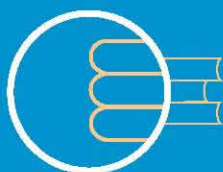


**sí bai
yes**

Trilingual students in secondary school:



A new reality



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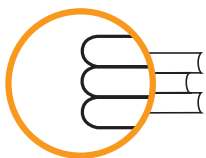
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BHINEBI: English through content in Secondary School.

BAC: Basque Autonomous Community.

CLIL: Content and Language Integrated Learning.

ESO: Compulsory Secondary Education

ESOL: English for Speakers of Other Languages.

PE: Plurilingual Experience.

FCE: First Certificate in English.

GC: Control Group/Grupo de control.

GE: Experimental Group/Grupo experimental.

INEBI: English through content (Primary school).

KET: Key English Test.

L1: First language or mother tongue.

L2: Second language.

L3: Additional language.

CEFR: Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

PET: Preliminary English Test.

SILL: Strategy Inventory for Language Learning.

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The Department of Education, Universities and Research (DEUI) has been promoting Plurilingual Education since 1996. First came the early introduction of English and French and then plurilingual experiences in Compulsory and Post-Compulsory Secondary Education which we are currently analysing.

The challenge for a small country such as ours, if we want to be interconnected with the principal learning networks, is to master those languages in which knowledge is generated and transmitted. Because of this, in addition to searching for adequate communicative expertise in our official languages, according to the existing regulations, our education system needs to continue to make progress in the incorporation of the third language as a conveying language so that our students can be true plurilingual students and can develop, both personally and professionally, in this globalised society that characterizes the 21st century. Therefore, the challenge of a plurilingual education cannot be postponed in the Basque society trying to shape the minds of those who are in our classrooms today.

This is why we have spent over 10 years promoting plurilingual experiences in DEUI. The experiences similar to those studied in this report are extremely important to education but one should be aware that there tend to be some advantages that one does not usually encounter: the incredible motivation of the students, teachers and families, the efforts to obtain good results and, quite often, the favourable socio-economic conditions (extracurricular classes...) of the students who participate.

Given all the above, it is undeniable that we are obtaining good results in these schools with plurilingual experiences. Furthermore, these are very instructive for the proposal I recently made to Parliament on the reform of the linguistic models. It is also necessary to establish clear objectives for everyone with regards to the third language for Compulsory and Post-Compulsory Secondary Education. This report contains some suggestions to this regard.

This research on plurilingual students will be definitely welcome as a means of enlightening and improving our commitment in this field. I am sure that those who are working in this environment will feel comforted with the results displayed in this report and it is those very results which will spur us on to continue to make progress and encourage the plurilingual program.

Tontxu Campos Granados

Minister for Education, Universities and Research Basque Country

THEORETICAL JUSTIFICATION
AND CONTEXT OF RESEARCH

1

1. THEORETICAL JUSTIFICATION

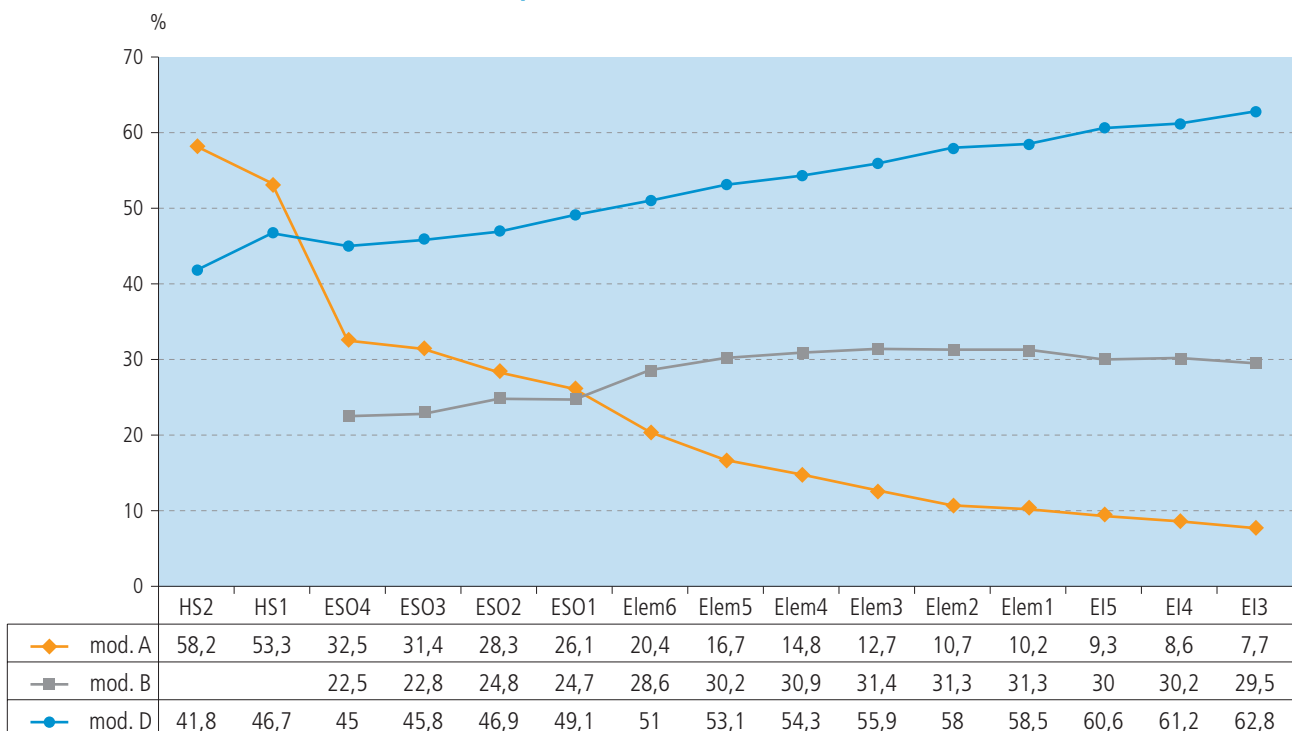
The goal of plurilingual education is to develop language skills and repertoires in various languages. The knowledge of multiple languages grows stronger throughout one’s life and people learn new languages because of different needs and requirements. Being plurilingual and linguistic diversity depend on the languages of others being accepted and on the curiosity provoked by those languages and cultures. This basic attitude ensures that minority languages survive and that they open up to other cultures and ways of thinking. An adequate educational policy should promote the teaching of the mother language, the other official language, and at least, two foreign languages.

