Maidir le scoileanna cás-staidéir T1, bhí trí scoil Ghaeltachta, dhá Ghaelcholáiste agus iar-bhunscoil meán-Bhéarla a raibh sruth lán-Ghaeilge

intí páirteach sa taighde. Bhí roinnt ábhar á dteagasc trí Ghaeilge sa sruth lán-Ghaeilge. Bhí réimse scoileanna páirteach sa taighde a bhí ionadaíoch ar chineálacha éagsúla scoileanna mar shampla - scoileanna beaga, scoileanna móra, scoileanna aon-ghnéis, scoileanna measctha, scoileanna DEIS, scoileanna tuaithe, scoileanna uirbeacha agus scoileanna príobháideacha.

Bailíodh eolas cáilíochtúil ó agallaimh leath-struchtúrtha le príomhoidí agus príomhoidí tántaisteacha, chomh maith le comhordaitheoir na Gaeilge i scoil amháin (N=18) agus bailíodh eolas cáilíochtúil ó ghrúpa fócais le múinteoirí Gaeilge i ngach scoil chás-staidéir (N= 42). Bhí naonúr ceannairí scoile T1 agus naonúr ceannairí scoile T2 páirteach sa taighde. Bhí 23 múinteoirí T1 agus 19 múinteoirí T2 páirteach sa taighde.

Lorgaíodh cead i scríbhinn ó gach príomhoide agus ó Chathaoirleach an Bhoird Bhainistíochta i ngach ceann de na scoileanna rannpháirteacha chun go mbeadh na scoileanna páirteach sa taighde thar thréimhse thrí bliana. Bhí rogha ag múinteoirí páirt a ghlacadh nó gan páirt a ghlacadh sa chéim seo den taighde. Ní úsáidtear ainmneacha pearsanta sa tuairisc seo le rúndacht na rannpháirtithe a chosaint. Tugtar eolas ar na cineálacha scoile atá sna scoileanna T1 (Scoil Ghaeltachta, Gaelcholáiste nó Sruth lán-Ghaeilge) le cur le saibhreas an taighde agus le bailíocht na hanailíse.

Bailíodh na sonraí idir mí Aibreáin agus mí na Bealtaine 2024 agus ó scoil amháin i mí Mheán Fómhair 2024. Reáchtáladh na hagallaimh agus na grúpaí fócais ar fad ar láthair na scoileanna seachas i gcás dhá agallamh le ceannairí agus grúpa fócais amháin le múinteoirí a d'iarr orainn agallamh a dhéanamh ar líne. Rinneadh taifead fuaimne ar na hagallaimh agus ar na grúpaí fócais agus rinneadh trasríobh orthu ina dhiaidh sin. Reáchtáladh na grúpaí fócais le múinteoirí agus leis na ceannairí scoile T1 trí Ghaeilge agus cuireadh na ceannairí i scoileanna T2 faoi agallamh i mBéarla. Tá na ceisteanna ó na hagallaimh le ceannairí scoile agus ó na grúpaí fócais le múinteoirí ar fáil in Aguisín A agus in Aguisín B. Léiríonn Tábla D líon na rannpháirtithe a ghlac páirt sa taighde ó na scoileanna cás-staidéir agus na sonraí a bailíodh uathu. Déantar cur síos ar anailís ar shonraí ina dhiaidh sin.

Tábla D: Scoileanna Cás-Staidéir agus Na Sonraí Taighde

Scoileanna	Agallaimh le Ceannairí Scoile	Grúpa Fócais le Múinteoirí
T1 Scoil A : Gaelcholáiste	Príomhoide & Príomhoide Tánaisteach	N=7
T1 Scoil B: Scoil Ghaeltachta	Príomhoide	N=2
T1 Scoil C: Gaelcholáiste	Príomhoide	N=3
T1 Scoil D: Scoil Ghaeltachta	Príomhoide & Príomhoide Tánaisteach	N=4
T1 Scoil E: Scoil Ghaeltachta	Príomhoide & Príomhoide Tánaisteach	N= 4
T1 Scoil F: Scoil ina bhfuil sruth lán-Ghaeilge	Príomhoide Tánaisteach	N=3
T2 Scoil A	Príomhoide	N= 4
T2 Scoil B	Príomhoide	N=5
T2 Scoil C	Príomhoide	N=3
T2 Scoil D	Príomhoide, Príomhoide Tánaisteach & Comhordaitheoir na Gaeilge	N= 2
T2 Scoil E	Príomhoide	N=3
T2 Scoil F	Príomhoide & Príomhoide Tánaisteach	N=2
Líon Iomlán	18	42

Anailís ar na Sonraí Taighde

Cuireadh dhá mhodh anailíse i bhfeidhm sa taighde seo. Rinneadh anailís ar bhonn téamúil (Braun & Clarke, 2006) ar na hagallaimh leath-struchtúrtha leis na ceannairí scoile. Leanadh sé chéim lena linn, ba iad sin, (i) léamh agus athléamh ar na sonraí; (ii) cód a dhearadh as na pointí éiritheacha; (iii) cóid a rangú mar théamaí (iv) athbhreithniú a dhéanamh ar théamaí (v) tábhacht na dtéamaí a shocrú agus (vi) tuairisciú a dhéanamh ar na torthaí. B`anailís ionductach a cuireadh i bhfeidhm ar na sonraí ó na hagallaimh leis na ceannairí scoile.

Baineadh leas as anailís teimpléid (King, 2012) le hanailís a dhéanamh ar na sonraí ó na grúpaí fócais le múinteoirí. Tá an sórt seo anailíse oiriúnach nuair atá téamaí aitheanta ag na taighdeoirí roimh ré a mbaineann tábhachtach ar leith leo agus ar mhaith leo a iniúchadh. Bhí freagracht ar na taighdeoirí freagairt do na critéir a leagadh síos san iarratas ar thairiscintí. Mar sin, dhear na taighdeoirí códleabhar (Crabtree & Millar, 1999; King, 2012) a bhí mar theimpléad. B`anailís dhéaduchtach a cuireadh i bhfeidhm ag úsáid an teimpléid, chomh maith le hanailís ionductach ar na téamaí éiritheacha; rinneadh leasuithe ar an teimpléad le linn na hanailíse. Is anailís struchtúrtha atá san anailís teimpléid a thugann struchtúr don anailís ón tús ach atá solúbtha chomh maith le freagairt do na téamaí éiritheacha. Mar atá molta ag King (2012), rinne na taighdeoirí códú neamhspleách ar na sonraí agus ansin rinne siad comparáid chriticiúil ar chódú a chéile le cur le bailíocht na hanailíse.

Conclúid

Rinneadh cur síos sa mhír seo ar mhodheolaíocht an taighde. Is sa chéad mhír eile a bhreathnaítear ar thorthaí an taighde.

Mír a Ceathair: **Téamaí Éiritheacha**

Réamhrá

Cuirtear réamhthorthaí an taighde i láthair sa mhír seo. Tá ceithre sheit sonraí i gceist, (i) sonraí ó na ceannairí scoile T1, (ii) sonraí ó na múinteoirí scoile T1, (iii) sonraí ó na ceannairí scoile T2 agus (iv) sonraí ó na ceannairí scoile T2. Breathnaítear ar na sonraí a bailíodh ó na scoileanna T1 i gCuid a hAon agus breathnófar ar na sonraí ó na scoileanna T2 i gCuid a Dó.

4.1 Sonraí ó na Scoileanna Cás-Staidéir T1

Cuid a hAon: Ceannairí Scoile T1

Dírítear sa chuid seo den tuairisc ar thaithí na gCeannairí Scoile in iarbhunscoileanna T1 ar chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta T1 agus ar na tuairimí atá acu ina leith. Breathnaítear ansin ar thaithí na gceannairí ar na tacaíochtaí agus ar na constaicí a bhaineann le cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta agus leis an soláthar, chomh maith leis na moltaí a rinne siad le linn na n-agallamh. Ar deireadh, déantar suimiú ar an gcuid seo den taighde a bhaineann ceannairí scoile i sé scoil chás-staidéir ($N = 9$) ar chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta i gcomhthéacsanna scoile T1.

Taithí agus Tuairimí na gCeannairí Scoile T1

Cé go raibh formhór na gceannairí dearfach faoin gcuraclam idirdhealaithe ar bhonn prionsabail, ba léir go raibh deacrachtaí le cur i bhfeidhm na

sonraíochta T1 i nach mór gach scoil chás-staidéir. Príomhbhuanna a bhain le fealsúnacht an tsoláthair idirdhealaithe, dar leis na ceannairí, ná saibhriú agus forbairt teanga scoláirí i scoileanna T1 a bheadh ag tógáil ar na scileanna teanga a bhí forbartha acu ón mbaile agus/nó ón gcóras scolaíochta i bprionsabal.

- *Anois, caithfidh mé a rá, i bprionsabal go n-aontaím leis. Is maith liom go mbeadh curaclam difriúil ann dos na scoileanna Gaeltachta agus na Gaelcholáistí, so ó thaobh an churaclaim de i bprionsabal. (T1 Scoil B - Príomhoide Scoil Ghaeltachta)*
- *Is breá liom an smaoineamh agus d'eascair sé as an díoscúrsa ar fad ach is an cur i bhfeidhm... (T1 Scoil D - Príomhoide Scoil Ghaeltachta)*
- *Is dócha gur coincheap iontach atá ann ó thaobh saghas idirdhealú a dhéanamh idir scoileanna atá ag feidhmiú trí Ghaeilge agus scoileanna atá ag feidhmiú trí Bhéarla. Ach is dócha sa chomhthéacs atá againn anseo i XXX, ní dóigh linn i ndáiríre go bhfuil an tsonraíocht ag freastal ar ár gcomhthéacs. (T1 Scoil C - Príomhoide Gaelcholáiste)*
- *Feicimse cad é atá an Roinn agus an NCCA ag iarraidh a dhéanamh, ach sílim nach bhfuil an ceart acu maidir leis seo. (T1 Scoil A - Príomhoide Gaelcholáiste)*

Léirigh na ceannairí príomhphointí buairimh a d'eascair óna dtaithí mar cheannairí ar scoileanna T1. Déantar cur síos ar thaithí agus ar thuairimí na gceannairí faoi thrí fhothéama: (i) labhairt na teanga i scoileanna T1, (ii) an córas grádála do scoláirí T1 agus, (iii) soláthar na sonraíochta T1 d'fhoghlaimoirí uile na Gaeilge.

Labhairt na Teanga i Scoileanna T1

Léirigh na ceannairí díomá agus imní nach raibh go leor béime ar labhairt na teanga. Mar gheall ar an ualach trom litríochta atá le clúdach agus toisc nach bhfuil scrúdú cainte mar chuid den mheasúnú suimitheach, mhínigh mórchuid na gceannairí nach raibh spás cruthaithe le díriú ar fhorbairt na scileanna teanga ó bhéal mar ba cheart. Cé go bhfuil cur i láthair ó bhéal le déanamh ag scoláirí i MRB 2, mhínigh ceannairí nach leor é seo ar chor ar bith, ach go háirithe nuair nach bhfuil marcanna suimitheacha ag dul dó. Léiríonn na tuairimí a bhí ag na ceannairí go mbíonn tionchar láidir ag an measúnú seachtrach ar chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta T1 sna scoileanna agus nach féidir an teagasc agus an fhoghlaim a scaradh ón measúnú suimitheach a dhéantar ar an bhfoghlaim chéanna.

Thóg na ceannairí ar fad an pointe go bhfuil níos mó i gceist leis an nGaeilge i scoileanna T1 ná ábhar scoile ná scrúdú. Tá sí níos leithne ná sin agus fite fuaite le féiniúlacht, le féinmhúinín agus le saol na scoláirí. Mhínigh ceannairí i scoileanna Gaeltachta go raibh labhairt na teanga mar dhroim chnámha na forbartha teanga acu i gcónaí agus gur chóir go ndíreofaí ar shaibhriú agus ar fhorbairt scileanna labhartha na scoláirí le tacú leo a bheith ina nGaeilgeoirí fadsaoil. Mhínigh ceannairí i nGaelcholáistí go raibh siad ag iarraidh úsáid na teanga a spreagadh taobh amuigh den rang agus i bpobal na scoile, mar sin, go raibh géarghá béim a chur ar scileanna labhartha na scoláirí sa rang.

Bhí gach ceannaire scoile go láidir den tuairim gur ceart agus gur cóir níos mó aitheantais a thabhairt do labhairt na teanga ag leibhéal na Sraithe Sóisearaí le tacaíocht agus le haitheantas a thabhairt don Ghaeilge mar theanga bheo bheathach. Thuairiscigh cuid de na ceannairí gur ghlac scoláirí páirt i scrúduithe béil roghnach mar chuid den mheasúnú sa seanchóras agus gur chothaigh an cleachtas seo deis ní ba mhó do mhúinteoirí díriú ar

fhorbairt scileanna labhartha sa rang. Chomh maith leis sin, thug an measúnú ar labhairt na Gaeilge deis do scoláirí na sárscileanna teanga ó bhéal a bhí sealbhaithe acu a léiriú agus a bheith mórtasach astu.

• *Is é ceann dos na rudaí is dócha a bhí an-díomách dúinn ná nach bhfuil deis ag na daltaí scrúdú béil a dhéanamh anois. Nuair a tugadh isteach an deis tá a fhios agam gur deis roghnach a bhí ann do dhaltaí scrúdú béil a dhéanamh don tSraith nó don Teastas Sóisearach. Bhí sé go hiontach agus bhí ár ndaltaí in ann a scileanna teanga a léiriú. Mar sin, fuair siad aitheantas don obair sin a bhí déanta acu. (T1 Scoil C - Príomhoide Scoil Ghaeltachta)*

• *Chun cuidiú leis na scoil an teanga a spreagadh, caithfidh luach a bheith air, tá gá le scrúdú béil. (T1 Scoil A - Príomhoide Gaelcholáiste)*

Bhí na ceannairí scoile go láidir den tuairim gur chóir níos mó béime a chur ar labhairt na teanga le chun tacú le stádas na teanga, le forbairt teanga na scoláirí agus lena gcuid féinmhúiníne agus inspreagtha mar úsáideoirí gníomhacha teanga. Tháinig cúrsaí idirdhealaithe chun cinn go mór. Pointe tábhachtach a ardaíodh ná nach bhfeileann measúnú a dhíríonn go príomha ar scileanna léitheoireachta agus scríbhneoireachta do gach foghlaimoir, go háirithe nuair nach mbíonn mórchuid de na foghlaimoirí ag léamh agus ag scríobh go rialta i nGaeilge taobh amuigh den scoil. Bhí foghlaimoirí ann a raibh scoth na Gaeilge acu ó bhéal ach nach raibh deis acu na scileanna teanga sin a léiriú sa mheasúnú scríofa. Ardaíodh ceisteanna faoi oiriúnacht an sórt seo measúnaithe do pháistí a bhfuil deacrachtaí litearthachta nó riachtanais oideachais sa bhreis acu. Thuairiscigh ceannairí nach raibh an easpa aitheantais do scileanna labhartha na Gaeilge cothrom ar na scoláirí a bhfuil stíleanna éagsúla foghlama acu agus nár oir an córas measúnaithe ar na sonraíochta, a raibh tionchar aige ar an gcleachtas ranga ach do na foghlaimoirí ab acadúla amháin.

- Tá an T1 ann ag déanamh imeallú ar roinnt mhaith den chohórt atá sa scoil seo agus is bocht an rud duine nó an t-ábhar a imeallú ar an ngréasán Gaeltachta.... agus an dream, b'fhéidir go bhfuil an ábaltacht acadúil acu, tá siad in ann b'fhéidir é sin a láimhseáil agus mar sin de, but níl chuile dhuine acadúil agus sin é an suimiú suas, an ginearálta teoranta a dhéanamse. (T1 Scoil D - Príomhoide Scoil Ghaeltachta)

An Córas Grádála do Scoileanna T1

Bhí ceannairí scoile i mbeagnach gach scoil chás-staidéir buartha faoin gcóras grádála ó cuireadh an soláthar idirdhealaithe i bhfeidhm. Sna cásanna seo bhí ceannairí scoile den tuairim nach bhféadfaí cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta a dhícheangal ón gcóras scrúdaithe.

- Níl tú ag iarraidh béim a chur ar na torthaí, ach caithfimid uile mar bhainisteoirí agus ceannairí a bheith eolach faoi sin agus bheith cognaíoch faoi sin, sin an slat tomhais atá againn mar scoil. (T1 Scoil A - Príomhoide Gaelcholáiste)

Léirigh nach mór gach ceannaire buairt agus míshástacht maidir leis an gcóras grádála ar na cúiseanna seo a leanas: (i) an titim shuntasach sna torthaí arda agus éagothroime an chórais ghrádála do scoláirí T1 dar leo, (ii) nach raibh na marcanna a bronnadh ar na scoláirí ag teacht le hardchumas teanga ó bhéal na scoláirí, (iii) go raibh drochthionchar ag na gráid íslithe ar fhéinmhuinín agus ar inspreagadh scoláirí agus múinteoirí agus (iv) go bhféadfadh na gráid íslithe dochar a dhéanamh do dheacháil na scoileanna agus don éileamh a bheadh ar scoileanna T1 sa todhchaí.

Léirigh nach mór gach ceannaire an tuairim go raibh díomá nó fiú fearg orthu maidir leis an titim sna marcanna ó cuireadh an soláthar idirdhealaithe i bhfeidhm. Léirigh ceannairí an tuairim go raibh éagóir á dhéanamh anois ar scoláirí T1 nó go raibh pionós á ghearradh orthu mar gheall go raibh siad i scoileanna T1. Mhínigh cuid de na ceannairí nach léiriú cruinn nó cóir a bhí sna marcanna a bhí bronta ar na scoláirí ar a gcumas teanga sa Ghaeilge i gcás cainteoirí dúchais

agus foghlaimoirí na Gaeilge araon. Mhínigh ceannaire i scoil Ghaeltachta amháin mar shampla, go raibh an líon gradam nach mór mar an gcéanna bainte amach ag scoláirí na scoile i Nuatheanga Eorpach agus sa Ghaeilge, cé gurb í an Ghaeilge teanga an bhaile ag cuid de na scoláirí, teanga an cheantair agus céad teanga na scoile. D'áitigh Príomhoide Gaelcholáiste go raibh na páistí anois faoi mhíbhuntáiste ag an gcóras T1 mar go mbeadh marcanna ní b'airde bainte amach acu sa Ghaeilge dá mbeidís ag freastal ar iar-bhunscoil T2.

- Ach má tá daltaí a tógadh sa Ghaeltacht gurb í an Ghaeilge an chéad teanga acu agus atá lánach i saol na Gaeilge sa Ghaeltacht agus nach bhfuil siad ag teacht amach le gradam, tá fadhb ansin. So, sin an rud is mó. Tá daltaí na Gaeltachta faoi mhíbhuntáiste mar gheall ar an idirdhealú seo. (T1 Scoil B - Príomhoide Scoil Ghaeltachta)
- Ach ceapann na daltaí go bhfuil saghas pionós á ghearradh orthu siúd i gcomparáid lena gcairde atá thíos an bhóthair sna scoileanna T2. Tá obair na gcapall ar siúl acu agus ansan fuair Cathal ó thíos an bhóthair nach bhfuil na scoileanna teanga céanna aige gradam sa scrúdú agus fuair siad siúd toilteanas nó ardoilteanas agus níl sé sin cothrom ar ár ndaltaí ar chor ar bith. (T1 Scoil C - Príomhoide Gaelcholáiste)

Thuiriscigh príomhoidí i gcuid de na scoileanna chomh maith go raibh tuismitheoirí buartha faoin titim sna marcanna agus iad i ndiaidh a bpáistí a sheoladh chuig scoil T1. I gcásanna áirithe ardaíodh an pointe go raibh an córas grádála ag tarraingt droch-cháil ar an scoil agus má leanann an cur chuige grádála mar atá go bhféadfadh sé tionchar diúltach a imirt ar thodhchaí na scoileanna T1.

- Ní thuigeann an pobal..an pobal go ginearálta céard atá i gceist le T1 so mar sin nuair a fheiceann siadsan nach bhfuil gradaim ag teacht amach nó you know...yeah is ionann é sin dóibh sin agus oh tá fadhb ansin le múineadh na Gaeilge. Agus níl sé sin fíor, tá a fhios againn nach bhfuil. (T1 Scoil B - Príomhoide Scoil Ghaeltachta)

- *Is dócha chomh maith leis sin, go han-mhacánta, go raibh na torthaí dos na scrúduithe díomách agus tá na tuismitheoirí ag cailliúint saghas, b'fhéidir roinnt den mhuinín atá acu in eanáil na gaeilscoláochta dá bharr agus táimid buartha go fadtéarmach go mbeidh tionchar ar an líon daltaí a dteastóidh uathu a gcuid oideachais a dhéanamh trí Ghaeilge. (T1 Scoil C - Príomhoide Gaelcholáiste)*

Ardaíodh an tuairim chomh maith nár chóir soláthar idirdhealaithe a chur i bhfeidhm sa tSraith Shinsearach go dtí go mbeadh réiteach ar na dúshlán maidir leis an mbronnadh marcanna do scoláirí T1 ag leibhéal na Sraithe Sóisearaí. Mar atá faoi láthair, bhí mórchuid na gceannairí den tuairim go raibh scoláirí T1 faoi mhíbhuntáiste sa scrúdú deiridh agus 'buntáiste caillte acu' ag leibhéal na Sraithe Sinsearaí, bheadh na himpleachtaí níos tromchúisí do na scoláirí agus léirigh cuid de na ceannairí imní faoi sin.

Soláthar na Sonraíochta T1 d'fhoghlaimoirí uile na Gaeilge

Bhí gach pobal scoile éagsúil i ngach scoil chás-staidéar agus bhí ceannairí na scoile freagrach as freastal ar réimse leathan foghlaimoirí. I gcás cuid de na scoileanna Gaeltachta, aithníodh go raibh bua ag baint leis an tsonraíocht maidir le saibhriú teanga agus dúshlán sa bhreis a thabhairt d'fhoghlaimoirí áirithe.

Ar an iomlán áfach, léirigh ceannairí i mórchuid na scoileanna cás-staidéir go raibh deacracht le cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta T1 mar gheall ar an ualach oibre, an caighdeán teanga agus na scileanna teanga a d'éiligh an tsonraíocht. Bhí na tuairimí a léirigh na ceannairí bunaithe ar a gcuid taithí le tuismitheoirí, scoláirí agus múinteoirí. Tá na dúshlán a bhain le soláthar na sonraíochta T1 d'fhoghlaimoirí éagsúla tuairiscithe anseo.

Bhí mórchuid na gceannairí den tuairim go raibh an tsonraíocht T1 ag cothú lagmhisnigh i measc scoláirí, múinteoirí agus tuismitheoirí agus go raibh éagóir á déanamh ar fhoghlaimoirí T1 de bharr an t-ualach oibre sa bhreis a bhain leis an tsonraíocht T1. Ó thaobh na litríochta de, nocht go leor de na ceannairí an tuairim go raibh an líon litríochta a bhí le clúdach ag scoláirí T1 ró-ard agus go raibh

caighdeán cuid de na téacsanna ró-uailmhianach do scoláirí ag leibhéal na hiarbhunscoile. Léirigh ceannairí an tuairim go raibh an tsonraíocht dúshlánach do scoláirí a raibh deacrachtaí litearthachta acu agus bhí cuid de na ceannairí den tuairim nach raibh an méid seo obair sa bhreis agus an fócas ar léitheoireacht agus scríbhneoireacht cothrom ar na scoláirí. Ardaíodh an tuairim nach mbíonn scoláirí ag léamh nó ag scríobh go rialta i nGaeilge taobh amuigh den scoil, mar sin, bhí an-dúshlán sa líon a bhí le clúdach do go leor foghlaimoirí.

- *Tá solúbthacht ann ó thaobh na dtéacsleabhar agus na húrscéalta, na dánta agus eile. Roghnaíonn an scoil. Tá cead ag an múinteoir agus scoláire a roghnú le chéile, ach níl aon solúbthacht don líon atá ann. (T1 Scoil D - Príomhoide Tánaisteach Scoil Ghaeltachta)*
- *Tá sé chomh deacair agus na múinteoirí ag cailleadh misnigh agus níl fhios agam cad a tharlóidh. (T1 Scoil F - Príomhoide Tánaisteach Sruth Iar-Ghaeilge)*

Bhí ceannairí scoile sna Gaelcholáistí den tuairim go raibh an tsonraíocht ródúshlánach do scoláirí nach bhfuil Gaeilge acu sa bhaile agus nach bhfuil tacaíocht bhreise leis an nGaeilge sa bhaile acu.

- *Ta sé rómhór sálim, go mbeadh an dalta ag déanamh T1 mar níl siad ina gcainteoirí dúchais, tá caighdeán Gaeilge iontach maith acu ach níl siad ina gcainteoirí dúchais. (T1 Scoil A - Príomhoide Gaelcholáiste)*

Thuiriscigh cuid de na ceannairí go mbeadh ar níos mó scoláirí tabhairt faoi ghnáthleibhéal sa Ghaeilge mar gheall ar an ualach oibre agus nach raibh seo cothrom orthu. Nocht duine de na ceannairí an tuairim go mbíonn an-díomá ar na scoláirí in amanna tabhairt faoin ngnáthleibhéal i gcomhthéacs scoile T1. Mhínigh ceannaire sa scoil ina raibh an sruth Iar-Ghaeilge go raibh foghlaimoirí ag roghnú gnáthleibhéil ní ba luaithe anois agus go raibh dúshlán le hidirdhealú sa rang agus scoláirí ag déanamh staidéir ar chúrsa ardleibhéil agus ar chúrsa ghnáthleibhéil in aon rang amháin. Mhínigh ceannaire eile go

raibh sé dúshlánach ar scoláirí tabhairt faoin tsonraíocht T1 sa Ghaeilge agus faoin tsonraíocht T1 sa Bhéarla. Sa chás seo, bhí sé tugtha faoi deara go raibh cuid de na scoláirí ag roghnú gnáthleibhéil sa Bhéarla agus ardleibhéal sa Ghaeilge sa tSraith Shóisearach le deis níos fearr a thabhairt dóibh féin díriú ar T1 sa Ghaeilge. Léiríodh inné faoi seo dá leathnófaí an tsonraíocht mar atá isteach sa tSraith Shinsearach agus dá mbeadh measúnú T1 le déanamh ag scoláirí sa dá theanga - Gaeilge agus Béarla.

- *Anois yeah, tá na daltaí ag teacht isteach le hiarratas bogadh go dtí an gnáth leibhéal níos luaithe agus níos luaithe sa dara bliain. Agus tá sé deacair ar na múinteoirí an dá thrá a fhreastal ansin. Tá sé deacair freastal ar na riachtanais atá acu, tá tú ag díriú isteach ar úrscéal agus a rá le lucht gnáthleibhéil níl sé seo ar do chúrsa ach déan é ar son na teanga agus tá sé deacair agus cuid acu le riachtanais difriúla freisin. (T1 Scoil F - Príomhoide Tánaisteach Sruth lán-Ghaeilge)*

Bhain dúshlán le soláthar na sonraíochtaí T1 i gcásanna sa Ghaeltacht nuair a bhí scoláirí nuathagtha ag freastal ar an scoil. Úsáidtear an téarma nuathagtha le tagairt do scoláirí atá tagtha go hÉirinn le cúpla bliain anuas. Toisc go raibh Gaeilge agus Béarla á bhfoghlaím ag na scoláirí ag an aon am amháin bhí an tsonraíocht T1 dúshlánach do na scoláirí siúd. I gcás amháin, bhí líon ard nuafhoghlaimoirí sa scoil agus bhain dúshlán le cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta T1 sa chás sin. Tháinig sé chun solais sa taighde go bhfuil machnamh le déanamh ar oiriúnacht na sonraíochta T1 i gcásanna áirithe sa Ghaeltacht.

Breathnaítear sa chéad mhír eile ar thuairimí na gceannairí maidir leis na tacaíochtaí agus na constaicí a bhaineann le cur i bhfeidhm agus soláthar na sonraíochta T1.

Tacaíochtaí

Is iad na príomhthacaíochtaí a chabhraigh le cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta T1 agus le cur i bhfeidhm an tsoláthair de réir na sonraí a bailíodh ó na ceannairí T1 ná: múinteoirí na scoile, soláthróirí áiseanna, scéimeanna tacaíochtaí Gaeltachta agus gníomhaíochtaí seach-churaclaim.

Múinteoirí na Scoile

Ba léir go raibh na ceannairí scoile an-mhórtasach as múinteoirí na scoile. Sna sonraí a bailíodh, tugadh moladh do dhíograis, do scil, do chruthaitheacht agus do ghairmiúlacht na múinteoirí. I ngach scoil is ar na múinteoirí a thit an príomhdhualgas an tsonraíocht a chur i bhfeidhm.

- *Is dócha an tacaíocht is mó ná an fhoireann scoile. Cinnte, tá foireann dochreidte againn agus tá foireann na scoile ag teacht ó gach cúige in Éirinn. Táimid i nGalltacht ach tá roinnt mhaith de na múinteoirí, is cainteoirí dúchais iad ó Ghaeltachtaí éagsúla timpeall na tíre rud atá go hálainn mar tugann sé blaiseadh de chanúintí éagsúla dár ndaltaí agus tá an Ghaeilge an-nádúrtha mar theanga sa scoil anseo, rud atá go haoibhinn. (T1 Scoil C - Príomhoide Gaelcholáiste)*

Soláthróirí Áiseanna

Cé gur tháinig rochtain ar áiseanna chun cinn mar dhúshlán a bhain le cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta T1, tugadh ardmholadh don Comhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscolaíochta (COGG) agus tugadh suntas don tsárobair a dhéanann siad ag soláthar áiseanna don earnáil lán-Ghaeilge agus Gaeltachta sa Ghaeilge agus do na hábhair eile trí Ghaeilge.

Scéimeanna Gaeltachta

Thug an taighde le fios go raibh go raibh scéimeanna tacaíochta Gaeltachta ag tacú le cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta T1 sa Ghaeltacht. Mhol ceannairí na huaireanta do thacaíochtaí breise faoin scéim aitheantais do scoileanna Gaeltachta mar dheathacaíocht. Chabhraigh na huaireanta breise le cainteoirí láidre Gaeilge saibhriú a dhéanamh ar a gcuid scileanna teanga agus bhí tacaíocht ann d'fhoghlaimeoirí na Gaeilge chomh maith.

- *Is dóigh liom gur cabhair an-mhór é sin don scoil go ginearálta, cabhraíonn sé le soláthar T1 ansin chomh maith mar bíonn snas á chur ag na daltaí ar a gcuid Gaeilge istigh i ngach rang, ní hamháin sna ranganna Gaeilge. (T1 Scoil E - Príomhoide Scoil Ghaeltachta)*

Mhínigh siad in dhá scoil go raibh siad páirteach i scéim inár tháinig cúntóir teanga isteach chun tacú le sealbhú an tsainfhoclóra a bhain leis na hábhair eile agus gur chuidiú iontach é sin. Thacaigh sé seo le foghlaim na Gaeilge sna ceachtanna Gaeilge chomh maith.

Bhí moladh ag dul freisin d'oifigigh phleanála teanga as cabhrú le himeachtaí scoile a rinne nasc idir an scoil agus an pobal lasmuigh di.

- Tugann siad deis dúinn, you know, amhránaithe, damhsóirí, daoine a bhaineann le cultúr na teanga, oidhreacht na teanga, aoichainteoirí. Gan an Oifig Pleanála Teanga ní bheadh an t-airgead againn na rudaí sin a chur ar fáil. Tá an comhoibriú pobail sin thar a bheith tábhachtach i gceantar Gaeltachta sílim. Tá sé ar fheabhas caithfidh mé a rá, tá ardmholadh ag dul don phleanáil teanga agus an tacaíocht a thugann siad do na hinstiúidí oideachais sna Gaeltachtaí ag leibhéal éagsúla. (T1 Scoil C - Príomhoide Scoil Ghaeltachta)*

Gníomhaíochtaí Seach-churaclaim agus nasc le pobal na Gaeilge

Thug gníomhaíochtaí seach-churaclaim agus nasc leis an bpobal tacaíocht do chur chun cinn na teanga sna scoileanna cás-staidéir T1 chomh maith. Mar shampla i nGaelcholáiste amháin bhí an scoil in úsáid ag grúpa pobail le ceol traidisiúnta a theagasc agus bhí nasc idir an scoil agus Gaelcholáiste eile. Tugadh deis, chomh maith leis sin do na scoileanna cuairt a thabhairt ar a chéile. Bhí deis ag scoláirí i nGaelcholáistí dul ar cuairt chun na Gaeltachta agus bhí cuid de na scoláirí ag obair mar cheannairí sa Ghaeltacht le linn na tsamhraidh. Sna scoileanna Gaeltachta tháinig scríbhneoirí, amhránaithe, aíonna ó TG4, iarscoláirí agus aoichainteoirí eile ar cuairt.

Constaicí

Is iad na príomhchonstaicí a d'aithin na ceannairí scoile T1 le linn na n-agallamh ná: earcaíocht múinteoirí, cúrsaí ama, áiseanna, acmhainní chun tacú le páistí a bhfuil riachtanais oideachais sa bhreis acu agus tacaíocht do nuafhoghlaimoirí na Gaeilge.

Earcaíocht Múinteoirí

Tháinig earcaíocht múinteoirí chun cinn mar phríomhdhúshlán i gcomhthéacs na sonraí a bailíodh. Labhair cuid de na ceannairí scoile faoin dúshlán a bhain le múinteoirí Gaeilge a earcú chomh maith le múinteoirí a earcú le hábhair eile a theagasc trí Ghaeilge. Mhínigh ceannairí go raibh sé thar a bheith deacair teacht ar mhúinteoirí a raibh saineolas ábhair agus ardchaighdeán Gaeilge acu agus nach raibh dóthain múinteoirí á soláthar ag institiúidí tríú leibhéal.

- Earcú foirne, sin ceann de na rudaí is deacra agus tá sé an-deacair ar roinnt cúiseanna éagsúla. Dár ndóigh, tá líon na múinteoirí atá líofa sa Ghaeilge i bhfad níos lú. Chomh maith leis sin, má theastaíonn uait post a ghlacadh i nGaelcholáiste, tá a fhios agat go mbeidh dhá oiread an méid oibre le déanamh agat mar beidh ort do chuid acmhainní féin a dhearadh. (T1 Scoil C - Príomhoide Gaelcholáiste)*

Tháinig an costas maireachtála i mBaile Átha Cliath chun cinn chomh maith, rud a spreag múinteoirí óga arb as an tuath iad filleadh abhaile.

Am

Bhí dúshlán ag baint le cúrsaí ama maidir le ham don teagasc, am don phleanáil agus am don fhorbairt ghairmiúil. Tháinig an laghdú ama do theagasc na Gaeilge chun cinn mar chonstaic agus mhínigh cuid de na ceannairí go raibh sé deacair an curaclam a chlúdach taobh istigh de dháileadh ama an churaclaim mar atá. I scoil amháin ní raibh rang laethúil ann sa Ghaeilge mar gheall ar chúrsaí amchláir agus mar sin bhí an ceannaire scoile den tuairim gur bhain sin ó theagmháil na scoláirí leis an teanga. Tuairiscíodh go raibh brú ama i gceist freisin leis na tascanna MRB ar fad a bhí le déanamh. I gcuid de na scoileanna cás-staidéir T1 bhí am sa bhreis á chaitheamh ar theagasc na Gaeilge anuas ar na huaireanta a mholtar. Bhí an t-am breise in úsáid le tacú leis na scoláirí forbairt a dhéanamh ar a gcuid scoileanna teanga sa Ghaeilge agus tabhairt faoin méid a bhí le clúdach.

Dar leis na ceannairí ní raibh go leor ama ann don phleanáil chomh maith agus le huasciliú/huasoiliúint a dhéanamh maidir leis na hathruithe curaclaim.

Úsáideadh uaireanta Pháirc an Chrócaigh go minic le dualgais phleanála eile a chomhlíonadh.

- *Tá am ag teastáil chun rudaí fisiciúla a dhéanamh chun na háiseanna a chur le chéile chun pleananna a chur le chéile, you know, bualadh le scoileanna eile b'fhéidir, agus rudaí a roinnt. Tá gach scoil ag déanamh an rud céanna. Tá sé fíordheacair an t am sin a fháil. (T1 Scoil F - Príomhoide Tánaisteach Sruth lán-Ghaeilge)*

Áiseanna

Príomhchonstaic a bhain leis an soláthar T1 ná rochtain ar áiseanna. Míníodh nach raibh rochtain ag na scoileanna ar chuid mhaith de na téacsanna i nGaeilge agus gur dúshlán mór é sin. I gceantair éagsúla na tíre bhí ceannairí den tuairim nach raibh áiseanna ar fáil i gcanúint na scoile/an cheantair. Mhaígh cuid de na ceannairí nach raibh caighdeán léitheoireachta cuid de na téacsanna oiriúnach mar go raibh siad ag aois léitheoireachta ró-ard.

Acmhainní chun Tacú le Scoláirí a bhfuil Riachtanais Oideachais sa Bhreis acu

Tháinig sé chun solais go dteastaíonn breis tacaíochtaí ó pháistí a bhfuil riachtanais oideachais sa bhreis acu. Cé go mbíonn áiseanna ar fáil i mBéarla, is minic go mbíonn ar an scoil iad a aistriú go Gaeilge. Thug an taighde le fios go raibh deacracht ag scoláirí áirithe rath a bhaint amach sa tsonraíocht T1 mar gheall ar an mbéim ar an léitheoireacht agus scríbhneoireacht. Mhol scoil amháin go mbeadh acmhainní breise daonna ag teastáil mar shampla breis cúntóirí riachtanais speisialta chun tacú le scoláirí a bhfuil riachtanais oideachais sa bhreis acu sa chóras lán-Ghaeilge.

- *Tá XX% de na daltaí sa scoil seo go bhfuil riachtanas éigin acu. B'fhéidir disléicse, díospaice, díoscalcúile. Ach nuair a lorgáimid na hacmhainní, mar shampla, do dhaltaí uathacha, níl siad ar fáil trí Ghaeilge agus bíonn orainn iad a aistriú. (T1 Scoil C - Príomhoide Gaelcholáiste).*

Réamh-mholtaí na gCeannairí T1 ag Céim a hAon

Cuireadh ceist ar na ceannairí scoile an raibh aon mholtaí ar mhaith leo a dhéanamh a rachadh chun sochair do chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta agus don soláthar ar bhonn níos leithne. Tá suimiú ar na moltaí a rinne siad ar fáil anseo. Tá sé tábhachtach le cur san áireamh gur bailíodh na sonraí ó scoileanna cás-staidéir ag Céim a hAon de staidéar trí bliana.

