

Research into the demand for Welsh language subtitling in Wales



Research into the demand for Welsh
language subtitling in Wales

£9.99

ISBN 0 900634 82 0

June 2001

Conducted in Partnership with **S4C**

Foreword

This research comes out of a true partnership between S4C and RNID Cymru, both of whom were keen to know whether there was a need and demand for comprehensive Welsh language subtitles.

S4C is committed to providing a Welsh language programme service, and extending the opportunity to access the programmes for non-Welsh speaking and deaf and hard of hearing people through the use of English subtitles. S4C also provides subtitles on Teletext 889 in simplified Welsh for Learners as additional support to the programme service.

Many deaf and hard of hearing people have seen their lives transformed by subtitles. These have enabled them to stay informed, to widen their horizons and, perhaps most important, to share in the experiences that hearing people take for granted. Television is a primary source of information and education as well as entertainment. It provides a crucial link to the outside world, forming many of the cultural ties that bind us together as a society. Therefore, it is no surprise that deaf and hard of hearing viewers consider the increase in subtitling provision on television one of the most significant improvements in the quality of their life in the last 10 years.

RNID Cymru provides a range of information in both Welsh and English but has limited information about the number of deaf and hard of hearing Welsh speakers and their specific needs.

S4C has a commitment to providing good quality subtitles on its programming and RNID and RNID Cymru are involved in a range of subtitling issues and campaigns. With the development of cable and satellite platforms and the recent launch of digital television, RNID is working to ensure that deaf and hard of hearing people are not sidelined from the advancements of these new technologies.

This research serves as an important step in understanding and responding to the needs of deaf and hard of hearing people in Wales.

Huw Jones

Chief Executive
S4C

Jim Edwards

Director
RNID Cymru

Contents	Page
Foreword	
1. Introduction	6
2. Key issues	7
3. The sample	8
4. Characteristics of respondents	8
4.1 age/gender	
4.2 level of hearing loss	
4.3 preferred language/ability to speak and read Welsh	
5. English subtitles on English programmes	12
5.1 knowledge/use of English subtitles on programmes in English	
5.2 reasons English subtitles are used with English language programmes	
5.3 how people found/find out about subtitling	
5.4 future use of English language subtitles on English language programmes	
6. English subtitles on Welsh programmes	17
6.1 closed caption English subtitles on Welsh programmes	
6.2 open caption English subtitles	
7. Welsh for Learners subtitles on Welsh programmes	20
7.1 present use of Welsh for Learners subtitles	
7.2 future use of Welsh for Learners subtitles	
8. Interest in and ability of respondents to use comprehensive Welsh language subtitles in future	22
8.1 interest in comprehensive Welsh language subtitles	
8.2 need for/ability to use comprehensive Welsh language subtitles	
9. Conclusion	24
10. Subtitles on television questionnaire	25

1. Introduction

At present some 60% of English broadcasting on the four main channels is subtitled. While subtitles are designed for the use of deaf and hard of hearing people, a wide range of people use them. Some of these people may not identify themselves as deaf or hard of hearing and use subtitles because “people on television mumble” or “there is too much background noise on television”. Both reasons are of course related to hearing loss. Other people use subtitles for programmes where there are strong regional/national accents or to understand the words to songs such as on *Top of the Pops*.

S4C retransmits Teletext subtitles for deaf or hard of hearing people during transmission of its English language output, which consists of programmes derived from the Channel Four service. S4C tries to replay the Teletext subtitles for programmes shown on Channel Four whenever a Channel Four programme is present as part of the S4C service. S4C broadcasts Welsh language programmes on two separate services, providing English subtitling on over 70% of Welsh language programmes on its analogue service and well ahead of the targets specified for its digital service.

Subtitling is also available as a limited service on S4C 2, providing English subtitles on around 17% of the recorded sessions from the National Assembly. These subtitles enable hearing people who are non-Welsh speakers or with a poor or limited understanding of Welsh, in addition to deaf and hard of hearing people, to follow the programmes in English. S4C also provides Welsh for Learners subtitles for an average of 10 hours per week. At present S4C does not provide comprehensive Welsh language subtitles.

The primary purpose of this research is to find out whether there is a need for comprehensive Welsh language subtitles on Welsh language programmes. RNID Cymru is concerned that deaf and hard of hearing people in Wales, whose preferred language is Welsh, are being disenfranchised from appreciating programmes in Welsh, having access only to English subtitles or simplified Welsh subtitles. S4C was also keen to identify whether there were people who would benefit from comprehensive Welsh language subtitles. They were particularly keen to identify the number of people who wanted Welsh subtitles and who had the Welsh language reading ability that would enable them to use them. The research also looks at advertising and other aspects of the use of subtitles in Wales.

The project was carried out over the period May to October 2000.

The objectives of the project were to:

- 1) establish baseline information of people’s knowledge and use of both English language and Welsh for Learners subtitles in Wales;
- 2) identify the subtitling usage and needs of both deaf and hard of hearing people and Welsh language users;
- 3) identify whether there is a demand/need for comprehensive Welsh language subtitles on S4C’s Welsh language television programmes; and
- 4) present the issues resulting from the research.