This document is directed to the context of the plurilingual experience and to its content, giving a brief review of the methodology and experiences related to using foreign languages as teaching languages.

1.1. From monolingualism to bilingualism

In the Autonomous Community of the Basque Country, the Basic Law of Normalization of the Use of Basque (1982) made it obligatory to study the two languages – Basque and Spanish – to which they shall have access – as chosen by families – through educational programs, “models”, that offer different features. In Model A, teaching is carried out in Spanish and the Basque language is a subject that is studied. In Model B, or the model of partial immersion, Spanish and Basque are used equally as the languages for teaching. Model D was originally the model for maintaining the minority familiar language for the Basque speaking students, wherein teaching is conducted in Basque, and Spanish is a subject that is studied.

Graph 1. Matriculation Data



Source: Euskadi School Board (Academic Year 2004-2005)

In the 25 years since this was established, the families have mainly opted for Model B and above all for D, which many Spanish speaking students have progressively joined so that model A is now becoming residual. The data shown in the graph give an idea of the models' positioning within the Basque Autonomous Community (henceforth BAC) framework.

Beyond the inherent difficulties that learning other languages present, the attitude towards their use is a determining factor in their usage. In this way it is beyond a doubt that bilingual programs do not only produce those who speak the languages or contribute to maintaining them as such, but also allow spaces and common references to be created for them in more than one direction and with more than one origin. In general, studying in immersion programs in a second language – including one as different from the first as Basque is – does not make things more difficult, but rather it appears to increase the cognitive abilities of the student who, at the same time, benefits from learning another language.

1.2. Characteristics of CLIL methodology

Some of the basic principles for practicing CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) in the classroom are the following:

- The language is used for learning and at the same time for communicating.
- The subject being studied is what is used to determine the type of language required for learning.
- Fluency is more important than accuracy in language use.

Theoreticians have stated that putting CLIL into practice is based on four fundamental principles: content, communication, cognition and culture. According to the so called 4Cs of the curriculum (Coyle, 1999), a well thought out CLIL lesson must combine the following elements:

Content: Progress in the knowledge, the skills, and the comprehension of the specific subjects of a given curriculum.

Communication: Use the language to learn while learning to use the language.

Cognition: Develop the cognitive skills that link the formation of concepts (abstract and concrete), the understanding and the language.

Culture: Exposure to different perspectives and to shared understanding that allows one to be more conscious of others and of self.

The CLIL methodology focuses on learning that requires an acquisition of concepts, skills and attitudes. In the first place, the trainees require additional input to understand the concepts, and in second place, there may be differences related to specific languages and cultures. Due to the above, the CLIL methodologies place emphasis on the cognitive requirements of each activity, using a larger number of audiovisual stimuli and cooperative learning (in pairs or in groups), conceptual frameworks (more intensive support from the teacher if needed) and frequent leaps from simple cognitive skills to more complex skills

CLIL learning is a mixture of both, language and content, and putting it into practice requires certain procedural abilities by the teachers. There is no doubt but that the cognitive advantages can also be obtained by an education in the native language. Nevertheless, the CLIL experiences have made it obvious that changing the language of instruction can mean a significant change in the manner in which teachers teach and students learn in given Primary and Secondary schools. This change in the medium of instruction is expected to work as a catalyst in educational improvements.

1.3. CLIL Experiences in the BAC

In the BAC several experiences are being carried out with regards to teaching-learning in the English Language. On the one hand, the INEBI (*Ingelesa Edukien Bitartez*, English through Content in Primary School) and BHINEBI (*Bigarren Hezkuntzan Ingelesa Edukien Bitartez*, English through Content in Secondary School) programs exist. The teachers wishing to participate in these experiences receive, in bimonthly seminars scheduled during school hours, theoretic training and curricular materials in order to put it into practice. This material was created by a group of consultants belonging to schools supporting educational training and innovation (Teachers' Advisory Centres, *Berritzegune*, in Basque language) that suggests an innovative breakthrough in the foreign language teaching-learning process because it incorporates, in a natural way, contents from other curricular subjects (Social Sciences, Natural Science, Arts, Mathematics, etc.) to be included in the subject of English Language.

During the 2003-2005 two-year period, 12 Secondary schools took part in the Plurilingual Experience (from hereon PE). This was later extended to other schools, some of which use French as the teaching language.

1.4. Institutional policies regarding plurilingual studies at BAC.

The Department of Education, Universities and Research has been promoting projects that help Plurilingual Education since 1996. The first steps were taken with the early introduction of English in Primary School and the experience was later extended to Secondary Education: Compulsory Secondary Education (henceforth ESO) and Post-Compulsory Secondary Education.

The first PE in Secondary schools was allowed in 2003-2004 and extended to 2006-2007. The number of schools taking part in the first period was 12, and there were 18 in the next group.