Scrúdú Cainte

- Moladh as cuimse a tháinig aníos ó na hagallaimh leis na ceannairí scoile sna scoileanna cás-staidéir T1 ná gur gá go mbeadh scrúdú cainte mar chuid den mheasúnú suimitheach ag leibhéal na Sraithe Sóisearaí chun scileanna labhartha a chur chun cinn. Bhí gach ceannaire scoile ar aon tuairim faoi seo ar mhórán cúiseanna.
- Ar an gcéad dul síos, tá níos mó i gceist leis an nGaeilge i scoileanna T1 ná ábhar scoile amháin. Tá labhairt na Gaeilge ag croílár phobal agus saol na scoileanna. Tá labhairt na Gaeilge fite fuaite le féiniúlacht scoláirí agus bhí na ceannairí den tuairim gur gá béim a leagan ar labhairt na Gaeilge trí chóras an scrúdaithe mar go mbíonn tionchar ag an scrúdú ar an teagasc agus ar an bhfoghlaim sa rang.
- Moladh go láidir go mbeadh scrúdú cainte ann chun aitheantas a thabhairt do scileanna teanga scoláirí i scoileanna T1 agus len iad a spreagadh leis an teanga a úsáid agus le bheith ina gcainteoirí gníomhacha Gaeilge.
- D'áitigh na ceannairí go raibh scrúdú cainte riachtanach ó thaobh cúrsaí idirdhealaithe de le deis a thabhairt do scoláirí a scileanna idirghníomhaithe teanga a léiriú tríd an gcaint.
- Moladh go mbeadh scrúdú cainte ann leis na scoláirí a réiteach don Ardeistiméireacht.

Athbhreithniú a dhéanamh ar an gcóras scrúdaithe agus ar an gcóras grádála do scoileanna T1

- Faoi mar a sheasann sé, léirigh nach mór gach ceannaire scoile an tuairim go raibh scoláirí T1 faoi mhíbhuntáiste ag an scrúdú deiridh, nach léiriú cruinn a bhí i marcanna an scrúduithe ar chaighdeán Gaeilge na

scoláirí agus gur fheil an córas measúnaithe do scoláirí acadúla amháin. Bhí tromlach na ceannairí den tuairim go raibh an córas scrúdaithe agus an córas marcála ag déanamh dochar don teanga ó thaobh cúrsaí inspreagtha agus féinmhuiníne de. Chuir cuid de na ceannairí in iúl má leantar leis an gcóras mar atá, go bhféadfadh drochthionchar a bheith ag an gcóras scrúdaithe ar an éileamh a bheadh ar scoileanna T1 sa todhchaí. Bheadh impleachtaí an-tromchúiseacha ann dá leanfaí leis an gcóras marcála atá sa tSraith Shóisearach sa tSraith Shinsearach.

Athbhreithniú a dhéanamh ar an litríocht & soláthar téacsanna

- Bhí cuid de na ceannairí scoile den tuairim go raibh an iomarca litríochta le clúdach ag scoláirí T1.
- Moladh gur chóir go mbeadh scoláirí in ann tarraingt ar litríocht na chéad bhliana agus iad ag réiteach don scrúdú.
- Moladh téacsanna a roghnú atá ar chaighdeán oiriúnach agus déanamh cinnte de go mbeadh na téacsanna ar fáil do na scoileanna T1 agus iad ar fáil i gcanúint an cheantair. Is gá tuilleadh iniúchta a dhéanamh ar an ábhar seo le linn an taighde.

Áiseanna & Tacaíochtaí do scoláirí a bhfuil riachtanas oideachais sa bhreis acu

- Moladh tacaíochtaí breise a chur ar fáil do scoláirí a bhfuil riachtanas oideachas sa bhreis acu agus go mbeadh áiseanna curtha in oiriúint don suíomh tumoideachais. Moladh go mbeadh breis foirne ann chomh maith chun tacú leis na foghlaimeoirí a bhfuil riachtanais bhreise oideachais acu.

Am don Phleanáil agus don Fhorbairt Ghairmiúil Leanúnach

- Moladh breathnú ar chúrsaí ama agus am ceart a thabhairt do mhúinteoirí le tabhairt faoin bhforbairt ghairmiúil agus le tabhairt faoin bpleanáil i gcomhthéacs athruithe suntasacha curaclaim.

Earcaíocht múinteoirí lán-Ghaeilge agus Gaeltachta &

Liúntas

- Moladh gur gá breathnú ar chúrsaí earcaíochta agus gur gá straitéis a bheith ann lena chinntiú go mbeidh múinteoirí ar fáil le teagasc i scoileanna sa chathair agus sna scoileanna Gaeltachta chomh maith.
- Moladh forbairt a dhéanamh ar oideachas múinteoirí go mbeidh soláthar ann don earnáil lán-Ghaeilge agus Ghaeltachta ó thaobh theagasc na Gaeilge mar ábhar agus teagasc ábhair eile trí Ghaeilge.
- Moladh i scoil Ghaeltachta amháin gurbh fhiú painéal a bheith ann do mhúinteoirí Gaeltachta.
- Moladh an liúntas a thabhairt ar ais do mhúinteoirí atá ag teagasc i scoileanna lán-Ghaeilge agus Gaeltachta mar bhealach le haitheantas a thabhairt don obair bhreise a bhaineann le bheith ag obair san earnáil.

Gníomhaíochtaí Seach-churaclaim & Nasc leis an bpobal

- Moladh cur leis na gníomhaíochtaí seach-churaclaim trí Ghaeilge chun cur leis na deiseanna atá ag scoláirí T1 sóisialú a dhéanamh trí mheán na Gaeilge taobh amuigh den scoil. Is gá go mbeadh daoine líofa sa Ghaeilge le háisitheoireacht a dhéanamh ar na gníomhaíochtaí seach-churaclaim chomh maith.
- Moladh go bhféadfadh ciste éigin cabhrú le turais chun na Gaeltachta do scoláirí i scoileanna T1 lasmuigh den Ghaeltacht.
- Moladh leanúint leis na scéimeanna teanga sa Ghaeltacht atá ag tabhairt tacaíochta d'fhorbairt teanga na scoláirí ar scoil.

Tátal

Bhí dúshlán le cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta T1 i mórchuid de na scoileanna cé go raibh mórchuid de na ceannairí ag aontú leis an soláthar idirdhealaithe ar bhonn prionsabail. Príomh-phointí buairimh ná: aitheantas do labhairt na teanga, an córas grádála do scoileanna T1 agus soláthar na sonraíochta T1 d'fhoghlaimeoirí uile na Gaeilge. Is iad foireann múinteoirí na scoile an phríomhthacaíocht a mhol na ceannairí. Bhí roinnt scéimeanna tacaíochta

teanga i scoileanna Gaeltachta le moladh chomh maith le gníomhaíochtaí seach-churaclaim agus nasc leis an bpobal áitiúil agus/nó le pobal Gaeltachta. Is iad na príomhchonstaicí a bhain le cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta agus leis an soláthar ná earcaíocht múinteoirí, am don teagasc, don phleanáil agus don fhorbairt ghairmiúil, áiseanna teagaisc agus áiseanna agus acmhainní chun tacú le foghlaimeoirí a raibh riachtanais oideachais sa bhreis acu. Cuireadh réamh-mholtaí na gceannairí i láthair a d'fhéadfaí tuilleadh iniúchta a dhéanamh orthu. Breathnaítear sa chéad chuid eile ar thaithí agus ar thuairimí múinteoirí i scoileanna T1 ar chur i bhfeidhm shonraíochtaí Gaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí.

Cuid a Dó: Múinteoirí T1

Príomhcheist a bhain leis an taighde ná: Cad é an taithí atá ceannairí scoile, múinteoirí agus scoláirí ar chur i bhfeidhm shonraíochtaí Gaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí (T1 agus T2) i réimse an teagaisc, na foghlama agus an mheasúnaithe agus cad iad na tuairimí atá acu ina leith?

Breathnaítear ar an gceist seo faoi na mórthéamaí seo a leanas a d'eascair ón anailís ar na grúpaí fócais le múinteoirí (N=23) i sé scoil T1. Is iad na mórthéamaí a bhain leis an anailís dhéaduchtach agus ionductach ná: Cúrsaí Aistrithe; Pleanáil & Tacaíochtaí; Cuir Chuige Teagaisc agus Foghlama; Measúnú, Litríocht, Ionchuimsitheacht, Tionchar an Scrúdaithe Dheiridh agus Moltaí na Múinteoirí. Tagann fothéamaí faoi gach ceann de na mórthéamaí.

Cúrsaí Aistrithe

Bhí meascán tuairimí idir na scoileanna agus cúiseanna éagsúla a chuir dúshlán roimh fhoghlaimeoirí maidir le foghlaim na Gaeilge sa chéad bhliain san iar-bhunscoil.

Mhínigh múinteoirí i scoil Ghaeltachta amháin, mar shampla, go raibh an t-iompar teanga sa phobal ag athrú agus go raibh tionchar ag cúinsí sochtheangeolaíochta ar chaighdeán Gaeilge na scoláirí agus an Béarla mar theanga an tsóisialaithe níos minice. Bhí neart oibre le déanamh sa chéad bhliain maidir le cruinneas agus saibhreas na Gaeilge a fhorbairt, go háirithe. D'aithin scoileanna eile go raibh forbairt ar an saibhriú teanga

ón mbunscoil. Bhain dúshlán le hidirdhealú sa chéad bhliain i gcuid de na scoileanna Gaeltachta mar go raibh ar mhúinteoirí freastal ar scoláirí a raibh réimse cumais iontu sa Ghaeilge, mar shampla, cainteoirí dúchais na Gaeilge, foghlaimeoirí Gaeilge ar ardchaighdeán agus nuafhoghlaimeoirí na Gaeilge. Bhí líon ard scoláirí a bhí nuathagtha go hÉirinn i scoil amháin. Theastaigh tacaíochtaí sa bhreis sna cásanna seo.

Sna Gaelcholáistí bhí an-réimse cumais ó thaobh na Gaeilge de i measc na scoláirí. Mhínigh na múinteoirí go raibh dúshlán go háirithe roimh scoláirí a bhí ag aistriú ó scoileanna meán-Bhéarla go dtí an Gaelcholáiste agus roimh scoláirí a raibh riachtanais oideachais sa bhreis acu. Bhí gá le tacaíocht bhreise a thabhairt d'fhoghlaimeoirí sna cásanna sin. Mhínigh múinteoirí chomh maith go raibh tionchar láidir ag an bpaindéim ar scileanna labhartha cuid de na scoláirí sa Ghaeilge agus go raibh easpa muiníne orthu í a labhairt. Bhain tábhacht mar sin le díriú ar scileanna labhartha sa chéad bhliain le tógáil ar fhéinmhuinín na bhfoghlaimeoirí ach go háirithe.

- *Níl aon mhuinín acu, tá eagla orthu labhairt amach. I 2017 bhí comhrá acu agus bhí siad ag meascadh le daoine sa chéad bhliain anois glacann sé am iad a chur ag comhrá. Tá siad go cúthaileach. Bíonn tú ag iarraidh muinín a chur isteach iontu. Now tá Gaeilge acu, tá Gaeilge labhartha acu ag teacht sea ach glacann sé seo am, cuirimid béim mhór ar an chomhrá. (T1 Scoil A Gaelcholáiste)*

Bhí éagsúlacht caighdeáin idir scoláirí a bhí ag teacht ó bhunscoileanna éagsúla chomh maith. Léirigh mórchuid na múinteoirí an tuairim go raibh neart bunrudaí le clúdach le foghlaimeoirí sa chéad bhliain, ábhar nach raibh clúdaithe acu sa bhunscoil. Dúirt múinteoirí go raibh gá díriú ar chruinneas na teanga ach go háirithe. Thuairiscigh cuid de na múinteoirí go raibh léim idir an chéad bhliain agus an dara/tríú bliain. Mar sin, is léir go raibh réimse cumais agus taithí ag foghlaimeoirí ag teacht chun na hiar-bhunscoile, léiríodh an tuairim go raibh an tsonraíocht T1 dúshlánach do chuid mhaith de na foghlaimeoirí.

Pleanáil & Tacaíochtaí

Bhí cleachtas comhoibritheach don phleanáil i bhfeidhm sna scoileanna T1 ar fad agus bhí áiseanna á roinnt idir múinteoirí ar thiomántán roinnte i ngach scoil chás-staidéir. Bhí múinteoirí ag dearadh pleananna agus áiseanna agus á roinnt le múinteoirí eile na scoile, bhí deis ag múinteoirí áiseanna a bhí san tiomántán a leasú agus a chur in oiriúint dá ranganna féin. Bhí pleanáil bliana agus téarma ar bun go comhoibritheach idir na múinteoirí sna scoileanna cas-staidéir. Bhí an scrúdú céanna ag ranganna i gcuid de na scoileanna chomh maith. Sa scoil ina raibh an sruth lán-Ghaeilge, roghnaíodh ábhar a bhí comhchoiteann leis an tsonraíocht T2 agus chabhraigh sin le cúrsaí pleanála agus rochtain ar áiseanna.

Bhí múinteoirí den tuairim go raibh líon ard torthaí foghlama sa tsonraíocht agus nach raibh sé i gcónaí soiléir conas iad a cheangal leis an gceacht nó leis na ceachtanna. Bhí comhráití gairmiúla ar siúl ag múinteoirí faoin bpleanáil ar bhonn neamhfhoirmiúil sna scoileanna chomh maith. Príomhdhúshlán a bhain le cúrsaí pleanála ná ganntanas ama don phleanáil fhoirmiúil. Bhí múinteoirí den tuairim go raibh níos mó ama de dhíth don phleanáil fhoirmiúil. Bhí neart de na múinteoirí sásta pleanáil a dhéanamh ag tarraingt ar na litríocht seachas a bheith ag díriú ar théamaí ar leith agus b'in athrú dearfach a bhain leis an tsonraíocht dar le cuid de na múinteoirí.

Bhí múinteoirí ag dearadh áiseanna iad féin agus ag baint leas as áiseanna a bhí ar fáil mar shampla: An Tairseach ag COGG, liosta téacsanna ó CNCM, Tuairisc.ie, TG4, abair.ie, an scéalaí. Luadh an leathanach Facebook darb ainm Facebook Múinteoirí na Gaeilge, mar áis úsáideach mar go raibh múinteoirí ag roinnt áiseanna. Bhí múinteoirí go láidir den tuairim go raibh níos mó áiseanna ag teastáil chun tacú le teagasc na Gaeilge i scoileanna T1. Bhí an-deacracht maidir le rochtain ar théacsanna do scoileanna T1 agus bhí sin ag dó na geirbe go mór ag múinteoirí. Chuir an easpa soiléireachta maidir le cad a bheadh ar an scrúdpháipéar isteach go mór ar mhúinteoirí i mórchuid de na scoileanna mar mhothaigh siad nach raibh siad in ann tacú leis na foghlaimeoirí agus iad ag ullmhú don scrúdú.

Cuir Chuige Teagaisc agus Foghlama

Bhí réimse leathan saibhir gníomhaíochtaí foghlama agus teagaisc ar siúl i ngach scoil T1 leis an tsonraíocht a chur i bhfeidhm. Rinneadh naisc idir snáithe na sonraíochta agus na scileanna teanga. Bhí an-chruthaitheacht sa teagasc léirithe ag na múinteoirí agus tugadh aird ar gach snáithe den tsonraíocht de réir aischothú na múinteoirí. Bhí neart de na gníomhaíochtaí céanna curtha i bhfeidhm sna scoileanna. Léiríonn na liostaí atá curtha i láthair anseo samplaí de ghníomhaíochtaí teagaisc agus foghlama ón réimse scoileanna agus níl na gníomhaíochtaí ceangailte le haon scoil ar leith.

Maidir le cumas cumarsáide a fhorbairt bhí gníomhaíochtaí ranga, gníomhaíochtaí scoile agus gníomhaíochtaí seach-churaclaim ar bun. Is suimiúil gur bhain múinteoirí leas as an litríocht go príomha le scileanna labhartha, léitheoireachta agus scríbhneoireachta a chur chun cinn. Bhí go leor de na gníomhaíochtaí foghlama bunaithe ar théamaí a bhain leis an litríocht agus is léir go raibh deiseanna saibhre foghlama ag eascairt ó na seánraí éagsúla litríochta. I scoil amháin mar shampla eagraíodh gníomhaíochtaí bunaithe ar an dán *'An Gealt'* le hÁine Ní Ghlinn. Rinne grúpaí beaga dráma agus dhear siad fógraí, clár agus leabhrán faoin dán. Thug sé seo deis do gach foghlaimeoir a bheith páirteach ar bhealach a d'oir dóibh féin. Thug múinteoirí aird ar idirdhealú sna cuir chuige teagaisc agus foghlama agus mhínigh siad go raibh gníomhaíochtaí ranga curtha in oiriúint do riachtanais na scoláirí.

Baineadh an-leas as an teicneolaíocht sna scoileanna ar fad chomh maith le cur le deiseanna cumarsáide na scoláirí sa Ghaeilge. Bhí deis ag scoláirí 'TikTok' nó scannáin bheaga a dhéanamh nó taifead a dhéanamh ar phíosaí léitheoireachta, tráchttaireachta, agallaimh go rialta.

Leag cuid de na scoileanna taobh amuigh den Ghaeltacht béim ar thuras chun na Gaeltachta mar bhealach le tacú le forbairt agus le húsáid na teanga. Bhí cuid de na scoileanna ag obair i gcomhpháirt le heagraíochtaí Gaeilge ar nós Chonradh na Gaeilge (Gaeilge 24) agus Gael Linn (Gaelbhratach) le húsáid na teanga a spreagadh. Bhí deis ag scríbhneoirí, aisteoirí, amhránaithe agus filí mar shampla teacht ar cuairt chuig scoileanna. Bhí rang breise

cruinnis i scoil amháin agus bhí córas i bhfeidhm sa scoil chéanna leis na scoláirí a spreagadh le Gaeilge níos cruinne a labhairt. Bhí spriocfhoclóir agus frásaí mar fhócas ag an scoil go seachtainiúil agus bhí scéim luaíochta i bhfeidhm leis na scoláirí a spreagadh an spriocfhoclóir agus na frásaí a úsáid.

Cumas Cumarsáide

Gníomhaíochtaí Ranga

- Díospóireachtaí
- Rólimirt
- Drámaí agus físeáin
- Grúpaí beaga ag déanamh dráma nó scannán gairid bunaithe ar dhán nó úrscéal
- Aisteoireacht mar charachtair ón úrscéal
- An chéad chaibidil eile den scéal a chumadh
- Taifid ar dhán nó scéal nó agallamh nó píosa tráchttaireachta
- TikTok as Gaeilge ar ábhair éagsúla
- Obair bheirte
- Obair ghrúpa
- Podchraoltaí
- Tráth na gceist
- Agallaimh
- Obair thionscadail
- Amhráin & dánta
- Agallamh le mamó, daideo agus/ nó le duine áitiúil
- Nuacht ranga
- Gnáthchomhrá faoina bhfuil ag tarlú sa saol.

Gníomhaíochtaí Scoile

- Comórtas filíochta
- Gaelbhratach
- Comórtas idir ranganna
- Caint phoiblí
- Gaeilge 24
- Seachtain na Gaeilge
- Campa samhraidh do lucht na chéad bhliana
- Córas duaiseanna nuair a labhraítear Gaeilge chuinn nó spriocfhoclóir/ frásaí
- Ceachtanna breise Gaeilge dírithe ar shaibhriú agus ar chruinneas teanga

Gníomhaíochtaí Seach-churaclaim agus/nó nasc leis an bpobal

- Agallaimh ar dhaoine áitiúla nó baill eile den teaghlach i gceantar Gaeltachta
- Lónraí idir scoileanna
- Turas chun na Gaeltachta ag scoileanna T1 taobh amuigh den Ghaeltacht

Feasacht Teanga agus Chultúrtha

Gníomhaíochtaí Ranga

- Eagarthóireacht a dhéanamh ar phíosáí téacs
- Spriocstruchtúir m.sh briathar, ainmfhocal, riail ghradaí a aimsiú i dtéacs
- Piarmheasúnú
- 5 abairt le taifead agus foghraíocht chuinn a úsáid
- Cluichí ar nós Kahoot dírithe ar phointí gramadaí

- Ag aimsiú patrún gramadaí i gcomhthéacs
- Tuiscint a fháil ar struchtúir na Gaeilge trí theacht ar rialacha go hionduchtach agus an patrún a chur i bhfocail
- Staidéar a dhéanamh ar chanúintí na Gaeilge agus comparáid a dhéanamh idir canúintí
- Amhrán/lúibín a scríobh
- Staidéar ar thraidisiún áitiúla & ainmneacha baile éagsúla
- Ceachtanna bunaithe ar an litríocht

Gníomhaíochtaí Scoile

- Ranganna feabhais agus ranganna breise cruinnis ag díriú ar an ngramadach
- Coiste na Gaeilge
- Gníomhaíochtaí a bhain leis an scéim aitheantais do na scoileanna Gaeltachta
- Laethanta trí Ghaeilge bunaithe ar théama ar leith

Gníomhaíochtaí Seach-churaclaim agus/nó nasc leis an bpobal

- Agallaimh ar dhaoine áitiúla
- Turas chun na Gaeltachta do scoileanna taobh amuigh den Ghaeltacht
- Aoichainteoirí, filí, amhránaithe, údair áitiúla, cainteoirí éagsúla
- Piseoga áitiúla
- An litríocht áitiúil
- Comórtais filíochta
- Podchraoltaí
- Tascanna a bhain leis an litríocht

Féinfheasacht an fhoghlaimeora

Gníomhaíochtaí Ranga

- Anailís a dhéanamh ar théacs
- Ceartú botún, botúin a aimsiú i dtéacs
- Piarmheasúnú
- Eagarthóireacht ar phíosa téacs
- Critéir reatha a shocrú agus píosa oibre a dhéanamh de réir na gcritéar
- Féinmheasúnú a dhéanamh ar a gcuid oibre féin
- Socraíonn foghlaimeoirí ar spriocanna ar leith agus bronnann siad breithiúnas ar leith orthu féin – de réir córas soilse tráchta m.sh glas - tá na spriocanna bainte amach, oráiste - dul chun cinn déanta, dearg - níl na spriocanna bainte amach go fóill
- Measúnú ranga ar phíosa oibre de réir chritéir ar leith
- Cur i láthair nó píosa scríbhneoireachta
- Deiseanna a thabhairt do na scoláirí tascanna a roghnú
- Cód-cheartúcháin.

Breathnaítear ar thaithí agus ar thuairimí na múinteoirí faoin litríocht sa chéad mhír eile.

Litríocht

Is iad na fothéamaí a tháinig chun cinn ná: buanna na litríochta, caighdeán agus canúint na litríochta, rochtain ar théacsanna agus líon na litríochta.

Is léir ón gcur síos ar na gníomhaíochtaí teagaisc agus foghlama gur bhain na múinteoirí an-leas as an litríocht chun forbairt a dhéanamh ar Ghaeilge na scoláirí agus gur bhunaigh siad neart gníomhaíochtaí ranga ar an litríocht. Thuairiscigh na múinteoirí gur chuir an litríocht le saibhriú na teanga ach go háirithe agus gur thaitin téacsanna difriúla le scoláirí difriúla agus go raibh réimse leathan téacsanna ar fáil ar na liostaí. Bhí samplaí de théacsanna litríochta a thaitin leis na scoláirí i ngach scoil agus bunaíodh

réimse saibhir gníomhaíochtaí teagaisc agus foghlama ar na téacsanna litríochta, mar shampla agallamh a chur ar charachtair, píosa aisteoireachta a dhéanamh, deireadh nua a scríobh, iontráil dialainne, blag a scríobh, rólímirt mar charachtair ón scéal. Mhínigh go leor de na múinteoirí go raibh na gearrscannáin spreagúil agus taitneamhach do na scoláirí agus gur chothaigh úsáid na ngearrscannán níos mó ama le tabhairt faoi ghníomhaíochtaí eile cumarsáideacha sa rang.

- *Físeán a deirtear liomsa. Mar sin chuir mé an cheist. “Cén fáth go dtaitníonn na físeáin libh?” agus dúirt siad “Mar gheall nílimid ag breathnú ar an litríocht, ar na nótaí ar iPad.” Agus is dóigh liom freisin mar gheall go dtugann sé níos mó deiseanna a scileanna féin a úsáid sa rang, tógann an físeán 16 nóiméad agus ansin is féidir leo am eile caitheamh a bheith cruthaitheach ag déanamh ról ghlacadh, drámaíocht, aisteoireacht, ag plé, ag déanamh díospóireachtaí agus rudaí éagsúla seachas díriú ar an litríocht an t-am ar fad. (T1 Scoil C, Gaelcholáiste)*

Cé go raibh na scoileanna lonnaithe i gcúigí éagsúla, bhí múinteoirí den tuairim nach raibh na téacsanna in oiriúint do chanúint na scoláirí agus gur chothaigh sin dúshlán sa bhreis dóibh maidir le teacht i dtuiscint ar an téacs agus treisiú a dhéanamh ar Ghaeilge na scoláirí idir ghramadach agus fhoclóir. Mhol múinteoirí i ngach scoil Ghaeltachta go gcuirfí téacsanna ar fáil i gcanúint an cheantair.

- *Agus go leor leor don litríocht, ní raibh sé i nGaeilge na háite seo, ní raibh siad ag teacht i dteagmháil leis an bhfocal scríofa a thuigfidís nó d'aithneoidís, cineál so in ionad ag neartú Gaeilge, bhí tú ag múineadh na focla dóibh nach n-úsáididís agus nach gcloisfidís ionas go dtuigfidís i gcomhthéacs téacs na focail sin. (T1 Scoil D, Scoil Ghaeltachta)*

Príomhdhúshlán a bhain leis an litríocht chomh maith ná rochtain ar théacsanna. Mhínigh múinteoirí go raibh an-chuid de na téacsanna as cló, go

raibh sé deacair teacht orthu agus go raibh am á chaitheamh ag fótachóipeáil go minic. Mhínigh múinteoirí go raibh seo míshásúil ach go háirithe do scoláirí a mbíonn deacracht acu le scileanna eagrúcháin.

Bhí éagsúlacht tuairimí maidir leis an líon litríochta a bhí le clúdach. Bhí cuid de na múinteoirí an-sásta leis an laghdú ar líon na litríochta dualgais ó 2023, i gcásanna eile bhí múinteoirí den tuairim go raibh an líon litríochta fós róthrom agus ag cothú deacrachtaí maidir le cúrsaí idirdhealaithe ach go háirithe.

- *Tá siad fós ag foghlaim, na daltaí le riachtanais agus a thagann le fíorbheagán Gaeilge. Tá sé dúshlánach orthu ar an gcéad dul síos agus ansin an méid litríocht atá le clúdach acu. (T1 Scoil A Gaelcholáiste)*
- *Tá sé go maith go bhfuil sé laghdaithe, dul chun cinn iontach! Tá sé laghdaithe anois do bhliain a 2 agus bliain 1 agus bliain 3. Ar a laghad anois tá sé indéanta. (T1 Scoil E Scoil Ghaeltachta)*

Léirigh cuid de na múinteoirí an tuairim go raibh caighdeán cuid de na téacsanna mí-oiriúnach do scoláirí na Sraithe Sóisearaí agus go raibh siad ródheacair dóibh. Bhí tionchar ag líon agus ag caighdeán na dtéacsanna ar an gcleachtas sa rang agus thuairiscigh múinteoirí i gcásanna go raibh orthu an-chuid ama a chaitheamh ag míniú na dtéacsanna seachas á léamh nó á bplé. Bhí an bhéim ar an litríocht ag fágáil na teanga labhartha in áit na leathphingine dar leis na múinteoirí. Chothaigh líon agus leibhéal na litríochta dúshlán do scoláirí áirithe agus dúshlán ní ba mhó do scoláirí a raibh deacrachtaí litearthachta nó deacrachtaí foghlama acu.

- *Formhór den am caite sa rang ag léamh litríochta. Bhíomar ag caint lenár daltaí féin agus chun an fhírinne a rá tugann sé 3 mhí úrscéal a léamh agus tá an úrscéal thart ar 100 leathanach agus nuair atá tú ag múineadh i rang measctha, ní féidir iarraidh ar na daltaí iad á léamh iad féin sa bhaile. (T1 Scoil C Gaelcholáiste)*

Thug tuairiscí na múinteoirí le fios go raibh buanna ag baint leis an litríocht chun tacú le cur i bhfeidhm ghnéithe den tsonraíocht. Toisc gur scrúdú scríofa a bhí sa scrúdú deiridh, bhí mórchuid de na múinteoirí den tuairim go raibh orthu díriú ar léamh agus scríobh sa rang agus go raibh sin ag baint ón am d'fhorbairt scileanna labhartha. Breathnaítear ar mheasúnú sa chéad mhír eile.

Measúnú

Breathnaítear ar thaithí agus ar thuairimí na múinteoirí faoi mheasúnú foirmitheach na sonraíochta T1, is é sin MRB 1 agus MRB 2 sa chuid seo chomh maith lena dtuairimí faoi na cruinnithe AFMÁ. Breathnaítear ar thuairimí na múinteoirí i leith an scrúdaithe dheiridh sa chéad chuid eile.

Maidir le MRB 1, léirigh na múinteoirí an tuairim gur obair í seo a bhíonn ar siúl sa rang ar aon nós. Maíodh i Scoil Ghaeltachta amháin go raibh tacaíocht ag teastáil ó na scoláirí na píosaí oibre a roghnú. Bhí meascán tuairimí faoi MRB 2. Bhí cuid de na múinteoirí dearfach faoi: *Is é ceann de na laethanta is deise é ar scoil an lá go ndéanann muid é sin, sin i mo thuairim* (T1 Scoil D Scoil Ghaeltachta). *Is maith liomsa an MRB 2, caithfidh mé a rá* (T1 Scoil B Ghaeltachta). Mhínigh múinteoirí áirithe gur mhothaigh na scoláirí go raibh rud éigin bainte amach acu agus an MRB curtha i gcrích acu. Bua a bhain le tascanna MRB ná gur cruthaíodh deis do na scoláirí díriú isteach ar ábhar a raibh suim acu féin ann.

Tháinig sé chun solais i gcúpla scoil gur chuir MRB 2 isteach ar na scoláirí ó thaobh strus agus imní de mar go raibh orthu seasamh suas agus cur i láthair a dhéanamh os comhair a bpiaraí. Níor oir an cur i láthair do scoláirí áirithe dar leo. Bhí cuid de na múinteoirí den tuairim gur measúnú ar scileanna cur i láthair a bhí i MRB 2 seachas measúnú ar scileanna idirghníomhaithe cainte sa Ghaeilge.

- *Aríst tá muid ag amharc ar an aistear teanga agus an aois ag a bhfuil an dalta agus rudaf atá muid ag iarraidh orthu, an bhfuil sé sin sin fóirstineach dá n-aois? Tá, tá siad neirbhíseach, tá siad faiteach is aois ana-dheacair i gcoitinne é ina saol agus anois tá muid ag iarraidh iad a chur ag seasamh suas agus labhairt os comhair a bpiarghrúpa. (T1 Scoil A, Gaelcholáiste)*

Toisc go bhfuil líofacht chumarsáide forbartha ag foghlaimeoirí T1 ardaíodh an cheist i scoil amháin an raibh an sórt seo measúnaithe feiliúnach d'fhoghlaimeoirí T1 ar chor ar bith mar go dtugann siad faoin gcineál seo cur i láthair go rialta ar aon nós sa Ghaeilge agus in ábhair eile. Níor cheap múinteoirí gur chóir don MRB teacht in áit an scrúdaithe cainte.

Príomh-mholadh a d'eascair ó na grúpaí fócais ná go raibh mórchuid na múinteoirí den tuairim gur chóir go mbeadh marcanna suimitheacha ag dul do na tascanna MRB. Bhí múinteoirí ar aon fhocal go ndeachaigh an t-uafás oibre isteach iontu ach nach fiú í mar nach raibh aitheantas i bhfoirm marcanna suimitheacha ag dul dóibh. I gcásanna áirithe dúirt múinteoirí go raibh na scoláirí díspregtha mar gheall nach raibh marcanna ag dul do na tascanna MRB agus i scoileanna áirithe bhí tuismitheoirí á gceistiú faoi am a chaitheamh ar an MRB seachas ar an scrúdú deiridh.

- *Slíimse agus tá siad ag cur an-obair isteach ann agus cén fáth nach mbeadh marc faoina choinne? (T1 Scoil A, Gaelcholáiste)*

Ar an iomlán, bhí na múinteoirí dearfach faoi na cruinnithe AFMÁ mar gur tugadh deis dóibh labhairt lena gcomhghleacaithe agus breithiúnas a thabhairt ar shamplaí oibre. Bhí cuid de na múinteoirí den tuairim gur thug an próiseas seo muinín dóibh go raibh siad ar an mbóthar ceart maidir leis na tuairiscíní nó go raibh catagóir ar leith tuillte ag an scoláire. Pléitear tionchar an scrúdaithe dheiridh sa chéad chuid eile.

Tionchar an Scrúdaithe Dheiridh

Is é aidhm an taighde ná iniúchadh a dhéanamh ar thaithí agus ar thuairimí na múinteoirí ar chur i bhfeidhm shonraíochtaí Gaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí. Ní thagann an scrúdú deiridh go díreach faoi chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta ach príomhthoradh a d'eascair ón anailís ná go raibh tionchar nach beag ag an scrúdú deiridh ar an teagasc agus ar an bhfoghlaim sa rang agus ar thuairimí na múinteoirí i leith na sonraíochta. Tá sé tábhachtach na tuairimí seo a thuairisciú mar phríomhthéama a tháinig chun solais ag Céim a hAon sa taighde. Pléitear an téama faoi dhá fhothéama, is iad sin: tionchar an

scrúdaithe ar an teagasc agus ar an bhfoghlaim agus taithí na múinteoirí ar an gcóras grádála i scoileanna T1.

Bhí na múinteoirí i mbeagnach gach scoil-chás-staidéir go láidir den tuairim go raibh tuilleadh treorach de dhíth orthu maidir le hábhar an scrúdaithe dheiridh. Chothaigh an éiginnteacht deacracht dóibh mar ba mhaith leo tacú leis a scoláirí agus iad a ullmhú don scrúdú. Bhí tionchar ag an easpa soiléireachta ar phleanáil agus ar theagasc na múinteoirí. Bhí múinteoirí díomách go raibh obair déanta acu sa rang ach nach raibh nasc soiléir idir an obair ranga agus an scrúdú deiridh. Mar shampla, cé gur thaitin an litríocht áitiúil le múinteoirí/scoláirí áirithe, ní raibh sí ar an bpáipéar scrúdaithe. D'áitigh múinteoirí nach raibh toradh na hoibre le feiceáil trí chóras an scrúdaithe. Dar le múinteoirí, chuir an t-ullmhúchán don scrúdú cuid mhór brú orthu díriú ar an litríocht (léitheoireacht & scríbhneoireacht) sa rang. Léirigh na múinteoirí díomá agus frustrachas leis an scrúdú agus bhí na marcanna a bronnadh ar na scoláirí ag dó na geirbe go mór acu.

Tuairim iontach láidir a d'eascair ó na grúpaí fócais i bhformhór de na scoileanna ná go bhfuil an córas grádála do scoláirí T1 míchothrom. I mbeagnach gach scoil dúirt múinteoirí go raibh an-titim i líon na ngrád arda ó cuireadh an tsonraíocht i bhfeidhm. D'áitigh go leor de na múinteoirí go raibh an córas grádála éagórach ar scoláirí T1 agus nach raibh ag éirí leis na cainteoirí Gaeilge ab fhearr gradam a bhaint amach. Dar leis na múinteoirí, chothaigh an titim sna marcanna lagmhisneach i measc na múinteoirí agus scoláirí.

• *Níl siad ag fáil na ngradam agus ní thuigeann muid é. (T1 Scoil A, Gaelcholáiste)*

• *Tá na grádanna deiridh a bronnadh an bhliain seo caite ar scrúduithe na Sraithe Sóisearaí, bhíodar lag, míchothrom agus míchaonna. (T1 Scoil C, Gaelcholáiste)*

Cuirfear moltaí na múinteoirí i láthair sa chéad chuid eile. Tá sé tábhachtach le cur san áireamh gur bailíodh na sonraí ó na scoileanna cás-staidéir ag Céim a hAon de staidéar trí bliana.

Réamh-mholtaí na Múinteoirí T1 ag Céim a hAon

Scrúdú Cainte

Tháinig moladh láidir ó mhúinteoirí i ngach uile ghrúpa fócais sna scoileanna cás-staidéir T1 gur gá níos mó aitheantais a thabhairt do scileanna labhartha na scoláirí agus gur chóir go mbeadh scrúdú cainte mar chuid den mheasúnú suimitheach sa tSraith Shóisearach. Mhol múinteoirí go mbeadh scrúdú cainte ann ar na cúiseanna seo a leanas:

- (i) Is teanga í an Ghaeilge agus is gá béim a chur ar labhairt na Gaeilge chun grá a chothú don teanga agus chun na scoláirí a spreagadh í a labhairt.
- (ii) Ní mór aitheantas a thabhairt do scileanna cainte scoláirí T1 idir chainteoirí dúchais agus fhoghlaimeoirí Gaeilge a bhfuil ardchaighdeán teanga labhartha acu.
- (iii) Ní mór deis a thabhairt do scoláirí a bhfuil riachtanais éagsúla acu a gcuid scileanna teanga a léiriú tríd an gcaint.
- (iv) Chabhródh an scrúdú cainte leis na scoláirí agus iad ag ullmhú don tSraith Shinsearach.

Litríocht & Áiseanna Tacaíochta don Litríocht

- Moladh go gcuirfí leabhrán/téacsleabhair ar fáil do scoileanna T1 ina mbeadh an litríocht ar fáil agus nótaí teagaisc don mhúinteoir mar threoir.
- Moladh litríocht a chur ar fáil i réimse canúintí a oireann do cheantar na scoile.
- Moladh go mbeadh sé incheadaithe an litríocht ó chúrsa na chéad bhliana a chur i dtreo an scrúdaithe dheiridh agus gur bealach amháin a bheadh anseo leis an ualach litríochta a laghdú agus le deis a thabhairt do scoláirí tógáil ar a raibh foghlama acu.

Torthaí Foghlama

- Moladh líon na dtorthaí foghlama a laghdú agus breis samplaí léirithe d'obair ranga a thagann leis na torthaí foghlama a chur ar fáil.