2. Key issues

1. There were over 1,000 respondents to the survey, comprising roughly two equally-sized sub-groups: (a) RNID Cymru members and supporters and (b) S4C viewers (people on the S4C magazine *Sgrin* mailing list). These respondents proved to represent very different groups and therefore some of the results are given separately.
2. Over 90% of the RNID Cymru respondents (550 people) to the survey are deaf or hard of hearing. In this sample there were however relatively few people who were comfortable with or could read Welsh well enough to use comprehensive Welsh subtitles.
 - 70% use subtitles whenever they watch television (in English)
 - 4% say Welsh is their most comfortable language, with around 6% saying they read Welsh fluently and an additional 6% saying they can read Welsh adequately
 - 5% use Welsh for Learners subtitles, and 7% say they would like comprehensive Welsh subtitles.
3. 59% of the S4C respondents (565 people) said Welsh was their most comfortable language with just over 60% saying they read Welsh fluently. Conversely, only 23% were deaf or hard of hearing.
 - 9% use subtitles whenever they watch television (in English), 25% use them at least once a week
 - 59% use Welsh as their most comfortable language, with over 60% saying they read Welsh fluently and an additional 17% saying they can read Welsh adequately
 - 20% always use English subtitles with Welsh language programmes, with around 20% using them sometimes. 31% use Welsh for Learners subtitles
 - 41% wanted to try comprehensive Welsh language subtitles – 25% wanted comprehensive Welsh language subtitles, with an additional 16% wanting to try them.
4. Overall, around a third of all respondents (323 people), primarily the S4C survey respondents, expressed interest in using or trying comprehensive Welsh language subtitles.
5. 182 (17%) of total respondents both had the Welsh language skills to enable them to use comprehensive Welsh subtitles and wanted to try or use them. This represents over 30% of the S4C survey group.
6. 54 people (5% of total respondents) who were deaf or hard of hearing, had sufficient Welsh language skills to enable them to use comprehensive Welsh subtitles and wanted to try or to use them. This group divides equally between deaf and hard of hearing S4C viewers and RNID Cymru Welsh language users.
7. There was some use of and interest in Welsh for Learners subtitles – 147 (13%) people presently used them with an additional 238 (21%) people wanting to try them. 49% of respondents were unaware of Welsh for Learners subtitles (33% of S4C respondents). Of the people currently using Welsh for Learners subtitles, over 60% read Welsh very well (95 people, 8% of the survey respondents). Around 30% of those who use them mentioned hearing loss as the reason for their use.

3. The sample

The survey was based on a postal questionnaire, the content of which was agreed by S4C and RNID Cymru and piloted on a number of deaf and hard of hearing people. A copy of the questionnaire is enclosed as Appendix 1. The questionnaire was circulated to all RNID Cymru members and one in four readers of the S4C magazine *Sgrin*, a total of 10,000 people. The questionnaires were distributed in mid-May 2000.

Table 1 Sampling frame

Sampling frame	Number receiving questionnaires	Number of completed questionnaires returned	Response rate
RNID membership (all members and RNID-interested people in Wales)	1,500	550	36.6%
S4C (1/4 of <i>Sgrin</i> mailing list)	8,500	565	6.6%

As shown in the table, 1,115 questionnaires were returned. The sample groups were very different and in most cases the two samples have been analysed separately.

The return rate amongst RNID Cymru supporters and members was high as the majority are deaf or hard of hearing people and dedicated users of subtitles. Therefore they have an interest in ensuring and strengthening the subtitling service.

Less than 7% of the readers of *Sgrin* magazine returned the questionnaire. While this is a lower rate of return than that of RNID members, it is consistent with the rate of return for a previous *Sgrin* questionnaire survey. Another recent questionnaire survey carried out by *Sgrin* magazine readership generated a 12% response rate.

4. Characteristics of respondents

4.1 age/gender

The age distribution is younger than might have been expected, given the propensity of deaf and hard of hearing people amongst older people in the population – well over half of all deaf and hard of hearing people are over 65.

Table 2 Age

Age Group	S4C		RNID Cymru		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<24	86	15	46	8	132	12
25 - 44 yrs	142	25	117	21	259	23
45 - 64 yrs	191	34	167	30	358	32
65 or over	134	24	214	39	348	31
No answer	12	2	6	2	18	2
Total	565	100	550	100	1115	100

Table 3 Gender

Gender	S4C		RNID Cymru		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	217	38	238	43	455	41
Female	320	57	272	49	592	53
No answer	28	5	40	8	68	6
Total	565	100	550	100	1115	100

4.2 level of hearing loss

Respondents were asked a range of questions in order to identify whether or not they experienced any level of hearing loss. One in seven people in the UK experience hearing loss, with many people failing to acknowledge their difficulties. (For example, of the five million people who would benefit from hearing aids, only two million have them.)

In order to elicit information about hearing loss from people who would not normally identify themselves as deaf or hard of hearing, a general question was asked:

“Do you have any problem with your hearing? For example, do you have difficulties following what people are saying in noisy places or difficulty hearing the television?”

While this question may appear vague, one which everyone regardless of hearing loss might agree with, it is a question which has been tested in research as identifying people who are beginning to experience hearing loss as well as those with higher degrees of loss.

Table 4 Some hearing loss

Some hearing loss*	S4C		RNID Cymru		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Hearing loss	358	66	492	95	850	80
Total**	543		515		1058	

*Based on self-classification – the respondents’ answer to the question, “Do you have any problem with your hearing? For example, do you have difficulties following what people are saying in noisy places or difficulty hearing the television?”