Conditions for participating in the experience require that the schools use Spanish, Basque and a foreign language for teaching, with a student being required to take courses in the foreign language at least 7 hours weekly in ESO, and 25% of the time in Post-Compulsory Secondary Education subjects. Furthermore, a student participating in the experience must pass a test in Basque as well as in the corresponding foreign language.

In order to conduct the experience, the Department of Education, Universities and Research offers specific training through the support services (*Berritzegune*) and a release for the teaching staff of one hour for the first course and half an hour for the second. In the same manner, economic aid is available for schools participating in the experience.

Evaluations of the experience have been conducted by the Educational Inspectorate and by those responsible for languages in the Teachers' Advisory Centres (*Berritzegune*). In both cases the conclusions were very positive, highlighting the high level of interest and involvement by all of the educational staff taking part in these evaluations.

The school managing teams of the schools involved and those responsible for the projects, point out a series of questions that are important to preserve the experience: the importance of maintaining a stable staff that teaches classes to the plurilingual groups, the need to make specific training available to those institutions, and the advisability of increasing economic aid. With regards to certain educational aspects, the creation of a supply of materials in English that would assist the teachers with their work in the classroom has been suggested.

RESEARCH DESIGN

2

2. RESEARCH DESIGN

2.1. Objectives

Research conducted on the use of English as the vehicular language in the plurilingual teaching models affirms that it increases the rate of learning the language without producing any negative effects (acquisition of a lower level of knowledge, difficulty with learning....) in the subjects taught in English. The Department of Education, Universities and Research has initiated the PE and wants to ensure that the methodology is effective (produces the desired effects), efficient (the cost benefit ratio is reasonable) and functional (does not produce dysfunctional effects). Due to this, this investigation has the following general objective:

- Confirm the educational value and effectiveness of the PE established in a limited number of Secondary schools.

The specific objectives are:

- Analyse the validity of the PE, evaluating the level of effectiveness and the possibility of using it in other Secondary schools.
- Confirm whether students in the experimental groups get an additional increase in linguistic ability in L3.
- Analyse the impact of the introduction of the PE at the various educational levels selected (1st cycle of ESO, 2nd cycle of ESO, and Post-Compulsory Secondary Education).
- Confirm that learning is not diminished in the subjects taught in the L3.
- Analyse whether unforeseen effects result, both desirable and undesirable.

2.2. Methodology

This research is based on case study methodology, with the following components:

- Description of the various models of the methodology's practical application in the schools participating in the experience. Assess the initial conditions, derived both from the institutional policies of the Department of Education, Universities and Research and from each of the schools.
- Evaluate the difference in performance in linguistic competence in the language used for teaching between the students in the experimental groups and those of the control groups in six schools. The sample includes groups from 1st ESO, 3rd ESO and 1st Post-Compulsory.
- The study is longitudinal and comparative. The linguistic ability was measured during the following timeframes:
 - October, 2004: 1st test to measure linguistic competence.
 - May, 2006: 2nd test to measure linguistic competence after two years of implementation of the PE.
- The perceptions, attitudes, and incentives of those involved (schools, teachers, consultants, students and families...) were studied through questionnaires and interviews. The teachers were included in a study of ethnographic nature using a personal diary listing some critical incidents. An analysis was later conducted on their content to reveal key factors regarding professional tasks.
- The evaluation of the results of the content taught in L3 and the position of the rest of the languages have been carried out using the scholarly results and the informed opinion of the didactic departments within the schools.

2.3. Choosing the sample

The selection of the schools has been discretionary and has been carried out in accordance with the following criteria:

- 6 of the 12 schools that participated in the experience.
- A minimum of 12 students for each level (1st ESO, 3rd ESO, 1st Post-Compulsory).
- The possibility to have a control group (CG) where the number of students is at least 10.
- A variety of territories and settings.

The initial distribution of students by schools and educational levels is as follows:

Schools	1 st ESO	3 rd ESO	1 st Post-Compulsory	TOTAL
1	49 + 10 (control)			59
2			14 + 10 (control)	24
3			18 + 10 (control)	28
4		24 + 10 (control)		34
5			16 + 10 (control)	26
6	18 + 10 (control)	20 + 10 (control)		58
TOTAL	87	64	78	229

2.4. Criteria for selecting control groups

1. Similar academic achievement, as measured by the marks in the previous grade.
2. Sex: Similar proportion of male and female students as in the experimental group (EG).
3. Similar learning motivation in the opinion of the corresponding teacher.

Control groups of 10 students minimum have been formed with equivalent profiles as that of the experimental group following the previous criteria.

2.5. Techniques and means of collecting data

The tests chosen are property of Cambridge ESOL and are:

- **Flyers (A2):** 1st ESO.
- **KET, Key English Test (A2):** 2nd and 3rd ESO.
- **PET, Preliminary English Test (B1):** 4th ESO and 1st Post-Compulsory.
- **FCE, First Certificate English (B2):** 2nd Post-Compulsory.

The tests have been implemented in three different stages:

- Tests with a diagnostic value were conducted in October 2004 on students in 1st ESO, 3rd ESO and 1st Post-Compulsory.
- Evaluation tests were conducted on the first cohort to finish the experimental process in May 2005: 2nd ESO, 4th ESO and 2nd Post-Compulsory.
- Evaluation tests on the groups that are the object of this research, who finished the experimental process in May 2006: 2nd ESO, 4th ESO and 2nd Post-Compulsory.