Cúrsaí Measúnaithe

- Moladh go mbeadh marcanna ag dul do na tascanna MRB.
- Moladh go mbeadh breis páipéar samplacha ar fáil agus go mbeadh breis teorach ann maidir leis an scrúdú deiridh.
- Moladh go mbeadh rogha ar an scrúdpháipéar chomh maith le rannóga ar leith - ceist faoin úrscéal, dráma srl.
- Moladh critéir reatha a chur ar fáil do na scrúduithe agus samplaí de pháipéir ag leibhéal éagsúla a roinnt le múinteoirí.

Tacaíochtaí do mhúinteoirí

- Moladh breis tacaíochtaí a chur ar fáil do na múinteoirí agus breis ama a thabhairt dóibh don phleanáil chun dul i ngleic leis na hathruithe curaclaim.

Soláthar d'fhoghlaimeoirí Uile na Gaeilge

- Mhol múinteoirí go mbeadh breis tacaíochtaí agus roghanna idirdhealaithe ar fáil do scoláirí ar gach leibhéal cumais sa Ghaeilge.
- Mhol múinteoirí go gcuirfí breis tacaíochtaí ar fáil do scoláirí atá nuathagtha go hÉirinn ag leibhéal na hiar-bhunscoile i scoileanna T1.

Breathnaítear sa chéad chuid eile den tuairisc ar na sonraí a bailíodh ó cheannairí scoile agus ó mhúinteoirí sna scoileanna cás-staidéir T2.

4.2 Sonraí ó na Scoileanna Cás-Staidéir T2

Cuid a Trí: Ceannairí Scoile T2

Dírítear sa chuid seo den tuairisc ar thaithí na gCeannairí Scoile sna scoileanna cás-staidéir T2 ar chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta T2 agus ar na

tuairimí atá acu ina leith. Breathnaítear ansin ar thaithí na gceannairí ar na tacaíochtaí agus ar na constaicí a bhaineann le cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta T2 agus leis an soláthar, chomh maith leis na moltaí a rinne siad le linn na n-agallamh. Ar deireadh, déanfar suimiú ar an gcuid seo den taighde a bhaineann le taithí agus le tuairimí ceannairí scoile i sé scoil chás-staidéir T2.

Taithí & Tuairimí na gCeannairí Scoile T2

Léirigh cuid de na ceannairí scoile tuairimí dearfacha faoi chuid de na gnéithe a bhain le cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta T2 le linn na n-agallamh.

Bhí meascán tuairimí maidir leis na tascanna MRB. Léirigh Príomhoide mar shampla, gur maith an rud é deis a thabhairt do scoláirí tabhairt faoi thasc agus aiseolas foirmitheach a fháil le linn na Sraithe Sóisearaí. Bhain pointí dearfacha eile le deis a thabhairt do scoláirí tionscadail a chur i gcrích, chomh maith le deiseanna a chothú leis an bhfoghlaim ghníomhach agus leis an bhfoghlaim chomhoibríoch a chur chun cinn mar chuid de phróiseas na dtascanna MRB.

Pointí dearfacha eile a tháinig chun cinn ná go raibh deis ní b'fhearr ann aiseolas a thabhairt le linn na Sraithe Sóisearaí mar gheall ar na hathruithe sa Chreat don tSraith Shóisearach. Mhol cuid de na ceannairí na cruinnithe AFMÁ mar go dtugtar deis do mhúinteoirí páirt a ghlacadh i gcomhráití gairmiúla faoin teagasc, foghlaim agus measúnú trí phróiseas na gcruinnithe athbhreithnithe.

Thug gach uile cheannaire scoile ardmholadh do mhúinteoirí Gaeilge na scoile de bharr a gcuid díograise agus a gcuid gairmiúlachta. Bhraith na ceannairí go raibh na múinteoirí tiomanta d'fhoghlaim Ghaeilge na scoláirí a chur chun cinn i ngach scoil chás-staidéir.

- *From going into the Irish classrooms and my interactions with the students who are doing Irish. I have a marvellous team of Irish teachers here. They are wonderful and the children love Irish. (T2 Scoil A - Príomhoide)*

Mhínigh cuid de na ceannairí scoile, cé go rabhadar dearfach faoi na sonraíochtaí Gaeilge i dtosach báire agus faoin gCreat don tSraith Shóisearach ar bhonn níos leithne maidir le freagairt do riachtanais foghlaimoirí éagsúla ach go háirithe, go raibh imní orthu anois nach raibh cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta T2 ag freagairt do riachtanais na bhfoghlaimoirí uile. Tháinig dúshlán maidir soláthar idirdhealaithe chun cinn go láidir mar théama i gcomhthéascanna scoile T2 agus pléitear na dúshlán seo sa rannóg a bhaineann le constaicí do chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta.

Ón taithí a bhí ag na ceannairí scoile, áfach, léirigh siad príomhbhuairteanna faoi chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta i gcomhthéacs scoileanna T2. Is iad na príomhphointí buairimh a d'ardaigh na ceannairí ná: (i) aitheantas do labhairt na teanga, (ii) an t-aistriú ón tSraith Shóisearach go dtí an tSraith Shinsearach, (iii) marcanna suimitheacha sa Ghaeilge, agus (iv) strus mar gheall ar na tascanna MRB.

Aitheantas do Labhairt na Gaeilge

Príomhthéama a d'eascair ó na hagallaimh leis na ceannairí scoile i scoileanna cás-staidéir T2 ná go raibh imní orthu faoin easpa béime ar labhairt na Gaeilge sa chóras measúnaithe. Dar leis na ceannairí, bhí an easpa measúnaithe ar scileanna cainte ag díspreagadh na scoláirí maidir le labhairt na Gaeilge. Is teanga í an Ghaeilge agus mar sin mhol na ceannairí gur cheart agus gur chóir béim a leagan ar fhorbairt scileanna idirghníomhaithe cainte sa tSraith Shóisearach tríd an measúnú suimitheach. Chuir ceannairí in iúl go raibh tionchar diúltach ag cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta ar inspreagadh na scoláirí i leith fhoghlaim na Gaeilge mar gheall ar an easpa aitheantais do labhairt na teanga.

Bhí na ceannairí d'aon ghuth agus go láidir den tuairim nach leor MRB 2 le measúnú a dhéanamh ar scileanna labhartha na scoláirí. Bhí na ceannairí den tuairim go raibh tionchar ag an measúnú ar an teagasc agus ar an bhfoghlaim agus cé go raibh sé i gceist ag an tsonraíocht béim a chur ar an measúnú foirmitheach agus an measúnú suimitheach araon, go léiríonn tuismitheoirí agus scoláirí suim sna torthaí suimitheacha den chuid is mó.

• *But the oral Irish, I think the oral Irish ... you need it. You need the oral Irish absolutely. (T2 Scoil A - Príomhoide)*

• *The students and the parents are really only interested in their final descriptor, the JCPA. (T2 Scoil D - Príomhoide Tánaisteach)*

Bhí gach ceannaire scoile den tuairim gur gá go mbeadh scrúdú cainte mar chuid den mheasúnú suimitheach sa tSraith Shóisearach chun tacú leo ullmhú don scrúdú cainte sa tSraith Shinsearach.

• *You know, there's nothing like your formal oral ... I think the CBAs are a really positive thing, but at the same token, I think that formal kind of doing an oral exam, the first time they formally do an oral exam for a state examination will be in a Leaving Cert, and that's too long really. (T2 Scoil A - Príomhoide)*

Léirigh ceannairí an tuairim chomh maith nach bhfeileann scrúdú scríofa amháin do na foghlaimoirí uile atá ag foghlaim na Gaeilge. Dar leis na ceannairí, thabharfadh scrúdú cainte deis do scoláirí scileanna idirghníomhaithe cainte a léiriú agus d'fheilfeadh seo ní b' fhearr d'fhoghlaimoirí a bhfuil réimse cumais iontu. Thug an taighde le fios go raibh taithí dhearfach ag scoileanna T2 a chuir na scrúduithe cainte roghnacha i bhfeidhm roimhe seo ar chóras na scrúduithe cainte.

An tAistriú ón tSraith Shóisearach go dtí an tSraith Shinsearach

Léirigh formhór na gceannairí scoile i scoileanna cás-staidéir T2 imní go bhféadfadh bearna a bheith sa chóras anois idir an tSraith Shóisearach agus an tSraith Shinsearach. Dar le tromlach na gceannairí tá bearna níos mó ann anois mar gheall ar an tsonraíocht T2.

• *What they've done is, they've changed the Junior cycle, but the senior cycle has remained the same. So, at the moment during this, and "interregnum" for want of a better description, you have an issue relating to "how do you bridge the gap that's expected?" And therein does lie a challenge. (T2 Scoil C - Príomhoide Tánaisteach)*

Léiríodh inné nach raibh a dóthain béime ar labhairt na teanga agus an tsonraíocht á cur i bhfeidhm mar gheall nach raibh measúnú suimitheach ar an gcaint. Cuireadh an tuairim in iúl go raibh bearna sa chaighdeán sa dá shraith agus go raibh caighdeán ní ba ísle ag na scoláirí anois agus iad ag dul isteach sa tSraith Shinsearach. Bhí cuid de na scoileanna ag cur breis ama ar leataobh do theagasc na Gaeilge sa tSraith Shinsearach le hiarracht a dhéanamh cuid den bhearna a líonadh. Úsáideadh ranganna breise san idirbhliain le breis tacaíochta a thabhairt d'fhorbairt scileanna labhartha na Gaeilge i gcuid de na scoileanna cás-staidéir. Dar leis na ceannairí, bhí an chuma ar an scéal go raibh míréir idir an dá shraith - an tSraith Shóisearach agus an tSraith Shinsearach agus go raibh straitéisí éagsúla curtha i bhfeidhm ag scoileanna le dul i ngleic leis an dúshlán.

- *It's as a result of the difficulties I'm seeing at Junior Cycle, I put an additional period to sixth year Gaeilge to give them a little bit more time around working on the oral, because of the importance of that in the end. ... because of the deficits at Junior Cycle.*
- *So it's a big commitment from my allocation, if you like, to the subject, but I feel it's necessary and worth it. (T2 Scoil E - Príomhoide)*

Marcanna Suimitheacha sa Ghaeilge

Bhraith mórchuid de na ceannairí scoile go raibh sé ní ba dheacra ar scoláirí Gradam agus Ardtuillteanas a bhaint amach sa Ghaeilge sa tSraith Shóisearach i gcomparáid leis an seanchóras agus go raibh sé ní ba dheacra gráid arda a bhaint amach sa Ghaeilge sa chóras reatha i gcomparáid le hábhair eile.

- *The course seems difficult, and it appears more difficult for students to achieve top end descriptors in Gaeilge than it is in other subjects ... So, we'd have students who will be high achievers getting higher merits or distinctions, in most of their subjects, and then getting maybe a merit 'as Gaeilge'. And that leads to frustration for the students and for the teachers as well. (T2 Scoil D - Príomhoide Tánaisteach)*

Thuiriscigh cuid de na ceannairí go raibh titim i líon na ngrád is airde ó cuireadh an tsonraíocht T2 i bhfeidhm. De réir na n-agallamh, chuir an líon beag gradam isteach ar mhuinín agus ar thaithí na gceannairí, na múinteoirí agus na scoláirí ar chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta. Dúradh go raibh drochthionchar ag na gráid íslithe ar fhéinmhuinín agus ar inspreagadh na scoláirí i leith fhoghlaim na Gaeilge agus iad ag dul isteach sa tSraith Shinsearach.

Bhí straitéisí á gcur i bhfeidhm le breis tacaíochta a thabhairt do scoláirí. Mhínigh príomhoide amháin mar shampla go raibh rangú déanta anois ar scoláirí na chéad bhliana ar bhonn cumas chun tacú le scoláirí, cé go raibh leibhéil mheasctha i ranganna na chéad bhliana nuair a thosaigh siad amach ar an tsonraíocht T2. Rinne príomhoide amháin ceangal idir an titim sna gráid leis an gcinneadh an scrúdú cainte a bhaint de mheasúnú na Sraithe Sóisearaí.

- *I suppose for us, I mean probably not the right way to look at things all the time, but results matter. And for us, the results would have significantly decreased as a result of moving to Junior Cycle... The biggest impact we feel on results for us is the oral going. We just feel that that has been major disadvantage. (T2 Scoil B - Príomhoide)*

Léirigh cuid de na ceannairí scoile an tuairim go raibh na bandaí grádála ró-leathan chomh maith agus go raibh sé ní ba dheacra ar scoláirí Gradam agus Ardtuillteanas a bhaint amach mar go raibh na bandaí grádála chomh leathan.

Dearcthaí faoi na MRB

Léiríodh meascán tuairimí maidir leis na tascanna MRB ar an iomlán. Mórthéama a d'eascair ón anailís ar na sonraí, áfach, ná go raibh na MRB ag cur brú agus inné ar scoláirí i gcásanna áirithe i scoileanna T2. Tuairiscíodh go raibh measúnú sa bhreis le déanamh ag scoláirí agus nach raibh na measúnuithe seo ag baint ó bhrú an scrúdaithe dheiridh cé nach fiú marcanna suimitheacha na MRB.

- *So instead of reducing stress, actually there's, there's increased stress. There's an increased stress because it's happening around the CBAs and for some students, not for all, and we know, it's not intended to be high stakes exam, but for some students, any exam [causes stress] and some parents. (T2 Scoil D - Príomhoide Tánaisteach)*

Mhínigh cuid de na ceannairí scoile go raibh scoláirí buartha faoi na MRB agus go raibh tionchar ag Covid-19 ar leibhéil imní na scoláirí. Bhain dúshlán ach go háirithe le MRB 2 nuair a bhíonn ar scoláirí cur i láthair ó bhéal a dhéanamh os comhair a bpiaraí i nGaeilge. Bhí na ceannairí scoile ag tagairt dá dtaithí roimh an leagan athbhreithnithe de MRB2. Bhí cuid de na ceannairí den tuairim nach bhfeileann an sórt seo measúnaithe do gach scoláire agus go mbaineann dúshlán sa bhreis le cur i láthair a dhéanamh trí mheán na Gaeilge nuair is í dara teanga na scoláirí.

- *Again this is across the board, it's not just Irish, but you know the CBA in theory is a really really good idea and there is real learning and real value in it. Em, it suits some students better than others you know and the fact that they have to present, it's bad enough to have to present in English, but for some students who absolutely struggle, it's a bigger issue to present in Irish and that's the source of stress and you know yourselves in a post-Covid environment. (T2 Scoil B - Príomhoide)*

Breathnaítear sa chéad mhír eile ar thuairimí na gceannairí maidir leis na tacaíochtaí agus na constaicí a bhaineann le cur i bhfeidhm agus le soláthar na sonraíochta T2.

Tacaíochtaí

Dar leis na ceannairí T2, is iad na príomhthacaíochtaí a chabhraigh le cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta T2 agus leis an soláthar ná: múinteoirí na scoile, tacaíochtaí inscoile agus tacaíochtaí taobh amuigh den scoil.

Múinteoirí na scoile

Bhí na ceannairí T2 ar fad den tuairim go raibh moladh ag dul do mhúinteoirí na scoileanna agus gurbh iad na múinteoirí féin na tacaíochtaí ba riachtanaí agus ba thábhachtaí do chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta.

Tacaíochtaí Inscoile

Dar leis na ceannairí, bhí meascán de thacaíochtaí inscoile i bhfeidhm sna scoileanna cás-staidéir T2. Bhí comhráití gairmiúla ar bun idir múinteoirí ar bhonn neamhfhoirmiúil agus ar bhonn ní b'fhoirmiúla. Chuir scoil amháin am ar leith ar fáil do chruinnithe gairmiúla ag amanna ar leith i rith na bliana agus úsáideadh uaireanta Pháirc an Chrócaigh chomh maith le díriú ar an nGaeilge i scoileanna áirithe.

Baineadh feidhm as an amchlár i scoil amháin chun cur le deiseanna teagmhála na scoláirí leis an nGaeilge agus rinneadh iarracht ranganna a chur ar fáil go rialta i rith na seachtaine seachas bloc ranganna a bheith ag tús nó deireadh na seachtaine amháin chun teagmháil na scoláirí a mhéadú leis an teanga.

Bhí cómhúinteoireacht ar siúl i gcuid de na scoileanna nuair a bhí na hacmhainní ar fáil. I scoil amháin míníodh gur chabhraigh an fhoireann tacaíochta foghlama le scoláirí a bhí ag streachailt leis an nGaeilge. D'éirigh leo an tacaíocht inranga seo a chur ar fáil mar go raibh Gaeilge líofa ag baill den fhoireann tacaíochta foghlama.

Suimiúil go leor, bunaíodh ócáidí cleachtais i scoil amháin a thug deis do mhúinteoirí dea-chleachtas a roinnt maidir le teagasc agus foghlaim na Gaeilge.

Tháinig an téacsleabhar chun cinn freisin mar thacaíocht a chur struchtúr ar an teagasc agus ar an bhfoghlaim sa Ghaeilge i scoileanna cás-staidéir T2. Bhí an litríocht agus treoir curtha ar fáil sa téacsleabhar agus ba chuidiú é sin.

Maidir le tacaíocht a thabhairt do na scoláirí, labhair ceannairí faoi chomórtais díospóireachtaí, tráth na gceist, foghlaim ghníomhach, Tae & Plé, seachtain na Gaeilge, úsáid na leabharlainne, an Ghaeilge sna meáin agus iarrachtaí

a dhéanamh go mbeadh próifíl feiceálach ag an nGaeilge sa scoil. Mhaígh ceannairí gur thacaigh an teicneolaíocht le cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta, mar shampla, iPadanna, ríomhairí glúine, teilifíseáin Apple, srl.

Tacaíochtaí Taobh Amuigh den Scoil

Luaigh ceannaire amháin tacaíocht ón gCigireacht agus ó na heagraíochtaí do mhúinteoirí Gaeilge mar thacaíochtaí do chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta T2. Mhol cuid de na ceannairí scoile na seirbhísí forbartha gairmiúla do mhúinteoirí (SFGM) mar thacaíocht do scoileanna maidir le háiseanna ar líne, na laethanta forbartha gairmiúla a cuireadh ar fáil agus cuairteanna scoile. Bhí meascán tuairimí léirithe ar na laethanta forbartha gairmiúla ag brath ar aiseolas na múinteoirí. Luaigh cuid de na ceannairí cnuas laethanta mar thacaíocht do scoileanna T2 chomh maith. Ar na laethanta seo tagann grúpaí múinteoirí le chéile ar láthair scoil amháin le tabhairt faoi fhorbairt ghairmiúil atá fócasaithe ar sprioc ar leith. Bhí líonra cruthaithe idir scoileanna a tháinig faoi eagrais bainistíochta ar leith agus eagraíodh imeachtaí idir na scoileanna a bhí páirteach leis an nGaeilge chur chun. Bhí naisc idir scoileanna T2 agus scoileanna T1 sa líonra seo.

Constaicí

Príomhthéama a tháinig chun cinn maidir le constaicí a bhain le cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta T2 agus leis an soláthar, ná easpa soláthair idirdhealaithe d'fhoghlaimeoirí uile na hiar-bhunscoile sa Ghaeilge. Bhain dúshlán le difréalú sa teagasc, san fhoghlaím agus sa mheasúnú. Breathnaítear ar idirdhealú faoi na fothéamaí: (i) córas na ndíolúintí, (ii) soláthar d'fhoghlaimeoirí uile na hiar-bhunscoile agus (iii) an t-aistriú ón mbunscoil go dtí an iar-bhunscoil. Pléitear earcaíocht múinteoirí ina dhiaidh sin.

Córas na nDíolúintí

Labhair nach mór gach ceannaire scoile faoi na díolúintí ón nGaeilge. Bhain castachtaí le córas na ndíolúintí sa taighde seo. Bhí méadú i líon na dtuismitheoirí a raibh díolúine á lorg acu dá gcuid páistí sa chéad bhliain den iar-bhunscoil mar gheall ar na coinníollacha le díolúine a bhronnadh a bheith chomh scaoilte is atá. Bhain castacht leis an gcóras agus le soláthar a dhéanamh do scoláirí a raibh díolúine acu nó á lorg acu.

Mhínigh ceannaire amháin mar shampla, go mbíonn ar na scoláirí a léiriú go bhfuil ag teip orthu sa Ghaeilge san iar-bhunscoil mura bhfuil díolúine acu ag teacht isteach ón mbunscoil. I gcásanna áirithe cuireadh tacaíochtaí i bhfeidhm chun tacú le scoláirí sa chéad bhliain agus sa dara bliain san iar-bhunscoil ach bheadh díolúine bronnta ar an scoláire tar éis bliana go leith in ainneoin na dtacaíochta a cuireadh ar fáil. Míníodh go raibh roinnt tuismitheoirí ag rá gur de dheasca cúinsí meabhairshláinte a raibh an díolúine a lorg acu ón nGaeilge. I gcásanna áirithe ba léir go raibh príomhoidí faoi bhrú ag an gcóras díolúine agus gur córas é a chur lena n-ualach oibre.

- The amount of Irish exemptions being sought for absolutely no good reason. There would have been a time when exemptions would have been only exceptional circumstances, whereas now before a child comes into first year you will have a letter from a parent stating the grounds on which this exemption should be and now obviously there's a loophole so to speak and they, you know, in the whole thing about anxiety, that it's affecting their child's mental health, you know and then because the responsibility lies with the Principal to grant those exemptions. (T2 Scoil B - Príomhoide)*

Ardaíodh an tuairim freisin gur cheap roinnt scoláirí/tuismitheoirí go raibh sé níos deacra marcanna arda a fháil sa Ghaeilge i gcomparáid le hábhair eile agus gur chuir sin le líon na scoláirí a raibh díolúine á lorg acu ón nGaeilge. Dúirt príomhoide amháin go raibh díolúine á lorg in amanna le breis ama a thabhairt do scoláirí staidéar a dhéanamh ar ábhar eile.

- Higher grades in Irish tend to be harder for students to achieve than other subjects so a lot seek exemptions. (T2 Scoil D - Príomhoide Tánaisteach)*

Chuir príomhoide eile in iúl go raibh an bhéim ar an léitheoireacht agus scríbhneoireacht ag cur as d'fhoghlaimeoirí áirithe agus ag tabhairt spreagadh dóibh díolúine a lorg ón nGaeilge. Cuireadh tacaíocht foghlama ar siúl le

linn an ama do na ranganna Gaeilge i gcásanna áirithe. I scoil eile, cuireadh tacaíocht foghlama ar fáil sa rang Gaeilge mar go raibh Gaeilge ag an bhfoireann tacaíochta foghlama.

Labhair ceannaire amháin faoi pháistí a thagann go hÉirinn sna blianta sinsearacha sa bhunscoil agus nár tugadh deis dóibh an Ghaeilge a fhoghlaim sa bhunscoil. Mar sin, bhí páistí a d'fhreastail ar scoil lán-Ghaeilge agus páistí nach bhfuair deis staidéar a dhéanamh ar an nGaeilge ar chor ar bith in aon rang amháin, bhain an-dúshlán le hidirdhealú dá bharr.

- The teachers then are left in a difficult position in the classrooms because they have children who may have come from a Gaelscoil sitting in front of them, and then you have a child who's sitting in front of you who has never heard the Irish language in their life. (T2 Scoil A - Príomhoide)*

Ba léir go raibh cúiseanna éagsúla do bhronnadh na ndíolúintí ach gur córas é atá tar éis fáis go mór.

Soláthar d'Fhoghlaimoirí Uile na hIar-bhunscoile

Bhí formhór na gCeannairí den tuairim nach raibh cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta T2 sa tSraith Shóisearach ag tacú leis na foghlaimoirí uile a bhí ag freastal ar na scoileanna cás-staidéir. Breathnaítear ar an easpa soláthair d'fhoghlaimoirí uile na hiar-bhunscoile faoi dhá théama, is iad sin (i) cúrsa bonnleibhéil agus (ii) soláthar d'fhoghlaimoirí atá nuathagtha.

Cúrsa Bonnleibhéil

Léirigh ceannairí i mbeagnach gach scoil an tuairim nach bhfreastalaíonn an rogha idir ardleibhéal agus gnáthleibhéal ar na foghlaimoirí uile atá ag foghlaim na Gaeilge. Bhí an cúrsa gnáthleibhéil ródheacair d'fhoghlaimoirí áirithe agus mhol mórchuid de na ceannairí go gcuirfí cúrsa bonnleibhéil ar fáil. Moladh go dtabharfadh cúrsa bonnleibhéil deis d'fhoghlaimoirí áirithe dul chun cinn a dhéanamh ag leibhéal a oireann dóibh féin agus deis ní ba mhó dóibh rathúlacht san fhoghlaim a bhaint amach sa Ghaeilge. Mhínigh na ceannairí seo go raibh cúrsa bonnleibhéil de dhíth go cinnte ar fhoghlaimoirí áirithe le deis a thabhairt dóibh cumas agus muinín a fhorbairt sa Ghaeilge.

Dar le ceannaire amháin, bhí córas dhá leibhéal i bhfeidhm, ba iad sin ardleibhéal agus gnáthleibhéal amháin agus go raibh imeallú á dhéanamh ar roinnt foghlaimoirí dá bharr.

- But the foundation level paper, at least the children were able and felt success with the foundation level paper, you know, which is now gone, you know. It wasn't the be all and end all of everything, but those two or three students who couldn't get the success out of the higher levels [ordinary and higher] got it in the Foundation [level]. At least they, there was a recognition and an acknowledgement that they learned something. (T2 Scoil A - Príomhoide)*
- It's about trying to build and maintain student confidence, really, and a sense of achievement and a fact that you know a teacher can say, "Well done. You found it very difficult, but look, I told you, and now here's the proof". (T2 Scoil E - Príomhoide)*

Soláthar do Scoláirí atá Nuathagtha

Ardaíodh an pointe nach raibh cúrsa Gaeilge ar fáil do scoláirí a bhí nuathagtha go hÉirinn. Is léir, mar sin, nach bhfuil soláthar ar bith ann don sainghrúpa seo. I scoil amháin bhí líon ard foghlaimoirí nuathagtha ach ní raibh soláthar ar bith ann dóibhsean ó thaobh na Gaeilge de. Moladh go gcuirfí soláthar ar fáil do na scoláirí seo mar gheall ar na buntáistí féiniúlachta agus cultúrtha a bhaineann le foghlaim na Gaeilge. Mhol duine de na ceannairí go bhféadfadh bonnchúrsa cumarsáide cabhrú le foghlaimoirí atá nuathagtha blaiseadh a fháil de bhuntáistí foghlama na Gaeilge.

An tAistriú ón mBunscoil go dtí an Iar-bhunscoil

I gcásanna áirithe bhí na ceannairí den tuairim go raibh an-éagsúlacht sna caighdeáin Ghaeilge a bhí ag na foghlaimoirí ag brath ar an mbunscoil óna raibh siad ag teacht. Bhí foghlaimoirí ar ardchaighdeán agus foghlaimoirí a raibh caighdeán ní ba ísle acu á dteagasc in aon rang amháin. Ceistíodh leanúnachas sa chóras trí chéile.

- I suppose the question I have is and I don't see evidence of it. Is there a link between the primary curriculum, the post primary curriculum, and even within the post primary between Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle, I don't see an integrated approach in any subject, particularly in Irish. (T2 Scoil F - Príomhoide).*

Earcaíocht Múinteoirí

Mhínigh cuid de na ceannairí scoile gur bhain dúshlán le hearcaíocht múinteoirí agus le múinteoirí a choinneáil. Is constaic í seo a chuireann isteach ar sholáthar na sonraíochta.

- I suppose challenges for me are ... the retention, the availability and retention of staff, and I mean, I don't have teachers that are running out of school or anything, but when a vacancy occurs, it's trying to replace them with someone qualified, who'll commit, and then who'll come, and then stay. (T2 Scoil E - Príomhoide)*

Réamh-mholtaí na gCeannairí T2 ag Céim a hAon

Is iad seo na moltaí a eascraíonn ó na hagallaimh leis na ceannairí scoile i scoileanna cás-staidéir T2. Tá sé tábhachtach le cur san áireamh gur bailíodh na sonraí ag Céim a hAon den taighde.

Scrúdú Cainte

- Mhol gach uile cheannaire go gcuirfí scrúdú cainte éigeantach ar fáil mar chuid den mheasúnú suimitheach sa tSraith Shóisearach. Ag tarraingt ar a gcuid taithí mar cheannairí scoile, bhí roinnt cúiseanna leis an moladh seo: (i) chun aitheantas a thabhairt do labhairt na teanga agus chun scoláirí a spreagadh an Ghaeilge a labhairt agus a fhoghlaim, (ii) chun tacú leis na scoláirí scileanna idirghníomhaithe cainte a fhorbairt, (iii) chun cabhrú le scoláirí ullmhú don tSraith Shinsearach, (iv) chun brú a bhaint ón measúnú deiridh agus, (v) chun tacú le foghlaimoirí ar gach leibhéal cumais.

Cúrsa Bonnleibhéil a chur ar fáil

- Moladh cúrsa bonnleibhéil a chur ar fáil chun tacú le foghlaimoirí ar réimse leibhéil éagsúla cumais Gaeilge a fhoghlaim.

Cúrsa a chur ar fáil do Scoláirí atá nuathagtha

- Moladh cúrsa a chur ar fáil do scoláirí atá nuathagtha go hÉirinn go mbeidh rochtain acu ar na buntáistí a bhaineann le foghlaim na Gaeilge agus chun cur le himeascadh.

Tátaí

Bhí na ceannairí T2 ar fad a ghlac páirt sa taighde seo ar aon tuairim go bhfuil gá le scrúdú cainte a thabhairt isteach mar chuid den mheasúnú suimitheach sa tSraith Shóisearach. Tháinig sé chun solais sna hagallaimh go raibh bearna ann anois idir an tSraith Shóisearach agus an tSraith Shinsearach ó cuireadh an tsonraíocht T2 i bhfeidhm. Anuas air sin, bhí straitéisí éagsúla i bhfeidhm i scoileanna chun tacaíocht sa bhreis a thabhairt do scoláirí san idirbhliain. Léirigh mórchuid na gceannairí an tuairim go raibh sé ní ba dheacra ardmharcanna a thuilleamh sa Ghaeilge agus go raibh drochthionchar aige seo ar dhearcthaí múinteoirí agus scoláirí. Cé go raibh tuairimí dearfacha léirithe i leith na MRB, chothaigh an córas seo brú do scoláirí áirithe. Bhí réimse tacaíochtaí inscoile agus tacaíochtaí taobh amuigh den scoil curtha i bhfeidhm chun tacú le cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta sna scoileanna cás-staidéir T2. Is gá tuilleadh iniúchta a dhéanamh ar sholáthar do na foghlaimoirí uile agus ar dhifreálú sna scoileanna ar chúiseanna éagsúla. Bhain castacht agus brú le córas na ndíolúintí ón nGaeilge. Aithníodh earcaíocht múinteoirí mar dhúshlán comónta eile. Cuireadh moltaí na gceannairí i láthair. Breathnaítear sa chéad mhír eile ar thaithí agus ar thuairimí múinteoirí i scoileanna cás-staidéir T2 ar chur i bhfeidhm shonraíochtaí Gaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí.

Cuid a Ceathair: Múinteoirí T2

Taithí agus Tuairimí na Múinteoirí i Scoileanna Cás-staidéir T2

Príomhcheist a bhain leis an taighde ná: Cad é an taithí atá ag ceannairí scoile, múinteoirí agus scoláirí ar chur i bhfeidhm shonraíochtaí Gaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí (T1 agus T2) i réimse an teagaisc, na foghlama agus an mheasúnaithe agus cad iad na tuairimí atá acu ina leith?

Dírítear sa chuid seo den tuairisc ar thaithí na múinteoirí i scoileanna cás-staidéir T2 ar chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta T2 agus ar na tuairimí atá acu ina leith. Breathnófar ar an gceist seo faoi na mórthéamaí seo a leanas a d'eascair ón anailís ar na grúpaí fócais le múinteoirí (N= 19) i sé scoil T2: Cúrsaí Aistrithe, Pleanáil & Tacaíochtaí, Cuir Chuige Teagaisc & Foghlama, Measúnú, Litríocht, Tionchar an Scrúdú Deiridh agus Moltaí na Múinteoirí. Tagann fothéamaí faoi gach ceann de na mórthéamaí seo.

Cúrsaí Aistrithe

Thuairiscigh múinteoirí, go raibh bearna idir an caighdeán Gaeilge a bhí sealbhaithe ag na scoláirí agus an caighdeán Gaeilge a bhí ag teastáil chun tabhairt faoin tsonraíocht Ghaeilge T2 san iar-bhunscoil. Léirigh múinteoirí ó 5 scoil as 6 scoil go raibh obair mhór le déanamh sa chéad bhliain le tuiscint na scoláirí a fhorbairt ar bhunstruchtúir na teanga agus le bunleibhéal inniúlachta a bhaint amach. Bhí an obair seo le déanamh mar thúsphointe. Chuir múinteoirí in dhá scoil an tuairim in iúl go raibh an phaindéim Covid-19 i ndiaidh drochthionchar a imirt ar leibhéal inniúlachta na scoláirí sa Ghaeilge. Bhí cuid de na múinteoirí den tuairim go raibh caighdeán éagsúla sa Ghaeilge sa chéad bhliain ag brath ar an mbunscoil óna raibh na scoláirí ag teacht chomh maith. Bhí bunscoileanna áirithe ní ba bháúla don Ghaeilge ná mar a bhí bunscoileanna eile. Bhí tionchar aige seo ar chaighdeán Gaeilge na scoláirí agus ar an teagasc agus foghlaim san iar-bhunscoil. Bhain dúshlán le hidirdhealú sa chéad bhliain den iar-bhunscoil. Bhí scoláirí áirithe ní ba láidre ó thaobh na Gaeilge de ná mar a bhí scoláirí eile, go háirithe iad siúd a bhí ag aistriú ó shuíomh lán-Ghaeilge nó ó scoileanna meán-Bhéarla a bhí láidir ó thaobh na Gaeilge de. D'fhéadfaí an léamh a dhéanamh ó na torthaí seo go

bhfuil dúshlán le sárú maidir le cúrsaí aistrithe ón mbunscoil go dtí an iar-bhunscoil ó thaobh na Gaeilge de i gcásanna áirithe agus go bhfuil bunobair le déanamh ag múinteoirí iar-bhunscoile i gcásanna áirithe roimh dóibh tabhairt faoi chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta T2.

- So tá an-mheascán ann ó thaobh cumais de, an-mheascán cumais ann agus bíonn sé deacair freastal ar riachtanais na scoláirí sin, gan trácht a dhéanamh ar litríocht agus rudaí mar sin de sa chéad bhliain. Níl na rudaí bunúsacha ar eolas acu ó thaobh na Gaeilge de. (T2 Scoil A)*

Pleanáil & Tacaíochtaí

Thug múinteoirí samplaí den chomhphleanáil agus áiseanna a roinnt lena chéile i gcuid de na scoileanna cás-staidéir. Phleanáil múinteoirí le chéile, go háirithe ag tús na bliana agus ag cruinnithe foirne nuair a bhí am leagtha síos don phleanáil. Bhí múinteoirí den tuairim gur bhain castacht leis an tsonraíocht T2 agus go raibh an-chuid le clúdach laistigh den achar ama a bhí ag dul don Ghaeilge sa tSraith Shóisearach. Bhraith cuid de na múinteoirí nach raibh sé indéanta an méid a bhí sa tsonraíocht a chlúdach.

Bhain na múinteoirí leas as na torthaí foghlama chun pleanáil a dhéanamh nuair a cuireadh an tsonraíocht i bhfeidhm den chéad uair, ach go háirithe. Ní raibh na torthaí foghlama lárnach sa phleanáil laethúil. I gcásanna áirithe, bhraith múinteoirí go raibh sé deacair ciall a bhaint as cuid de na torthaí foghlama agus iad a cheangal leis an gcleachtas ranga go praiticiúil. Thuairiscigh cuid de na múinteoirí go raibh na torthaí foghlama an-leathan ar fad agus go bhféadfaidh múinteoirí difriúla ciall dhifriúil a bhaint astu. Léiríodh an tuairim go raibh na torthaí foghlama sa Ghaeilge ní ba chasta ná mar a bhíonn torthaí foghlama in ábhair eile a bhí á dteagasc acu.

- Níl siad soiléir ar chor ar bith i gcomparáid le hábhair eile. Tá siad éasca, mar shampla i Staidéar Gnó. Tá siad éasca chun tuiscint, ach i nGaeilge tá siad ró-deacair agus ró-chasta. (T2 Scoil A)*

Bhain na múinteoirí leas as réimse áiseanna chun tacú leo agus iad i mbun pleanála agus i mbun teagaisc. Mhol na múinteoirí *Facebook* Múinteoirí na Gaeilge le háiseanna a roinnt lena gcomh-mhúinteoirí ach go háirithe, agus mhínigh siad gur chabhraigh an áis seo leo coinneáil ‘suas chun dáta.’ Tacaíochtaí eile a bhí in úsáid ag na múinteoirí ná: Tuairisc.ie, VIFAX, Téacsleabhair, acmhainní ó COGG, TG4 Foghlaim, Seomra Ranga Google / TEAMS agus laethanta forbartha gairmiúla a bhí eagraithe ag na seirbhísí tacaíochta.

Níor úsáid formhór na múinteoirí na físeáin tacaíochta a bhí curtha ar fáil ag an CNCM chun tacú leis an ullmhúchán do na MRB. Léirigh cuid de na múinteoirí an tuairim go raibh an caighdeán Gaeilge a bhí léirithe sna físeáin an-ard ar fad agus go gcuirfeadh na heiseamláirí sin isteach ar fhéinmhuinín scoláirí i scoileanna T2.

- *Ag teacht aníos ag an MRB, is féidir linn na taifid sin do na scoláirí eile ag déanamh MRB a thaispeáint inár ranganna. Scaitfí blonn sé sin beagáinín scanrúil. Blonn siad ag rá “Whoa!” (T2 Scoil F)*

Cuir Chuige Teagaisc agus Foghlama **Cumas Cumarsáide**

Is léir ón anailís gur cuireadh an bhéim ba mhó ar chumas cumarsáide na scoláirí a fhorbairt sa Ghaeilge sna scoileanna T2 seachas an dá shnáithe eile atá sa tsonraíocht, is iad sin, feacht teanga agus chultúrtha agus féinfheacht an fhoghlaimeora. Bhí réimse gníomhaíochtaí curtha i bhfeidhm sna scoileanna le cumas cumarsáide na scoláirí a fhorbairt, mar shampla: cluichí teanga, comórtais, rólghlacadh bunaithe ar an litríocht, físeáin *TikTok* a chruthú, obair ghrúpa, obair bheirte, cluichí teanga, Flipgrid, taifid fuaime ar phíosáí léitheoireachta agus físeáin bheaga a dhéanamh bunaithe ar théama. Luaigh scoil amháin Gaeilge24 mar chur chuige a spreag na scoláirí le Gaeilge a labhairt. Bhain cruthaitheacht le cuid de na tascanna ranga mar atá léirithe sna ráitis ar lean.