**Total who responded to the question.

Another question was designed to identify those people who recognise themselves as deaf or hard of hearing. Respondents were asked to classify themselves on the basis of whether they were profoundly deaf, severely deaf, hard of hearing or hearing.

Table 5 Degree of hearing loss

Degree of hearing loss*	S4C		RNID Cymru		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Profound hearing loss	7	2	205	39	212	21
Severe hearing loss	20	4	116	22	136	14
Hard of hearing	79	17	170	32	249	25
Hearing	360	77	37	7	397	40
Total**	466	100	528	100	994	100

*Based on respondents' self-classification in answer to the question, "Please indicate whether you are hearing, profoundly deaf, severely deaf, hard of hearing".

**Total who responded to the question.

A third question asked people whether they used any aids or devices to support their hearing when watching television. The results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6 Use of hearing aids/other devices for watching TV*

Type of aid	S4C		RNID Cymru		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Turning up sound	69	12	114	21	183	16
Lipreading	8	1	143	26	151	14
TV listening aid**	8	1	106	19	114	10
Hearing aid	47	8	293	53	340	30
Total***	565		550		1115	

*People could have ticked more than one box, categories not mutually exclusive.

**A total of 47 people asked for information about TV listening aids, equal numbers from each S4C and RNID group.

***Total sample group, not all responded to this question.

Not surprisingly, whilst the RNID sample has much greater levels of hearing loss than those who returned the questionnaires from the S4C sample, the S4C respondents have a higher degree of hearing loss than the population as a whole.

Tables 4, 5 and 6 show that over 60% of the S4C respondents have some level of hearing loss, with 23% who acknowledge their loss and 8% wearing hearing aids. In the population as a whole, 20% of adults are deaf or hard of hearing with only some 3% having hearing aids. Clearly S4C viewers with hearing loss were more likely to respond to the questionnaire.

4.3 preferred language/ability to speak and read Welsh

In order to determine whether people would be able to cope with the amount of Welsh text that comprehensive subtitles would require, a range of questions to elicit people's ability to read Welsh text were asked. There was concern that many Welsh speakers may lack the necessary Welsh literacy skills required to enable usage of comprehensive Welsh subtitles. The survey identified:

- whether the questionnaire was completed in Welsh
- what respondents saw as their most comfortable language
- respondents' ability to read Welsh, and
- the range of materials they read in Welsh.

Table 7 Language in which questionnaires completed

	S4C		RNID Cymru		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Welsh	294	52	16	3	310	28
English	271	48	534	97	805	72
Total	565	100	550	100	1115	100

As can be seen, almost all the people who completed the questionnaire in Welsh were S4C respondents. Few RNID Cymru members chose the Welsh version of the questionnaire.

Table 8 Language in which respondents felt most comfortable*

	S4C		RNID Cymru		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Welsh	333	59	24	4	357	32
English	249	44	451	82	700	63
Other spoken lang.	1		2		3	
BSL	5	1	101	18	106	10
Other sign lang.	-		14	3	14	1
Total	565	*	550	*	1115	*

*Some people ticked more than one answer.

Table 9 Ability to read Welsh

Can you read Welsh?	S4C		RNID Cymru		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes, fluently	349	62	33	6	382	34
Yes, adequately	95	17	34	6	129	12
Yes, but find it a struggle	75	13	75	14	150	13
No	40	7	392	71	432	39
Total	565	99	550	101	1115	100

Table 10 Ability in the Welsh language

	S4C		RNID Cymru		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
I can understand, speak, write and read Welsh extremely well	287	51	16	3	307	27
I can understand, speak, write and read Welsh quite well	155	27	30	5	185	17
I can understand, speak, write and read a little Welsh	51	9	28	5	79	7
I can understand and speak some Welsh	20	4	22	4	42	4
I can understand a little Welsh	30	5	96	17	126	11
I can't understand or speak Welsh	17	3	343	62	360	32
No answer	5	1	15	4	20	2
Total	565	100	550	100	1115	100

Just over 300 questionnaires were completed in Welsh, with over 350 respondents stating Welsh was their most comfortable language. Whichever way the question was asked there were around 300-350 people, a third of the survey (60% of S4C sample), with good Welsh reading skills and an ability to manage subtitles in Welsh. Most of these people were S4C respondents. RNID members, many more of whom are deaf, are less likely to use Welsh and/or have the level of Welsh language required for Welsh subtitle use.

Table 11 Types of material read in Welsh

	S4C		RNID Cymru		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Books	316	56	25	5	341	31
Newspapers	307	54	24	4	331	30
Magazines	343	61	31	6	374	34
Letters/correspondence	304	54	24	4	328	29
Forms/leaflets	300	53	33	6	333	30
None/no answer	99	18	478	87	577	52
Total	565	*	550	*	1115	*

*Some people ticked more than one answer.

5. English subtitles on English programmes

5.1 knowledge/use of English subtitles on programmes in English

There was a very high level of ownership of Teletext televisions in the survey – 89% of S4C and 92% of RNID respondents. There was a similarly high awareness of how to access closed caption subtitles – 89% of S4C and 92% of RNID respondents. There were however 60 people, 5% of the survey, who had little or no knowledge of subtitling and requested more information on how to access them. Of those not presently using English subtitles, 80 people (7%) said they planned to try them in future (see Table 19).