2.6. Other means used to obtain information

- Questionnaire for the School Managing Team.
- Interview with the person responsible/coordinator for the experience.
- Questionnaire I (students participating in the experience and control groups).
- Questionnaire II (student participating in the experience).
- Questionnaire for families.
- Questionnaire for teachers.
- Questionnaire for didactic departments and the schools' headteachers.
- Documentary analysis.
- Teachers' diaries.

RESULTS **3**

3. RESULTS

3.1. Introduction

This chapter offers three types of results:

- Results from the tests measuring the linguistic competence.
- Simulated results through the accumulated differential gain using a common scale of the Common European Framework of Reference.
- Results on the level of knowledge acquired in the subjects taught in English.

Different instruments have been used to obtain the data. To measure the student's linguistic competence the Cambridge ESOL tests indicated below were used.

To carry out the differential income simulation, there were used as the starting point North (2000, 2002) and Kaftandjeva and Takala (2002) studies on empirical validation of CEFR scales.

Lastly, to analyse the level of knowledge acquired in the subjects taught in L3, the didactic departments of the schools participating in the research answered to a questionnaire. For this, it was also requested an assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of the plurilingual teaching experience.

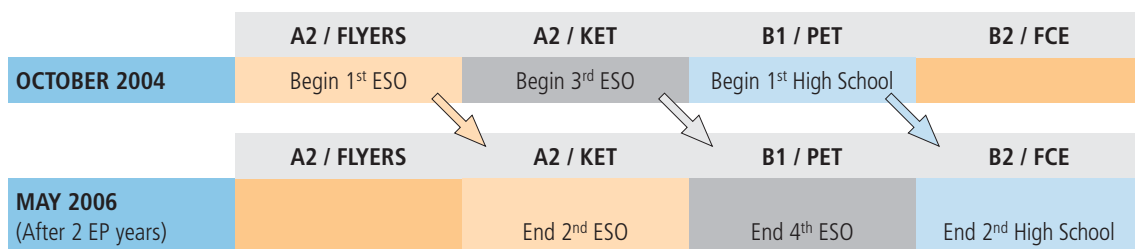
It must be reminded that the nature of those three types of results differs. With regards to linguistic competence the data are of a quantitative nature, while the results on the differential gain are an approximation, and those referring to the level of knowledge are of a qualitative nature.

Below, there is a summary of the results of the performance tests that were conducted on PE students and the corresponding control groups, in October 2004 and May 2006.

TEST	<i>Flyers</i>	KET	PET	FCE
CEFR LEVEL	A2	A2 ¹	B1	B2

In addition to analysing the results of each test, the student's performance for Flyers, KET and PET in October 2004, was compared with that of May, 2006, at a higher level (KET, PET and FCE). The purpose was to show the improvement in the student after participating in two PE academic years. The table reflects the comparison made among tests.

Graphic 2. Levels and Research Test Correspondence



(1) Level A2 of KET widens the communicative contexts of Flyers test A2 and is aimed at more mature students.

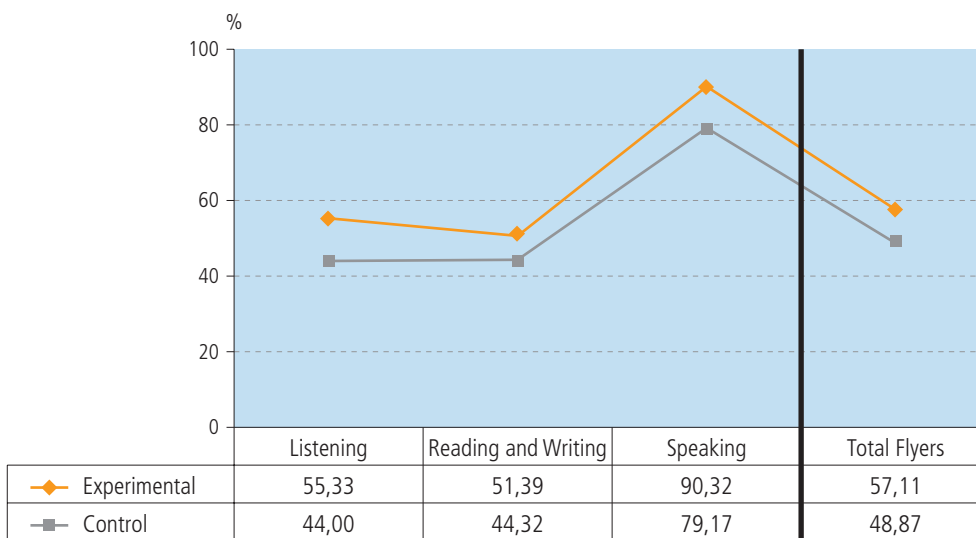
3.2. Results in the first cycle of Secondary Education

As indicated in the table, in the first cycle of ESO the students took two types of tests: One at the beginning of the research (Flyers-A2 2004) and the next after two years of PE (KET-A2 2006).