- *Bhí an comórtas bunaithe ar ceann de na prós a bhí léite acu so bhí orthu aisteoireacht a dhéanamh bunaithe ar Katfish nó rud éigin mar sin. Bhí orthu TikTok a dhéanamh bunaithe air sin, bhí sé greannmhar... bhí orthu dul siar a dhéanamh ar na scéalta agus an foclóir cuí a úsáid. (T2 Scoil B)*
- *Tá cluiche Jenga agam le huimhreacha ar na blocanna agus blonn bileoga difriúla agam le ceisteanna, is féidir leo an bloc a bhaint amach agus má tá uimhir 1 [acu], cuireann tú ceist uimhir 1 ar do phairtnéir. (T2 Scoil C)*

Ba léir gur thaitin cuir chuige ghníomhacha leis na scoláirí ach go raibh am i gceist le tascanna taitneamhacha gníomhacha a éascú do na scoláirí. Bhraith múinteoirí go raibh cúrsaí ama mar chonstaic ar ghníomhaíochtaí idirghníomhaithe teanga a chur ar fáil de bharr go raibh go leor le clúdach acu don scrúdú scríofa agus gur ghá dóibh díriú air sin.

- *Is féidir leat na rudaí deasa sin a dhéanamh an t-am ar fad agus cé go bhfuil cumarsáid déanta acu agus deiseanna labhairt lena chéile is araile, ach, ar an lá, caithfidh siad a bheith in ann súf síos agus an méid sin a scríobh agus tá an-chuid le scríobh acu. (T2 Scoil E)*

Moladh chomh maith gurbh fhiú níos mó ama a thabhairt d’fhorbairt scileanna labhartha na scoláirí sa Ghaeilge. Is fiú a aithint gur i gcásanna áirithe mhínigh múinteoirí go raibh sé deacair na scoláirí a spreagadh le labhairt i nGaeilge i scoileanna T2. Cé go ndearnadh iarracht tasc trí Ghaeilge a chur ar siúl sa rang, i gcásanna áirithe bhí na scoláirí drogallach labhairt i nGaeilge agus labhair siad i mBéarla. I gcásanna áirithe, bhí easpa inniúlachta sa teanga ó bhéal sa Ghaeilge mar bhac ar úsáid na teanga sa seomra ranga.

- *Fiú inniu, bhí muid ag déanamh scannáin so foclóir faoi scannáin agus an phictiúrlann, agus bhí ceistneoir acu le cur ar a chéile faoi scannáin. Ach bhí mé ag siúl timpeall an ranga agus bhí siad ag cur na ceisteanna trí Bhéarla ar a chéile. (T2 Scoil A)*

Feasacht Teanga & Chultúrtha

Níor thug na múinteoirí mórán samplaí de chleachtais ranga chun feasacht teanga na scoláirí a chur chun cinn. Cuireadh béim ar chodanna de struchtúir na teanga a aithint i ranganna áirithe.

- I suppose nuair a bhíonn tú ag ceartú an obair bhaile, is féidir leat na cóipleabhair a mhalartú agus cuireann tú cúpla treoir ar an gclár bán, you know, cuir líne faoi na briathra difriúla, an bhfuil siad san aimsir chaite, cuir ciorcal timpeall réamhfhocal ... (T2 Scoil C)*

I gcuid de na scoileanna, iarradh ar scoláirí píosaí cainte nó léitheoireachta a thaifeadh agus a thaifeadh arís tar éis dóibh aiseolas a fháil faoin bhfoghraíocht.

Cuireadh béim ar an bhfeasacht chultúrtha a spreagadh trí gníomhaíochtaí éagsúla le linn sheachtain na Gaeilge ach go hairithe, chomh maith le turais chuig an bpictiúrlann, maidineacha tae, cainteanna poiblí agus céilithe. Moladh an amhránaíocht mar bhealach le nasc a dhéanamh le cultúr na Gaeilge.

- I suppose ó thaobh an chultúir agus maidir leis an litríocht...em... déanaim iarracht na hamhráin a dhéanamh in áit na ndánta. I mbealach éigin tá sé níos éasca do na daltaí nuair atá amhrán ann agus tá siad in ann éisteacht leis. (T2 Scoil D)*

D'aithin múinteoirí i scoileanna T2 gur bhain dúshlán le nasc a dhéanamh le pobal labhartha na Gaeilge taobh amuigh den scoil. Bhí cuid de na múinteoirí den tuairim nach raibh dóthain ama acu le díriú ar fhorbairt na feasachta cultúrtha taobh amuigh den chéad bhliain mar gheall ar bhrú an scrúdaithe. Labhair na múinteoirí i scoil amháin faoi scoláirí a spreagadh le dul chun na Gaeltachta le linn an tsamhraidh. Sa scoil chéanna bhí deis ag scoláirí dul ar thuras lae chun na Gaeltachta sa chéad bhliain. Bhí cuid de na múinteoirí den tuairim go raibh sé deacair aionna speisialta a fháil isteach sa scoil agus go gcuirfeadh cleachtas mar sin le deiseanna na scoláirí feasacht chultúrtha a fhorbairt agus nasc a dhéanamh le pobal teanga taobh amuigh den scoil.

Féinfheasacht an Fhoghlaim

Is í féinfheasacht an fhoghlaimeora an snáithe ba lú ar leag na múinteoirí béim. I gcuid de na scoileanna spreag múinteoirí na scoláirí le machnamh a dhéanamh ar obair a bhí curtha i gcrích acu mar shampla, Cad atá á fhoghlaim agam? Cad a d'fhoghlaim mé? Conas is féidir liom barr feabhais a chur ar an obair an chéad uair eile? Léiríodh an tuairim go raibh sé deacair ar chuid de na scoláirí tabhairt faoin bhféinmheasúnú nó faoin machnamh sa dara teanga. Bhí roinnt de na múinteoirí den tuairim gur bhain dúshlán le hathmhachnamh a dhéanamh trí Bhéarla fiú agus go raibh sé an-dúshlánach tabhairt faoin athmhachnamh trí Ghaeilge do scoláirí áirithe.

- Tá an machnamh á dhéanamh as Béarla sa rang Fraincise agus tá tú ag iarraidh ar dhaltaí gnáthleibhéil agus, i ndáiríre an t-ardleibhéil, é sin a dhéanamh as Gaeilge ... tá sé sin chomh deacair. (T2 Scoil E)*

Breathnaítear ar thuairimí na múinteoirí i leith na litríochta sa chéad chuid eile.

An Litríocht

Bhí mórchuid na múinteoirí sna scoileanna cás-staidéir T2 dearfach faoin rogha litríochta a bhain leis an tsonraíocht. Bhí múinteoirí i dtrí scoil chás-staidéir den tuairim go raibh an iomarca litríochta le clúdach go fóill sa tsonraíocht T2, áfach agus nár bh leor an laghdú a rinneadh ar an liosta litríochta mar thoradh ar an Athbhreithniú Luath.

- Ó thaobh na litríochta, tá laghdú níos mó ag teastáil go géar, i mo thuairimse. (T2 Scoil A)*

Sna grúpaí fócais, thug na múinteoirí samplaí den litríocht a thaitin leis na scoláirí agus samplaí de na gníomhaíochtaí ranga a chur siad ar fáil do na scoláirí bunaithe ar an litríocht. Bhí réimse gníomhaíochtaí ar bun ar nós rólghlacadh, drámaí, agus scríbhneoireacht bunaithe ar an litríocht. Tháinig na gearrscannáin chun cinn mar rogha litríochta a thaitin leis na daltaí.

- Ceapaim féin go dtaitníonn an t-úrscéal go mór leo. So déanaimid an ceann “Cúpla” agus toisc go mbaineann sé le saol an déagóra agus an Ghaeltacht baineann siad an-taitneamh as agus tá a lán féidearthachtaí d’imeachtaí gur féidir leat a dhéanamh as sin. Mar shampla, litir a scríobh ón nGaeltacht, comhrá fóin a bheith agat, ag samhlú gur tusa an phríomhcharachtar. (T2 Scoil C)

- Tá mé ag smaoineamh ar Ghleann Álainn, agus tá an oiread sin is féidir leat a dhéanamh, is féidir cás cúirte a chur ar siúl. Is féidir leat póstaer a dhearadh de chosc a chur ar dhumpáil. Is féidir é sin a nascadh le córas timpeallachta. Is féidir linn an oiread sin a bhaint ó Gleann Álainn. (T2 Scoil E)

I gcásanna áirithe léirigh múinteoirí an tuairim nach raibh cuid den litríocht feiliúnach do dhéagóirí agus is fiú tuilleadh fiosraithe a dhéanamh faoi seo mar go bhfuil liosta athbhreithnithe de théacsanna molta curtha ar fáil.

Measúnú

Cuirfear na torthaí a thagann faoin téama measúnú i láthair faoi na fothéamaí (i) MRB 1: An Phunann Teanga, (ii) MRB 2 agus (iii) Cruinnithe AFMÁ.

MRB 1: An Phunann Teanga

Ní mór a aithint nach raibh mórán taithí ag na scoileanna ar an MRB 1 agus na sonraí taighde á mbailiú. Maidir leis na scoileanna a raibh taithí acu air, bhí scoil amháin sásta go raibh an MRB 1 curtha sa dara bliain. Labhair cuid de na múinteoirí faoin mbrú ama a chothaigh na tascanna MRB.

MRB 2: Ag Idirghníomhú trí Ghaeilge

Bhí meascán tuairimí ag múinteoirí maidir le MRB 2. Bhí múinteoirí i Scoil E agus i Scoil F sásta gur thug MRB deis do na scoláirí a scileanna teanga a chur chun cinn agus go raibh an taithí go maith dóibh. Mhol siad go mbronnfaí marcanna suimitheacha ar an MRB, áfach, chun aitheantas a thabhairt d’obair na scoláirí agus go raibh an easpa aitheantais i bhfoirm marcanna ag cur isteach ar inspreagadh scoláirí tabhairt faoin tasc.

- Is breá liom an MRB 2. Ceapaim go bhfuil sé go maith dóibh an cur i láthair a dhéanamh, tá sin go hiontach. Ach ní chuireann sé lena marcanna agus is mór an trua é sin mar cuireann muid an-chuid ama isteach ann chun é a dhéanamh leo. (T2 Scoil E)

Ar an láimh eile, bhí múinteoirí eile cáinteach faoin tasc féin. Cháineadar an smaoineamh gur tasc idirghníomhaithe teanga a bhí ann mar go raibh luaschártaí in úsáid ag scoláirí chun tacú leo an cur i láthair a dhéanamh. In amanna, ní raibh ag éirí le scoláirí ceisteanna a fhreagairt nó plé a dhéanamh agus bhí píosaí cainte foghlamtha de ghlanmheabhair acu. Dar le cuid de na múinteoirí, bhain srianta le féidearthachtaí an taisc scileanna idirghníomhaithe teanga a chur chun cinn.

- Agus déanann siad cur i láthair bunaithe ar rud éigin agus foghlaimíonn siad rud éigin de ghlanmheabhair beagnach. Ansin cuireann tú na ceisteanna bunúsacha agus níl siad in ann freagraí a thabhairt duit, tá rud éigin in easnamh sa phróiseas. (T2 Scoil A)

Tháinig sé chun cinn i gcuid de na scoileanna cás-staidéir gur chuir MRB 2 brú ar scoláirí áirithe agus go raibh siad neirbhíseach tabhairt faoin tasc. Mhol múinteoirí scrúdú cainte in áit an MRB agus go mbeadh scrúdú cainte ní b’fheiliúnaí chun scileanna idirghníomhaithe cainte a fhorbairt, chun aitheantas a thabhairt d’obair na scoláirí agus chun tacú le scoláirí a bhí neirbhíseach ag labhairt os comhair an ranga. Bhí na múinteoirí ag tarraingt ar a gcuid taithí ar MRB 2 sular cuireadh na treoirlínte athbhreithnithe ar fáil. Pléifear moltaí na múinteoirí maidir le scrúdú cainte mar phríomh-mholadh a bhí acu. Féachfar ar thuairimí na múinteoirí faoi na cruinnithe AFMÁ sa chéad chuid eile.

Cruinnithe AFMÁ

Bhí tuairimí dearfacha ag na múinteoirí maidir lena dtaithí ar na cruinnithe AFMÁ. Thug na cruinnithe deis dóibh labhairt lena gcomhghleacaí agus thug an próiseas tacaíocht dóibh breithiúnais ghairmiúla a dhéanamh, go háirithe nuair nach raibh siad iomlán cinnte faoin tuairiscín a bhí le bronnadh nó nuair a bhí scoláirí ar imeall an bhanda ghrádála. Léirigh múinteoirí an tuairim gur

chóir breis tacaíochtaí a chur ar fáil - samplaí d'obair scoláirí a théann leis na tuairiscíní sa chaoi is nach mbeadh cinntí suibíachtúla á ndéanamh ag múinteoirí.

Taithí ar an Scrúdú Deiridh

Is é aidhm an taighde ná iniúchadh a dhéanamh ar thaithí agus ar thuairimí na múinteoirí ar chur i bhfeidhm shonraíochtaí Gaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí. Ní thagann an scrúdú deiridh go díreach faoi chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta ach príomhthoradh a d'eascair ón anailís ná go raibh tionchar mór ag an scrúdú deiridh ar an teagasc agus ar an bhfoghlaim sa rang agus ar thuairimí na múinteoirí i leith na sonraíochta T2. Tá sé tábhachtach na tuairimí seo a thuairisciú mar phríomhthéama a tháinig chun solais ag Céim a hAon sa taighde.

Dar leis na múinteoirí, ní raibh an scrúdú deiridh ag teacht go beacht agus go soiléir le cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta agus bhí míréir idir an méid a bhí leagtha síos sa tsonraíocht agus taithí na múinteoirí agus na scoláirí ar an scrúdú deiridh. Ardaíodh pointí tábhachtacha sna grúpaí fócais gur gá a thuairisciú agus dul i ngleic leo. Bhí múinteoirí ag iarraidh tacú leis na scoláirí agus iad ag ullmhú don scrúdú mar chuid dá ról mar mhúinteoirí gairmiúla Gaeilge. Mhínigh cuid de na múinteoirí go raibh sé dodhéanta seo a dhéanamh mar nach bhféadfaidís an méid a bheadh ar an scrúdpháipéar a thuar ar aon bhealach. Bhí orthu raon leathan ábhar a chlúdach ach bhí a fhios acu go raibh seans ann nach mbeadh nasc leis an scrúdú deiridh. Léiríodh an tuairim go raibh an éiginnteacht faoi ábhar an scrúdaithe míchothrom ar na scoláirí agus nach raibh an éiginnteacht seo ag tabhairt an deis ab fhearr dóibh rathúlacht a bhaint amach sa scrúdú deiridh.

Thuairiscigh múinteoirí chomh maith go raibh torthaí ní b'íse ag na scoileanna agus gráid ní b'íse bronnta ar na scoláirí ó cuireadh na sonraíochtaí i bhfeidhm. Chuir seo isteach ar dhearcthaí na múinteoirí. Mhol múinteoirí go ndéanfaí athbhreithniú ar na bandaí grádála agus nach raibh siad cothrom ar na scoláirí. Míníodh freisin go raibh scoláirí a fuair toilteanas sa Ghaeilge, is é sin marc ó 55-74% ag athrú chuig cúrsa gnáthleibhéil don Ardteist.

- *Ní bhfuair muid aon ghradam sa scoil seo ó thosaigh an rud agus téann siad ar aghaidh agus faigheann siad H1 san Ardteist. I mean... bíonn i gcónaí duine nó beirt achan bliain ar chóir dóibh é a fháil agus ní fhaigheann siad é. (T2 Scoil B)*

Mhínigh múinteoirí cuid de na fadhbanna a bhain go sonrach leis an scrúdpháipéar, mar shampla go raibh cuid de na scoláirí nach raibh in ann na ceisteanna a thuiscint. Sa chás sin, cé go bhféadfadh an-chuid oibre a bheith déanta ag scoláire, agus dua caite aige ag foghlaim na Gaeilge, ní bheadh toradh na hoibre sin le feiceáil.

- *Níl sé cothrom ar na daltaí a bhfuil go leor staidéir déanta acu agus rinne siad a lán oibre ar feadh 3 bliana agus ansin focal amháin sa cheist nach dtuigeann siad agus ansin ní féidir leo plé leis an bpáipéar. (T2 Scoil E)*

Ba léir ó na tuairiscí go raibh tionchar diúltach ag an scrúdú deiridh ar thaithí na múinteoirí ar an tsonraíocht T2 agus ar na tuairimí a bhí acu ina leith. Féachtar anois ar mholtaí na múinteoirí i scoileanna cás-staidéir T2. Tá sé tábhachtach le cur san áireamh gur bailíodh na sonraí ó na scoileanna cás-staidéir ag Céim a hAon de staidéar trí bliana.

Réamh-mholtaí na Múinteoirí T2 ag Céim a hAon Scrúdú Cainte

- Is é an phríomhmholadh a eascraíonn ó na grúpaí fócais le múinteoirí i scoileanna T2 na gur chóir scrúdú cainte a bheith mar chuid den mheasúnú suimitheach sa tSraith Shóisearach. Bhí na múinteoirí i ngach scoil chás-staidéir ar aon fhocal faoi. Is iad na príomhchúiseanna a bhain leis an moladh ná gur chóir aitheantas a thabhairt do labhairt na teanga agus béim a leagan ar fhorbairt scileanna idirghníomhaithe cainte na scoláirí. Bhí múinteoirí den tuairim go gcabhródh scrúdú cainte leis an mbearna a laghdú idir an tSraith Shóisearach agus an tSraith Shinsearach. Níor cheap na múinteoirí gur chóir go dtiocfadh MRB 2 in áit scrúdaithe

cainte. Bhí múinteoirí a raibh taithí acu ar an scrúdú cainte sa Teastas Sóisearach den tuairim gur chóir é a thabhairt ar ais.

Cúrsaí Measúnaithe

- Moladh go dtabharfaí treoir agus tacaíocht do mhúinteoirí chun go bhféadfaidís tacú leis na scoláirí ullmhú don scrúdú deiridh.
- Moladh athbhreithniú a dhéanamh ar an scrúdú deireadh ionas go mbeadh nasc soiléir leis an gcleachtas ranga.
- Moladh athbhreithniú a dhéanamh ar na bandaí grádála.
- Moladh marcanna a thabhairt do thascanna MRB.

Nasc a dhéanamh idir an tSraith Shóisearach & an tSraith Shinsearach

- Bhí múinteoirí den tuairim go raibh an-bhearna idir an tSraith Shóisearach agus an tSraith Shinsearach agus go gcabhródh scrúdú cainte leis an mbearna seo a laghdú.

An Litríocht

- Mhol go leor de na múinteoirí laghdú eile a dhéanamh ar an méid litríochta atá le clúdach. Is fiú tuilleadh fiosraithe a dhéanamh faoi seo mar gur bailíodh na sonraí ag Céim a hAon de chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí athbhreithnithe.
- Moladh go mbeadh cead ag scoláirí litríocht na chéad bhliana a úsáid i dtreo an scrúdaithe dheiridh.

Torthaí Foghlama

- Moladh na torthaí foghlama a shoiléiriú.

Soláthar d'fhoghlaimeoirí Uile na Gaeilge

- Moladh cúrsa bonnleibhéil a chur ar fáil chun tacú le foghlaimeoirí ar leibhéil éagsúla cumais.

Tacaíochtaí

- Moladh go mbeadh breis tacaíochtaí ann do scoileanna T2 chun tacú leo nasc a dhéanamh leis an bpobal teanga taobh amuigh den scoil.

Mír a Cúig: Suimiú ar na Téamaí Éiritheacha

Déantar comparáid agus codarsnacht sa mhír seo idir na príomhthorthaí a bhain le comhthéacsanna scoile T1 agus T2 ag Céim a hAon den taighde, agus cuirtear i láthair réamh-mholtaí a rinne na ceannairí agus na múinteoirí ag eascairt óna dtaithí ar chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí T1 agus T2. Tá sé tábhachtach a aithint gurb é seo an chéad cheann de dhá thuarascáil eatramhacha agus go bhféadfadh athruithe teacht ar na torthaí éiritheacha sa dá bhliain atá amach romhainn. Sna chéad chéimeanna eile den staidéar, fiosrófar gach téama ar bhonn níos doimhne agus níos leithne agus ó pheirspictíochtaí réimse rannpháirtithe. Beidh suirbhé náisiúnta le múinteoirí iar-bhunscoile Gaeilge, rud a thabharfaidh léargas níos leithne ar an taithí atá ag múinteoirí iar-bhunscoile na Gaeilge ar chur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí Gaeilge agus ar na tuairimí atá acu ina leith sa chéad chéim eile. Reáchtálfar grúpaí fócais le scoláirí sna scoileanna cás-staidéir sa chéad chéim eile le sonraí a bhailiú faoina dtaithí agus a ndearcchaí maidir le cur i ngníomh na sonraíochtaí. Is fiú téamaí a aithint arbh fhiú tuilleadh fiosraithe a dhéanamh orthu ag na chéad chéimeanna eile den taighde. Cuirtear i láthair na téamaí éiritheacha ó Chéim a hAon sa mhír seo.

Réamhthorthaí na gCeannairí Scoile T1 & T2

Bhí na ceannairí scoile i scoileanna T1 agus T2 ar aon tuairim gur chóir níos mó béime a chur ar an nGaeilge labhartha sa tSraith Shóisearach agus níos mó aitheantais a thabhairt do scoileanna labhartha na Gaeilge tríd an measúnú suimitheach. Mhol gach uile cheannaire scoile go mbeadh scrúdú cainte mar

chuid den mheasúnú suimitheach sa tSraith Shóisearach don Ghaeilge. Bhí ceannairí den tuairim gur gá níos mó aitheantais a thabhairt do labhairt na teanga chun scoláirí a spreagadh í a labhairt, chun freastal ar fhoghlaimeoirí éagsúla, chun scoláirí a ullmhú don tSraith Shinsearach, agus leis an nGaeilge a chur chun cinn mar theanga bheo bheathach.

D'áitigh ceannairí T1 go bhfuil an Ghaeilge níos tábhachtaí ná ábhar i scoileanna T1 agus í mar theanga an cheantair agus/nó mar theanga an bhaile agus toisc gurb í teanga na scoile. Tháinig sé chun solais gur bhain deacrachtaí suntasacha leis an gcóras idirdhealaithe don mheasúnú suimitheach deiridh, go háirithe i gcás na scoileanna cás-staidéir T1 mar go raibh titim shuntasach sna gráid arda do scoláirí T1 ó cuireadh an tsonraíocht T1 i bhfeidhm in 2017. D'fhéadfadh an córas marcála deighilte do scoileanna T1 agus T2, an leathnú ar na bandaí grádála agus an scrúdú féin a bheith mar chúis leis na deacrachtaí seo. Léirigh morchuid de na ceannairí sna scoileanna cás-staidéir T2 go raibh sé ní ba dheacra marcanna arda a bhaint amach sa Ghaeilge i gcomparáid le hábhair eile. Bhí an titim shuntasach sna marcanna arda do scoláirí T1 ach go háirithe, ag imirt drochthionchair ar thaithí scoileanna ar an soláthar idirdhealaithe agus léiríodh an tuairim go raibh scoláirí T1 faoi mhíbhuntáiste mar gheall ar an measúnú suimitheach idirdhealaithe. Bhí an titim sna marcanna ina ábhar mór imní i scoileanna cás-staidéir T1.

Thug ceannairí scoile T1 agus T2 ardmholadh do mhúinteoirí na scoileanna agus cuireadh in iúl gurb iad na múinteoirí féin an phríomhfhoinsé a bhí ag scoileanna chun tacú le cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí. Bhí roinnt ócáidí scoile ar siúl sna scoileanna T2 chun tacú le cur chun cinn na Gaeilge. Láidreachtaí

a bhain le cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta i scoileanna T1 ná an nasc leis an bpobal taobh amuigh den scoil agus an cur chuige uile scoile a cuireadh i bhfeidhm chun tacú le cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta agus chun tacú le cur chun cinn na Gaeilge mar theanga bheo bheathach na scoile. Taca láidir eile a chabhraigh le cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta T1 ná scéimeanna tacaíochta, mar shampla scéimeanna atá á dtairiscint mar chuid den scéim aitheantais do na scoileanna Gaeltachta, chomh maith le scéimeanna atá á n-eagrú ag eagrais Ghaeilge. Chabhraigh comhráití gairmiúla le cur i ngníomh na sonraíochtaí sa dá chomhthéacs.

Tháinig dúshlán chun solais sa dá chomhthéacs maidir le soláthar an churaclaim d'fhoghlaimoirí uile na hiar-bhunscoile. Bhain dúshlán le hoideachas ionchuimsitheach a sholáthar - do scoláirí a raibh réimse cumais iontu sa Ghaeilge, do scoláirí a raibh riachtanais bhreise oideachais acu agus do scoláirí a bhí nuathagtha i scoileanna T1 agus i scoileanna T2. Mhol mórchuid na gceannairí T2 go gcuirí cúrsa bonnleibhéil ar fáil. Léiríonn na réamhthorthaí seo go dteastaíonn níos mó tacaíochtaí leis an bhfreastal cuí a dhéanamh ar scoláirí uile na hiar-bhunscoile agus ní mór go ndéanfaí machnamh cúramach air seo. Bhí dúshlán roimh scoileanna T1 rochtain a fháil ar théacsanna molta don litríocht. Bhain dúshlán le múinteoirí cáilithe a fhostú sa dá chomhthéacs scoile, T1 agus T2. Thug an taighde le fios go bhfuil córas na ndíolúintí ag cothú deacrachtaí sa chóras T2 ar bhealaí éagsúla. Bhí cúiseanna éagsúla a bhain le díolúine a lorg ón nGaeilge in iar-bhunscoileanna T2 agus castacht mhór ag baint leis an gcóras. Léiríonn na sonraí go bhféadfadh sé a bheith deacair ar phríomhoidí diúltú do bhronnadh díolúine mar go bhfuil na coinníollacha chomh scaoilte is atá. B'fhiú an t-ábhar seo a iniúchadh go domhain i staidéar eile. Tháinig sé chun solais sa taighde go raibh bearna idir an bunleibhéal agus an iar-bhunleibhéal i gcásanna áirithe ó thaobh chaighdeán na Gaeilge ag brath ar an mbunscoil óna raibh na scoláirí ag teacht agus cúinsí eile. Bhí ceannairí T2 den tuairim nach mbeadh scoláirí ullamh a dhóthain do mheasúnú scríofa agus do mheasúnú labhartha sa tSraith Shinsearach agus bhí cúiteamh curtha ar fáil sa tSraith Shóisearach i scoileanna áirithe chun dul i ngleic leis an mbearna a líonadh.

Réamhthorthaí ó na Múinteoirí T1 agus T2

Pléitear na príomhthorthaí faoi na téamaí a leagadh béim orthu san iarratas ar thairiscintí chomh maith leis na téamaí a d'eascair ó shonraí na múinteoirí.

Cúrsaí Aistrithe

Sa dá chomhthéacs scoile T1 agus T2, bhain dúshlán le cúrsaí aistrithe ón mbunscoil go dtí an iar-bhunscoil. Dar leis na múinteoirí, bhí éagsúlacht sna caighdeáin Ghaeilge a bhí ag na foghlaimoirí agus i gcásanna áirithe bhí go leor de bhunghnéithe den teanga le clúdach ag scoláirí sa chéad bhliain. Tháinig cúrsaí idirdhealaithe chun cinn sa dá chomhthéacs. Bhí meascán caighdeán i ranganna na chéad bhliana. Bhí idirdhealú de dhíth ach go háirithe sna cásanna seo a leanas: nuair a bhí scoláirí ag aistriú ó bhunscoil mheán-Bhéarla go hiar-bhunscoil T1; nuair a bhí riachtanais oideachais sa bhreis ag scoláirí; nuair a bhí foghlaimoirí nuathagtha go hÉirinn; nuair a bhí tacaíocht bhreise de dhíth mar gheall ar an mbearna sna caighdeáin idir an bhunscoil agus an iar-bhunscoil agus mar gheall ar go gcuirtear níos mó béime ar chúrsaí léitheoireachta agus scríbhneoireachta ag leibhéal na hiar-bhunscoile. Luaigh cuid de na múinteoirí go raibh tionchar ag Covid-19 ar fhéinmhuinín na scoláirí i labhairt na Gaeilge. Chuir na múinteoirí T1 agus T2 an-bhéim ar labhairt na Gaeilge a chur chun cinn sa chéad bhliain agus chun muinín agus cumas na scoláirí a fhorbairt i labhairt na Gaeilge. Cuireadh béim ar leith ar fhorbairt an tsaibhris agus an chruinnis i gcomhthéacsanna scoile T1. Bhain múinteoirí leas as réimse modheolaíochtaí chun tacú le scoláirí muinín agus cumas a fhorbairt i labhairt na Gaeilge.

Pleanáil agus Tacaíochtaí

Bhí tiomántáin roinnte in úsáid ag múinteoirí i scoileanna T1 agus bhí na múinteoirí ag ullmhú a gcuid nótaí teagaisc féin agus á roinnt eatarthu. Bhí comhphleanáil idir múinteoirí sa dá chomhthéacs T1 agus T2, go háirithe ag tús na bliana agus bhí comhráití gairmiúla neamhfhoirmiúla ar bun idir múinteoirí i ngach scoil chás-staidéir. Cé gur úsáid múinteoirí torthaí foghlama na sonraíochta T1 agus T2, i gcásanna áirithe mhínigh múinteoirí go raibh na torthaí foghlama an-leathan agus doiléir.

Bhí deacracht ní ba mhó ag múinteoirí i scoileanna T1 rochtain a fháil ar théacsanna agus chuir sin lena n-ualach oibre. Bhí na scoileanna T1 iontach buíoch den obair a dhéanann COGG ag soláthar áiseanna do scoileanna T1. Mar sin féin, ag Céim a hAon den taighde, bhí múinteoirí T1 den tuairim nach raibh neart téacsanna ar fáil i gcanúint an cheantair agus gur chuir sé seo isteach ar obair an ranga agus ar thuiscint na scoláirí ar na téacsanna. Bhí an téacsleabhar mar áis ag múinteoirí T2 agus bhí rochtain acu ar na téacsanna litríochta mar gheall air sin. Thaitin sé le cuid mhór de na múinteoirí sna scoileanna cás-staidéir T1 pleanáil a dhéanamh bunaithe ar an litríocht. Cé nach bhfuil an scrúdú deiridh mar phríomhfhócas ag an taighde seo, thug an taighde le fios go raibh mórchuid na múinteoirí sa dá chomhthéacs scoile míshásta leis an treoir a cuireadh ar fáil maidir leis an scrúdú deiridh, chomh maith leis an scrúdú féin. Bhí múinteoirí imníoch faoi bheith in ann tacú le scoláirí sa scrúdú deiridh.

Bhí réimse leathan áiseanna in úsáid ag múinteoirí i scoileanna cás-staidéir T1 agus T2, mar shampla, An Tairseach ag COGG, liosta téacsanna ó CNCM, tuairisc.ie, TG4 agus an leathanach *Facebook Múinteoirí na Gaeilge*. Thuairiscigh múinteoirí T1 agus T2 gur mhaith leo níos mó áiseanna tacaíochta don Ghaeilge. Bhí breis tacaíochtaí de dhíth maidir le samplaí léirithe de na gnéithe cáilíochta a bhain leis na tascanna MRB. Mhol scoileanna cuid de na scéimeanna tacaíochtaí a bhí curtha ar fáil ag na heagrais Ghaeilge ar nós *Gaeilge 24* de chuid Chonradh na Gaeilge agus *Gaelbhratach* de chuid Ghael-Linn. Bhí scéimeanna tacaíochta ann sa Ghaeltacht a chabhraigh le cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochta agus forbairt teanga na scoláirí. Bhí turais chun na Gaeltachta aitheanta mar thacaíocht do chur chun cinn na Gaeilge ag roinnt scoileanna T1 agus T2 taobh amuigh den Ghaeltacht.

Mhol múinteoirí go gcuirfí breis tacaíochtaí ar fáil chun tacú le teagasc na Gaeilge. Moladh go gcuirfí tacaíochtaí ar fáil do scoláirí a bhfuil riachtanais bhreise oideachais acu. Tá sé tábhachtach machnamh a dhéanamh ar sholáthar an churaclaim agus ar thacaíochtaí a chur ar fáil do scoláirí atá nuathagtha. Moladh go gcuirfí breis gníomhaíochtaí seach-churaclaim ar fáil trí Ghaeilge agus go mbeadh níos mó deiseanna ag scoileanna T2 nasc a

dhéanamh leis an bpobal teanga taobh amuigh den scoil. Chuirfí fáilte roimh níos mó ama don fhorbairt ghairmiúil chomh maith.

Cuir Chuige Teagaisc agus Foghlama

Léiríodh i Mír a Ceathair, gur cuireadh réimse leathan agus saibhir oideolaíochtaí i bhfeidhm sna scoileanna cás-staidéir chun torthaí foghlama an churaclaim a chur i ngníomh agus chun cumas agus muinín na scoláirí a fhorbairt sa Ghaeilge. Ag Céim a hAon den taighde, roinn múinteoirí a gcuid taithí ar leas a bhaint as an gcruthaitheacht agus as an nuálaíocht ina modhanna teagaisc a bhí scoláire-lárnaithe agus difearáilte chun freastal ar riachtanais éagsúla na bhfoghlaiméirí.

Sna scoileanna T2, cuireadh an phríomhbhéim ar chumas cumarsáide a fhorbairt. Cuireadh réimse gníomhaíochtaí i bhfeidhm chun tacú le forbairt cumas cumarsáide na scoláirí, mar shampla: ról-imirt bunaithe ar an litríocht, físeáin *TikTok* a dhearadh, obair ghrúpa, obair bheirte, cluichí teanga, *Flipgrid*, taifid fuaime a dhéanamh ar phíosaí gearra léitheoireachta agus físeáin ghearra bunaithe ar théamaí éagsúla. Bhí dúshlán le tascanna a áisiú trí mheán na Gaeilge i gcuid de na scoileanna T2. Bhí béim leagtha ar na trí shnáithe i scoileanna T1 agus cuireadh béim ach go háirithe ar chumas cumarsáide agus feachtas teanga agus chultúrtha a fhorbairt. Bhí deiseanna ní ba mhó ag scoileanna T1 an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn ar bhonn uile scoile agus chun naisc a dhéanamh leis an bpobal teanga taobh amuigh den scoil. Bhí gníomhaíochtaí ranga, gníomhaíochtaí scoile agus gníomhaíochtaí seach-churaclaim ar siúl i scoileanna T1. Bhain cruthaitheacht leis an teagasc bunaithe ar an litríocht i go leor de na scoileanna. Tháinig moladh an-láidir ó mhúinteoirí i scoileanna T1 agus T2, go gcuirfí scrúdú cainte ar fáil sa Ghaeilge chun níos mó ama a thabhairt d'fhorbairt scoileanna idirghníomhaithe cainte na scoláirí sa rang. I go leor cásanna, thuairiscigh na múinteoirí go raibh orthu díriú ar an léitheoireacht agus scríbhneoireacht sa rang mar gheall nach raibh scrúdú cainte ann. Léirigh múinteoirí an tuairim nach raibh an fócas láidir ar léitheoireacht agus scríbhneoireacht feiliúnach d'fhoghlaiméirí uile na Gaeilge.

Litríocht

De réir na múinteoirí, thaitin téacsanna éagsúla le scoláirí agus bhí siad den tuairim go raibh rogha leathan téacsanna ar fáil. Thaitin gearrscannáin leis na scoláirí go háirithe, agus thug múinteoirí samplaí d'úrscéalta, gearrscéalta, dánta agus amhráin a thaitin le scoláirí. Ag eascairt ón Athbhreithniú Luath (Mac Gearailt & Ó Duibhir, 2023), bhí cuid de na múinteoirí T1 agus T2 sásta leis an laghdú ar líon na litríochta a bhí le clúdach ó Mheán Fómhair 2023, mar sin féin, bhí cuid mhaith de na múinteoirí sa dá chomhthéacs scoile go fóill den tuairim go raibh an líon litríochta atá le clúdach róthrom. Mar sin, beidh sé tábhachtach an t-athrú seo a mheas le linn an staidéir leantaigh. Léirigh múinteoirí T1 nach raibh téacsanna ar fáil i gcanúint na háite agus gur chuir sin le hualach oibre na scoláirí ó thaobh tuiscint na teanga de. Moladh go gcuirfí breis téacsanna ar fáil i gcanúint an cheantair do scoileanna T1. Bhí múinteoirí sa dá chomhthéacs scoile den tuairim go dtacódh sé leis na scoláirí dá mbeadh cead acu tarraingt ar litríocht na chéad bhliana sa scrúdú deiridh. D'fhéadfaí tuilleadh fiosraithe a dhéanamh faoi seo.

Measúnú Foirmitheach

Bhí meascán tuairimí ag na múinteoirí faoi MRB 1 agus MRB 2. Cheistigh múinteoirí an fiúntas a bhain le MRB 1 ach ní raibh taithí ag na múinteoirí ar fad ar MRB 1 go fóill. Bhí taithí ní ba leithne ag múinteoirí ar MRB 2. I gcásanna áirithe, thaitin MRB 2 le múinteoirí mar go raibh deis ag foghlaimeoirí tasc a chur i gcrích ar ábhar suime leo. Cheistigh múinteoirí an tasc idirghníomhaithe teanga ceart a bhí i gceist le MRB 2 nó an cur i láthair a bhí ann. Bhí imní ar scoláirí áirithe labhairt os comhair a bpiaraí agus bhí an téama seo ní ba láidre i scoileanna T2 ina raibh an Ghaeilge á foghlaim mar dhara teanga. Bhí na múinteoirí den tuairim nach bhféadfadh MRB 2 teacht in áit an scrúdaithe cainte agus go raibh scrúdú cainte ag teastáil mar chuid de mheasúnú suimitheach na Sraithe Sóisearaí. Cuireadh na treoirlínte athbhreithnithe do na MRB ar fáil i mí Mheán Fómhair 2023, mar sin glacfadh sé níos mó ama an t-athrú seo a mheas thar thréimhse an staidéir leantaigh. Bhí múinteoirí T1 agus T2 den tuairim gur chóir go mbeadh marcanna ag dul do na MRB 2 chun aitheantas a thabhairt d'obair na scoláirí. Bhí na múinteoirí sna scoileanna cás-staidéir dearfach faoi na cruinnithe AFMÁ den chuid is mó mar gur tugadh deis

dóibh a mbreithiúnais ghairmiúla a phlé lena gcomhghleacaithe agus smaointí a roinnt lena chéile.