This survey is an improvement on the previous levels of awareness identified by RNID in 1998 where across the UK only 77% of people had Teletext televisions and 59% knew how to access subtitles.¹

Table 12 shows the frequency with which respondents use subtitles in the two sample groups.

Table 12 Use of English subtitles with English programmes

	S4C		RNID Cymru		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes, whenever possible	49	9	363	69	412	38
Yes, at least once a day	34	6	31	6	65	6
Yes, at least once a week	56	10	19	4	75	7
Yes, at least once a month	23	4	11	2	34	3
Yes, less often	71	13	29	5	100	9
No, never	310	57	76	14	386	36
Total*	543	99	529	100	1072	99

*Total number who responded to this question.

The two samples are clearly very different. The S4C respondents, while having lower usage of subtitles than RNID respondents, still have a higher usage than the population as a whole. (Again this is likely to be a reflection of the self-selection that the questionnaire generated.) Previous research of the UK population suggests 5% using subtitles all the time.

5.2 reasons English subtitles are used with English language programmes

Table 13 details the degree of deafness by the use of subtitles.

Table 13 Usage of English subtitles by degree of hearing loss

	Severely/ profoundly deaf		Hard of hearing		Hearing		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes, whenever possible	275	81	106	45	31	6	412	38
Yes, at least once a day	19	6	17	7	29	6	65	6
Yes, at least once a week	10	3	14	6	51	10	75	7
Yes, at least once a month	3	1	4	1	27	5	34	3
Yes, less often	11	3	21	9	68	14	100	9
No, never	22	6	75	32	289	58	386	36
Total*	340	100	237	100	495	99	1072	99

*Total number who responded to this question.

¹ NOP Omnibus Research for RNID (November 1998) as printed in *Subtitling for Deaf and Hard of Hearing People*, RNID June 1999.

Not surprisingly, subtitle use is related to the level of hearing loss. Table 14 shows some of the reasons people gave for using English subtitles.

Table 14 Reason respondents use subtitles with English language programmes

	S4C		RNID Cymru		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Because I have hearing problems	45	8	385	70	430	39
Because people on TV mumble a lot/ you can't always catch the words	81	14	139	25	220	20
Because of background noise on TV	55	10	107	19	162	14
To avoid having the sound up too loud	98	17	127	23	225	20
Because of background noise in my house	81	14	50	9	131	12
Because some accents or words used are unfamiliar	56	10	75	14	131	12
Because my English isn't too good	5	1	19	3	24	2
Total*	565	*	550	*	1115	*

*Not all respondents completed this question and some ticked more than one box. Percentage relates to the total sample rather than the number completing this question.

Around 17%-20% of S4C respondents were using subtitles for reasons related to hearing loss, for example: 'because people on TV mumble a lot/you can't always catch the words' or to avoid having the sound up too loud' – classic answers of people with a hearing loss. Deaf and hard of hearing people in the RNID sample were clearly relying on subtitles to watch and enjoy television.

5.3 how people found/find out about subtitling

Respondents were also asked how they first learned about closed caption subtitles. This information is provided in Table 15.

Table 15 How respondents learned about closed caption subtitles

	S4C		RNID Cymru		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Through school/health/other professionals/ organisations	17	3	72	25	89	17
Through family/friends	52	22	88	30	140	27
Through TV on-screen promotions	142	61	92	32	234	45
Through posters/hoardings/petrol pump adverts	5	2	3	1	8	2
Through newspapers/magazines	51	22	60	21	111	21
Total*	232	**	291	**	523	**

*Total number answering question.

**Some respondents ticked more than one answer.

S4C respondents who answered the question were more likely to become aware through on-screen promotions, while RNID respondents were more likely to find out through professional contacts or family and friends. As seen in Table 16 this difference can be related to hearing loss for those who are severely or profoundly deaf. As part of the professional support at audiology clinics deaf and hard of hearing people should have been told about subtitles. This has clearly happened for severely and profoundly deaf people but not to the same extent for those who are hard of hearing.

Table 16 How respondents learned about closed caption subtitles by hearing status

	Severely/ profoundly deaf		Hard of hearing		Hearing		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Through school/health/other professionals/organisations	54	27	9	9	23	13	86	18
Through family/friends	64	32	26	25	43	25	133	28
Through TV on-screen promotions	59	29	48	47	98	57	205	43
Through posters/hoardings/petrol pump adverts	1		2		5	3	8	2
Through newspapers/magazines	42	21	24	24	33	19	99	21
Total*	202	**	102	**	172	**	476	**

*Total number answering question where level of hearing loss known.

**Some respondents ticked more than one answer.

Information was also collected on the best way to advertise a subtitled programme. Here again there are differences between the S4C sample and the RNID sample.

In Table 17, 48% of severely/profoundly deaf respondents said newspaper and/or magazines were the best ways to find out which programmes were subtitled and 30% said Teletext pages. This compares with 14% of hearing people saying newspaper and/or magazines were the best way and 17% Teletext pages. This difference may be because deaf and hard of hearing viewers are likely to plan their viewing around subtitles (not being able to watch programmes which are not subtitled), therefore preferring the information in papers and/or on the Teletext information pages. Seeing at the beginning of the transmission that a programme is subtitled may however influence hearing people to use subtitles if/when they are available. For them, on-screen information at the start of the programme is the best way (61%).