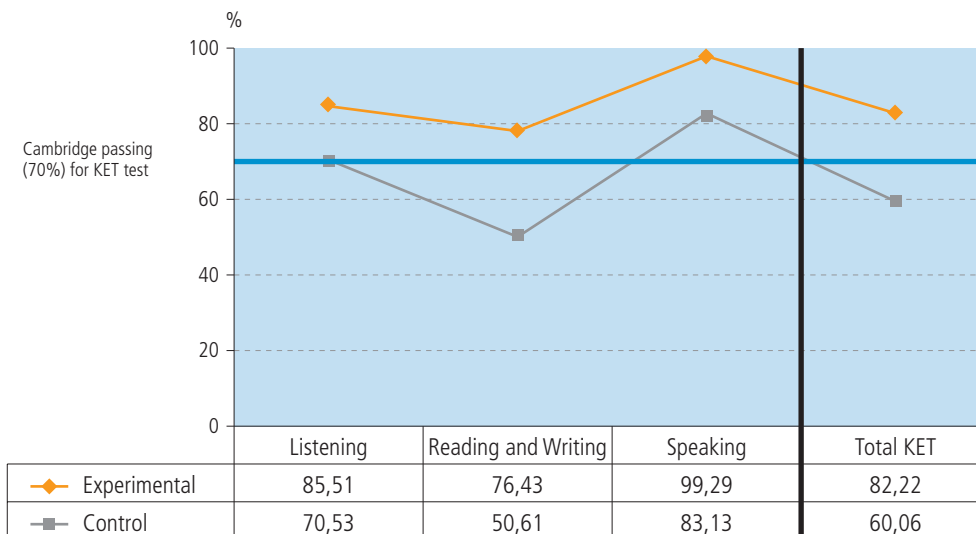
As was previously mentioned, both Flyers and KET are at the A2 CFER level, even though KET is more demanding both with regard to the variety of communicative contexts as well as the necessary maturity required to take the test.

The following graphics show the results from the experimental group and the control group.

Graphic 3. Flyers results. Experimental group - Control group. October 2004



Graphic 4. KET results. Experimental group - Control group. May 2006

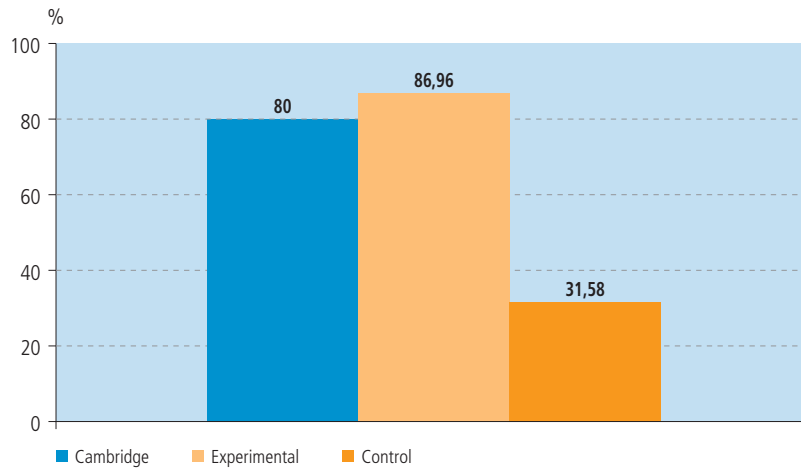


The difference in global performance between the control group and the experimental when they took the first test, Flyers, was 8% higher for the experimental. After two academic years, in the KET test, the difference between both was significantly higher, 22%.

Although the Flyers test does not have a minimum average to pass required by Cambridge ESOL institution, KET does have one, and it is 70%. The experimental group exceeds this percentage, with an 82% average, while the control group only obtained 60%.

When using the rate of students passing the test (80%) for Cambridge ESOL candidates from Spain for the KET test as the comparison parameter, it can be observed that the experimental group has a higher percentage of students passing, which is 87%, while only 31% of the control group were able to pass the test.

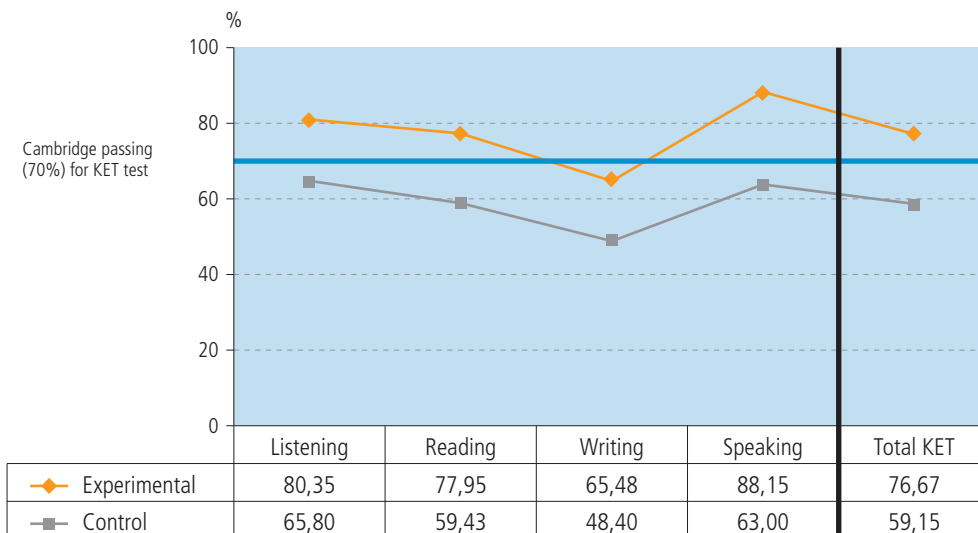
Graphic 5. Grades KET Cambridge - Research. Passed May 2006