Taithí ar an Scrúdú Deiridh

Príomhthéama a tháinig chun cinn ná gur léirigh mórchuid na múinteoirí míshástacht leis an scrúdú deiridh. Thuairiscigh múinteoirí T1 ach go háirithe, nach léiriú cruinn a bhí sna torthaí T1 ar chumas teanga ó bhéal na scoláirí agus an t-ardchaighdeán Gaeilge labhartha a bhí sealbhaithe acu ón mbaile agus/nó ón scoil. Mhol gach uile mhúinteoir go gcuirfí measúnú suimitheach ar labhairt na Gaeilge ar fáil sa tSraith Shóisearach. Mhol na múinteoirí go gcruthódh an scrúdú cainte níos mó deiseanna chun díriú ar scileanna labhartha na Gaeilge sa rang agus go raibh seo thar a bheith tábhachtach chun cainteoirí inniúla Gaeilge a chothú agus chun an Ghaeilge a chur chun cinn mar theanga bheo bheathach. Thabharfadh scrúdú cainte deis do scoláirí a scileanna teanga ó bhéal a léiriú agus bheadh scrúdú cainte ní b'fheiliúnaí d'fhoghlaiméoirí a bhfuil réimse cumais iontu. Chabhródh scrúdú cainte ag leibhéal na Sraithe Sóisearaí le scoláirí agus iad ag ullmhú don scrúdú cainte sa tSraith Shinsearach. Bhí múinteoirí T1 agus T2 den tuairim nach raibh an measúnú suimitheach oiriúnach d'fhoghlaiméoirí uile na Gaeilge. Ag Céim a hAon den taighde seo, bhí na múinteoirí T1 agus T2 míshásta le bronnadh na marcanna agus treoir maidir leis an scrúdú deiridh, chomh maith leis an easpa aitheantais do scileanna cainte sa mheasúnú suimitheach. I gcásanna áirithe bhí foclaíocht an scrúdaithe deacair le tuiscint ag cuid de na scoláirí. Thuairiscigh múinteoirí go raibh neamhréir idir an tsonraíocht, na hoideolaíochtaí a d'úsáid siad chun í a chur i ngníomh agus an scrúdú suimitheach deiridh. D'iarr múinteoirí ag Céim a hAon den taighde breis soiléireachta agus teorach maidir leis an scrúdú suimitheach deiridh agus go ndéanfaí athbhreithniú ar an gcóras gradála do scoláirí T1 ach go háirithe. Thug múinteoirí le fios go raibh an scrúdú T1 míchothrom ar na scoláirí.

Srianta an Taighde

Bhí 12 scoil chás-staidéir páirteach sa taighde agus is éard atá sa tuairisc seo ná léargas ar a dtaithí siúd ar chur i bhfeidhm shonraíochtaí Gaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí agus ar na tuairimí atá acu ina leith. Is cur síos domhain saibhir atá sna torthaí a bhaineann le suíomhanna cás-staidéir ar leith ach ní

féidir a rá gurb amhlaidh atá an scéal i ngach scoil fud fad na tíre. Bhí trasnaí idir an taithí agus na tuairimí a bhí ag ceannairí agus ag múinteoirí i scoileanna cás-staidéir T1 agus scoileanna cás-staidéir T2 ar chuid de na téamaí. Roinn ceannairí scoile agus múinteoirí a gcuid taithí agus a gcuid tuairimí ar chur i bhfeidhm shonraíochtaí Gaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí agus iad ag an gcéad chéim de chur i bhfeidhm leagan Mheán Fómhair 2023 de na sonraíochtaí. Sa chaoi seo, tharraing siad ar an réamhthaithí a bhí acu ar chur i bhfeidhm an churaclaim idirdhealaithe a cuireadh ar fáil den chéad uair in 2017 chomh maith.

Conclúid

Tugann an tuairisc eatramhach seo léargas ar theagasc agus ar fhoghlaim na Gaeilge sa tSraith Shóisearach in 12 scoil chás-staidéir, sé iar-bhunscoil T1 agus sé iar-bhunscoil T2. Is léir ón taighde go bhfuil ceannairí scoile agus múinteoirí ag obair go díograiseach sa dá chomhthéacs scoile ionas go mbeidh eispéiris teagaisc agus foghlama ar ardchaighdeán ag scoláirí sa Ghaeilge. Tá réamhthéamaí ó 12 scoil chás-staidéir chomh maith leis na réamh-mholtaí a bhí ag ceannairí scoile agus ag múinteoirí curtha i láthair sa tuairisc seo. Tabharfaidh na chéad chéimeanna eile den taighde breis léargais ar theagasc agus ar fhoghlaim na Gaeilge agus ar an soláthar do na sonraíochtaí i gcomhthéacsanna T1 agus T2.

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Aguisín A

Sampla de na ceisteanna T1 agus T2 don Phríomhoide/Phríomhoide Tánaisteach

- Inis dom faoi do thaithíse agus do chuid tuairimí ar chur i bhfeidhm shonraíochtaí
- Ghaeilge na Sraithe Sóisearaí i do scoil? (soláthar idirdhealaithe T1 agus T2)
- Cad iad na tacaíochtaí is mó a éascaíonn/ a chabhraíonn le cur i bhfeidhm an tsoláthair agus na sonraíochtaí Gaeilge?
- An bhfuil constaicí ar leith ann do chur i bhfeidhm an tsoláthair agus na sonraíochtaí?
- Cad é an taithí atá agat mar phríomhoide/phríomhoide tánaisteach ar na hathruithe sa mheasúnú agus sa tuairisciú sa Ghaeilge sa tsraith shóisearach ó 2017 agus cad é an tionchar atá acu seo ar do scoil?
- An bhfreastalaíonn cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí ar na foghlaimoirí uile atá ag foghlaim na Gaeilge i do thuairimse?
- An bhfeiceann tú go bhfuil difríochtaí idir an cur i bhfeidhm T1/T2?
- Ar mhaith leat aon rud eile a rá faoi na riachtanais atá ag foghlaimoirí atá ag leanúint na sonraíochtaí T1/T2?
- An mbeadh moltaí ar leith agat/agaibh maidir leis an soláthar don Ghaeilge sa tSraith Shóisearach?

Aguisín B

Ceisteanna do na Grúpaí Fócais le Múinteoirí

Leanúnachas agus Aistriú – Bliain a haon

1. An bhfuil cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí ag tógáil ar an nGaeilge atá ag na scoláirí agus iad ag aistriú ón mbunscoil?

Pleanáil

2. Conas a phleanálann tú do cheachtanna Gaeilge - comhphleanáil, múinteoirí aonair?
3. Conas a úsáideann tú do shaoirse ghairmiúil (breithiúnas gairmiúil) mar mhúinteoir?

Cumas Cumarsáide (Sonraíocht T1/T2)

4. Tabhair samplaí de na gníomhaíochtaí/ tascanna cumarsáideacha a chuireann tú ar fáil d'fhoghlaimoirí le cumas cumarsáide a fhorbairt sa Ghaeilge?
5. An mbeadh moltaí agaibh maidir le scileanna idirghníomhaithe teanga na scoláirí a chur chun cinn?

Feasacht Teanga agus Chultúrtha (Sonraíocht T1/T2)

6. Tabhair samplaí de na gníomhaíochtaí a chuireann tú ar fáil/ a éascaíonn tú le feasacht teanga agus feasacht chultúrtha na bhfoghlaimoirí a fhorbairt sa rang? (Leid: feasacht chultúrtha - pobal na Gaeltachta, pobal na Gaeilge taobh amuigh den scoil, pobal na Gaeilge go hidirnáisiúnta)
7. An mbeadh moltaí agaibh maidir le feasacht teanga agus chultúrtha na scoláirí a chur chun cinn?

Féinfheasacht an Fhoghlaimora (Sonraíocht T1/T2)

8. Tabhair samplaí de na gníomhaíochtaí a chuireann tú ar fáil/ a éascaíonn tú le scileanna féinfheasachta na scoláirí mar fhoghlaimoirí teanga a fhorbairt? (Leid: straitéisí foghlama teanga, straitéisí machnaimh, straitéisí féinmheasúnaithe, an fhoghlaim fhéinriartha -tabhairt faoi deara/ féincheartú)?

9. An mbeadh moltaí agaibh le maidir le féinfheasacht foghlama na scoláirí a chur chun cinn?

Forbairt scileanna teanga ar bhonn comhtháite (Sonraíocht T1/T2)

10. Cad iad na scileanna teanga/ snáithe is mó ar a chuirtear béim sa rang? Cén fáth? (leid 5 scil - éisteacht, labhairt, léitheoireacht, scríbhneoireacht, idirghníomhú cainte)

Torthaí Foghlama

11. Cén leas a bhaineann sibh as na torthaí foghlama? An bhfuil na torthaí foghlama atá sna sonraíochtaí soiléir agus cabhrach don teagasc, foghlaim agus measúnú? Tabhair míniú agus samplaí le bhur dtoil.

Ról na litríochta

12. Conas a thacaíonn an litríocht le forbairt teanga na scoláirí? (Leid - Cad iad na téacsanna/ seánraí is éifeachtaí le tacú le forbairt scileanna teanga? An bhfuil líon agus cáilíocht na dtéacsanna oiriúnach dar libhse? Sonraíocht 2023 - Cad iad na téacsanna is mó a thaitníonn leis na scoláirí?).

Ionchuimsitheacht

13. Dar libhse, an dtacaíonn cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí le riachtanais teanga na scoláirí uile atá i do ranganna (leideanna - cainteoirí T1/ T2/ scoláirí a bhfuil riachtanais oideachais sa bhreis acu, scoláirí nach bhfuil Gaeilge/Béarla mar theanga bhaile acu)?

Measúnú

14. Cad é an taithí ata agaibh ar MRB1 (An Phunann Teanga), MRB 2 (Ag idirghníomhú trí Ghaeilge), agus cad é na tuairimí atá agaibh ina leith?
15. Cad a cheapann sibh faoin MRB a bheith in dhá bhliain éagsúla?
16. An mbeadh moltaí agaibh maidir leis an measúnú foirmitheach (MRB1 (An Phunann)/ MRB2 (an tasc idirghníomhaithe cainte /an Tasc measúnaithe)?
17. Conas a dhéanann tú measúnú ar scileanna labhartha/ scileanna idirghníomhaithe cainte na scoláirí sa Ghaeilge?
18. Cad é an taithí atá agaibh faoin bpróiseas a bhaineann leis an Athbhreithniú ar Fhoghlaim agus ar Mheasúnú Ábhair (AFMÁ)?

Tacaíochtaí & Soláthar

19. Cad iad na tacaíochtaí is úsáidí duitse mar mhúinteoir? (leid: Eiseamláirí d'obair na scoláirí ar shuíomh an CNCM/ Treoracha maidir le Measúnú ón CNCM/ Liosta na dtéacsanna don chéad bhliain (T1 agus T2), liosta na dtéacsanna don dara agus don tríú bliain (T1 agus T2), tacaíochtaí lasmuigh den scoil)
20. Cad iad na tacaí a mholfa go gcuirfí ar fáil do mhúinteoirí?

Tuairimí

21. Cad iad hathruithe is mó daoibhse ó cuireadh sonraíochtaí Gaeilge T1/T2 na sraithe sóisearaí ar fáil don Ghaeilge/ soláthar idirdhealaithe ar fáil don Ghaeilge sa tSraith Shóisearach? Luaigh pointí dearfacha nó aon dúshláin sa teagasc/foghlaim/measúnú.
22. An bhfuil an tsonraíocht T1 ag tacú leis na riachtanais teanga atá ag foghlaimeoirí i scoileanna T1/ cainteoirí dúchais Gaeilge? Tabhair míniú le do thoil.
23. An mbeadh moltaí ar leith agaibh maidir le cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí nó soláthar na sonraíochtaí i gcomhthéacs T1/T2 go háirithe?
24. Cad iad na difríochtaí is mó idir cur i bhfeidhm na sonraíochtaí T1/T2?
25. Ar mhaith libh aon rud eile a rá?

A Study and Continuing Review of the Implementation of Junior Cycle Irish Specifications (T1 & T2)

INTERIM REPORT
Phase One • Year: 2023-2024

Aisling Ní Dhiorbháin and Sarah O'Grady



SEALBHÚ
Lárionad Taighde DCU
um Fhoghlaim agus Teagasc
na Gaeilge

Reference:

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Note: Please note that this report is a translation of the original report which was written in Irish.

Acronyms

- SLAR: Subject Learning and Assessment Review
- NCCA: The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
- CBA: Classroom-Based Assessments
- JCPA: Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement
- T1: Language 1 (Gaeltacht schools and Irish-medium schools/units)
- T2: Language 2 (English-medium schools where Irish is taught as a second language)

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Nóta Buíochais

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Executive Summary

This interim report presents initial emerging themes from Phase One of a three-year study on the implementation of Junior Cycle Irish language Specifications (T1 & T2). Differentiated provision for the teaching and learning of Irish was introduced at Junior Cycle in 2017. A separate Irish language specification was provided for T2 schools (English-medium schools where Irish is taught as a second language), and for T1 schools (Gaeltacht schools and Irish-medium schools/units). This mixed methods, multi-dimensional study commissioned by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), follows on from the Early Enactment Review of Junior Cycle Irish T1 & T2 (Early Enactment Review) (Mac Gearailt & Ó Duibhir, 2023). This study primarily focuses on the September 2023 version of the Irish language Junior Cycle specifications (T1 & T2) which were updated in response to the Early Enactment Review. However due to the gradual nature of curriculum change some data collected refers to experiences and opinions regarding the 2017 specifications for Irish (T1 & T2). The study aims to capture interesting insights into all aspects of the specifications, allowing for the emergence of possible solutions to challenges met in the enactment of the specifications. Particular consideration is given to schools' experiences of the model of differentiation for Irish at Junior Cycle, as well as the changes in practice brought about by the 2015 Framework for Junior Cycle. The study will gain insights into the impact of changes that were introduced in response to the Early Enactment Review.

Phase One of the research explored school leaders and teachers' experiences and opinions regarding the implementation of the Irish language specifications (T1 & T2) in the areas of teaching, learning and assessment. It also investigated participants' experiences of supports available in relation

to the enactment and provision for the specifications and obstacles that may exist. Data were gathered from interviews with school leaders (n=18) and focus groups with teachers (n=42) in 12 case-study schools nationally. The researchers used purposive sampling to ensure that schools included a range of language learners and a range of learning contexts at post-primary level. Six T1 schools and six T2 schools participated in the research. T1 case-study schools included three Gaeltacht schools, two Gaelcholáiste outside the Gaeltacht and a post-primary school with an Irish-medium strand where some subjects were taught through Irish. Purposive sampling was important to ensure that the research would capture insights into the differentiated provision in both T1 and T2 school contexts. Interviews with school leaders were analysed using thematic analysis and template analysis was used to analyse teacher focus groups.

Both strengths and challenges emerged regarding the implementation of the Irish language specifications (T1 & T2) and provision for the specifications. Initial themes presented in this report will be explored in greater depth and breadth over the course of this three-year study. It is of note that all school leaders highly praised the dedication and professionalism of Irish teachers in implementing the specifications. They recognised teachers as the primary source of support in enacting the specifications. Emerging themes relating to positive elements of the enactment of the specifications and provision related to: (i) teacher planning and collaboration, (ii) teaching and learning, (iii) use of texts, and (iv) supports for Irish.

Irish teachers were found to plan collaboratively and to share resources regularly with teachers both inside and outside of school. Teachers also reported that they regularly engaged in professional conversations and most teachers were of the opinion that Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meetings were worthwhile in terms of supporting professional judgements. A wide range of methodologies were used by teachers to support students' learning of Irish.

There are three strands in the specifications: (i) communicative competence, (ii) language and cultural awareness, and (iii) learner self-awareness. Teachers in T2 schools primarily focused on the strand communicative competence. Teachers in T1 schools focused on each of the three strands, placing a greater emphasis on the development of communicative competence and language and cultural awareness. Teachers self-reported samples of creativity and innovation in teaching and learning. A particular focus was placed on oral language tasks to support the use of Irish in all schools, particularly in first year. The majority of teachers drew on prescribed and recommended texts to actively engage students in using Irish and to support the development of students' language and literacy skills. Texts in a variety of genres were used to support teaching and learning of Irish and teachers reported that gearrscannáin in particular were popular with students. Samples of classroom practice which show learner-centred and communicative pedagogies are reported in the body of the report - see Section Four and Section Five.

Many teachers were satisfied with the range of recommended (1st year) and prescribed texts (2nd & 3rd year). Following the Early Enactment Review, amendments to the specifications in September 2023 included a reduction in the volume of recommended and prescribed texts; this amendment will be monitored over the duration of the study. While some teachers were satisfied with the reduction in the volume of texts to be studied by students at Junior Cycle, others were of the opinion that a further reduction in the volume of recommended and prescribed texts is warranted.

It emerged that both in-school and out-of-school supports helped promote the teaching and learning of Irish and the use of Irish in schools. Links with

Gaeltacht regions were seen as beneficial for students living outside the Gaeltacht. In-school events (e.g. Seachtain na Gaeilge, events through Irish) promoted language use and positive attitudes towards Irish. T1 schools adopted a whole school approach to the use of Irish and these schools had stronger links with the language community outside of school compared with T2 schools. The growing range of resources for Irish (e.g. resources from COGG, TG4) was viewed positively, as well as support schemes for Irish (e.g. Gaelbhreach, Gaeilge 24, supports related to the Gaeltacht recognition scheme), in terms of supporting the teaching and learning of Irish.

Mixed views were expressed regarding Classroom-based assessments (CBAs). As a result of amendments to assessment influenced by the Covid-19 pandemic, very few schools had experience of CBA 1: The Language Portfolio. While some participants felt CBA 2: The Communicative Task was worthwhile as it offered students a sense of achievement in having completed a task, others reported that CBA 2 was a source of stress for students and that it did not promote interactive oral language skills. Many participants suggested that summative marks should be awarded for CBAs. All participants (teachers and school leaders), were strongly of the opinion that CBA 2 should not be in place of an oral Irish summative exam at Junior Cycle. A re-imagined CBA2: Interacting through Irish was introduced in September 2023 in response to recommendations from the Early Enactment Review (Mac Gearailt & Ó Duibhir, 2023). Participants' experiences of the enactment of the re-imagined CBA 2: Interacting through Irish will be explored in further phases of this study.

Challenges emerged with regard to the enactment of the specifications and provision for Irish at Junior Cycle in terms of: (i) oral Irish, (ii) the final summative exam, (iii) inclusive education, (iv) supports for teaching and learning, and (v) transition points. Challenges emerging at Phase One may also be considered as opportunities to further support the teaching and learning of Irish at Junior Cycle.

A main emerging theme at this phase of the research study was participants' concern about the lack of recognition in the form of summative marks for oral Irish at Junior Cycle. It was found that this negatively impacted on classroom

practice. All participants strongly recommended that an oral Irish exam be introduced at Junior Cycle to create space to focus on oral language in class, to motivate students to speak Irish and to support the use of Irish as a living language. Participants indicated that an oral Irish exam would provide opportunities for a diversity of learners to experience success in their learning and that summative assessment of oral language skills could support students in preparing for the oral language exam at Senior Cycle. Dissatisfaction was expressed regarding the final summative exam in all case-study schools. In the view of participants, the final summative exam is not suitable for all students due to the predominant focus on reading and writing skills in Irish. Participants in T1 schools in particular, were extremely concerned about the drop in higher grades for students since the introduction of the differentiated assessment. This drop in grades may be due to the separate assessments for T1 and T2 students, broader grade bands at Junior Cycle and the final examination itself. Participants in T1 schools reported that students were now at a disadvantage due to the differentiated assessment and that this should be reviewed.

It emerged that further supports are needed for students with additional educational needs in T1 and T2 schools. Some participants in T2 schools suggested the introduction of a foundation level course would cater for students with different levels of ability in Irish. Provision for newcomer students in T1 emerged as an area where students and schools need more supports. Some participants also highlighted the gap in provision for newcomer students in T2 schools as these students do not have an opportunity to learn Irish. The complexity of exemptions from Irish arose as an issue in T2 schools which could be further explored in another study.

Although teachers drew on a wide range of resources and supports, they indicated that further supports and professional development would be welcomed. T1 schools experienced difficulty in accessing texts on the list of recommended and prescribed texts and in accessing texts in the local dialect. The lists of texts for Junior Cycle Irish T1 and T2 were revised during the school year 2023/2024 and amended lists were provided (Circular 0086/2024). Views related to the revised lists of texts will be further monitored over the course of this study.

Challenges were highlighted concerning the transition from primary school to post-primary school in case-study schools. This was linked with students' varying levels of competency in Irish in first year as well as the change from the Primary Language Curriculum which places a strong emphasis on oral language to the post-primary specification which places greater emphasis on reading and writing in Irish. Covid-19 was also cited as a factor that had negatively impacted on students' confidence to speak Irish. Participants in T2 schools in particular indicated that a gap was emerging between Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle, and some schools had extra supports in place in Senior Cycle to support students. For the most part, the perceived gap between Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle was linked to the lesser emphasis placed on oral Irish at Junior Cycle.

Initial emerging themes presented at Phase One of this study are based on data collected from 12 case-study schools and they are not generalisable to all schools nationwide. Further phases of the study will continue to explore the enactment of the Junior Cycle Irish language specifications (T1 & T2) as well as amendments made to the specifications in September 2023 from the viewpoint of a wider range of participants. It is envisaged that initial themes will be further explored over the course of the study and that other themes will emerge. Phase Two of the study will include a nationwide survey with teachers and focus groups with students in case-study schools. Parents/Guardians and a broad range of stakeholders will participate in Phase Three of the study.

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Section One: Introduction

A model of differentiated provision was provided for the teaching and learning of Irish at Junior Cycle in 2017. A distinction was made between the Irish specifications for T2 schools (namely English-medium schools where Irish is taught as a second language) and for T1 schools (Gaeltacht schools and Irish-medium schools/units) at Junior Cycle level. In September 2023, building on what was presented in an *Early enactment review of Junior Cycle Irish T1 and T2* (Mac Gearailt & Ó Duibhir, 2023), the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) commissioned a group of researchers from SEALBHÚ: DCU Research Centre for the Learning and Teaching of Irish to undertake a study and continuing review of the implementation of the Irish language specifications. The research data collected at Phase One of the research is presented in this interim report. It is important to note that the themes reported in this interim report represent perspectives captured at the start of this ongoing study. The research project will take place over a period of three years. The longitudinal design of the research will enable further engagement with various stakeholders in year 2 and year 3 and further insights into the implementation of the specifications from a range of experiences and perspectives.

The aim of the research is to continue the study and review of the implementation of Junior Cycle Irish Specifications (T1 & T2) in post-primary schools in the area of teaching, learning and assessment. In particular, the research focuses on the enactment of the September 2023 version of the specifications, and follows a cohort of students who began First Year in 2023-2024. However, due to the gradual nature of curriculum change some data collected will refer to experiences and opinions regarding the 2017

T1 and T2 specifications for Irish. As set out in the research for tender, the study will provide interesting insights into all aspects of the specifications, allowing for the natural emergence with participants of possible solutions to challenges met in the enactment of the specifications (NCCA Tender, p.21). Particular consideration will be given to schools' experiences of the model of differentiation for Irish at Junior Cycle, as well as the changes in practice brought about by the 2015 Junior Cycle Framework.

The main questions that will guide the research over the course of the three years are:

1. *What are school leaders, teachers and students' experiences of the implementation of the Junior Cycle Irish language specifications (T1 & T2) in the areas of teaching, learning and assessment, and what are their opinions regarding this?*
2. *What are stakeholders' experiences of the supports available in relation to the implementation of and provision for the specifications, and what obstacles if any exist?*
3. *Does the implementation of the specifications align with the rationale and aims of the updated specifications for Junior Cycle Irish (T1 & T2), and the Framework for Junior Cycle (2015) more broadly?*

The research questions respond directly to the criteria laid down by the NCCA in the call for tenders. There will be three phases in this research:

- **Phase One 2023/2024:** Focus groups/interviews with post-primary Irish teachers and school leaders in case study schools.
- **Phase Two 2024/2025:** National online survey for post-primary Irish teachers and focus groups with students in case study schools.
- **Phase Three 2025/2026:** Focus groups with students in case study schools, focus groups/interviews with teachers and other school professionals in case study schools, anonymous survey with parents/guardians in case study schools and invited written submissions from stakeholders.



A research report will be provided to the NCCA annually at the end of each phase. It is hoped, through the research process, that the research data collected will benefit the implementation and provision of Junior Cycle Irish Specifications. It is stated in the invitation to tender that the findings arising from this research should help the NCCA to make decisions on curriculum and assessment matters, and that the research may influence educational policies more broadly.

This is the first interim report. The qualitative data collected at Phase One of the research from focus groups with teachers and interviews with school leaders in 12 case study schools is presented. This information primarily focuses on main questions one and two, as it provides insights into teachers' experiences and views regarding the implementation of Junior Cycle Irish (T1 & T2) specifications. It also provides an insight into the experiences of school

leaders in implementing the specifications, as well as their experiences and views regarding the supports available for their provision and the obstacles to implementation.

12 case study schools participated in the research at Phase One. Participants from six T1 and six T2 schools participated in the research. 17 deputy principals/principals and one Irish-language coordinator were interviewed (N=18) and 42 teachers took part in focus groups. The focus was on a sample of T1 schools and a sample of T2 schools to adequately examine participants' experiences of differentiated provision.

There are five parts in this report. The first section is an introduction. Section Two looks at the historical timeline of the specifications, the content of the specifications themselves and recent research into the implementation of the T1 and T2 specifications. The methodology of the research is described in Section Three. The findings from the interviews with school leaders and focus groups with teachers in case study schools are presented in Section Four and the results are discussed and summarised. Emerging themes from Phase One of the research are summarised in Section Five, along with initial recommendations of school leaders and teachers, and the next steps in the Continuing Review are explained.

Section Two: Research Context

This section describes the background and context of the Specifications for Junior Cycle Irish. This is important to place the research in context and in light of other research already carried out on the subject. The historical background to the T1 and T2 specifications are looked at in the context of the implementation of the Junior Cycle Framework. Information on the content of the specifications themselves is then presented. This is followed by exploring the main findings from the early enactment review of Junior Cycle Irish T1 and T2 and other research findings on the subject to date.

Background and Context of Junior Cycle Irish Specifications

The first iteration of the Framework for Junior Cycle was announced in October 2012 by the Minister of Education Ruairí Quinn (The Department of Education and Skills, 2012). It is based on the NCCA's advice to the Department as set out in *Towards a Framework for Junior Cycle* (November 2011) and on research into education for our young people aged 12 to 15 / 16 years. It was recommended that students should be given other recognition that is not only based on summative exam results (NCCA, 2011). The Framework drew on a longitudinal national study of student learning at Junior Cycle (Smyth, 2009), as well as a review of international practice and a period of consultation by the NCCA (NCCA, 2010; NCCA, 2011). The Framework was to support transitions from primary school and preparation for Senior Cycle, whilst recognising the diverse and democratic needs of students at this particular stage. It was envisaged that the Framework would be more

student centred than the previous Junior Certificate and that it would present opportunities for the assessment of a broader range of knowledge, skills, understanding and values through a dualistic approach to assessment, both formative and summative. It highlighted the need to move away from the predominant focus of a terminal, summative exam which was dominating teaching and learning.

Over the next three years, the enactment of the Framework from policy to practice met with many challenges. Assessment dominated the agenda but the importance of resources and teacher professional development were also of concern. Arising from the Travers Report (2015), the *Framework for Junior Cycle* was published in October 2015 (Department of Education and Skills, 2015). The Framework and specifications are underpinned by learning outcomes. Learning Outcomes are defined as “statements in curriculum specifications to describe the knowledge, understanding, skills and values students should be able to demonstrate after a period of learning” (Department of Education and Skills, 2015, p.12). Irish language specifications T1 and T2 were developed within the tumultuous context of the Framework for Junior Cycle.

Between March and May 2015, a background paper and guidance document on the review of Junior Cycle Irish was submitted for consultation (NCCA, 2013; NCCA 2015a; NCCA, 2015b). A recommendation emerged from educational and Irish language stakeholders that differentiation should be made in the curriculum between learners learning Irish in T1 and T2 schools (NCCA, 2015b). A differentiated T1 and T2 language curriculum was implemented in junior classes in primary school in 2015 and in middle and senior classes in 2019. It was recommended that a differentiated curriculum in post-primary

schools would enhance students' learning and continuity in their journey of learning from primary to post-primary.

In addition to incorporating changes brought about by Junior Cycle Framework, Irish teachers also faced the challenge of implementing a differentiated curriculum for Irish for the first time at lower secondary level. Differentiated provision for Irish was made available at Junior Cycle for the first time in 2017. Irish language specifications were provided to T1 and T2 schools (Department of Education and Skills, 2017a; 2017b). Implementation of the T1 and T2 specifications began at a time when there were many changes occurring at post-primary level and industrial dispute among teachers. These difficulties resulted in delays in the provision of professional development which may have adversely affected teachers' experiences in implementing the specifications. It was intended that Irish at Junior Cycle would be reviewed following the completion of a three-year cycle by a cohort of students in September 2020. However, these plans were interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic, as schools were closed for long periods and the State examinations were cancelled except for early school leavers and adult learners.

Draft specifications for the Leaving Certificate were published in February 2021, that were based on the differentiated provision at Junior Cycle, and aimed to establish continuity in learning. Following the public consultation, it was recommended to seek and provide information on the implementation of Junior Cycle Irish specifications as a first step which would assist stakeholders in making decisions about curriculum change at Senior Cycle (NCCA 2023a). Two members of SEALBHÚ (Mac Gearailt & Ó Duibhir, 2023) were commissioned by the NCCA to undertake an *Early enactment review of Junior Cycle Irish T1 and T2*. The main findings that emerged from the first review are discussed later in this section. Amendments were made to the specifications arising from the findings of the early review.

This research focuses on the implementation of Junior Cycle Irish specifications T1 and T2 (Department of Education 2023a, 2023b) which were made available in September 2023. The aims and content of the specifications are now considered.

Aims and Content of the T1 and T2 Irish Language Specifications

The Junior Cycle Irish specifications are linked to key skills in the Framework for Junior Cycle. Eight key skills are identified, namely:

1. *Being creative*
2. *Being numerate*
3. *Being literate*
4. *Communication*
5. *Managing knowledge and thinking*
6. *Managing myself*
7. *Staying healthy*
8. *Working with others*

The elements of the key skills and examples of student learning activity that link with the key skills are reflected in the Irish language specifications (T1 & T2).

Specification for Junior Cycle Irish (T1 Schools)

The T1 specification is aimed at native Irish speakers and Irish language learners in Gaeltacht schools, in Irish-medium schools (Gaelcholáistí) and in Irish-medium units. T1 students use Irish as a communicative language in school on a daily basis, and may use Irish as a home language and/or in the community. T1 students have a higher level of contact with Irish compared to their peers who attend T2 schools, and who usually have limited contact with the language. According to the T1 specification, it is necessary to provide a specific specification for T1 students who would have more developed

productive and receptive skills because of their immediate language environment. 'This specification aims to develop, enrich and enhance the full range of students' language skills.' (Department of Education, 2023a, p. 3). The emphasis of the T1 specification is on accurate and competent use of the language and on the internalisation of the living culture of Irish. Particular importance is placed on the language needs of native speakers and it is recommended that schools seeking recognition as a Gaeltacht school under *the Policy on Gaeltacht Education 2017-2022* (Department of Education and Skills, 2016) should undertake the T1 specifications.

The learning outcomes associated with the three strands of the specification (Communicative Competence, Language and Cultural Awareness and Learner's Self-Awareness) are broadly aligned with level B2 descriptors, that is an independent language user, of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR, Council of Europe 2001, 2018). The specification recognises that learners' language skills are not necessarily at equal levels across the language skills.

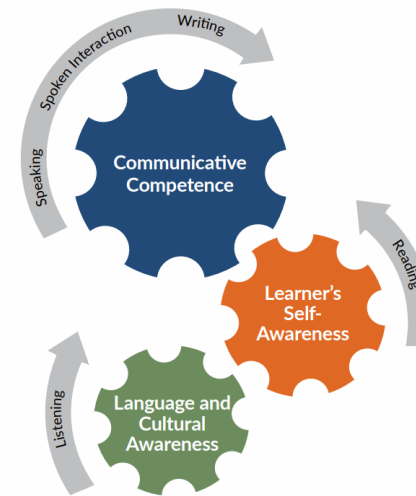
Specification for Junior Cycle Irish (T2 Schools)

Learners in T2 schools rely primarily on school for language input in Irish and for opportunities to use the language. The T2 specification emphasises creation of language opportunities, making of connections with a language community and the discovery of accurate and authentic exemplars of the language. In the case of T2 schools, the learning outcomes associated with the three strands (Communicative Competence, Language and Cultural Awareness and Learner's Self-Awareness) are consistent with the descriptors found in the A2-B1 bands (from basic user to independent language user) of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR, Council of Europe 2001, 2018).

Overview of the T1 and T2 Specifications

Both specifications consist of three integrated strands: Communicative Competence, Language and Cultural Awareness and Learner Self-awareness as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Strands of the Irish Specifications T1 and T2 (p. 12)



It is expected that students will spend a minimum of 240 hours participation timetabled over the three years of Junior Cycle. Communicative competence encompasses the five language skills: listening, reading, spoken production, spoken interaction and writing. Language skills are integrated and communicative competence supports the development of the other two strands. The specifications place particular emphasis on the communicative use of the language with users in the students' language community.

There are six key elements guiding teaching and learning in the T1 and T2 specifications as shown in Table A.

Table A: Elements that guide the teaching and learning of the specifications

Communicative approach	Emphasis is placed on the communicative use of language and interaction in class tasks.
The Importance of Confidence	Particular emphasis is placed on developing the student's confidence.
Integrated Approach	The five language skills are developed in an integrated manner.
Language of the Classroom	Irish is the language of communication in the classroom.
Opportunities for language use	Opportunities for language output in different forms are essential for students.
Task-based activities	Students develop language skills by participating in interactive communicative language tasks.

The Importance of Literature

The T1 and T2 specifications emphasise the use of literature. It is intended that literature will support the development of language and literacy, critical and creative skills, cultural understandings and personal development. The literary texts cover a range of genres – films, short stories, songs, plays, poems, novels etc. It is recommended that students are involved in the selection of texts and a list of suggested texts is provided along with a list of compulsory genres. There is a list of recommended texts for first year and a further list of prescribed texts for second and third years of Junior Cycle. The T1 and T2 specifications contain the following definition of text: *“All products of language use oral, written, visual, or multi-modal can be described as texts. Multimodal texts combine language with other systems for communication,*

such as print text, visual images, sound and the spoken word.” (Department of Education, 2023a, p. 20; 2023b, p. 19). Schools can choose literature from a list of recommended texts that best suit the needs of students and the context in which they are learning. There is a separate list for T1 and T2 schools. T1 schools can choose oral/local literature suited to the interests of students and the local area. The NCCA welcomed expressions of interest from T1 and T2 post-primary teachers of Irish who wished to participate in the review of Junior Cycle T1 and T2 literature lists. This work started in September 2023.

Classroom-Based Assessments and the Assessment Task

Specifications are derived from the Junior Cycle Framework which sets out a vision for formative and summative assessments at Junior Cycle. Two Classroom-Based Assessments (CBAs) are part of the implementation of the specifications. CBA 1 is a Language Portfolio. Students are asked to select three pieces of work. One piece of audio or video must be selected and can include oral/local literature. It is recommended that literature be used as a stimulus for one of the portfolio pieces. The student describes the rationale for selecting the three pieces.

CBA 2 is called ‘Interacting through Irish’. Students prepare a spoken piece about a topic they are interested in or by composing and presenting a creative piece. The student then has a conversation with the teacher and fellow students (T1 schools only) about the topic or creative piece.

Teachers provide formative feedback to students on the CBA tasks and teachers have an opportunity to collaborate and evaluate students’ work at Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) meetings. The teacher uses Features of Quality to form a judgement on the quality of the student’s work and the SLAR meeting supports teachers in finding insights and common understanding about the standard of the Features of Quality for each descriptor. There are four achievement level descriptors: *Exceptional*, *Above expectations*, *In line with expectations*, and *Yet to Meet Expectations*. Examples

of CBA 1: The Language Portfolio and CBA 2: Interacting through Irish are collected and discussed at SLAR meetings. The descriptor awarded to the student is shared with parents/guardians and through the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA).

Students undertake an Assessment Task upon completion of the Classroom-Based Assessments. The assessment task provides students with an opportunity to reflect on CBA 2 and it is intended that the assessment task will be submitted to the State Examinations Commission for marking. 10 % of the final marks would be awarded for the assessment task. The State Examinations Commission is responsible for providing the final examination equating to 90 % of marks. Higher Level and Ordinary Level examinations are provided in T1 and T2 school contexts. The early review of the enactment of T1 and T2 specifications will be discussed in the next section.

Early Review of the Enactment of T1 and T2 Specifications

Data from the early review (Mac Gearailt & Ó Duibhir, 2023) was collected between February and June 2022. Data were collected from an online survey with teachers (N=911); focus groups with students (N=94); focus groups with teachers (N=31) and written submissions from stakeholders. The teachers taking part in the survey were teaching in different contexts that included T2 schools (87 % of respondents), Gaelcholáistí (11 % of respondents), Gaeltacht schools (4 % of respondents) and Irish-medium units (1 %). Strengths and challenges arose regarding the enactment of the specifications.