Table 17 People’s views on the best way to find out which programmes are subtitled

	Severely/ profoundly deaf		Hard of hearing		Hearing		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Information on subtitling pages in newspapers and/or magazines	160	48	59	26	53	14	272	26
Information on subtitling on Ceefax/Teletext TV programme information pages	101	30	42	19	65	17	208	20
Information on subtitling on screen at the start of the programme	120	36	117	52	231	61	468	45
Information on subtitling on screen throughout the programme	43	13	39	17	46	12	128	12
Total*	331	**	226	**	376	**	1045	**

*Total number answering question.

**Some respondents ticked more than one answer.

Those who use subtitles most often (more than once a week) use a range of means of checking/finding out about subtitle availability (see Table 18).

Table 18 People’s views on the best way to find which programmes are subtitled by use of subtitles

How often people use subtitles	Once a week or more		Less often	
	N	%	N	%
Information on subtitling pages in newspapers and/or magazines	207	38	24	17
Information on subtitling on Ceefax/Teletext TV programme information pages	148	28	20	16
Information on subtitling on-screen at the start of the programme	225	42	78	60
Information on subtitling on-screen throughout the programme	78	14	17	13
Total*	538	**	129	**

*Total number answering question.

**Some respondents ticked more than one answer.

People were also asked how they would like information about closed caption subtitles to be shown – by a symbol, letter (S, T or C), by having a word shown, or by the numbers 888/889.

50% of viewers wanted information to be shown by the numbers 888 or 889, with 25% wanting the words ‘subtitles’ or ‘titles’ to be used.

5.4 future use of English subtitles

8% of the respondents (90 people) in the survey did not have a television with Teletext access. Those who had Teletext on the whole knew how to access subtitles. (This was in response to a question on access – using 888.) While the numbers are small, the largest group without Teletext who did not know about accessing subtitles were hard of hearing people, many of whom are older people. This would suggest that advertising about Teletext and subtitling targeted at this group would increase subtitling uptake.

The information in Table 19 is in response to a question about people’s interest in using English language subtitles in the future (whether or not they presently knew about them).

Table 19 Future use of English subtitles with English programmes

Do not use but would like to try English language subtitles	N	%	Total
S4C	38	7	565
RNID Cymru	42	8	550
Profoundly/severely deaf	15	4	349
Hard of hearing	32	13	250
Hearing	25	6	397

6. English subtitles on Welsh language programmes

6.1 closed caption English subtitles on Welsh programmes

Respondents were asked whether they used English subtitles for Welsh language programmes. English language subtitles on Welsh programmes are used, by hearing as well as deaf and hard of hearing people, to support their Welsh language skills, enabling them to follow a Welsh language programme.

Table 20 Use of English subtitles with Welsh programmes

	S4C		RNID Cymru		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes, whenever possible	108	20	259**	51	367	35
Yes, at least once a day	25	5	9	2	34	3
Yes, at least once a week	54	10	33	6	87	8
Yes, at least once a month	34	6	19	4	53	5
Yes, less often	56	10	50	10	106	10
No, never	257	48	139	27	396	38
Total*	543	99	509	100	1043	99

*Total number who responded to this question.

**This may not mean that 259 or 51% watch Welsh language programmes often, but that they use subtitles “whenever possible” on whatever programme they watch.

Comparing Table 20 with Table 12, English subtitles are used for very different reasons on English and Welsh programmes. On English programmes they are primarily used by deaf and hard of hearing people, while on Welsh language programmes they are used by people who cannot understand the Welsh and by deaf and hard of hearing people. For this reason twice as many S4C respondents used English subtitles “whenever possible” when watching Welsh language programmes. Fewer RNID respondents said they used English subtitles on Welsh programmes than on English ones. This is likely to be because they seldom watch S4C Welsh programmes.

Around 15% of people whose most comfortable language is Welsh used subtitles at least once a day while watching Welsh language programmes.

Table 21 Use of English subtitles with Welsh programmes for people whose most comfortable language is Welsh

Use of English subtitles with Welsh programmes	Welsh most comfortable language		Total	
	N	%	N	%
Yes, whenever possible	40	11	367	35
Yes, at least once a day	14	4	34	3
Yes, at least once a week	25	7	87	8
Yes, at least once a month	10	3	53	5
Yes, less often	29	8	106	10
No, never	219	61	396	38
Total	357		1115	99

Table 22 looks at the usage of English subtitles on Welsh programmes by people with good Welsh language skills – who stated that they could either understand, speak, write and read Welsh extremely or quite well (see Table 10) and identifies them by their level of hearing loss.

Table 22 People with extremely or quite good Welsh language skills* by hearing loss and current use of English subtitles on Welsh programmes

Degree of hearing loss**	Use English subtitles		Do not use subtitles		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Profound hearing loss	10	8	2	1	12	3
Severe hearing loss	18	15	5	2	23	7
Hard of hearing	33	28	31	14	64	18
Hearing	59	49	187	83	246	71
Total**	120	100	225	100	345	99

*Based on respondents’ self-classification stating they either understand, speak, write and read Welsh extremely or quite well.

**Based on respondents’ self-classification in answer to the question, “Please indicate whether you are hearing, profoundly deaf, severely deaf, hard of hearing”.