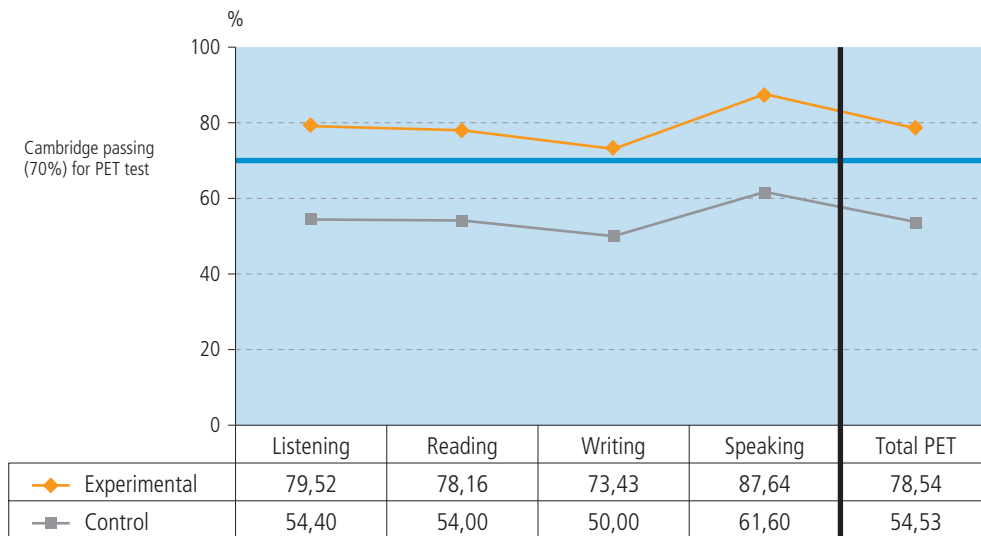
3.3. Results in the second cycle of Secondary Education

During this academic cycle the students took two types of tests: One at the beginning of the research (KET-A2 2004) and the next after two years of PE (PET-B1 2006).

Graphic 6. KET results. Experimental group - Control group. October 2004



Graphic 7. PET results. Experimental group - Control group. May 2006

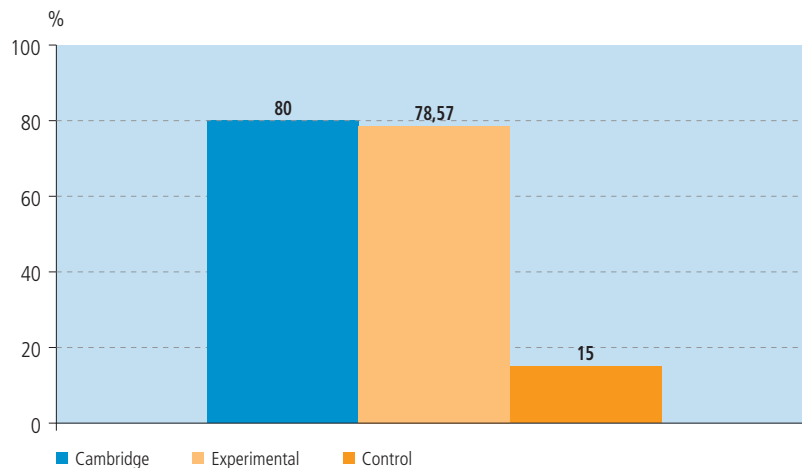


The difference in global performance between the control group and the experimental when they took the first test, KET, was 18% higher for the experimental. After completing two academic years, the difference between them increased to 24% in the PET test.

The KET and PET tests are two consecutive CEFR levels, A2 and B1, and the improvement therefore expected is to exceed the minimum level to pass the test, or 70%. In this regard both the KET and PET experimental group obtained and exceeded this percentage (with 77% and 79% respectively), while the control group could not pass KET and after two years, were unable to pass PET, with global results of 59% (KET) and 55% (PET).

When using the passing rate of PET tests (80%) for Cambridge ESOL candidates as the comparative parameter between the two, it could be seen that the experimental group was very close to this percentage of passing with 79%, while in the control group only 15% passed the test.

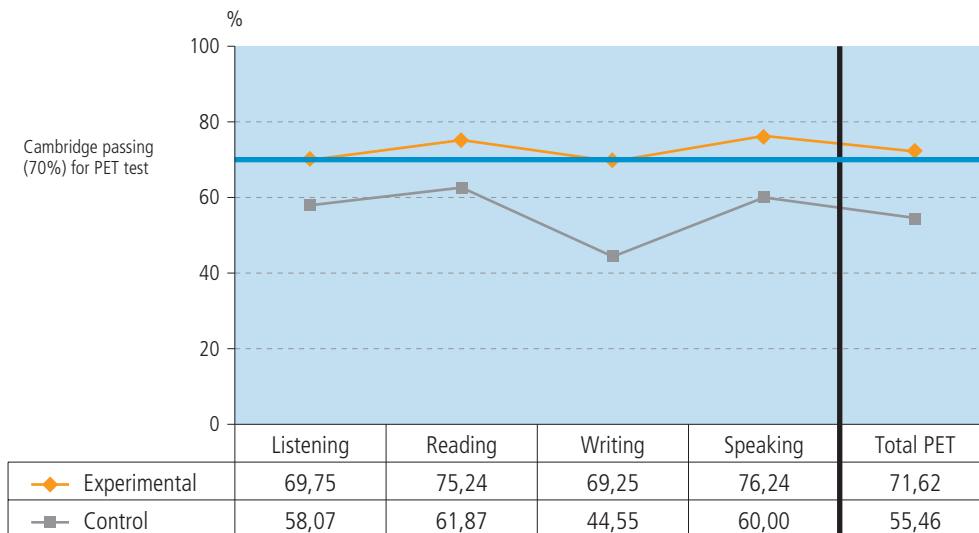
Graphic 8. Grades PET Cambridge - Research. Passed May 2006