Overall teachers expressed dissatisfaction with the specifications in T1 and T2 school contexts in the survey. Some participants were complimentary about certain aspects of the specifications, such as the literature, CBA tasks, reflection, self-directed learning and the use of film in first year. The challenges that emerged included challenges at transition points with students moving from primary to post-primary and from Junior Cycle to Senior Cycle. Continuity from primary to post-primary created difficulty due to the shift of emphasis from

a communicative curriculum in primary school to a post-primary curriculum with a greater emphasis on reading and writing. It was expressed that there was too much emphasis on literature and that the amount of literature to be covered was too heavy and detracted from students' opportunities to speak the language. There were also challenges in accessing texts and the suitability of some of the texts that required a very high standard of Irish from the students. The lack of emphasis on spoken interaction skills in assessment was identified as a challenge. While it was intended that CBA 2 would assess spoken interaction skills, in some cases, extracts of spoken Irish were rote-learned and translated from English into Irish. It was claimed that the lack of emphasis on oral interaction skills in the summative assessment at Junior Cycle was out of sync with the Leaving Certificate assessment in Irish, in which 40 % of marks are awarded for the oral examination since 2012. Prior to the implementation of the specifications, approximately 40 % of schools were providing an optional oral examination in the Junior Cycle in 2016. Teachers were unhappy with the guidance on the final examination. A sample paper was not provided until Autumn of the 3rd year and only one sample paper was available for Higher and Ordinary levels. Teachers were of the opinion that in some cases the learning outcomes were difficult to understand. The authors of the report stated that caution should be exercised in drawing conclusions from the findings as students had not completed a full cycle at the time and the learning and teaching conditions had been disrupted due to the pandemic.

Arising from the *Early enactment review of Junior Cycle Irish T1 and T2*, (Mac Gearailt & Ó Duibhir, 2023) the Junior Cycle Irish T1 and T2 specifications and assessment arrangements for classroom-based assessments 1 and 2 were amended in September 2023 (Circular 0015/2023, Department of Education, March 2023). The amendments concerned the student cohorts 2022/25 and 2023/26. Responding to the early review and in order to give students more opportunities to develop oral and spoken interactions skills in Irish, the amount of literature to be covered was reduced. The circular stated that a full review of the lists of Junior Cycle Irish texts would be undertaken in 2023/2024. The amendments to the specifications and assessment arrangements set out in the circular for the cohort of students 2023-2026 are illustrated in Table B.

Table B: The main changes for the cohort of students 2023-2026 (incoming first years) T1 and T2 (Circular 0015/2023).

- **Reduction in minimum volume of literary texts recommended for first year T2 Literature lists Junior Cycle Gaeilge (curriculumonline.ie)**
- **Reduction in minimum volume of literary texts prescribed for- second and third year T1 and T2**
- **Amendments to the range of genres for second and third year T1**
- **Amendments to the range of genres for first, second and third year T2**
- **CBA 1 takes place in second year**
- **Reimagined CBA2 in revised assessment guidelines T1 and T2.**

Amendments were made to the assessment guidelines for CBA 1 & CBA 2 in September 2023 for T1 and T2 schools. Additional support material was provided for CBA2 (NCCA, 2023b; 2023c).

The minimum amount of literature for the second and third years is shown in Table C (Circular 0015/2023).

Table C: Minimum Literature requirements for second year and third year

T1	T2
One complete novel	One complete novel - Higher Level only
One complete play	Two short films or one complete play
Two short films	Four poems/songs
Five poems/songs	One short story
Two short stories	
Five local/oral texts	

In accordance with Circular 0015/2023, the follow-up review of the implementation of the specifications in this research, is important to monitor and evaluate the amendments as well as to investigate the pedagogies implemented by teachers to enact the learning outcomes of the specifications. It was stated that the focus of this research would be on all learners learning Irish and would investigate practical ways in which students' competence and confidence in speaking and

interacting with others in Irish is developed during the three years at Junior Cycle. This research focuses mainly on the updated T1 and T2 specifications September 2023 and related guidance. Other relevant research is now explored.

Other Relevant Research

Longitudinal research on the implementation of the Junior Cycle Framework undertaken by researchers at the University of Limerick is also of interest to this research. The third interim report (McGarr et al., 2024) shows that Irish teachers, Mathematics teachers and Science teachers are more negative about the Junior Cycle Framework than teachers teaching other subjects. It was noted that teachers of Irish had a lower level of satisfaction with their job and were more negative about the content of the specifications than most teachers teaching other subjects.

Barnes et al. (2024) analysed data from the longitudinal study "Growing Up in Ireland" to investigate students' attitudes towards learning Irish. The analysis, based on data from over 7,000 students, shows that students attending T1 schools had more positive attitudes towards the language compared with students in T2 schools. The analysis also showed that students' attitudes towards Irish remain relatively stable from primary to post-primary. Pedagogies that are student centred and positive interactions with teachers are associated with more positive attitudes towards learning Irish. Barnes et al. (2024) highlight the need to optimise enjoyment and minimise challenges to improve student motivation to learn Irish. The role of parents was also acknowledged in this study as well as the wider factors that impact on Irish. The role of Irish as part of a multilingual repertoire and advantages for intercultural understanding were also highlighted.

Conclusion

This section described the historical background to the T1 and T2 specifications, research to date and the rationale and content of the specifications themselves. The next section looks at the methodology of the research.

Section Three: Research Methodology

This section describes the methodology of the research. The design of the research and the steps taken to complete Phase One of the research are explained. An account will be taken of the process of analysis applied to the qualitative data at Phase One of the research and information is given about the participating case study schools.

Research Design

This study is mixed methods multi-dimensional research. A range of quantitative and qualitative research tools will be used to answer the research questions over the three years of the study. Data presented at Phase One is initial data from 12 schools and should be considered in that context. Using this design, the research has the potential to provide information about students, teachers and other school professionals' experiences of the enactment of the Junior Cycle Irish specifications (T1 and T2). This research will provide insights into the experiences of stakeholders of the supports available in relation to the provision and implementation of the specifications, and what barriers, if any, exist to its implementation. This research will also provide insights into how the enactment of the specifications reflects the rationale and aims for the updated version of the Irish specifications (T1 & T2) at Junior Cycle and the Framework for Junior Cycle (2015) more broadly.

Phase One focused on main questions one and two, these were:

1. *What are school leaders, teachers and students' experiences of the implementation of the Junior Cycle Irish language specifications (T1 & T2) in the areas of teaching, learning and assessment and what are their opinions regarding this?*
2. *What are stakeholders' experiences of the supports available in relation to the implementation of and provision for the specifications, and what obstacles if any exist?*

Phase Two will explore students' experiences and opinions regarding Year One (2023-2024) and Year Two (2024-2025) of the implementation of the updated specifications in case study schools. Students will participate in Phase Three and will share their experiences and opinions of Year Three (2025-2026) as they progress towards completing their Junior Cycle. The longitudinal design of the research will enable engagement with a wide range of stakeholders over the three year period, for example teachers, students, school personnel, parents/guardians, educational and Irish language organisations. It is important to note that initial themes presented in this interim report may be further explored from a variety of perspectives over the three years of this study. The main research questions respond to the criteria set out by the NCCA in the call for tenders. This section describes the methodology of the research at Phase One. The data were collected from semi-structured interviews with school leaders and focus groups with teachers in six T1 and six T2 case study schools.

Recruitment of Case Study Schools and Sampling

The research team received ethical approval from the Ethics Committee of Dublin City University to undertake the research in January 2024. An invitation to express interest in the research was sent by email from SEALBHÚ to all post-primary schools using the publicly available data on the Department of Education website (N=735). 33 schools expressed an interest in participating in the research. The researchers used purposive sampling (Maxwell, 2009; Teddlie & Yu, 2007) to ensure that schools included a range of language learners and a range of learning contexts at post-primary level. According to Teddlie & Yu (2007, p. 83) 'a purposive sample is typically designed to pick a small number of cases that will yield the most information about a particular phenomenon'. The case study methodology was very suitable for this research.

A case study focuses on a specific case situated in a specific context and often includes rich descriptions and small details (Yin, 2009). A case study can be effective in shedding light on people's perspectives of a given situation (Cohen et al., 2018). This research used was a multiple case study design (Yin, 2009). Each school acted as a case in itself and the researchers analysed each case study school as a single case, and then analysed all the T1 schools together and all the T2 schools together. A comparison was finally made between the T1 case study schools and the T2 case study schools.

Research participants

12 schools were selected to be case study schools, six T1 schools and six T2 schools participated in the research. The case study schools were selected to reflect the experiences of different schools of the implementation of the specifications. Schools in every province in Ireland participated in the research.

In relation to T1 case study schools, three Gaeltacht schools, two Gaelcholáiste and an English-medium post-primary school with an Irish-medium stream participated in the research. In the Irish-medium stream, some

subjects were taught through Irish. The research involved a range of schools representing different school types for example – small, large, single-sex, mixed, DEIS, rural, urban and fee-paying.

Qualitative data were gathered from semi-structured interviews with principals and deputy principals, as well as the coordinator of Irish in one school (N=18) and qualitative data were gathered from focus groups with Irish teachers in each case study school (N=42). Nine T1 and Nine T2 school leaders and 23 T1 and 19 T2 teachers participated in the research.

Written permission was sought from all principals and the Chairperson of the Board of Management in each of the participating schools for them to participate in the research over a three-year period. Teachers had the option of taking part or not taking part in this phase of research. Personal names are not used in this report to protect the confidentiality of participants. Information on the types of T1 school (Gaeltacht School, Gaelcholáiste or Irish-medium Stream) is provided to add to the richness of the research and to the validity of the analysis.

Data were collected between April and May 2024 and from one school in September 2024. All interviews and focus groups took place on the school premises except for two interviews with leaders and one focus group with teachers who requested an online interview. Interviews and focus groups were audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed. The focus groups were held with teachers and the T1 school leaders through Irish and the leaders in the T2 schools were interviewed in English. The questions from the interviews with school leaders and the focus groups with teachers are available in Appendices A and B. Table D shows the number of participants who participated in the research from the case study schools and the data collected from them. The analysis of data is then described.

Table D: Case Study Schools and Research Data

Schools	Interviews with School Leaders	Focus Group with Teachers
T1 School A: Gaelcholáiste	Principal & Deputy Principal	N=7
T1 School B: Gaeltacht School	Principal	N=2
T1 School C: Gaelcholáiste	Principal	N=3
T1 School D: Gaeltacht School	Principal & Deputy Principal	N=4
T1 School E: Gaeltacht School	Principal & Deputy Principal	N= 4
T1 School F: Irish-medium school	Deputy Principal	N=3
T2 School A	Principal	N= 4
T2 School B	Principal	N=5
T2 School C	Principal	N=3
T2 School D	Principal, Deputy Principal & Irish Language Coordinator	N=2
T2 School E	Principal	N=3
T2 School F	Principal & Deputy Principal	N=2
Total Number	18	42

Analysis of the Research Data

Two methods of analysis were applied in this research. The semi-structured interviews with school leaders were analysed on a thematic basis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It followed six steps, i.e. (i) reading and re-reading the data; (ii)

designing a code from the emerging points; (iii) categorising codes as themes; (iv) reviewing themes; (v) determining the importance of themes and; (vi) reporting on the results. An inductive analysis was applied to the data from the interviews with the school leaders.

Template analysis (King, 2012) was used to analyse the data from the focus groups. This type of analysis is appropriate when the researchers have pre-identified themes that are of particular importance to them and that they would like to explore. The researchers were responsible for responding to the criteria laid down in the request for tender. Therefore, the researchers designed a codebook (Crabtree & Millar, 1999; King, 2012) as a template. Deductive analysis was implemented using the template, as well as an inductive analysis of the emerging themes; amendments were made to the template during the analysis. Template analysis is a structured analysis that frames the analysis from the outset but is also flexible to respond to emerging themes. As recommended by King (2012), the researchers independently coded the data and then critically compared each other's coding to strengthen the validity of the analysis.

Conclusion

This section described the methodology of the research study. The next section looks at the results of the research.

Section Four: Emerging Themes

Introduction

Initial findings from Phase One of the research are presented in this section. There are four sets of data: (i) data from T1 school leaders, (ii) data from T1 teachers, (iii) data from T2 school leaders and (iv) data from T2 teachers. The data gathered from the T1 schools are presented in Part One and the data from the T2 schools are presented in Part Two. An English Translation has been provided for quotations in Irish.

4.1 Data from the T1 Case Study Schools

Part One: T1 School Leaders

This part of the report focuses on the experience of School Leaders in T1 post-primary schools on the implementation of the T1 specification and their views regarding this. The leaders' experience of the supports and obstacles to implementation of the specification and its provision will then be considered, as well as the recommendations they made during the interviews. Finally, this section of the report involving school leaders in six case study schools (N= 9) on the implementation of the specification in T1 school contexts is summarised.

Experiences and Views of T1 School Leaders

While the majority of leaders were positive about the differentiated curriculum in principle, it was clear that there were difficulties with the implementation of the T1 specification in almost all case study schools. According to school leaders, one of the main strengths of the concept of differentiated provision was the language enrichment and language development of students in T1 schools who could build on the language skills they had developed from home and/or from school, in principle.

- *Anois, caithfidh mé a rá, i bprionsabal go n- aontálm leis. Is maith liom go mbeadh curaclam difriúil ann dos na scoileanna Gaeltachta agus na Gaelcholáistí, so ó thaobh an churaclaim de i bprionsabal. (T1 Scoil B - Príomhoide Scoil Ghaeltachta)*
- *Now, I have to say, in principle I agree with it. I like that there would be a different curriculum for Gaeltacht schools and Gaelcholáistí, so from the point of view of the curriculum, in principle. (T1 School B – Principal of Gaeltacht School)*
- *Is breá liom an smaoineamh agus d'eascair sé as an dioscúrsa ar fad ach is an cur i bhfeidhm... (T1 Scoil D - Príomhoide Scoil Ghaeltachta)*
- *I love the idea and it arose from all the discourse but it's the implementation. (T1 School D - Principal of Gaeltacht School)*

- *Is dócha gur coincheap iontach atá ann ó thaobh saghas idirdhealú a dhéanamh idir scoileanna atá ag feidhmiú trí Ghaeilge agus scoileanna atá ag feidhmiú trí Bhéarla. Ach is dócha sa chomhthéacs atá againn anseo i XXX, ní dóigh linn i ndáiríre go bhfuil an tsonraíocht ag freastal ar ár gcomhthéacs. (T1 Scoil C - Príomhoide Gaelcholáiste)*
- *It's probably a great concept to sort of distinguish between schools operating through Irish and schools operating through English. But probably in the context we have here in XXX.... We don't really think in all honesty that the specification serves our context. (T1 School C – Principal of Gaelcholáiste)*
- *Feicimse cad é atá an Roinn agus an NCCA ag iarraidh a dhéanamh, ach sílim nach bhfuil an ceart acu maidir leis seo. (T1 Scoil A - Príomhoide Gaelcholáiste)*
- *I see what the NCCA and the Department are trying to do, but I think they are not right on this. (T1 School A – Principal of Gaelcholáiste)*

Leaders highlighted key points of concern stemming from their experience as leaders of T1 schools. The experience and views of the leaders are described under three sub-themes: (i) spoken Irish in T1 schools, (ii) the grading system for T1 students, and (iii) the provision of the T1 specification for all learners of Irish.

Spoken Irish in T1 Schools

The leaders expressed disappointment and concern that there was not enough emphasis on speaking the language. Due to the large amount of literature to be covered and the fact that an oral examination is not part of the summative assessment, most leaders explained that space had been created for the proper development of oral language skills. While students are required to give oral presentations in CBA 2, leaders explained that this is not at all sufficient, particularly as there are no summative marks awarded. The views expressed by the leaders show that the external assessment has a

strong impact on the implementation of the T1 specification in schools and that teaching and learning cannot be separated from summative assessment of the same learning.

All of the leaders were of the view that Irish in T1 schools is more than a school subject or an exam. It is wider than that, and intertwined with identity, self-confidence and the lives of the students. Leaders in Gaeltacht schools explained that speaking the language was always the backbone of their language development and that the focus should be on enriching and developing students' oral skills to support them to become lifelong Irish speakers. Leaders in Gaelcholáistí explained that they wanted to encourage the use of the language outside of class and in the school community, so there was an urgent need to emphasise the spoken skills of the students in class.

All school leaders were strongly of the view that more recognition should be given to speaking the language at Junior Cycle level to give support and recognition to Irish as a living language. Some leaders reported that students participated in an optional oral examination as part of the assessment in the old system and that this practice had fostered a greater opportunity for teachers to focus on the development of oral language skills in class. The oral examination had also provided students with an opportunity to demonstrate the excellent oral language skills they had acquired and to take pride in this.

- *Is é ceann dos na rudaí is dócha a bhí an-dfómáach dúinn ná nach bhfuil deis ag na daltaí scrúdú béil a dhéanamh anois. Nuair a tugadh isteach an deis tá a fhios agam gur deis roghnach a bhí ann do dhaltáí scrúdú béil a dhéanamh don tSraith nó don Teastas Sóisearach. Bhí sé go hiontach agus bhí ár ndaltaí in ann a scileanna teanga a léiriú. Mar sin, fuair siad aitheantas don obair sin a bhí déanta acu. (T1 Scoil C - Príomhoide Scoil Ghaeltachta)*
- *One of the things that was probably very disappointing to us is that the students don't have the opportunity to take an oral exam right now. When the opportunity was introduced, I know, it was an optional opportunity for students to take an oral examination for the Cycle*

or Junior Certificate. It was amazing and our students were able to demonstrate their language skills, they got recognition for the work they had done. (T1 School C – Principal of Gaeltacht School)

- *Chun cuidiú leis na scoil an teanga a spreagadh, caithfidh luach a bheith air, tá gá le scrúdú béil. (T1 Scoil A - Príomhoide Gaelcholáiste)*
- *To help the school promote the language, it must have value, an oral exam is required. (T1 School A – Principal of Gaelcholáiste)*

The school leaders strongly agreed that there should be more emphasis to support the status of the language, students' language development and their self-confidence and motivation as active language users. Issues relating to differentiation featured strongly. An important point raised was that assessment which focuses primarily on reading and writing skills is not particularly suited to all learners, particularly when most learners do not read and write regularly in Irish outside of school. There were learners who had excellent oral Irish but did not have an opportunity to demonstrate those language skills in the written assessment. Questions were raised about the suitability of this type of assessment for children with literacy difficulties or additional educational needs. Leaders reported that the lack of recognition for Irish-speaking skills in the assessment which impacted on classroom practice was unfair to students with different learning styles and suited only the most academic learners.

- *Tá an T1 ann ag déanamh imeallú ar roinnt mhaith den chohórt atá sa scoil seo agus is bocht an rud duine nó an t-ábhar a imeallú ar an ngréasán Gaeltachta.... agus an dream, b'fhéidir go bhfuil an ábaltacht acadúil acu, tá siad in ann b'fhéidir é sin a láimhseáil agus mar sin de, but níl chuile dhuine acadúil agus sin é an suimiú suas, an ginearálta teoranta a dhéanaimse. (T1 Scoil D - Príomhoide Scoil Ghaeltachta)*

- *The T1 is marginalising much of the cohort in this school and it's a shame to marginalise a person or a subject in the Gaeltacht network.... And maybe they're the ones who have the ability, they may be able to handle that and so on, but not everyone is academic and that's the general summary I would make. (T1 School D – Principal of Gaeltacht School)*

The Grading System for T1 Schools

School leaders in almost all case study schools have been concerned about the grading system since the differentiated provision was implemented. In these cases, school leaders were of the opinion that the implementation of the specification could not be disconnected from the examination system.

- *Níl tú ag iarraidh béim a chur ar na torthaí, ach caithfidh uile mar bhainisteoir agus ceannairí a bheith eolach faoi sin agus bheith cognaíoch faoi sin, sin an slat tomhais atá againn mar scoil. (T1 Scoil A - Príomhoide Gaelcholáiste)*
- *You don't want to emphasise the results, but as managers and leaders we all need to be aware of that and be cognisant about that, that's our yardstick as a school. (T1 School A - Principal of Gaelcholáiste)*

Almost all leaders expressed concern and dissatisfaction with the grading system for the following reasons: (i) the significant drop in high results and the inequity of the grading system for T1 students, (ii) the marks awarded to the students did not match the high standard of students' oral Irish, (iii) the lowered grades were negatively impacting on students' and teachers' self-confidence and motivation and (iv) the lowered grades could damage the reputation of the schools and future demand for T1 schools.

Almost all leaders expressed the view that they were disappointed or even angry at the fall in marks since the differentiated provision was implemented.

Leaders expressed the view that T1 students were now being wronged or punished for being in T1 schools. Some of the leaders explained that the marks awarded to students did not accurately or fairly reflect the Irish language ability of both native speakers and learners of Irish. A leader in one Gaeltacht school, for example, explained that the number of distinctions in Irish was almost the same as that awarded to students in a Modern European Language, even though Irish was the home language of some students, the community language and the first language of the school. The Principal of a Gaelcholáiste argued that the children were now disadvantaged by the T1 system because they would have achieved higher marks in Irish if they were attending a T2 post-primary school.

• *Ach má tá daltaí a tógadh sa Ghaeltacht gurb í an Ghaeilge an chéad teanga acu agus atá lárnach i saol na Gaeilge sa Ghaeltacht agus nach bhfuil siad ag teacht amach le gradam, tá fadhb ansin. So, sin an rud is mó. Tá daltaí na Gaeltachta faoi mhíbhuntáiste mar gheall ar an idirdhealú seo. (T1 Scoil B - Príomhoide Scoil Ghaeltachta)*

• *But if there are pupils raised in the Gaeltacht whose first language is Irish and who are at the centre of the Irish-language life in the Gaeltacht and they are not coming out with distinction, then there is a problem. So that's the main thing. Pupils in the Gaeltacht are at a disadvantage because of this differentiation. (T1 School B – Principal of Gaeltacht School)*

• *Ach ceapann na daltaí go bhfuil saghas pionós á ghearradh orthu siúd i gcomparáid lena gcairde atá thíos an bhóthair sna scoileanna T2. Tá obair na gcapall ar siúl acu agus ansan fuair Cathal ó thíos an bhóthair nach bhfuil na scileanna teanga céanna aige gradam sa scrúdú agus fuair siad siúd toilteanas nó ardoilteanas agus níl sé sin cothrom ar ár ndaltaí ar chor ar bith. (T1 Scoil C - Príomhoide Gaelcholáiste)*

• *However, the pupils feel that they are being punished in a way compared to their friends down the road in the T2 schools. They're doing trojan work and Cathal from down the road who doesn't have the same language skills got a distinction in the exam and they got a merit or a higher merit and that's not fair to our students at all. (T1 School C – Principal of Gaelcholáiste)*

Principals reported in some schools that parents were concerned about the drop in marks after sending their children to a T1 school. In some cases, the point was raised that the grading system would damage the reputation of the school and if the grading system continues as it is, this could negatively affect the future of the T1 schools.

• *Ní thuigeann an pobal..an pobal go ginearálta céard atá i gceist le T1 so mar sin nuair a fheiceann siadsan nach bhfuil gradaim ag teacht amach nó you know...yeah is ionann é sin dóibh sin agus oh tá fadhb ansin le múineadh na Gaeilge. Agus níl sé sin fíor, tá a fhios againn nach bhfuil. (T1 Scoil B - Príomhoide Scoil Ghaeltachta)*

• *The public generally don't understand what T1 means so when they see that distinctions aren't coming out or you know...yeah, that's the same for them as saying and oh there's a problem with teaching Irish. And that's not true, we know it isn't. (T1 School B – Principal of Gaeltacht School)*

• *Is dócha chomh maith leis sin, go han-mhacánta, go raibh na torthaí dos na scrúduithe díomách agus tá na tuismitheoirí ag cailliúint saghas, b'fhéidir roinnt den mhuinín atá acu in earnáil na gaelscolaíochta dá bharr agus táimid buartha go fadtéarmach go mbeidh tionchar ar an líon daltaí a dteastóidh uathu a gcuid oideachais a dhéanamh trí Ghaeilge. (T1 Scoil C - Príomhoide Gaelcholáiste)*

- *It is also likely that, very honestly, the results for the exams were disappointing and the parents are losing perhaps some of the confidence they have in the Irish-medium education sector as a result, and we are concerned that in the long term the number of students who want to pursue their education through Irish will be affected. (T1 School C – Principal of Gaelcholáiste)*

The opinion was also raised that differentiated provision should not be applied in Senior Cycle until the challenges in relation to the awarding of marks to T1 students at Junior Cycle level have been resolved. As is currently the case, most leaders considered that T1 students were at a disadvantage in the final exam and had 'lost an advantage'. At Senior Cycle level, the implications would be more serious for the students and some of the leaders expressed concerns about this.

Provision of the T1 Specification for all learners of Irish

Each school community in each of the case study schools was different and the school leaders were responsible for catering to a wide range of learners. In the case of Gaeltacht schools, it was recognised that the specification was beneficial for language enrichment and for presenting an additional challenge for certain learners.

Overall, however, leaders in most case study schools indicated that the implementation of the T1 specification was problematic due to the workload, the standard of language and the language skills demanded by the specification. The opinions expressed by the leaders were based on their experiences with parents, students and teachers. The challenges of providing the T1 specification for a variety of learners have been reported here.

Most leaders considered that the T1 specification was creating low levels of confidence among students, teachers and parents and that the additional workload associated with the T1 specification was unfair to T1 learners. Considering the literature, many leaders expressed the view that the amount of literature to be covered by T1 students was too onerous and that the standard of some of the texts was too ambitious for students at post-primary

level. Leaders expressed the view that the specification was challenging for students with literacy difficulties and some leaders were of the opinion that this amount of additional work and the focus on reading and writing was not fair on students. The view was raised that students do not read or write regularly in Irish outside of school, so the amount of literature to be covered was very challenging for many learners.

- *Tá solúbthacht ann ó thaobh na dtéacsleabhar agus na húrscéalta, na dánta agus eile. Roghnaíonn an scoil. Tá cead ag an múinteoir agus scoláire a roghnú le chéile, ach níl aon solúbthacht don líon atá ann. (T1 Scoil D - Príomhoide Tánaisteach Scoil Ghaeltachta)*
- *There is flexibility in terms of textbooks, novels, poems and so on. The school chooses. The teacher and student can choose together, but there is no flexibility regarding the amount. (T1 School D – Deputy Principal of Gaeltacht School)*
- *Tá sé chomh deacair agus na múinteoirí ag cailleadh misnigh agus níl fhios agam cad a tharlóidh. (T1 Scoil F - Príomhoide Tánaisteach Sruth Iar-Ghaeilge)*
- *It's so hard and the teachers are losing courage and I don't know what will happen. (T1 School F – Deputy Principal of Irish-Medium Stream)*

School leaders in Gaelcholáistí were of the opinion that the specification was too challenging for students who do not have Irish at home and who do not have additional support with Irish at home.

- *Ta sé rómhór sílim, go mbeadh an dalta ag déanamh T1 mar níl siad ina gcainteoirí dúchais, tá caighdeán Gaeilge iontach maith acu ach níl siad ina gcainteoirí dúchais. (T1 Scoil A - Príomhoide Gaelcholáiste)*

- *It is too much, I think, that the student would be doing T1 because they are not native speakers, they have a very good standard of Irish, but they are not native speakers. (T1 School A - Principal of Gaelcholáiste)*

Some leaders reported that, due to the workload, more students would have to undertake ordinary level and that this was not fair to them. One of the leaders expressed the view that students are sometimes very disappointed to undertake the ordinary level in the T1 school context. A leader in the Irish-medium school with an Irish-medium stream explained that learners were now choosing ordinary level earlier and that there was a challenge with differentiation in class, as students were studying a higher level course and an ordinary level course in the same class. Another leader explained that it was challenging for students to undertake the T1 specification in Irish and the T1 specification in English. In this case, it was noted that some students were choosing ordinary level in English and higher level in Irish at Junior Cycle to give them a better chance to focus on Irish. Concerns were expressed about the specification as it is being extended to Senior Cycle, and if students had to undergo a T1 assessment in both Irish and English.

- *Anois yeah, tá na daltaí ag teacht isteach le hiarratas bogadh go dtí an gnáth leibhéal níos luaithe agus níos luaithe sa dara bliain. Agus tá sé deacair ar na múinteoirí an dá thrá a fhreastal ansin. Tá sé deacair freastal ar na riachtanais atá acu, tá tú ag díriú isteach ar úrscéal agus a rá le lucht gnáthleibhéil níl sé seo ar do chúrsa ach déan é ar son na teanga agus tá sé deacair agus cuid acu le riachtanais difriúla freisin. (T1 Scoil F - Príomhoide Tánaisteach Sruth lán-Ghaeilge)*

- *Now yeah, students are coming in with a request to move to the ordinary level earlier and earlier in the second year. And it is difficult for teachers to cater to both. It's hard to meet their needs, you're focusing on a novel and telling ordinary level students "This isn't your course but do it for the language" and it's hard and some with different needs as well. (T1 School F – Deputy Principal of Irish-medium Stream)*

The provision of T1 specifications was a challenge in cases in the Gaeltacht where students who were newcomers were attending the school. The term 'newcomer' is used to refer to students who have come to Ireland in recent years. As students were learning both Irish and English at the same time, the T1 specification was challenging for those students. In one case, there was a high number of newcomer students in the school and the implementation of the T1 specification was challenging in that context. The research revealed that consideration should be given to the appropriateness of the T1 specification in certain cases in the Gaeltacht.

The next section will look at the views of the leaders on the supports and obstacles related to the implementation and delivery of the T1 specification.

Supports

The main supports that supported the implementation of the T1 specification and provision according to the data collected from the T1 leaders were: teachers, providers of resources, Gaeltacht support schemes and extracurricular activities.

Teachers

It was clear that the school leaders were very proud of the schools' teachers. The data gathered showed praise for the enthusiasm, skill, creativity and professionalism of teachers. In each school, the primary responsibility for the implementation of the specification rested with the teachers.

- *Is dócha an tacaíocht is mó ná an fhoireann scoile. Cinnte, tá foireann dochreidte againn agus tá foireann na scoile ag teacht ó gach cúige in Éirinn. Táimid i nGaeltacht ach tá roinnt mhaith de na múinteoirí, is cainteoirí dúchais iad ó Ghaeltachtaí éagsúla timpeall na tíre rud atá go hálainn mar tugann sé blaiseadh de chanúintí éagsúla dár ndaltaí agus tá an Ghaeilge an-nádúrtha mar theanga sa scoil anseo, rud atá go haoibhinn. (T1 Scoil C - Príomhoide Gaelcholáiste)*

- *Probably the biggest support is the school staff. Sure we have an incredible team and the staff are from every province in Ireland. We are in the Gaeltacht but there are a lot of teachers who are native speakers from different Gaeltacht areas around the country. That's great because it gives our students a sense of different dialects and the Irish language is very natural as a language in the school here, which is wonderful. (T1 School C – Principal of Gaelcholáiste)*

Providers of Resources

While access to resources was a challenge in relation to the implementation of the T1 specification, the Council for Gaeltacht and Irish-medium Education/ An Chomhairle um Oideachas Gaeltachta agus Gaelscoilíochta (COGG) was highly commended and noted for their excellent work in providing resources for the Irish-medium and Gaeltacht sector in Irish language and for teaching other subjects through Irish.

Gaeltacht Schemes

The research indicated that Gaeltacht support schemes were supporting the implementation of the T1 specification in the Gaeltacht. Some of the leaders commended additional supports under the Gaeltacht school recognition scheme as beneficial. The extra hours helped strong Irish speakers enrich their language skills and there was support for learners of Irish as well.

- *Is dóigh liom gur cabhair an-mhór é sin don scoil go ginearálta, cabhraíonn sé le soláthar T1 ansin chomh maith mar bíonn snas á chur ag na daltaí ar a gcuid Gaeilge istigh i ngach rang, ní hamháin sna ranganna Gaeilge. (T1 Scoil E - Príomhoide Scoil Ghaeltachta)*
- *I think that's a huge help for the school in general, it helps with the provision of T1 there as well because the students are enriching their Irish in every class, not just in the Irish classes. (T1 School E – Principal of Gaeltacht School)*

They explained in two schools that they were involved in a scheme in which a language assistant came in to help with the acquisition of specialist language

related to other subjects and that this was a great help. This contributed to the learning of Irish in Irish lessons as well.

Language planning officers were also commended for assisting with school events that linked the school to the community outside of it.

- *Tugann siad deis dúinn, you know, amhránaithe, damhsóirí, daoine a bhaineann le cultúr na teanga, oidhreacht na teanga, aoichainteoirí. Gan an Oifig Pleanála Teanga ní bheadh an t-airgead againn na rudaí sin a chur ar fáil. Tá an comhoibriú pobail sin thar a bheith tábhachtach i gceantar Gaeltachta sílim. Tá sé ar fheabhas caithfidh mé a rá, tá ardmholadh ag dul don phleanáil teanga agus an tacaíocht a thugann siad do na hinstiúidí oideachais sna Gaeltachtaí ag leibhéal éagsúla. (T1 Scoil C - Príomhoide Scoil Ghaeltachta)*
- *They allow us, you know, singers, dancers, people associated with the culture of the language, the heritage of the language. Guest speakers. Without the Language Planning Office, we wouldn't have the money to do that. This community collaboration is extremely important in a Gaeltacht area I think. It's excellent I must say, the language planning and the support they provide to the educational institutions in the Gaeltacht at various levels is to be highly commended. (T1 School C – Principal of Gaeltacht School)*

Extracurricular activities and links with the Irish language community

Extracurricular activities and links with the community also supported the promotion of the language in the T1 case study schools. For example, in one Gaelcholáiste the school was used by a community group to teach traditional music and there was a link between the school and another Gaelcholáiste. The schools were also given the opportunity to visit each other. Students in Gaelcholáistí had the opportunity to visit the Gaeltacht and some of the students worked as leaders in the Gaeltacht during the summer. In the Gaeltacht schools, writers, singers, guests from TG4, past students and other guest speakers visited.

Obstacles

The main obstacles identified by the T1 school leaders during the interviews were: teacher recruitment, time, resources, resources to support children with additional educational needs and support for new learners of Irish.

Recruitment of Teachers

Teacher recruitment emerged as a key challenge in the context of the data collected. Some of the school leaders spoke about the challenge of recruiting Irish teachers as well as recruiting teachers to teach other subjects through Irish. Leaders explained that it was extremely difficult to find teachers with subject knowledge and a high standard of Irish and that there were not enough teachers coming from third level institutions.

Earcú foirne, sin ceann de na rudaí is deacra agus tá sé an-deacair ar roinnt cúiseanna éagsúla. Dár ndóigh, tá líon na múinteoirí atá líofa sa Ghaeilge i bhfad níos lú. Chomh maith leis sin, má theastaíonn uait post a ghlacadh i nGaelcholáiste, tá a fhios agat go mbeidh dhá oiread an méid oibre le déanamh agat mar beidh ort do chuid acmhainní féin a dhearadh. (T1 Scoil C - Príomhoide Gaelcholáiste)

Staff recruitment, that's one of the hardest things and it's very difficult for a number of different reasons. Of course, the number of teachers who are fluent in Irish is much lower. Also, if you want to take up a job in a Gaelcholáiste, you know you're going to have to do twice as much work as you'll need to design your own resources. (T1 School C – Principal Gaelcholáiste)

The cost of living in Dublin also arose as encouraging young teachers from the country to return home.

Time

Time for teaching, planning and professional development were all challenges. The reduction in time for the teaching of Irish emerged as an obstacle and some leaders explained that it was difficult to cover the curriculum within the current allocation of curriculum time. In one school, there

weren't daily classes in Irish because of timetables and so the school leader was of the opinion that this detracted from the students' contact with the language. It was reported that there was time pressure to carry out all of the CBA tasks. Additional time was spent on the teaching of Irish in some of the T1 case study schools in addition to the recommended hours. The extra time was used to support the students to develop their language skills in Irish and to undertake the amount of work that had to be covered.

Leaders also felt that there was insufficient time to plan and to upskill regarding curriculum changes. Croke Park hours were often used to fulfil other planning duties.

Tá am ag teastáil chun rudaí fisiciúla a dhéanamh chun na háiseanna a chur le chéile chun pleananna a chur le chéile, you know, bualadh le scoileanna eile b'fhéidir, agus rudaí a roinnt. Tá gach scoil ag déanamh an rud céanna. Tá sé fíordheacair an t am sin a fháil. (T1 Scoil F - Príomhoide Tánaisteach Sruth lán-Ghaeilge)

It takes time to do the physical things, to put the resources together, to put plans together, you know, to possibly meet other schools and share things. All schools are doing the same thing. It is very difficult to find that time. (T1 School F – Deputy Principal of Irish-Medium Stream)

Resources

A key obstacle to the provision of T1 was access to resources. It was explained that many of the texts in Irish were not accessible to schools and that this was a major challenge. In different parts of the country, leaders felt that resources were not available in the dialect of the school/area. Some leaders claimed that the standard of reading of some of the texts was not appropriate because the required reading age was too high.

Resources to Support Students with Additional Educational Needs

It emerged that extra supports are needed for children with additional educational needs. Although resources are available in English, the school is often required to translate them into Irish. The research showed that some

students had difficulty achieving success in the T1 specification due to the emphasis on reading and writing. One school recommended that additional staff are required such as additional Special Needs Assistants to support students with additional educational needs in the Irish-medium system.

Tá XX% de na daltaí sa scoil seo go bhfuil riachtanas éigin acu. B'fhéidir disléicse, diospraicse, dioscalcúile. Ach nuair a lorgáimid na hacmhainní, mar shampla, do dhaltaí uathacha, níl siad ar fáil tríd Ghaeilge agus bíonn orainn iad a aistriú. (T1 Scoil C - Príomhoide Gaelcholáiste).

XX% of students in this school have some need. Perhaps dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia. But when we look for the resources, for example, for autistic students, they are not available through Irish and we have to translate them. (T1 School C – Principal of Gaelcholáiste).

Suggested recommendations T1 School Leaders at Phase One

The school leaders were asked if there were any recommendations they would like to make that would benefit the implementation of the specification and the provision on a wider basis. The recommendations of the T1 School Leaders are summarised here. It is important to note that data were collected from case-study schools at Phase One of a three year study.

Oral Examination

- A very strong recommendation that emerged from the interviews with the school leaders in the T1 case study schools was that an oral examination should be part of the summative assessment at Junior Cycle level in order to promote oral language skills. All school leaders agreed on this for a variety of reasons.
- First of all, Irish in T1 schools is more than just a school subject. Irish is at the heart of community and school life. The speaking of Irish is closely intertwined with the identity of students and the leaders were of the opinion that it is necessary to emphasise the speaking of Irish through the

examination system as the examination has an impact on teaching and learning in the class.

- It was strongly recommended that there be an oral examination to give recognition to language skills of students in T1 schools and to encourage them to use the language and to be active speakers of Irish.
- Leaders insisted on the need for an oral examination in terms of differentiation to allow students to demonstrate their language interaction skills through oral language.
- It was recommended that an oral examination be held to prepare the students for the Leaving Certificate.