Of those respondents with good Welsh language skills, more than a quarter are deaf or hard of hearing, two-thirds of them using English subtitles with Welsh Language programmes. Table 23 looks at the reasons viewers with good Welsh language skills said they watched Welsh programmes with English subtitles.

Table 23 Reason why English subtitles used with Welsh programmes, people with extremely or quite good Welsh language skills*

	Total		Deaf or hard of hearing**		Hearing**	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Because I have hearing problems	51	26	48	68	0	0
Because people on TV mumble a lot/you can't always catch the words	52	26	28	40	20	20
To avoid having the sound up too loud	36	18	17	24	13	13
Because of background noise on TV	24	12	15	21	7	7
Because of background noise in my house	32	16	4	6	24	23
Because some accents or words used are unfamiliar	74	38	20	28	43	42
Because I or other members don't understand enough Welsh	69	36	15	21	47	46
Total***	194		70		102	

*Based on respondents' self-classification stating they either understand, speak, write and read Welsh extremely or quite well.

**Based on respondents' self-classification in answer to the question, "Please indicate whether you are hearing, profoundly deaf, severely deaf, hard of hearing".

***Some respondents ticked more than one answer.

Table 23 shows that around 20% of people who identify themselves as hearing use subtitles for reasons related to hearing difficulties – "people on TV mumble, background noise on TV", while 42-46% use them because of accents and/or to benefit other members of their family.

6.2 open caption English subtitles

The survey was also designed to determine respondents' views on open caption subtitles. S4C provides these for some popular and/or repeated Welsh language programmes, such as the Sunday edition of *Pobol y Cwm*².

Table 24 Respondents views about open caption subtitles (burnt in subtitles)

	S4C		RNID Cymru		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
I always like them	72	13	279	54	351	33
I like them sometimes (for example on Welsh language programmes such as The Sunday Edition of <i>Pobol y Cwm</i> on S4C)	148	27	61	12	209	20
I am not bothered – don't mind either way	165	30	142	27	307	29
I don't like them and find they can spoil my enjoyment	161	29	38	7	199	19
Total*	546	99	520	100	1066	101

A minority of respondents do not like open caption subtitles. These tend to be hearing people. People who use closed caption subtitles also like open subtitles.

7. Welsh for Learners subtitles on Welsh programmes

7.1 present use of Welsh for Learners subtitles

Table 25 presents information on the use of Welsh for Learners subtitles. As can be seen, 483 respondents (43%) knew about the service – 61% of S4C respondents and 25% of RNID respondents.

Table 25 Current use of Welsh for Learners subtitles* by those who know about them

	S4C		RNID Cymru		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Use	107	31	40	29	147	30
Don't use	237	69	99	71	338	70
Total*	344	100	139	100	483	100

*Note the total of 483 respondents reflects the number who know about Welsh for Learners subtitles.

² *Pobol y Cwm* is a Welsh language television soap opera, shown Monday to Friday with an omnibus edition on Sunday. The omnibus edition has open caption subtitles.

Table 26 looks at the usage of Welsh for Learners subtitles on Welsh programmes by people with good Welsh language skills who stated that they could either understand, speak, write and read Welsh extremely or quite well (see Table 10) and identifies them by their level of hearing loss.

Table 26 People with extremely or quite good Welsh language skills* by hearing loss and current use of Welsh for Learners subtitles on Welsh programmes

Degree of hearing loss**	Use Welsh for Learners subtitles		Do not use subtitles		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Profound hearing loss	5	6	2	1	7	3
Severe hearing loss	16	20	5	3	21	8
Hard of hearing	9	11	25	13	34	12
Hearing	51	63	161	83	212	77
Total	81	100	193	100	274	100

*Based on respondents' self-classification stating they can either understand, speak, write and read Welsh extremely or quite well.

**Based on respondents' self-classification in answer to the question, "Please indicate whether you are hearing, profoundly deaf, severely deaf, hard of hearing".

A third of those with good Welsh language skills use Welsh for Learners subtitles – a third of these people have hearing loss. The reason Welsh for Learners subtitles are used by people with good Welsh language skills is given in Table 27.

Table 27 Reason why Welsh for Learners subtitles used with Welsh programmes, people with extremely or quite good Welsh language skills*

	Total		Deaf or hard of hearing**		Hearing**	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Because I have hearing problems	22	24	21	70	0	0
Because people on TV mumble a lot/ you can't always catch the words	27	30	7	23	17	36
Because of background noise on TV	13	14	5	17	5	11
Because of background noise in my house	19	21	3	10	13	28
Because some accents or words used are unfamiliar	33	36	9	30	20	42
Because I or other members of my family don't understand enough Welsh	10	11	2	7	7	15
Because I or other members of my family are Welsh language learners	29	32	4	13	17	36
Total***	91		30		47	

*Based on respondents' self-classification stating they can either understand, speak, write and read Welsh extremely or quite well.

**Based on respondent's self-classification in answer to the question, "Please indicate whether you are hearing, profoundly deaf, severely deaf, hard of hearing".

***Some respondents ticked more than one answer.

Deaf and hard of hearing people are using Welsh for Learners because of their hearing loss, with a considerable number of hearing people using them because of accents and unfamiliar words as well as because of their hearing loss.

7.2 future use of Welsh for Learners

There are still a considerable number of people who do not use Welsh for Learners subtitles, many of whom say they are interested in trying the service.