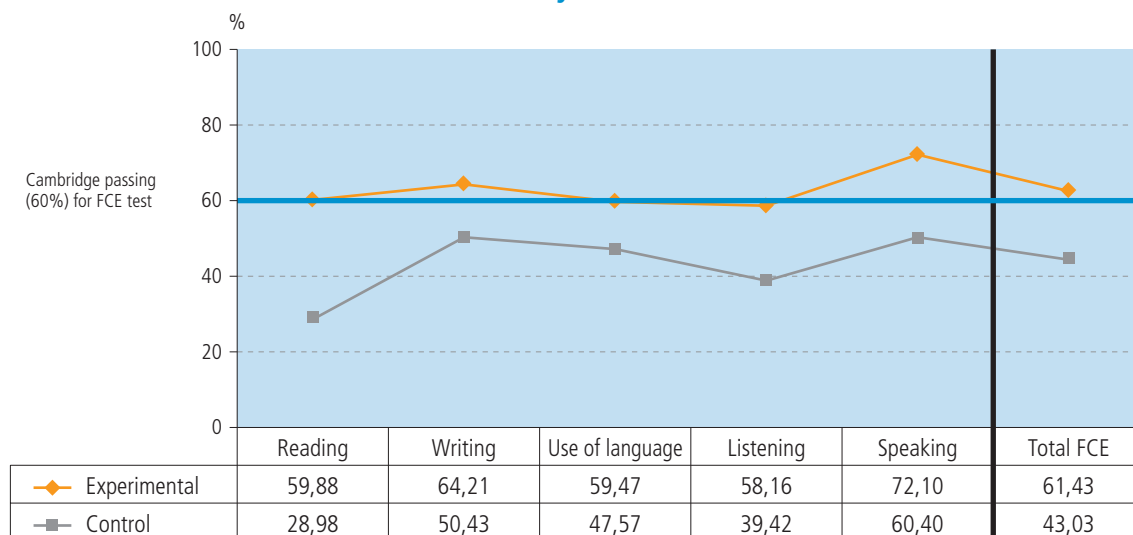
3.4. Post-Compulsory Secondary Education results

During this academic stage the students took two types of tests: one at the beginning of the research (PET-B1 2004) and the next after two years of PE (FCE-B2 2006).

Graphic 9. PET results. Experimental group - Control group. October 2004



Graphic 10. FCE results. Experimental group - Control group. May 2006



The experimental group's results were significantly higher than the control group's in both tests and for all skills measured.

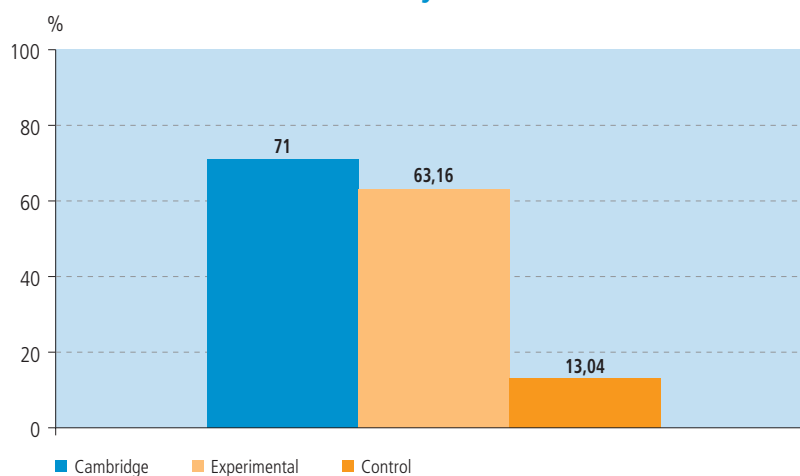
The difference in global performance between the experimental group and the control group in PET was 16%. After taking two academic years the difference between them in the FCE test was 18%.

The PET and FCE tests are two consecutive levels of CEFR, B1 and B2, although the level of difficulty in the FCE is quite high and, therefore, the global percentage required by Cambridge ESOL for passing is lower, 60%.

During this academic stage the expected improvement is exceeding the minimum percentage required to pass the test, 70% for PET and 60% for FCE. In this regard, both the PET and FCE experimental group obtained and passed this percentage (with 71% and 61% respectively), while the control group could not pass PET and after two academic years, were unable to pass FCE, with global results of 55% (PET) and 43% (FCE).

When using the passing rate for the FCE test for Cambridge ESOL students as the comparative parameter, which is 71%, it can be observed that the experimental group with 63% passing is closer to the Cambridge average. In the control group 13% passed the test.

**Graphic 11. FCE Grades. Cambridge - Research.
Passed May 2006**



3.5. Results by skill

The results in speaking stand out in all of the tests, as they are always highest both in the experimental and in the control groups for both applications, the first in 2004 and the final in 2006. Official accredited examiners from Cambridge ESOL always evaluated this skill and they followed the same criteria used for the corresponding official tests.

Of all skills tested, the students in the first cycle of ESO experimental group, that were evaluated with Flyers and KET, obtained the second highest percentage in speaking, while lesser grades were obtained in reading and writing. There are considerable differences between the control and experimental groups in all skills with speaking standing out for Flyers and writing in KET.

Skills Flyers 2004 ²	Ítems	% EXPERIMENTAL GROUP	% CONTROL GROUP	% DIFFERENCE Exp. G. -Cont. G.
Listening	25	55,33	44	11,33
Reading and Writing	50	51,39	44,32	7,07
Speaking	12	90,32	79,17	11,15
Total FLYERS	—	57,11	48,87	8,24

(2) The Flyers test was only taken in October of 2004.