Review of the examination and grading system for T1 schools

- As it stands, almost all school leaders expressed the view that T1 students were disadvantaged in the final examination, that the examination marks were not an accurate reflection of the students' standard of Irish and that the assessment system was suitable for academic students only. Most leaders felt that the examination and marking system were damaging to the language in terms of motivation and self-confidence. Some leaders pointed out that continuing with the current system could have a negative impact on the future demand for T1 schools. There would be serious implications if the Junior Cycle grading system continued into Senior Cycle.

Review of literature and provision of texts

- Some of the school leaders were of the opinion that there was too much literature to be covered by T1 students.
- It is recommended that students should be able to draw on the literature from first year while preparing for the exam.
- It was recommended that texts of an appropriate standard be selected and that the texts would be made available to T1 schools and be made available in the local dialect.

- The topic of literature will require further investigation over the course of the study.

Resources and Supports for students with additional educational needs

- It was recommended that additional supports be provided for students with additional educational needs and that resources be adapted to the immersion education setting. It was also recommended that additional staff be provided to support learners with additional educational needs.

Time for Planning and Continuing Professional Development

- It was recommended that time be reviewed and teachers be given proper time to undertake professional development and planning in the context of significant curricular changes.

Recruitment of Irish-medium and Gaeltacht teachers & Allowance

- It was recommended that recruitment should be considered and that a strategy should be put in place to ensure that teachers are available to teach in schools in the city as well as in Gaeltacht schools.
- It was recommended that the development of teacher education should provide for the Irish-medium and Gaeltacht sector in terms of the teaching of Irish as a subject and the teaching of other subjects through Irish.
- It was suggested in one Gaeltacht school that there should be a panel for Gaeltacht teachers.
- It was recommended that the allowance to teachers who are teaching in Irish-medium and Gaeltacht schools be restored as a way to recognise the additional work involved in working in the sector.

Extracurricular Activities & Connection with the Community

- It was recommended that extra-curricular activities through Irish be enhanced to increase the opportunities for T1 students to socialise through the medium of Irish outside of school. Facilitators must also be fluent in Irish to facilitate extracurricular activities.

- It was suggested that some funding could help with trips to the Gaeltacht for students in T1 schools outside the Gaeltacht.
- It was recommended to continue the language schemes in the Gaeltacht that are supporting the language development of students at school.

Summary

There were challenges with the implementation of the T1 specification in almost all schools although most leaders agreed with the differentiated provision on principle. Key points of concern were recognition for speaking the language, the grading system for T1 schools and the provision of the T1 specification for all learners of Irish. The leaders praised the teaching staff in the schools as a main support. A number of language support schemes in Gaeltacht schools were commended, as well as extracurricular activities and links to the local and/or Gaeltacht community. The main obstacles to the implementation of the specification and provision were teacher recruitment, time for teaching, planning and professional development, teaching resources as well, as resources to support learners with additional educational needs. Leaders' recommendations were presented which may warrant further investigation. The next part looks at the experiences and views of teachers in T1 schools on the implementation of Junior Cycle Irish specifications.

Part Two: T1 Teachers

A main question of the research was: What are school leaders, teachers and students' experiences of the implementation of the Junior Cycle Irish Specification (T1& T2) in the area of teaching, learning and assessment and what are their opinions regarding this?

This question will be considered under the following main themes that emerged from the analysis of the focus groups with teachers (N=23) in six T1 schools. The main themes arising from the deductive and inductive analysis were: Transitions; Planning & Supports; Teaching and Learning Approaches; Assessment, Literature, Inclusion, The Impact of the Final Examination and Teachers' Recommendations. Sub-themes are presented under each of the main themes.

Transitions

There was a variety of views between schools and various reasons why learners were challenged regarding learning Irish in their first year in post-primary school.

Teachers in one Gaeltacht school explained, for example, that language practice in the community was changing and that sociolinguistic factors influenced students' standard of Irish; English was more often the language of socialisation. There was a lot of work to be done in the first year on developing the accuracy and richness of Irish, in particular. Other schools recognised the development of language enrichment from primary school. Differentiation was a challenge in first year in some Gaeltacht schools as teachers had to cater for students with a range of abilities in Irish, such as native speakers of Irish, learners with a high standard of Irish and new learners of Irish. In one school, there was a high number of students who had recently arrived in Ireland. More support was needed in these cases.

In Gaelcholáistí there was a wide range of competence in Irish among students. The teachers explained that students transitioning from English-medium schools to the Gaelcholáiste and students with additional educational needs were particularly challenged. Learners needed additional support in these cases. Teachers also explained that the pandemic had a strong impact on some students' speaking skills in Irish and that they lacked confidence to speak it. It was therefore important to focus on oral skills in the first year to build on learners' self-confidence, in particular.

Níl aon mhuinín acu, tá eagla orthu labhairt amach. I 2017 bhí comhrá acu agus bhí siad ag meascadh le daoine sa chéad bhliain anois glacann sé am iad a chur ag comhrá. Tá siad go cúthaileach. Bíonn tú ag iarraidh muinín a chur isteach iontu. Now tá Gaeilge acu, tá Gaeilge labhartha acu ag teacht sea ach glacann sé seo am, cuirimid béim mhór ar an chomhrá. (T1 School A Gaelcholáiste)

They have no confidence, they are afraid to speak out. In 2017 they had conversations and were mixing with people in first year.

Now it takes time to get them chatting. They're shy. You want to put confidence in them. Now they have Irish, they have spoken Irish coming up, but this takes time, we put great emphasis on the conversation. (T1 School A Gaelcholáiste)

There was also a diversity of standards between students coming from different primary schools. Most teachers expressed the view that there were many basic elements to cover with learners in first year, that is, content they had not covered in primary school. Teachers said there was a need to focus on accuracy, in particular. Some teachers reported a large jump between first year and second/third year. Therefore, it is clear that learners coming to post-primary had a range of abilities and experiences, the view was expressed that the T1 specification was challenging for many learners.

Planning & Supports

Collaborative practice for planning was in place in all T1 schools and resources were shared between teachers on a shared drive in each case study school. Teachers designed plans and resources and shared them with other teachers in the school; teachers had the opportunity to amend and adapt resources from the drive for their own classes. Yearly and termly planning was carried out collaboratively between the teachers in case study schools. Classes in some of the schools also had the same exam. In the school where there was an Irish-medium stream, content that was common to the T2 specification was chosen and this assisted with planning and access to resources.

Teachers were of the opinion that there was a high number of learning outcomes in the specification and that it was not always clear how to connect them to the lesson or lessons. Teachers had professional discussions on planning on an informal basis in schools. A key challenge in planning was a lack of time for formal planning. Teachers felt that more time was needed for formal planning. Many teachers were happy to plan drawing on the literature rather than focusing on specific themes and this was a positive change associated with the specification according to some teachers.

Teachers were designing resources themselves and taking advantage of available resources such as: *An Tairseach* by COGG, a list of texts from the NCCA, *Tuairisc.ie*, TG4, *abair.ie*, *The Storyteller*. The Facebook page called *Teachers of Irish/Múinteoirí na Gaeilge* was mentioned as a useful resource for teachers who were sharing resources. Teachers were strongly of the opinion that more resources were needed to support the teaching of Irish in T1 schools. Access to texts for T1 schools was very difficult and bothered teachers greatly. Teachers in most of the schools were very upset about the lack of clarity as to what would be on the examination paper as they felt unable to support the learners in preparing for the exam.

30 **Approaches to Teaching and Learning**

A wide and rich range of teaching and learning activities were taking place in all T1 schools to implement the specification. Links were made between the strands of the specification and the language skills. The teachers demonstrated great creativity in teaching and, according to the teachers' feedback, attention was paid to each strand of the specification. Many similar activities were carried out in the schools. The lists presented here show examples of teaching and learning activities from the range of schools. The activities are not linked to any particular school.

In terms of developing communication competence, class activities, school activities and extracurricular activities were undertaken. It is interesting that teachers used literature primarily to promote speaking, reading and writing skills. Many of the learning activities were based on themes relating to literature; it is clear that there were rich learning opportunities arising from the different genres of literature. One school, for example, organised activities based on Áine Ní Ghlinn's poem '*An Gealt*'. Small groups produced a play and designed advertisements, programmes and booklets about the poem. This enabled all learners to get involved in a way that suited them. Teachers were conscious of differentiation in teaching and learning approaches and explained that class activities were tailored to the needs of students.

Technology was also used extensively in all schools to enhance students' opportunities to communicate in Irish. Students had the opportunity to make

'TikTok' videos, short films or to record pieces of reading, commentaries and interviews on a regular basis.

Some schools outside the Gaeltacht highlighted a trip to the Gaeltacht as a means of supporting the development and use of the language. Some of the schools worked in partnership with Irish language organisations such as Conradh na Gaeilge (*Gaeilge 24*) and Gael Linn (*Gaelbhratach*) to encourage the use of the language. Writers, actors, singers and poets, for example, had the opportunity to visit schools. There was an additional grammar class in one school and a system was in place in the school to encourage the students to speak Irish more accurately. The school focused on weekly target vocabulary and phrases and a reward scheme was in place to encourage students to use the target vocabulary and phrases.

Communicative Competence

Class activities

- Debates
- Role-play
- Plays and videos
- Small groups making a short play or film based on a poem or novel
- Acting as characters from the novel
- Creating the next chapter of the story
- Recordings of a poem, story, interview or piece of commentary
- TikTok in Irish on various topics
- Pair work
- Group work
- Podcasts
- Quizzes
- Interviews

- Project work
- Songs & poems
- Interview with grandmother, grandfather and/or a local person
- Class news
- Conversations about what is happening in daily life.

School Activities

- Poetry contest
- Gaelbhratach
- Competition between classes
- Public speaking
- Gaeilge 24
- Seachtain na Gaeilge
- Summer camp for 1st year students
- A reward system for using accurate or target vocabulary/ phrases
- Additional Irish language lessons aimed at language enrichment and accuracy.

Extracurricular activities and/or links with the community

- Interviews with local people or other family members in a Gaeltacht area
- Networks between schools
- Trips to the Gaeltacht for T1 schools outside the Gaeltacht

Language and Cultural Awareness

Class activities

- Editing of pieces of text
- Finding target structures e.g. verb, noun, a grammatical rule in a text

- Peer assessment
- Recording of 5 sentences using accurate pronunciation
- Games such as Kahoot focused on grammar points
- Finding grammatical patterns in context
- Understanding the structures of Irish by discovering rules inductively and putting the pattern into words.
- Studying the dialects of Irish and comparing dialects
- Writing a song/lúibín
- Study of local traditions and different town names
- Lessons based on the literature

School Activities

- Classes for improving Irish and additional classes focusing on accurate grammar
- Irish Language Committee
- Activities relating to the Gaeltacht recognition scheme
- Theme-based days through Irish

Extracurricular activities and/or links with the community

- Interviews with local people
- Trips to the Gaeltacht for schools outside of the Gaeltacht
- Guest speakers, poets, singers, local authors, various speakers
- Local superstitions
- Local literature
- Poetry contests
- Podcasts
- Literary tasks

Learner's self-awareness

Class activities

- Analysing texts
- Correcting mistakes, finding mistakes in text
- Peer assessment
- Editing of a piece of text
- Setting success criteria and implementing the criteria on a piece of work
- Self-assessment of their own work
- Learners setting and judging specific targets – according to a traffic light system e.g. green - targets have been reached, orange - progress has been made, red - targets have not yet been achieved
- Classroom assessment of a piece of work according to specific criteria
- Presentation or piece of writing
- Providing students with opportunities to choose tasks
- A correction code.

Teachers' experiences and opinions about literature are looked at in the next section.

Literature

The sub-themes that arose were: the benefits of literature, the dialect and standard of literature, access to texts and the amount of literature.

It is clear from the description of the teaching and learning activities that teachers made great use of literature to develop students' Irish and that they established many classroom activities based on literature. The teachers reported that literature contributed to the enrichment of language in particular, that different students liked different texts and that a wide range of texts were available on the list. There were examples of texts that students liked in each school and a rich variety of teaching and learning activities were based on the

literature, such as interviewing a character, acting, writing a new ending, writing a diary entry, writing a blog and role-playing as characters from the story. Many of the teachers explained that the short films were motivating and enjoyable for the students and that using the short films fostered more time to engage in other communicative activities in class.

• *Físeán a deirtear liomsa. Mar sin chuir mé an cheist "Cén fáth go dtaitníonn na físeáin libh?" agus dúirt siad "Mar nílimid ag breathnú ar litríocht, ar na nótaí ar iPad." Agus is dóigh liom freisin mar gheall go dtugann sé níos mó deiseanna a scileanna féin a úsáid sa rang, tógann an físeán 16 nóiméad agus ansin is féidir leo am eile caitheamh a bheith cruthaitheach ag déanamh ról ghlacadh, drámaíocht, aisteoireacht, ag plé, ag déanamh díospóireachtaí agus rudaí éagsúla seachas díriú ar an litríocht an t-am ar fad. (T1 Scoil C, Gaelcholáiste)*

• *Videos I'm told. So I asked the question "Why do you like the videos?" and they said "Because we don't look at literature, on the notes on an iPad". And I also think because it offers more opportunities to use their own skills in class, the video takes 16 minutes and then they can spend other time creatively doing role-play, drama, acting, debating, doing various debates and other things rather than focusing on the literature all the time. (T1 School C, Gaelcholáiste)*

Although the schools were located in different provinces, it is interesting to note that teachers felt that the texts were not adapted to their students' dialect and that this created an additional challenge in terms of understanding the text and strengthening the students' Irish in both grammar and vocabulary. Teachers in all Gaeltacht schools recommended that texts be provided in the dialect of the area.

- *Agus go leor leor don litríocht, ní raibh sé i nGaeilge na háite seo, ní raibh siad ag teacht i dteagmháil leis an bhfocal scríofa a thuigfidís nó d'aithneoidís, cineál so in ionad ag neartú Gaeilge, bhí tú ag múineadh na focla dóibh nach n-úsáididís agus nach gcloisfidís ionas go dtuigfidís i gcomhthéacs téacs na focail sin. (T1 Scoil D, Scoil Ghaeltachta)*

- *And a lot of the literature wasn't in the local Irish, they didn't come into contact with the written word they would understand or recognise. This, kind of, instead of strengthening Irish you were teaching them the words that they wouldn't use and that they wouldn't hear so that they could understand the words in the context of the text. (T1 School D Gaeltacht School)*

A key challenge for literature was also access to texts where teachers explained that many texts were out of print, difficult to access and time was often spent photocopying. Teachers explained that this was particularly unsatisfactory for students who have difficulty with organisational skills.

There was a difference of views as to the amount of literature to be covered. Some teachers were very pleased with the reduction in the amount of prescribed literature since 2023, in other cases teachers felt that the amount of literature was still too heavy and causing difficulties in relation to differentiation, in particular.

- *Tá siad fós ag foghlaim, na daltaí le riachtanais agus a thagann le fíorbheagán Gaeilge. Tá sé dúshlánach orthu ar an gcéad dul síos agus ansin an méid litríocht atá le clúdach acu... (T1 Scoil A Gaelcholáiste)*

- *They are still learning, the pupils with additional needs, and come with very little Irish. It is challenging for them in the first place and then the amount of literature they have to cover... (T1 School A, Gaelcholáiste)*

- *Tá sé go maith go bhfuil sé laghdaithe, dul chun cinn iontach! Tá sé laghdaithe anois do bhliain a 2 agus bliain 1 agus bliain 3. Ar a laghad anois tá sé indéanta. (T1 Scoil E Scoil Ghaeltachta)*

- *It's good that it's reduced, great progress! It has now been reduced for year 2 and year 1 and year 3. At least now it's manageable. (T1 School E, Gaeltacht School)*

Some teachers expressed the view that the standard of some of the texts were inappropriate for Junior Cycle students and too difficult for them. The amount and standard of texts had an impact on class practice, and teachers in some cases reported that they had to spend a lot of time explaining the texts rather than reading or discussing them. According to the teachers, the emphasis on literature was to the detriment of the spoken language. The amount and standard of literature posed challenges for some students and greater challenges for students with literacy or learning difficulties.

- *Formhór den am caite sa rang ag léamh litríochta. Bhíomar ag caint lenár daltaí féin agus chun an fhírinne a rá tugann sé 3 mhí úrscéal a léamh agus tá an úrscéal thart ar 100 leathanach agus nuair atá tú ag múineadh i rang measctha, ní féidir iarraidh ar na daltaí iad á léamh iad féin sa bhaile. (T1 Scoil C Gaelcholáiste)*

- *Most of the time spent in class reading literature! We were talking to our own students and, to tell the truth, it takes 3 months to read a novel and the novel is about 100 pages and when you are teaching in a mixed class, the students cannot be asked to read them themselves at home. (T1 School C, Gaelcholáiste)*

Teachers' reported that the literature was beneficial to support the implementation of elements of the specification. As the final examination was a written exam, many of the teachers felt that they had to focus on reading and writing in class and that this was taking from the time when oral language skills were developed. Assessment is considered in the next paragraph.

Assessment

Teachers' experiences and opinions of the formative assessment of the T1 specification, namely CBA 1 and CBA 2 are considered in this section as well as their views on the SLAR meetings. Teachers' views on the final examination will be looked at in the next section.

In relation to CBA 1, the teachers expressed the view that this is work that takes place in the class anyway. It was stated in one Gaeltacht School that the students needed support in selecting the pieces of work. There were mixed views on CBA 2. Some of the teachers were positive about it: *Is é ceann de na laethanta is deise é ar scoil an lá go ndéanann muid é sin, sin i mo thuairim* (T1 Scoil D Scoil Gaeltachta). *It's one of the nicest days of school, the day we do that, that's in my opinion* (T1 School D, Gaeltacht School). *Is maith liomsa an MRB 2, caithfidh mé a rá* (T1 Scoil B Ghaeltachta). *I like the CBA 2, I must say* (T1 School B, Gaeltacht School B). Some teachers explained that the students felt a sense of achievement when they completed the CBA. One advantage of the CBA tasks was that they created an opportunity for the students to focus on a subject/topic they were interested in.

In some schools it emerged that CBA 2 affected students in terms of stress and anxiety as they had to stand up and make a presentation in front of their peers. They felt that the presentation was not suitable for some students. Some teachers were of the opinion that CBA 2 was an assessment of presentation skills rather than an assessment of oral interaction skills in Irish.

- *Aríst tá muid ag amharc ar an aistear teanga agus an aois ag a bhfuil an dalta agus rudaí atá muid ag iarraidh orthu, an bhfuil sé sin sin fóirstineach dá n-aois? Tá, tá siad neirbhíseach, tá siad faiteach is aois ana-dheacair i gcoitinne é ina saol agus anois tá muid ag iarraidh iad a chur ag seasamh suas agus labhairt os comhair a bpiarghrúpa. (T1 Scoil A, Gaelcholáiste)*

- *Again we're looking at the language journey and the age of the student and the things we're asking of them, is that appropriate for their age? Yes, they're nervous it's a very difficult age in general in their lives and now we're trying to get them to stand up and talk in front of their peer group. (T1 School A, Gaelcholáiste)*

As T1 learners have developed communicative fluency, the question was raised in one school as to whether this type of assessment was appropriate for T1 learners at all as they undertake this type of presentation regularly in Irish and in other subjects anyway. Teachers did not think that the CBA should replace an oral exam.

A main recommendation from the focus groups was that most teachers were of the opinion that summative marks would be awarded for the CBA tasks. Teachers agreed that a great deal of work had gone into them but that it was not worth it as they did not get recognition in the form of summative marks. In some cases, teachers said that students were discouraged by the absence of marks for the CBA tasks and in some schools, parents questioned spending time on the CBA instead of the final exam.

- *Sílimse agus tá siad ag cur an-obair isteach ann agus cén fáth nach mbeadh marc ina choinne? (T1 Scoil A, Gaelcholáiste)*
- *I think they're putting a lot of work into it and why wouldn't there be a mark for it? (T1 School A, Gaelcholáiste)*

Overall teachers were positive about the SLAR meetings as they were given the opportunity to talk to their colleagues and evaluate samples of work. Some teachers were of the opinion that this process gave them confidence that they were on the right path regarding the awarding of grade descriptors and that the student had achieved a particular category. The impact of the final examination will be discussed in the next paragraph.

Impact of the Final Examination

The aim of the research is to explore teachers' experiences and opinions of the implementation of Junior Cycle Irish specifications. The final examination does not directly relate to the implementation of the specification, but a key finding of the analysis is that the final examination had a very significant impact on teaching and learning in class and on teachers' views on the specification. It is important to present these views as a key theme that emerged in Phase One in the research. The theme is discussed under two sub-themes, namely: the impact of the examination on teaching and learning and teachers' experiences of the grading system in T1 schools.

Teachers in almost all case study schools were strongly of the opinion that they needed more guidance about the content of the final examination. The uncertainty created difficulties for them as they wanted to support their students and prepare them for the exam. The lack of clarity impacted on teachers' planning and teaching. Teachers were disappointed that they had done so much work in class, but there was no clear link between the class work and the final exam. For example, while some teachers/students liked local literature, it was not on the exam paper. Teachers argued that all of the class work was not reflected in the examination system. According to teachers, the preparation for the exam put a lot of pressure on them to focus on literature (reading & writing) in class. The teachers expressed disappointment and frustration with the exam and the marks awarded to the students were worrying them greatly.

A very strong view that emerged from the focus groups in most schools was that the grading system for T1 students is unfair. In almost all schools, teachers said that there has been a high drop in the number of high grades since the implementation of the specification. Many of the teachers argued that the grading system was unfair to T1 students and that the best Irish speakers were not successful in achieving a distinction. According to the teachers, the fall in marks was disillusioning for teachers and students.

Níl siad ag fáil na ngradam agus ní thuigeann muid é. (T1 Scoil A, Gaelcholáiste)

They're not getting the distinctions and we don't understand it. (T1 School A, Gaelcholáiste)

Tá na grádanna deiridh a bronnadh an bhliain seo caite ar scrúduithe na Sraithe Sóisearaí, bhíodar lag, míchothrom agus mídhaonna. (T1 Scoil C, Gaelcholáiste)

The final grades awarded last year for the Junior Cycle examinations, they were weak, unfair and inhumane. (T1 Scoil C, Gaelcholáiste)

Teachers' recommendations will be presented in the next section. It is important to note that this data were collected from case-study schools at Phase One of a three year study.

Suggested recommendations T1 Teachers at Phase One

Oral Examination

There was a strong recommendation from teachers from all focus groups in the T1 case study schools that the oral skills of students should be given more recognition and that an oral examination should be part of the summative assessment in Junior Cycle. Teachers recommended that an oral examination be held for the following reasons:

- (i) Irish is a language and emphasis needs to be placed on speaking the language to foster a love of the language and encourage students to speak it.
- (ii) Recognition must be given to the oral language skills of T1 students, including native speakers and learners of Irish who have a high standard of spoken language.
- (iii) Students with different needs must be given the opportunity to demonstrate their language skills through speaking.
- (iv) The oral examination would assist the students in preparing for Senior Cycle.

Literature and Resources to Support Literature

- It was recommended that T1 schools be provided with textbooks containing the literature and teaching notes for guidance.
- It was recommended that literature be provided in a range of dialects appropriate to the area of the school.
- It was suggested that it should be possible to draw on literature from the first-year course in the final examination and that this would be one way to reduce the amount of literature and give students an opportunity to build on what they had learned.

Learning Outcomes

- It was recommended that the number of learning outcomes be reduced and further illustrative examples of classroom work be provided that are consistent with the learning outcomes.

Assessment

- It was recommended that marks be awarded for the CBA tasks.
- It was recommended that more sample papers be made available as well as further guidance on the final examination.
- It was recommended that an option be included on the examination paper as well as specific sections – a question about the novel, a play etc.
- It was recommended that marking criteria would be provided for the examinations and that samples of papers at different levels be shared with teachers.

Supports for Teachers

- It was recommended that more supports should be provided to teachers and that they be given more time for planning to address the curriculum changes.

Provision for All Learners of Irish

- Teachers recommended that additional supports and differentiation options be available to students with a range of ability in Irish.
- Teachers recommended that additional supports be provided for newcomer students in Ireland at post-primary level in T1 schools.

The next section of the report looks at the data collected from school leaders and teachers in the T2 case study schools.

4.2 Data from T2 Case Study Schools

Part Three: T2 School Leaders

This section of the report focuses on the experience and views of school leaders in the T2 case study schools on the implementation of the T2 specification. The leaders' experiences of the supports and obstacles related to the implementation of the T2 specification and the provision, as well as their recommendations from the interviews will be considered. Finally, this section relating to the experience and views of school leaders in six T2 case study schools will be summarised.

Experiences and Views of T2 School Leaders

Some of the school leaders expressed positive views on some of the elements relating to the implementation of the T2 specification during the interviews.

There was a mixture of views on the CBA tasks. One Principal, for example, indicated that it is good to give students the opportunity to undertake a task and receive formative feedback during Junior Cycle. Other positive points included giving students the opportunity to complete projects, as well as fostering opportunities for active and collaborative learning as part of the process of the CBA tasks.

The manner in which the changes in the Framework for Junior Cycle provided a better opportunity to provide feedback during Junior Cycle was also considered positive. Some leaders praised the SLAR meetings, as the review meeting process provides teachers with an opportunity to engage in professional conversations about teaching, learning and assessment.

All school leaders paid tribute to the schools' Irish teachers for their enthusiasm and professionalism. In all case study schools, leaders felt that teachers were committed to promoting students' learning of Irish.

- *From going into the Irish classrooms and my interactions with the students who are doing Irish. I have a marvellous team of Irish teachers here. They are wonderful and the children love Irish. (T2 School A – Principal)*

Some school leaders explained that while they were initially positive about the Irish specifications and the Framework for Junior Cycle more broadly in responding to the needs of a variety of learners, they were now concerned that the implementation of the T2 specification was not responding to the needs of all learners. Challenges in the provision regarding differentiation arose as a strong theme in T2 school contexts and these challenges are discussed in the section relating to obstacles to the implementation of the specification.

However, school leaders expressed key concerns about the implementation of the specification in the context of T2 schools from their experience. The main points of concern raised by the leaders were: (i) recognition for spoken Irish, (ii) transition between Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle, (iii) summative marks in Irish, and (iv) stress due to the CBAs.

Recognition for Spoken Irish

A key theme arising from the interviews with school leaders in T2 case study schools was that they were concerned about the lack of emphasis on spoken Irish in the assessment system. According to the leaders, the lack of assessment of speaking skills was discouraging students from speaking Irish. Irish is a language and therefore the leaders recommended that emphasis should be placed on developing oral language interaction skills in Junior Cycle through summative assessment. Leaders pointed out that the implementation of the specification had a negative impact on students' motivation to learn Irish due to the lack of recognition for speaking the language.

Leaders unanimously and strongly felt that CBA 2 is not sufficient to assess students' speaking skills. Leaders were of the opinion that assessment had an impact on teaching and learning and although the specification intended to emphasise both formative and summative assessment, parents and students largely expressed interest in the summative results alone.

- *But the oral Irish, I think the oral Irish, you need it. You need the oral Irish. (T2 School A – Principal)*
- *The students and the parents are really only interested in their final descriptor, the JCPA. (T2 School D – Deputy Principal)*

All school leaders were of the view that an oral examination must be part of the summative assessment in Junior Cycle to support students in preparing for the oral examination in Senior Cycle.

- *You know, there's nothing like your formal oral...I think the CBAs are a really positive thing, but at the same token, I think that formal kind of doing an oral exam, the first time they formally do an oral exam for a state examination will be in a Leaving Cert, and that's too long really. (T2 School A – Principal)*

Leaders also expressed the view that a written examination is not suitable for all learners who are learning Irish. According to the leaders, an oral examination would give students the opportunity to demonstrate oral language interaction skills and would be more suitable for learners with a range of abilities. The research indicated that T2 schools who previously conducted the optional oral examinations had a positive experience of the oral examination system.

Transitions between Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle

Most school leaders in T2 case study schools expressed concern that there may be a gap between Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle. According to the majority of leaders, the gap is larger due to the T2 specification.

- *What they've done is, they've changed the Junior Cycle, but the Senior Cycle has remained the same. So, at the moment during this, and "interregnum" for want of a better description, you have an issue relating to "how do you bridge the gap that's expected?" And therein does lie a challenge. (T2 School C – Deputy Principal)*

Concerns were expressed that there was not enough emphasis on speaking the language in the implementation of the specification because there was no summative assessment of oral Irish. The opinion was expressed that there was a gap in standard between both Cycles and that students now had a lower standard when entering Senior Cycle. Some of the schools were dedicating additional time to the teaching of Irish at Senior Cycle in an effort to bridge the gap somewhat. In some of the case study schools, additional classes were used in Transition Year to further support the development of Irish speaking skills. The leaders found that there was a discrepancy between the two Cycles – Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle and that schools had different strategies in place to tackle the challenge.

- *It's as a result of the difficulties I'm seeing at Junior Cycle, I put an additional period to sixth year in Irish to give them a little bit more time around working on the oral, because of the importance of that in the end. ...because of the deficits at Junior Cycle. So, it's a big commitment from my allocation, if you like, to the subject, but I feel it's necessary and worth it. (T2 School E – Principal)*
- *So it's a big commitment from my allocation, if you like, to the subject, but I feel it's necessary and worth it. (T2 Scoil E - Príomhoide)*

Summative Marks in Irish

Most school leaders felt that it was more difficult for students to achieve a Distinction and a Higher Merit in Irish in Junior Cycle compared to the old system and that it was more difficult to achieve high grades in Irish, in the current system compared to other subjects.

- *The course seems difficult, and it appears more difficult for students to achieve top end descriptors in Irish than it is in other subjects... So, we'd have students who will be high achievers getting higher merits or distinctions, in most of their subjects, and then getting maybe a merit 'as Gaeilge'. And that leads to frustration for the students and for the teachers as well. (T2 School D – Deputy Principal)*

Some leaders reported a drop in the number of the highest grades since the implementation of the T2 specification. According to the interviews, the small number of distinctions has negatively affected the confidence and experience of leaders, teachers and students with regard to the implementation of the specification. It was stated that the lower grades were negatively impacting on students' self-confidence and motivation for learning Irish as they entered Senior Cycle.

Strategies had been put in place to increase support for students. One principal suggested, for example, that first year students were now streamed on the basis of ability to support students, although there were mixed levels in first year classes when they had started out on the T2 specification. Another principal linked the drop in grades with the decision to remove the oral examination from the assessment of Junior Cycle.

- *I suppose for us, I mean probably not the right way to look at things all the time, but results matter. And for us, the results would have significantly decreased as a result of moving to Junior Cycle... The biggest impact we feel on results for us is the oral going. We just feel that has been a major disadvantage. (T2 School B – Principal)*

Some school leaders expressed the view that the grade bands were too broad and that it was more difficult for students to achieve Distinction and Higher Merits because the grade bands are so wide.

Views on CBAs

A mixture of views were expressed regarding the CBAs. However, a main theme that emerged from the analysis of the data was that in some cases, the CBAs were creating pressure and anxiety for students in T2 schools. It was reported that these additional assessments carried out by students were not detracting from the pressure of the final examination even though there were no summative marks awarded for the CBAs.

- *So instead of reducing stress, actually there's increased stress. There's an increased stress because it's happening around the CBAs and for some students, not for all, and we know, it's not intended to be a high stakes exam, but for some students, any exam [causes stress] and some parents. (T2 School D – Deputy Principal)*

Some school leaders explained that students were concerned about the CBAs and that Covid-19 had affected students' levels of anxiety. CBA 2 was particularly challenging when students had to give oral presentations to their peers in Irish. School leaders were referring to their experiences prior to the revised version of CBA2. Some leaders felt that this type of assessment is not suitable for all students and that there is an additional challenge in giving presentations through the medium of Irish when it is the students' second language.

- *Again, this is across the board, it's not just Irish, but you know the CBA in theory is a really good idea and there is real learning and real value in it. Em, it suits some students better than others you know, and the fact that they have to present, it's bad enough to have to present in English, but for some students who struggle absolutely, it's a bigger issue to present in Irish and that's the source of stress and, you know yourselves, in a post-Covid environment.... (T2 School B – Principal)*

The next section looks at the views of the leaders on the supports and obstacles associated with the implementation and provision of the T2 specification.

Supports

According to the T2 leaders, the main supports that helped the implementation of the T2 specification and the provision were: teachers, in-school supports and supports outside of school.

Teachers

All T2 leaders felt that the teachers deserved praise and that teachers themselves were the most essential and important support for the implementation of the specification.

In-school supports

According to the leaders in T2 case study schools, a variety of in-school supports was in place. Professional conversations took place between teachers both on an informal and a more formal basis. One school provided allocated time for professional meetings at specific times throughout the year, and in certain schools, Croke Park hours were also used to focus on Irish.

The timetable was used in one school to increase students' contact time with Irish and an effort was made to provide regular classes during the week rather than having a block of classes at the beginning or end of the week to increase students' engagement with the language.

Co-teaching took place in some of the schools where resources were available. In one school, it was explained that the learning support team helped students who were struggling with Irish. They managed to provide this in-class support as members of the learning support team were fluent in Irish.

Interestingly, an event focused on sharing good practice was established in one school which allowed teachers to share best practice regarding the teaching and learning of Irish.

The textbook also emerged as a support for providing structure for the teaching and learning in Irish in T2 case study schools. The literature and guidance provided in the textbook were deemed helpful.

In relation to supporting students, leaders spoke about debating competitions, quizzes, active learning, Tea & Discussion/Tae agus Plé, Seachtain na Gaeilge, use of the library, Irish in the media and making efforts to have a visible profile of Irish in the school. Leaders stated that technology supported the implementation of the specification, for example, ipads, laptops and Apple TVs.

Supports Outside of School

One leader cited support from the Inspectorate and from the organisations for teachers of Irish as supports for the implementation of the T2 specification. Some school leaders praised teacher professional development services in supporting schools such as online resources, professional development

days and school visits. There was a mixture of views expressed regarding professional development days depending on teachers' feedback. Some leaders also mentioned Cluster Days as a support for T2 schools. On these days, groups of teachers meet in one school location to undertake professional development focused on a particular goal. A network was created between schools that came under a particular management body and events were organised to promote Irish between the schools involved. This network included links between T2 and T1 schools.

Obstacles

A key theme that emerged in relation to obstacles to the implementation of the T2 specification and the provision was a lack of differentiated provision for all post-primary learners in Irish. There were challenges with differentiation regarding teaching, learning and assessment. Differentiation will be considered under the sub-themes: (i) the system of exemptions from Irish, (ii) provision for all post-primary learners and, (iii) the transition from primary to post-primary. Recruitment of teachers will be discussed at a later stage.

The System of Exemptions from Irish

All school leaders spoke about exemptions from Irish. This research shows complexities in the exemption system. There was an increase in the number of parents seeking an exemption for their children in the first year of post-primary school due to the loosening of conditions for granting exemptions. There was complexity in the provision for students who were exempt or seeking an exemption.

One leader explained, for example, that unless students have an exemption coming from the primary school, they have to show that they are failing in Irish in the post-primary school. In some cases, supports were put in place to support first and second year students in post-primary, but despite the supports provided, students would be granted an exemption after a year and a half. It was explained that some parents were seeking an exemption from Irish citing mental health issues. In some cases, it was clear that principals were under pressure from the exemption system and that it was a system that added to their workload.

- *The amount of Irish exemptions being sought for absolutely no good reason. There would have been a time when exemptions would have been only exceptional circumstances, whereas now before a child comes up in for in the first year you will have a letter from a parent stating the grounds on which this exemption should be and now obviously there's a loophole so to speak and they, you know, in the whole thing about anxiety, that it's affecting their child's mental health, you know, and then because the responsibility lies with the Principal to grant those exemptions. (T2 School B – Principal)*

The opinion was also expressed that some students/parents thought it was more difficult to obtain high marks in Irish compared to other subjects and that this increased the number of students seeking an exemption from Irish. One principal said that an exemption was sometimes sought to allow students more time to study another subject.

- *Higher grades in Irish tend to be harder for students to achieve than other subjects. There is a lot of seeking exemptions. (T2 School D – Deputy Principal)*

Another principal pointed out that the focus on reading and writing was troubling some learners and encouraging them to seek an exemption from Irish. In some cases, learning support was provided for students at the allocated time for Irish classes. In another school, learning support was provided in the Irish class as the learning support team had Irish.

One leader spoke about children who arrived in Ireland in the senior years of primary school and who were not given the opportunity to learn Irish in primary school. Therefore, there were children who attended an Irish-medium school and children who had not yet received the opportunity to study Irish at all in the same class, differentiation was very challenging as a result.

- *The teachers then are left in a difficult position in the classrooms because they have children who may have come from a Gaelscoil sitting in front of them, and then you have a child who's sitting in front of you who has never heard the Irish language in their life. (T2 School A – Principal)*

It was clear that there were various reasons for the granting of exemptions but that it is a system that had grown very considerably.

Provision for all Post-Primary learners

Most leaders were of the opinion that the implementation of the T2 specification in Junior Cycle did not support all learners attending the case study schools. Provision for all post-primary learners will be considered under two themes, namely (i) foundation level and (ii) provision for newcomer students.

Foundation Level

Leaders in almost every school expressed the view that the choice between higher level and ordinary level does not cater for all learners who are learning Irish. The ordinary level course was too difficult for some learners, and most leaders recommended that a foundation level course be provided. It was suggested that a foundation level course would give some learners an opportunity to progress at a level that suits them and give them an increased opportunity to achieve success in learning Irish. These leaders explained that some learners definitely needed a foundation level course to give them the opportunity to develop their ability and confidence in Irish. One leader explained that there was a two-level system in place, consisting of a higher level and an ordinary level and that some learners were marginalised as a result.

- *But the foundation level paper, at least the children were able and felt success with the foundation level paper, you know, which is now gone, you know. It wasn't the be all and end all of everything, but those two or three students who couldn't get the success out of the higher levels [ordinary and higher] got it in the Foundation [level]. At least, there was a recognition and an acknowledgement that they learned something. (T2 School A – Principal)*

- *It's about trying to build and maintain student confidence, really, and a sense of achievement and a fact that you know a teacher can say, "Well done. You found it very difficult, but look, I told you, and now here's the proof". (T2 School E – Principal)*

Provision for Newcomer Students

The point was raised that there is no Irish course available for students who have recently arrived in Ireland. It is clear, therefore, that there is no provision at all for this particular group. In one school, there was a high number of newcomer students but there was no provision for them in terms of Irish. It was recommended that provision be made for these students because of the benefits of learning Irish in terms of identity and culture. One of the leaders suggested that a basic communication course could help newcomer learners to experience some of the benefits of learning Irish.