Table 28 Future use of Welsh for Learners

Do not use but would like to try Welsh for Learners subtitles	N	%	Total
S4C	110	19	565
RNID Cymru	128	23	550
Profoundly/severely deaf	70	20	349
Hard of hearing	58	23	250
Hearing	84	21	397
Welsh most comfortable language	44	12	357

More advertising can increase take-up of this service and not only by Welsh language learners.

8. Interest and ability to use comprehensive Welsh language subtitles in future

More than a third of S4C respondents would like to use or are keen to try comprehensive Welsh subtitles as can be seen in Table 29.

Table 29 Interest in using comprehensive Welsh language subtitles

	S4C		RNID Cymru		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes	141	25	41	7	182	16
Would like to try them	88	16	53	10	141	13
Don't know	50	9	55	10	105	9
No	81	14	231	42	312	28
Doesn't affect me	177	31	126	23	303	27
No response	28	5	44	8	72	6
Total	565	100	550	100	1115	99

Table 30 Interest in using comprehensive Welsh language by Welsh language skills

	Total	Excellent or quite good Welsh language skills		Some Welsh language		None	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Yes / Would like to try them	323	182	37	107	43	34	9
Don't know	105	32	6	44	18	29	8
No / Doesn't affect me / No response	687	274	56	96	39	317	83
Total	1115	488	99	247	100	380	100

182 people – 56% of those who say they want comprehensive Welsh subtitles, or would like to try them – are likely to have the Welsh language skills to be able to use them. Table 31 details the number with adequate skills who have a hearing loss.

Table 31 People with extremely or quite good Welsh language skills* by hearing loss and current desire to use comprehensive Welsh subtitles on Welsh programmes

	Yes / like to try		Don't know		No		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Profound/severe hearing loss	25	14	2	6	15	5	42	9
Hard of hearing	29	16	6	19	41	15	76	16
Hearing	105	58	19	59	183	67	307	63
Level of hearing loss not known	23	13	5	16	35	13	63	13
Total	182	101	32	100	274	100	488	101

**Based on respondents' self-classification in answer to the question, "Please indicate whether you are hearing, profoundly deaf, severely deaf, hard of hearing".

182 people, 16% of total respondents, both wanted comprehensive Welsh subtitles and have the Welsh language skills to use them. Of these people, 30% have a hearing loss and are unlikely to appreciate the programmes in Welsh without them. This represents 5% of the total sample. Of the hearing people with good Welsh language skills, 34% would like comprehensive Welsh subtitles.

9. Conclusion

The research indicates that of the respondents with the ability to read comprehensive Welsh subtitles over a third are keen for their transmission. 11% of this same group (respondents with the ability to read comprehensive Welsh subtitles) are deaf or hard of hearing, requiring subtitles to appreciate the programme in Welsh.

In the sample as a whole, 5% of respondents who were deaf or hard of hearing wanted Welsh language subtitles and had the Welsh language skills that would enable them to use a comprehensive Welsh subtitling service. While catering for the needs of 5% may seem a small minority of viewers, it is similar to the percentage of viewers in the UK population who use English subtitles on the main English language channels³.

³ NOP Omnibus Research for RNID (November 1998) as printed in *Subtitling for Deaf and Hard of Hearing People*, RNID June 1999.

Subtitles on television

What do you think?

S4C has joined with The Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID) Cymru to find out your views on subtitling. You can help us to improve subtitling services in the future by telling us what you think of the existing services.

At present only a few programmes have subtitles that are permanently on your television screen. (They include programmes such as *Songs of Praise* on BBC1 and Sunday's edition of *Pobol Y Cwm* on S4C.) These are called open caption or 'burnt on' subtitles. Many programmes have subtitles that only appear if you select them with your remote control on the Teletext and Ceefax text page services on your television. They are usually on page 888. These are called closed caption subtitles.

Subtitles on television

1. Does your television receive text pages – that is the Ceefax and Teletext services?

Yes Don't know
 No

2. Do you know how to access subtitles on Ceefax and Teletext pages (by selecting 888 or 889)?

Yes No

3. Do (did) you know about closed caption subtitles?

Yes No

If yes, how did you find out about them?

Through school/health/other professionals/organisations 1
 Through family/friends 2
 Through TV on screen promotions 3
 Through posters/hoardings/petrol pump adverts 4
 Through newspapers/magazines 5

4. How do you feel about subtitles you cannot turn off?

I always like them
 I like them sometimes (for example on Welsh language programmes such as the Sunday edition of *Pobol Y Cwm* on S4C)
 I am not bothered – don't mind either way
 I don't like them and find they can spoil my enjoyment

If you would like to know more about subtitles tick here

Your use of subtitles

5. Do you ever use subtitles on the Ceefax and Teletext text pages when viewing English language TV programmes on any TV channel?

- | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|---|----------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Yes, whenever possible | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | Yes, at least once a month | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |
| Yes, at least once a day | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 | Yes, less often | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 |
| Yes, at least once a week | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 | No, never | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 |

If yes, why do you use English subtitles on **English language programmes?** (tick all that apply)

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|--|--|
| Because I have hearing problems | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | | |
| Because people on TV mumble a lot/ you can't always catch the words | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 | | |
| Because of background noise on TV | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 | | |
| Because of background noise in my house | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 | | |
| Because some accents or words used are unfamiliar | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 | | |
| To avoid having the sound up too loud | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 | | |
| Because my English isn't too good | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7 | | |

6. Do you ever use the English language subtitles (888) on Teletext when viewing Welsh language TV programmes?

- | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|---|----------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Yes, whenever possible | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | Yes, at least once a month | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |
| Yes, at least once a day | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 | Yes, less often | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 |
| Yes, at least once a week | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 | No, never | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 |

If yes, why do you use English subtitles (888) on **Welsh language programmes?** (tick all that apply)

- | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|--|--------------------------|---|
| Because I have hearing problems | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | Because some accents or words used are unfamiliar | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 |
| Because people on TV mumble a lot/ you can't always catch the words | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 | | | |
| Because of background noise on TV | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 | Because I or other members don't understand enough Welsh | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 |
| Because of background noise in my house | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 | To avoid having the sound up too loud | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7 |

7. Are you aware that there are subtitles in Welsh for learners of the Welsh language on page 889?

- | | | | |
|-----|--------------------------|----|--------------------------|
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|-----|--------------------------|----|--------------------------|

8. Do you ever use Welsh language subtitles (889) on the Teletext when viewing Welsh language TV programmes?

- | | | | | | |
|-----|--------------------------|---|----|--------------------------|---|
| Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | No | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 |
|-----|--------------------------|---|----|--------------------------|---|

If yes, why do you use subtitles (889) on **Welsh TV programmes?** (tick all that apply)

- | | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|---|---|--------------------------|---|
| Because I have hearing problems | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 | Because I or other members don't understand enough Welsh | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 |
| Because people on TV mumble a lot/ you can't always catch the words | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 | | | |
| Because of background noise on TV | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 | Because I or other family members are Welsh language learners | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 |
| Because of background noise in my house | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4 | Because some accents or words are unfamiliar | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7 |

9. Which of the following do you think is the best way of finding out whether a programme is subtitled or not (tick one):

- Information on subtitling pages in newspapers and/or magazines 1
- Information on subtitling on Ceefax/Teletext TV programme information pages 2
- Information on subtitling on screen at the start of the programme 3
- Information on subtitling on screen throughout the programme 4

10. How would you like the information about subtitles to be shown?

- By using a symbol 1 By having a word such as Subtitles or Titles 3
- By using letter(s) such as S, T or C 2 By using the numbers 888/889 4

Your use of subtitles in the future

11. Would you like to/are you planning to use English language subtitles in the future?

- I already use them and plan to continue 1
- I would like to try them (but do not use them at present) 2
- I know about subtitles but don't like/don't want to use them 3
- I am not interested in using English subtitles 4

12. Would you like to/are you planning to use Welsh for learners subtitles in the future?

- I already use them and plan to continue 1
- I would like to try them (but do not use them at present) 2
- I know about subtitles but don't like/don't want to use them 3
- I am not interested in using Welsh for learners subtitles 4

13. Would you like to use Welsh language subtitles which include the full Welsh language text?

- Yes 1 No 2 Would like to try them 3 Don't know 4 Doesn't affect me 5

Watching TV

14. If you don't use subtitles, why not? (tick one)

- Don't need/like them 1
- Do not have TV that has subtitles 2
- Don't know how to access them and not interested in using them 3
- Don't know how to access them, but would like to try them 4
- Can't see them 5
- Can't follow them 6

15. Do you use any of the following for watching TV?

- Hearing aid 1
- Turn sound up 2
- Lipreading 3
- TV listening aid/induction loop 4
- Other 5
- None of the above 6

If you do not use any of the above but would like to know more about TV listening devices tick here

About you

16. Do you have any problems with your hearing? For example, do you have difficulties following what people are saying in noisy places or difficulty hearing the television?

Yes No

17. Age

24 or under 1 45 to 64 3
25 to 44 2 65 or over 4

18. Gender

Male Female

19. With which language do you feel most comfortable? (tick one only)

Welsh 1 British Sign Language 4
English 2 Other sign language 5
Other spoken language 3

20. Which of these statements best describes your ability in the Welsh language? (tick one)

I can understand, speak, write and read Welsh extremely well 1
I can understand, speak, write and read Welsh quite well 2
I can understand, speak, write and read a little Welsh 3
I can understand and speak some Welsh 4
I can understand a little Welsh 5
I can't understand or speak Welsh 6

21. Can you read Welsh?

Yes – fluently 1 Yes – but find it a struggle 3
Yes – adequately 2 No 4

If yes, which of the following do you read in Welsh? (tick as many as apply)

Books 1 Letters/correspondence 4
Newspapers 2 Forms/leaflets 5
Magazines 3 None of the above 6

22. Please indicate whether you are

Hearing 1 Severely deaf 3
Profoundly deaf 2 Hard of hearing 4

The Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID) in Wales would like to support your needs and to work with you. If you would like to know more about RNID tick here

If you have indicated in the questionnaire that you want further information on television subtitling, about TV listening devices or about RNID, we will need your address in order to contact you again. Your name and address will be kept confidential. We will not pass on your details to anyone else.

Name

Address

Postcode

Thank you very much for taking part in this survey.

Please return this in the Freepost envelope provided or send it to the following address:

Wales Subtitling Questionnaire
FREEPOST SW1684, RNID Cymru
3rd Floor, 33-35 Cathedral Road
Cardiff CF11 9HB

Occasionally RNID will send you information on other areas of our work; please tick this box if you would prefer not to receive this.