Transitions from Primary to Post-Primary

In some cases, the leaders were of the opinion that the learners' standards of Irish varied greatly depending on the primary school from which they were coming. Learners with a high standard of Irish and learners with lower standards of Irish were being taught in the same class. The overall continuity in the system was questioned.

- *I suppose the question I have is and I don't see evidence of it... There is a link between the primary curriculum, the post primary curriculum, and even within the post primary between Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle, I don't see an integrated approach in any subject, particularly in Irish. (T2 School F – Principal)*

Teacher Recruitment

Some school leaders explained that recruitment and retention of teachers was a challenge. This is an obstacle that affects the provision for the specification.

- *I suppose challenges for me are... the retention, the availability and retention of staff, and I mean, I don't have teachers that are running out of school or anything, but when a vacancy occurs, it's trying to replace them with someone qualified, who'll commit, and then who'll come, and then stay. (T2 School E – Principal)*

Suggested recommendations T2 School Leaders at Phase One

These are the recommendations arising from the interviews with the school leaders in T2 case study schools. It is important to note that data were collected at Phase One of the research.

Oral Examination

- All leaders recommended that a compulsory oral examination be included as part of the summative assessment in Junior Cycle. Drawing on their experiences as school leaders, there were a number of reasons for this recommendation: (i) to give recognition to the speaking of Irish and to encourage students to speak and learn Irish, (ii) to support students in developing oral interaction skills, (iii) to help students prepare for Senior Cycle, (iv) to lessen the pressure of the final assessment and, (v) to support learners of different abilities.

Provide a Foundation Level Course

- It was recommended that a foundation level course be provided to support learners with a range of abilities in learning Irish.

Providing Courses for Newcomer Students

- It was recommended that students newly arrived in Ireland be offered a course in Irish so that they can access the benefits of learning Irish and to support integration.

Summary

All T2 leaders who participated in this research agreed on the need to introduce an oral examination as part of the summative assessment in Junior Cycle. Interviews revealed that there has now been a gap between Junior

Cycle and Senior Cycle since the T2 specification was implemented and that various strategies were in place in schools to further support transition year students. Most leaders expressed the view that it was more difficult to achieve high marks in Irish and that this had a negative impact on the attitudes of teachers and students. While positive views were expressed about the CBAs, this system has created pressure for some students. A range of in-school supports and supports outside of school supported the implementation of the specification in the T2 case study schools. Provision for all learners and differentiation warrants further consideration for various reasons in schools. The system of exemptions from the Irish language was complicated and burdensome. Recruitment of teachers was recognised as another common challenge. Leaders' recommendations were presented. The next part focuses on the experiences and opinions of teachers in T2 case study schools regarding the implementation of Junior Cycle Irish specifications.

Part Four: T2 Teachers

The Experiences and Views of Teachers in T2 Case Study Schools

A main question for the research was: What are school leaders, teachers and students' experiences of the implementation of the Junior Cycle Irish language specifications (T1 & T2) in the areas of teaching, learning and assessment, and what are their opinions regarding this?

This part of the report will focus on teachers' experiences in T2 case study schools on the implementation of the T2 specification and their views in this regard. This question will be considered under the following major themes arising from the analysis of the focus groups with teachers (N=19) in six T2 schools: Transitions, Planning & Supports, Teaching and Learning Approaches, Assessment, Literature, Impact of the Final Examination and Teachers' Recommendations. Sub-themes fall under each of these major themes.

Transitions

According to teachers' reports, there was a gap between the standard of Irish acquired by the students in primary school and the standard of Irish required

to undertake the Irish T2 specification in post-primary school. Teachers from 5 out of 6 schools indicated that there was a lot of work to be done in first year to develop students' understanding of the basic structures of the language and to achieve a basic level of competence. This work had to be done as a starting point. Teachers in two schools expressed the view that the Covid-19 pandemic had adversely affected students' proficiency levels in Irish. Some of the teachers were also of the opinion that there were different standards in Irish in first year depending on the primary school from which the students were coming. Some primary schools were more favourable towards Irish than others. This has had an impact on students' standard of Irish and on teaching and learning in post-primary school. Differentiation was a challenge in the first year of post-primary school. Some students were stronger in terms of Irish than others, especially those coming from an Irish-medium setting or English-medium schools that were strong in terms of Irish. It may be inferred from these findings that, in some cases, the transition from primary to post-primary school poses challenges in relation to Irish and that post-primary teachers in some cases have to focus on the basics of the language prior to implementing the T2 specification.

• *So tá an-mheascán ann ó thaobh cumais de, an-mheascán cumais ann agus bíonn sé deacair freastal ar riachtanais na scoláirí sin, gan trácht a dhéanamh ar litríocht agus rudaí mar sin de sa chéad bhliain. Níl na rudaí bunúsacha ar eolas acu ó thaobh na Gaeilge de. (T2 Scoil A)*

• *So there is a great mix of ability, a great mix of ability and it is difficult to meet the needs of these students, not to mention literature and similar things in first year. They don't know the basics regarding Gaeilge. (T2 School A)*

Planning & Supports

Teachers in some of the case study schools provided examples of shared planning and sharing of resources. Teachers planned together, especially at the beginning of the year and at staff meetings when time was allocated for

planning. Teachers were of the opinion that the T2 specification was complex and that there was a lot to cover within the timeframe of Junior Cycle Irish. Some teachers felt that it was not possible to cover all that was set out in the specification.

Teachers used learning outcomes to plan in particular, when the specification was first implemented. The learning outcomes were not central to daily planning. In some cases, teachers felt it was difficult to interpret some of the learning outcomes and to practically link them to class practice. Some teachers reported that the learning outcomes were very broad and could be interpreted differently by different teachers. The opinion was expressed that the learning outcomes in Irish were more complex than the learning outcomes in other subjects they were teaching.

• *Níl siad soiléir ar chor ar bith i gcomparáid le hábhair eile. Tá siad éasca, mar shampla i Staidéar Gnó. Tá siad éasca chun tuiscint, ach i nGaeilge tá siad ró-deacair agus ró-chasta. (T2 Scoil A)*

• *They are not at all clear when compared to other topics. They are easy, for example in Business Studies. They are easy to understand, but in Irish they are too difficult and too complicated. (T2 School A)*

The teachers used a range of resources to support them in planning and teaching. The teachers praised Facebook Teachers of Irish/Múinteoirí na Gaeilge in particular, for sharing resources with their fellow teachers and explained that this resource helped them to keep 'up to date.' Other supports used by the teachers were: Tuairisc.ie, VIFAX, Textbooks, resources from COGG, TG4 Foghlaim, Google Classroom/TEAMS and professional development days organised by the support services.

Most teachers did not use the support videos provided by the NCCA to support the preparation for the CBAs. Some teachers expressed the view that the standard of Irish shown in the videos was very high and that these exemplars could negatively impact on students' self-confidence in T2 schools.

- *Ag teacht aníos ag an MRB, is féidir linn na taifid sin do na scoláirí eile ag déanamh MRB a thaispeáint inár ranganna. Scaití bíonn sé sin beagáinín scanrúil. Bíonn siad ag rá “Whoa!” (T2 Scoil F)*
- *Coming up to the CBA, we can’t show those recordings to the other students doing CBA in our classes. This is a little bit scary. They say “Whoa!” (T2 School F)*

Teaching and Learning Approaches

Communicative Competence

It is clear from the analysis that the greatest emphasis in Irish in T2 schools was placed on developing students’ communicative competence rather than on the two other strands of the specification, namely, language and cultural awareness and learner’s self-awareness. A range of activities were implemented in schools to develop students’ communicative abilities, for example: competitions, role-play based on the literature, creation of *TikTok* videos, group work, pair work, language games, *Flipgrid*, making audio recordings of pieces of reading and short videos based on a theme. One school cited *Gaeilge24* as an event that encouraged students to speak Irish. Some of the class tasks showed creativity in teaching and learning, as is reflected in the statements that follow.

- *Bhí an comórtas bunaithe ar ceann de na próis a bhí léite acu so bhí orthu aisteoireacht a dhéanamh bunaithe ar Katfish nó rud éigin mar sin. Bhí orthu TikTok a dhéanamh bunaithe air sin, bhí sé greannmhar... bhí orthu dul siar a dhéanamh ar na scéalta agus an foclóir cuí a úsáid. (T2 Scoil B)*
- *The competition was based on one of the prose they had read so they had to act based on Katfish or something like that. They had to make a TikTok, it was funny... they had to revise the stories and use the correct vocabulary. (T2 School B)*

- *Tá cluiche Jenga agam le huimhreacha ar na blocanna agus bíonn bileoga difriúla agam le ceisteanna, is féidir leo an bloc a bhaint amach agus má tá uimhir 1 [acu], cuireann tú ceist uimhir 1 ar do phairtnéir. (T2 Scoil C)*
- *I have a Jenga game with numbers on the blocks and I have different sheets with questions, they can take a block and if they have number 1, you ask your partner question number 1. (T2 School C)*

It was clear that the students enjoyed active learning approaches but that there was time needed to facilitate tasks that were enjoyable and in which the students were active. Teachers felt that time was an obstacle to facilitating language interaction activities as they had a lot to cover for the written exam and they needed to focus on that.

- *Is féidir leat na rudaí deasa sin a dhéanamh an t-am ar fad agus cé go bhfuil cumarsáid déanta acu agus deiseanna labhairt lena chéile is araile, ach, ar an lá, caithfidh siad a bheith in ann suí síos agus an méid sin a scríobh agus tá an-chuid le scríobh acu. (T2 Scoil E)*
- *You can do those nice things all the time and even though they have communicated and had opportunities to talk to each other etc., but on the day they need to be able to sit down and write that much and they have a lot to write. (T2 School E)*

It was also suggested that more time should be given to the development of students’ oral language skills in Irish. It is worth noting, that in some cases, teachers explained that it was difficult to encourage students to speak in Irish in T2 schools. While an attempt was made to do a task through Irish in class, in some cases students were reluctant to speak Irish and spoke in English. A lack of oral language proficiency in Irish was a barrier to the use of the language in the classroom in some cases.

- *Fiú inniu, bhí muid ag déanamh scannáin so foclóir faoi scannáin agus an phictiúrlann, agus bhí ceistneoir acu le cur ar a chéile faoi scannáin. Ach bhí mé ag siúl timpeall an ranga agus bhí siad ag cur na ceisteanna trí Bhéarla ar a chéile. (T2 Scoil A)*

- *Even today, we were doing films and vocabulary about films and the cinema, and they had a questionnaire to put together about films. But I was walking around the class, and they were asking each other the questions in English. (T2 School A)*

Language and Cultural Awareness

The teachers did not give many examples of classroom practice to promote students' language awareness. Emphasis was placed on identifying parts of the structure of the language in certain classes.

- *I suppose nuair a bhíonn tú ag ceartú an obair bhaile, is féidir leat na cóipleabhair a mhalartú agus cuireann tú cúpla treoir ar an gclár bán, you know, cuir líne faoi na briathra difriúla, an bhfuil siad san aimsir chaite, cuir ciorcal timpeall réamhfhocail ... (T2 Scoil C)*

- *I suppose when you're correcting the homework, you can exchange the copybooks and put a few instructions on the whiteboard, you know, put a line about the different verbs, are they in the past tense, circle around a preposition... (T2 School C)*

In some schools, students were asked to record themselves speaking or reading and to re-record after receiving feedback on the pronunciation.

Emphasis was placed on encouraging cultural awareness through various activities in particular, during *Seachtain na Gaeilge*, as well as trips to the cinema, tea mornings, public talks and céilithe. Singing was emphasised as a way of connecting with Irish culture.

- *I suppose ó thaobh an chultúir agus maidir leis an litríocht...em... déanaim iarracht na hamhráin a dhéanamh in áit na ndánta. I mbealach éigin tá sé níos éasca do na daltaí nuair atá amhrán ann agus tá siad in ann éisteacht leis. (T2 Scoil D)*

- *I suppose from a cultural point of view and in relation to literature... em...I try to do the songs instead of poems. In some ways it is easier for the students when there is a song and they are able to listen to it. (T2 School D)*

Teachers in T2 schools recognised that it was a challenge to connect with the Irish speaking community outside of school. Some teachers felt that they did not have enough time to focus on developing cultural awareness apart from in first year due to the pressure of the exam. Teachers in one school spoke about encouraging students to go to the Gaeltacht during the summer. In the same school, students had the opportunity to go on a day trip to the Gaeltacht in first year. Some teachers felt that it was difficult to get guest speakers to visit the school and that such a practice would enhance students' opportunities to develop cultural awareness and connect with a language community outside of school.

Learner's Self-Awareness

Learner's self-awareness was the strand that was least focused on by teachers. In some schools, teachers encouraged students to reflect on work they had completed, for example, what am I learning? What did I learn? How can I improve my work moving forward? The opinion was expressed that some students found it difficult to engage in self-assessment or reflection in a second language. Some teachers felt that reflecting through English was a challenge and that it was very challenging to reflect through Irish for some students.

- *Tá an machnamh á dhéanamh as Béarla sa rang Fraincise agus tá tú ag iarraidh ar dhaltáí gnáthleibhéil agus, i ndáiríre an t-ardleibhéil, é sin a dhéanamh as Gaeilge ... tá sé sin chomh deacair. (T2 Scoil E)*

- *The reflection is in English in the French class, and you are asking ordinary level students and in fact, higher level students to do that in Irish ... that is so difficult. (T2 School E)*

Teachers' views on literature will be considered in the next part.

The Literature

Most teachers in the T2 case study schools were positive about the choice of literature associated with the specification. Teachers in three case study schools were of the opinion that there was still too much literature to be covered in the T2 specification however, and that the literature list had not been sufficiently reduced as a result of the Early Review.

- *Ó thaobh na litríochta, tá laghdú níos mó ag teastáil go géar, i mo thuairimse. (T2 Scoil A)*
- *In terms of literature, a greater reduction is very much needed, in my opinion. (T2 School A)*

In the focus groups, the teachers provided examples of literature that the students liked and examples of classroom activities based on the literature. A range of activities took place such as role-play, drama, and writing based on the literature. Short films emerged as an option that the students particularly liked.

- *Ceapaim féin go dtaitníonn an t-úrscéal go mór leo. So déanaimid an ceann "Cúpla" agus toisc go mbaineann sé le saol an déagóra agus an Ghaeltacht baineann siad an-taitneamh as agus tá a lán féidearthachtaí d'imeachtaí gur féidir leat a dhéanamh as sin. Mar shampla, litir a scríobh ón nGaeltacht, comhrá fóin a bheith agat, ag samhlú gur tusa an phríomhcharachtar. (T2 Scoil C)*

- *I think the story is very appealing to them. So, we do the "Cúpla" one and because it is about the life of a teenager and the Gaeltacht, they really enjoy it and there are many possibilities for activities that you can do drawing from it. For example, write a letter from the Gaeltacht, have a phone conversation, imagining that you are the main character. (T2 School C)*

- *Tá mé ag smaoineamh ar Ghleann Álainn, agus tá an oiread sin is féidir leat a dhéanamh, is féidir cás cúirte a chur ar siúl. Is féidir leat póstaer a dhearadh de chosc a chur ar dhumpáil. Is féidir é sin a nascadh le córas timpeallachta. Is féidir linn an oiread sin a bhaint ó Gleann Álainn. (T2 Scoil E)*

- *I'm thinking about Gleann Álainn, and there's so much you can do, you can have a court case. You can design a poster to prevent dumping. This can be linked to the environment. We can get so much out of it. (T2 School E)*

In some cases, teachers expressed the opinion that some of the literature was not suitable for teenagers and this warrants further investigation as a revised literature list has been provided.

Assessment

The results that fall under the assessment theme will be presented under the sub-themes (i) CBA 1: The Language Portfolio, (ii) CBA 2: Interacting in Irish and (iii) SLAR Meetings.

CBA 1: The Language Portfolio

It must be acknowledged, when gathering the data, that the schools did not have much experience of CBA 1. In relation to the schools that had experience of it, one school was satisfied that CBA 1 had been moved into second year. Some of the teachers spoke about the time pressure that the CBA tasks have created.

CBA 2: Interacting through Irish

Teachers had mixed views on CBA 2. Teachers in School E and School F were pleased that CBA gave the students the opportunity to develop their

language skills and that the experience was good for them. However, they recommended that summative marks should be awarded for the CBAs to give recognition to students' work and that the lack of recognition in the form of marks was affecting students' motivation to engage with the task.

- *Is breá liom an MRB 2. Ceapaim go bhfuil sé go maith dóibh an cur i láthair a dhéanamh, tá sin go hiontach. Ach ní chuireann sé lena marcanna agus is mór an trua é sin mar cuireann muid an-chuid ama isteach ann chun é a dhéanamh leo. (T2 Scoil E)*
- *I love the CBA 2. I think it's good for them to make the presentation, that's great. But it doesn't add to their marks and that's a pity because we put a lot of time into doing it with them. (T2 School E)*

On the other hand, other teachers were critical about the task itself. They criticised that it was considered an interactive language task as students were using flashcards to support them in making the presentation. Sometimes students were unable to answer questions or to discuss and they had memorised the oral delivery. Some teachers saw limitations in the capacity of the task to promote language interaction skills.

- *Agus déanann siad cur i láthair bunaithe ar rud éigin agus foghlaimíonn siad rud éigin de ghlanmheabhair beagnach. Ansin cuireann tú na ceisteanna bunúsacha agus níl siad in ann freagraí a thabhairt duit, tá rud éigin in easnamh sa phróiseas. (T2 Scoil A)*
- *And they do a presentation based on something and they learn something almost off by heart. Then you ask the basic questions, and they are unable to give you answers, there is something missing in the process. (T2 School A)*

It emerged in some of the case study schools that CBA 2 put pressure on some students, and they were nervous to undertake the task. Teachers recommended replacing the CBA with a more meaningful oral examination

which would develop interactive oral languages skills, recognise the work of students and support students who were nervous speaking in front of the class. Teachers were drawing on their experience of CBA 2 prior to the revised guidelines being made available.

Teachers' suggestions in relation to an oral examination will be discussed as their main recommendation. Teachers' views on the SLAR meetings will be looked at in the next section.

SLAR Meetings

The teachers had positive views on their experiences of the SLAR meetings. The meetings provided them an opportunity to speak to their colleagues and the process supported them in making professional judgements, especially when they were not fully sure of the descriptor to be given or when students were on the border of the grading band. Teachers expressed the view that more supports should be provided, for example, examples of student work linked with the descriptors to avoid teachers making subjective decisions.

Experience of the Final Examination

The aim of the research is to explore teachers' experience and views on the implementation of Junior Cycle Irish specifications. The final examination does not directly come under the implementation of the specification, but a key finding from the analysis is that the final examination had a major impact on teaching and learning in class and on teachers' views of the T2 specification. It is important to present these views as a main theme that emerged at Phase One in the research.

According to the teachers, the final examination was not accurately and clearly aligned with the implementation of the specification and there was a mismatch between what was set out in the specification and the experience of teachers and students of the final examination. Important points were raised in the focus groups that need to be reported and addressed. Teachers wanted to support the students as they prepared for the exam as part of their role as professional teachers of Irish. Some teachers explained that this was impossible because they could not in any way predict what would be on the

exam paper. They had to cover a wide range of content but knew that there was a chance that there would be no link to the final exam. The opinion was expressed that the uncertainty about the content of the examination was unfair to the students and that this uncertainty was not giving them the best chance of achieving success in the final examination.

Teachers also reported lower results for schools and lower grades awarded to students since the specifications were implemented. This upset the teachers. Teachers recommended that the grade bands be reviewed and that they were not fair to students. It was also explained that students who had gained a Merit in Irish, that is a mark from 55-74 % were switching to Ordinary Level for the Leaving Cert.

• *Ní bhfuair muid aon ghradam sa scoil seo ó thosaigh an rud agus téann siad ar aghaidh agus faigheann siad H1 san Ardteist. I mean... bíonn i gcónaí duine nó beirt achan bliain ar chóir dóibh é a fháil agus ní fhaigheann siad é. (T2 Scoil B)*

• *We haven't received any distinctions in this school since this started and they go ahead and get an H1 in the Leaving Cert. I mean... there are always one or two people every year who should receive it and they don't get it.. (T2 School B)*

Teachers explained some of the problems specific to the examination paper, for example that some of the students were unable to understand the questions. In that case, while a student may have done a lot of work, having spent a lot of time learning Irish, the outcome of that work would not be evident.

• *Níl sé cothrom ar na daltaí a bhfuil go leor staidéir déanta acu agus rinne siad a lán oibre ar feadh 3 bliana agus ansin focal amháin sa cheist nach dtuigeann siad agus ansin ní féidir leo plé leis an bpáipéar. (T2 Scoil E)*

• *It's not fair to the students who have done a lot of study and done a lot of work for 3 years. And then one word in the question they don't understand and then they can't engage with the paper. (T2 School E)*

It was clear from the reports that the final examination had a negative impact on teachers' experience of, and opinions on, the T2 specification. The recommendations of teachers in T2 case study schools are now considered. It is important to note that data were collected from case-study schools at Phase One of a three year study.

Suggested recommendations T2 Teachers at Phase One Oral Examination

- The main recommendation from the focus groups with teachers in T2 schools is that an oral examination should be part of the summative assessment in Junior Cycle. The teachers in every case study school agreed on this. The main reasons for the suggestion were that the spoken language should be acknowledged, and emphasis should be placed on developing students' oral interaction skills. Teachers felt that an oral examination would help to bridge the gap between Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle. Teachers did not think CBA 2 should replace an oral exam. Teachers who had experience of the oral examination in the Junior Certificate were of the opinion that it should be reintroduced.

Assessment

- It was recommended that teachers be provided with guidance and support so that they could support students in preparing for the final exam.
- It was recommended to review the final exam so that there would be a clear link to class practice.
- It was recommended to review the grading bands.
- It was recommended to give marks to CBA tasks

Linking Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle

- Teachers felt that there was a large gap between Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle and that an oral examination would help to bridge this gap.

Literature

- Many teachers have suggested a further reduction in the amount of literature to be covered. This needs further investigation as data were collected at the first stage of implementing the revised specifications.
- It is recommended that students be allowed to draw on first-year literature in the final examination.

Learning Outcomes

- It was recommended to clarify the learning outcomes.

Provision for all learners of Irish

- It was recommended that a foundation level course be provided to support learners of a range of abilities.

Provision for all learners of Irish

- It was recommended that a foundation level course be provided to support learners of a range of abilities.

Supports

- It was recommended that there be additional supports for T2 schools to support them in connecting with the language community outside of school.

Section Five: Summary of Emerging Themes

This section compares and contrasts the main emerging themes from the T1 and T2 school contexts at Phase One of the research, along with initial recommendations made by school leaders and teachers arising from their experiences of implementing the T1 & T2 specifications. It is important to note that this interim report is the first of two interim reports and these emerging findings may evolve as the study progresses over the next two years. In the subsequent phases of the study, all themes will be explored in more depth and breadth and from the point of view of a variety of participants. The next phase of the research will include a national survey with Irish post-primary teachers, which will give a broader insight into the experience and views of post-primary teachers of Irish regarding the enactment of the T1 and T2 specifications. Focus groups will be held with students in the case study schools in the next phase of research to gather data on their experiences and opinions of the enactment of the specifications. Given the early stages of the study, it is appropriate to highlight themes that merit further exploration. The following section presents the emerging themes from Phase One of the research.

Initial Findings from T1 and T2 School Leaders

School leaders in both T1 and T2 schools agreed that there should be more emphasis on spoken Irish in Junior Cycle and more recognition for oral Irish skills through summative assessment. All school leaders recommended that an oral examination be part of a summative assessment in Junior Cycle for Irish.

Leaders felt that speaking the language needs more recognition to encourage students to speak it, to cater for a variety of learners, to prepare students for Senior Cycle, and to promote Irish as a living language.

T1 leaders emphasised that Irish is more important than a subject in T1 schools as it is the language of the area and/or the home and because it is the language of the school. It emerged that there were significant difficulties caused by the differentiated summative final assessment particularly in the case of T1 schools where there was a significant drop in high grades for T1 students since the original T1 specification was implemented in 2017. This may be due to separate grading for T1 and T2 students, broader grade bands at Junior Cycle and the final examination itself. Most leaders in the T2 case study schools also indicated that it was more difficult to achieve high marks in Irish compared to other subjects. The significant drop in higher marks for T1 students in particular was negatively impacting on schools' experiences of the differentiated provision and the opinion was expressed that T1 students were currently at a disadvantage due to the differentiated summative assessment. This was an issue of great concern in T1 case study schools.

T1 and T2 school leaders commended teachers and indicated that the teachers themselves were the primary source of support for the schools in the implementation of the specifications. T2 schools had some school events to promote Irish. Strengths of the implementation in T1 schools were links with the community outside the school and the whole-school approach which was in place to support the implementation of the specification and to support the promotion of Irish as the living language of the school. Support schemes

were another strength which aided the implementation of the T1 specification in some cases, for example schemes offered as part of the recognition scheme for Gaeltacht schools, as well as schemes provided by Irish language organisations. Professional conversations supported the enactment of the specifications in both contexts.

Challenges emerged in both contexts in terms of curriculum provision to cater for all post-primary learners. There were challenges in the provision with regard to supporting inclusive education – for students with a range of abilities, for students with additional educational needs and for newcomer students in T1 and T2 schools. Most T2 school leaders in case study schools suggested the need for a foundation level course. These initial findings suggest that greater supports are needed to cater for all learners and this should be carefully considered. It was challenging for T1 schools to access the recommended texts. The recruitment of qualified teachers was challenging in both T1 and T2 school contexts.

The research indicates that the system of exemptions is causing difficulties in the T2 system in a variety of ways. There were various reasons for seeking an exemption from Irish in T2 post-primary schools and the system showed great complexity. Data gathered suggest that it is difficult for principals to reject the granting of an exemption. This issue should be explored in depth in another study. The research revealed that in some cases there was a gap between primary and post-primary level in terms of the standard of Irish depending on the primary school from which the students were coming and other circumstances. T2 leaders felt that students may not be sufficiently prepared for the summative written and oral assessments at Senior Cycle and in some schools, measures were put in place at Senior Cycle to address the gap.

Initial Findings of T1 and T2 Teachers

The initial findings will be discussed under the themes highlighted in the research for tender as well as the themes emerging from teachers' data.

Transitions

In both T1 and T2 school contexts, transition from primary to post-primary was challenging. The learners' standards of Irish varied and, in some cases, according to the teachers, many basic aspects of the language had to be covered by students in first year. Issues with differentiation arose in both contexts. There was a mix of standards in first year classes. Differentiation was particularly needed in the following instances: when students were coming from an English-medium primary school to a T1 post-primary school; when students had additional educational needs; when learners were newly arrived in Ireland, where additional support was required due to the gap in standards between primary and post-primary and due to the greater emphasis placed on reading and writing at post-primary level. Some of the teachers explained that Covid-19 had an impact on students' self-confidence when speaking Irish. The T1 and T2 teachers placed great emphasis on promoting the speaking of Irish in first year and on developing students' confidence and ability to speak Irish. A particular emphasis was placed on the development of linguistic richness and accuracy in T1 school contexts. Teachers used a range of methodologies to support students' development of confidence and competence in speaking Irish.

Planning and Supports

Teachers in T1 schools used a shared drive and they prepared and shared their own teaching notes with each other. There was shared planning between teachers in both T1 and T2 contexts, particularly at the beginning of the year and informal professional conversations took place between teachers in each case study school. While teachers drew on the learning outcomes of the T1 and T2 specifications, in some cases teachers explained that the learning outcomes were very broad and unclear.

Teachers in T1 case study schools experienced greater difficulty in accessing texts and this increased their workload. T1 schools were appreciative of the work of COGG in providing resources for T1 schools. However, at Phase One T1 teachers were of the opinion that many texts were not available in the local dialect and that this negatively impacted the work of the class and the students' understanding of the texts. The textbook was a resource for T2

teachers, and this gave them access to the texts. Many of the teachers in the T1 case study schools enjoyed planning based on the literature. Although the final exam is not a direct focus of this research, it emerged that the vast majority of teachers in both contexts were dissatisfied with guidance provided on the final exam, as well as the exam itself. They were concerned about being able to support students in the final examination.

Teachers used a wide range of resources in T1 and T2 case study schools; for example the COGG Portal, a list of texts from the NCCA, *Tuairisc.ie*, TG4 and the Facebook page Múinteoirí na Gaeilge. T1 and T2 teachers reported that they would like more resources to support the teaching of Irish. Further supports were sought in relation to illustrative examples of the features of quality associated with the CBA tasks. Schools praised some of the support schemes provided by Irish language organisations such as Conradh na Gaeilge's *Gaeilge 24* and Gael-Linn's *Gaelbhratach*. There were support schemes in the Gaeltacht which assisted in the implementation of the specification and students' language development. Trips to the Gaeltacht were recognised as a support for the promotion of Irish by a number of T1 and T2 schools outside of the Gaeltacht.

Teachers recommended further resources be made available to support the teaching of Irish. It was recommended that supports be provided for students with additional educational needs. Provision and supports for newcomer students should be considered. It was recommended that additional extra-curricular activities through Irish would be welcome and that there should be more opportunities for T2 schools to connect with the language community outside of school. Increased time for professional development would also be welcomed.

Teaching and Learning Approaches

As presented in Section Four, a varied and rich range of pedagogies were implemented in case study schools to enact the learning outcomes of the T1 and T2 specifications and to develop students' competence and confidence in Irish. In this initial phase of the study, teachers shared their experiences of

using creativity and innovation in their teaching methodologies which were student centred and differentiated to meet the needs of a variety of learners.

In T2 schools, the main focus was on the strand of developing communicative competence. A range of activities were implemented in schools to develop students' communicative abilities, for example: role-play based on the literature, creation of *TikTok* videos, group work, pair work, language games, *Flipgrid*, making audio recordings of pieces of reading and short videos based on various themes. In certain T2 contexts, it was challenging to facilitate tasks through the medium of Irish in T2 schools. There was a focus on the three strands in T1 schools, with a particular emphasis on developing communicative competence and language and cultural awareness. T1 schools had greater opportunities to promote Irish on a whole-school basis and to make links with the language community outside of school. Class based, whole school and extracurricular activities took place in T1 schools. There were examples of creativity in teaching when drawing on the literature in many of the case study schools. Teachers in T1 and T2 schools strongly recommended that an oral language exam be introduced to allow more time to focus on the development of oral language interaction skills in class. In many cases, teachers reported having to focus on reading and writing due to the absence of an oral exam. They felt that a predominant focus on reading and writing was not suitable for all learners of Irish.

Literature

According to the teachers, students enjoyed a variety of texts and teachers felt that there was a wide choice of texts available. Students enjoyed short films in particular, and teachers shared examples of novels, short stories, poems and songs that the students enjoyed. The reduced volume of literature introduced in September 2023 following the Early Enactment Review (Mac Gearailt & Ó Duibhir, 2023), was well received by some T1 and T2 teachers, however many of the teachers in both school contexts were of the opinion that the amount of literature to be covered was still too much. Therefore, it will be important to further monitor this change over the course of this longitudinal study. T1 teachers stated that texts were not available in local dialects and that

this increased students' workload in terms of understanding the language. It was recommended that more texts be provided in the dialect of the area for T1 schools. Teachers in both school contexts indicated that it would support students if they could draw on first year literature in the final exam. This could be explored further.

Formative Assessment

Teachers had mixed views on CBA 1 and CBA 2. Teachers questioned the merits of CBA 1 but not all teachers in case study schools had experience of it as yet. Teachers had more experience of CBA 2. In some cases, teachers liked CBA 2 because learners had the opportunity to complete a task that was of interest to them. However, teachers questioned whether CBA 2 was an authentic language interaction task or whether it was a presentation. Some students were anxious about speaking in front of their peers; this theme was stronger in T2 schools where Irish was learned as a second language. Teachers were of the opinion that CBA 2 could not replace the oral examination and that an oral examination was required as part of the summative assessment of Junior Cycle. The revised guidelines for the CBA were introduced in September 2023, therefore it will take more time to monitor this change over the course of this longitudinal study. T1 and T2 teachers were of the opinion that marks should be awarded for CBA 2 to give recognition to students' work. The teachers in the schools were generally positive about the SLAR meetings as they provided an opportunity to discuss professional judgments with their colleagues and share ideas with each other.

Experience of the Final Examination

A key theme that emerged was that the vast majority of teachers expressed dissatisfaction with the final exam. T1 teachers, in particular, reported that the T1 results did not accurately reflect the oral language proficiency of the students and the high standard of spoken Irish they had acquired from home and/or school. All teachers recommended that a summative oral language assessment should be introduced for Junior Cycle. It was suggested that an oral examination would give teachers a greater opportunity to focus on spoken Irish skills in class and that this was extremely important in developing

competent Irish speakers and in fostering Irish as a living language. An oral examination would give students the opportunity to demonstrate their oral language skills and would be more suitable for learners of varying ability. An oral examination in Junior Cycle would also support students in preparing for the oral examination in Senior Cycle.

T1 and T2 teachers were of the opinion that the summative assessment was not suitable for all learners of Irish. The awarding of marks, the guidance provided about the examination, as well as lack of recognition for oral skills in summative assessment were dissatisfactory for T1 and T2 teachers in Phase One of this research. In some cases, the wording of the exam was difficult for some students to understand. Teachers reported that there was a disconnect between the specification, the pedagogies used by them to enact it and the final summative exam. Teachers in Phase One of this research have requested further clarity and guidance in relation to the final summative exam and that the grading system should be reviewed for T1 schools in particular. Teachers reported that the T1 exam was unfair to students.

Limitations of the research

Twelve schools were involved in the research and this report is an insight into their experiences of and opinions on the implementation of Junior Cycle Irish specifications. The findings from individual case study schools provide rich and in-depth description, but these findings cannot be generalised to every school in the country. There were common findings across the experience and opinions of leaders and teachers in T1 and T2 case study schools. School leaders and teachers shared their experiences and opinions of the implementation of Junior Cycle Irish language specifications at the initial stage of implementing the specifications September 2023. In doing so they also drew on their previous experiences of implementation of this differentiated curriculum which was originally provided in 2017.

Conclusion and Next Steps

This interim report provides an insight into the teaching and learning of Irish at Junior Cycle in 12 case study schools, six T1 post-primary schools and six T2 post-primary schools. The research shows that school leaders and teachers are working diligently in both school contexts to provide students with high-quality teaching and learning experiences in Irish. This report presents initial themes from 12 case study schools along with some initial recommendations from school leaders and teachers. Further stages of the study will provide more insight into the teaching and learning of Irish at Junior Cycle and provision for the specifications in T1 and T2 contexts.

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Appendix A

Example of T1 and T2 questions for the Principal/Deputy Principal

- Tell me about your experience and opinions on the implementation of Junior Cycle Irish specifications in your school? (* differentiated provision T1 and T2)
- What supports facilitate/help the implementation of the Irish specifications/ provision for the teaching and learning of Irish?
- Are there any obstacles, in particular, to the implementation of the specifications/ provision for the teaching and learning of Irish?
- What is your experience as a post-primary principal/deputy principal of the changes in assessment and reporting in Irish at Junior Cycle since 2017, and how have these impacted your school?
- Does the implementation of the specifications cater for all learners who are learning Irish in your opinion?
- Do you see differences in the implementation of the T1/T2 application?
- Is there anything else you would like to say about the needs of learners and the T1/T2 specifications?
- Would you have any specific recommendations regarding the provision for Irish at the Junior Cycle?

Appendix B

Questions for Focus Groups with Teachers

Continuity and Transition – Year one

1. Is the implementation of specifications building on the Irish that students have acquired when transferring from primary school?

Planning

2. How do you plan your Irish lessons – shared planning, individual planning?
3. How do you use your professional freedom (professional judgement) as a teacher?

Communicative Competence (T1/T2 Specification)

4. Give examples of the communicative activities/tasks you facilitate for learners to develop communication skills in Irish?
5. Would you have recommendations for promoting students' language interaction skills?

Language and Cultural Awareness (T1/T2 Specification)

6. Give examples of activities that you provide/facilitate to develop learners' language and cultural awareness in class? (Hint: cultural awareness – the Gaeltacht community, the Irish language community outside of school, the international Irish language community)
7. Would you have recommendations for promoting students' linguistic and cultural awareness?

Learner's Self-awareness (T1/T2 Specification)

8. Give examples of activities you provide/facilitate to develop student's' self-awareness skills as language learners? (Hint: language learning strategies, reflection strategies, self-assessment strategies, self-directed learning, self-correction)?
9. Would you have recommendations for promoting learner's self-awareness?

The Integrated Development of language (T1/T2 Specification)

10. What language/strand skills are most emphasised in the class? Why?
(Hint: 5 skills – listening, speaking, reading, writing, speech interaction)

Learning Outcomes

11. How do you use the learning outcomes? Are the learning outcomes in the specifications clear and helpful for teaching, learning and assessment?
Please provide explanations and examples.

The role of literature

12. How does literature support students' language development? (Hint: What are the most effective texts/genres to support the development of language skills? Do you consider the number and quality of texts appropriate? 2023 Specification – What texts do students like the most?).

Inclusion

13. In your opinion, does the implementation of the specifications support the language needs of all students in your classes (Hint: T1/T2/speakers of students with additional educational needs, students who do not have Irish/English as their home language)?

Assessment

14. What is your experience of and views on CBA 1 (The Language Portfolio), CBA 2 (Interacting through Irish)?
15. What do you think about the CBA being in two different years?
16. Would you have suggestions for the formative assessment (CBA 1 (Portfolio)/CBA 2 (speech interaction task/Assessment task)?
17. How do you assess students' oral skills/speech interaction skills in Irish?
18. What is your experience of the Subject Learning and Assessment Review (SLAR) process?

Supports & Procurement

19. What supports are most useful to you as a teacher? (Hint: Examples of student work on the NCCA website/NCCA Assessment Instructions/List of texts for first year (T1 and T2), list of texts for second and third year (T1 and T2), supports outside of school)
20. What supports should be provided to teachers?

Opinions

21. What changes are most significant for you since the Junior Cycle Irish T1/T2 specifications/ differentiated provision for Irish at Junior Cycle were implemented? Share positive points or any challenges in teaching/ learning/assessment.
22. Is the T1 specification supporting the language needs of learners in T1 schools -native Irish speakers? Please explain.
23. Would you have specific suggestions for the implementation/ provision for the specifications in the context of T1/T2 in particular?
24. What are the main differences between the implementation of the T1/T2 specifications?
25. Would you like to say anything else?