KET Skills 2006	Items	% EXPERIMENTAL GROUP	% CONTROL GROUP	% DIFFERENCE Exp. G. -Cont. G.
Listening	25	85,51	70,53	14,98
Reading and Writing	35	76,43	50,61	25,82
Speaking	20	99,29	83,13	16,16
Total KET	—	82,22	60,06	22,16

During the second ESO cyclee the KET and PET tests were given. In the PET test, the experimental groups had their best results in listening and speaking, while lesser results were obtained in reading and writing. The differences between experimental and control groups are greater and more uniform in the PET tests than the KET.

PET Skills 2006	Items	% EXPERIMENTAL GROUP	% CONTROL GROUP	% DIFFERENCE Exp. G. -Cont. G.
Listening	25	79,52	54,40	25,12
Reading	35	78,16	54,00	24,16
Writing	25	73,43	50,00	23,43
Speaking	25	87,64	61,60	26,04
Total PET	—	78,54	54,53	24,01

There are some variations regarding the performance by skills in the Post-Compulsory experimental groups when compared with the former. Speaking is the highest of all. This is followed by writing, with 64%, and finally, the results for listening and reading are somewhat less, around 59%. It is necessary to point out that in the FCE test use of English is also measured, and the results are equivalent to the comprehensive skills, i.e. 59%. The greatest difference between the experimental and control groups are in reading followed by use of English.

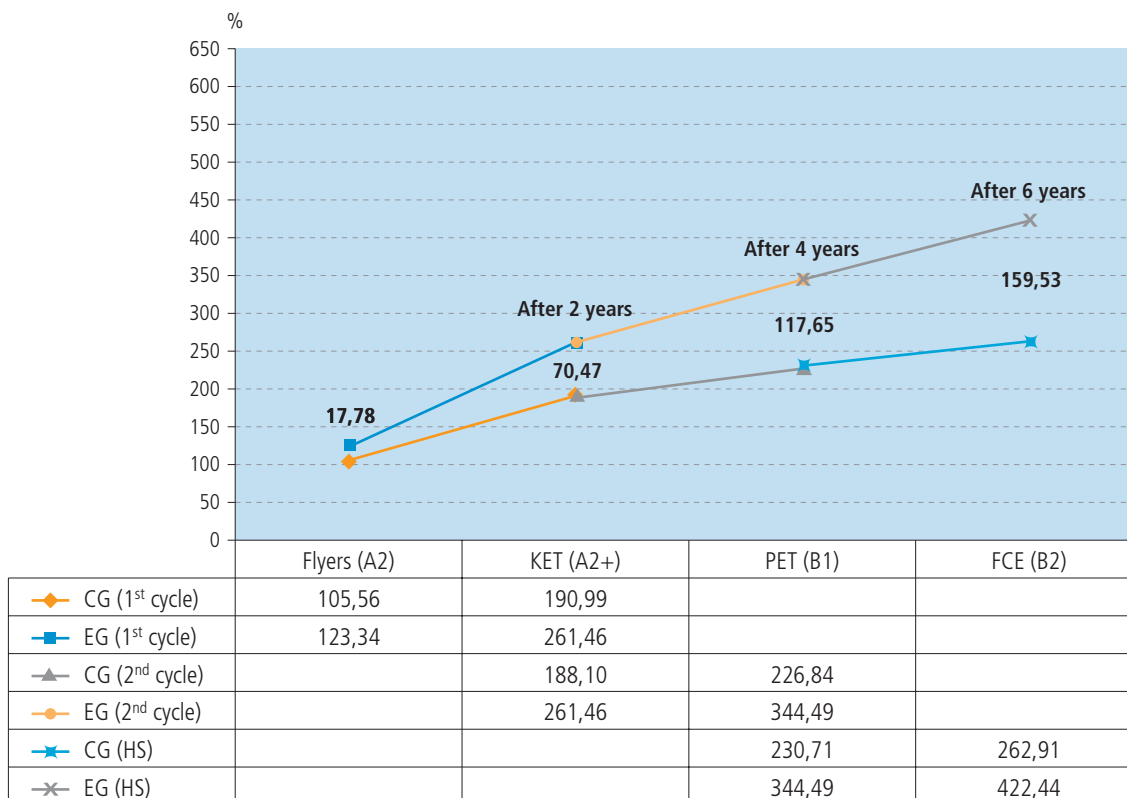
FCE Skills 2006	Items	% EXPERIMENTAL GROUP	% CONTROL GROUP	% DIFFERENCE Exp. G. -Cont. G.
Reading	35	59,88	28,98	30,90
Writing	10	64,21	50,43	13,78
Use of English	65	59,47	37,57	21,90
Listening	30	58,16	39,42	18,74
Speaking	25	72,10	60,40	11,70
Total FCE	—	61,43	43,03	18,40

3.6. Simulation of accumulated results. Estimating the differential gain

To estimate the accumulated gains, the grading for each test has been distributed on a common scale so that the differences between each phase can be summed. For this, there were followed the steps proposed and the approximate and provisional results obtained by North (2000, 2002) and Kaftandjeva and Takala (2002) from their studies on the empirical validation of the CEFR scales. This analysis is a theoretical simulation and the results presented here should therefore be taken cautiously because they are scores that refer to the hypothetical differential gain that would arise if the data were presented on a common scale. The scores listed in the graph indicate the difference in results between the two groups.

The results on the CEFR scale would be the following:

Graphic 12. Accumulated results CEFR scale (North) A2-B2



The most significant conclusions are:

- The final result for each section of the experimental groups is superior to the results of the students selected to start the experience in the next highest group.
- The final results for each section of the control groups are almost the same as the results of the students starting the subsequent section. This highlights the continuity of results in the normal English educating process and reinforces the validity of measured competence, with the added limitation that they are distinct cohorts of students.
- The initial difference on a scale of 1.000 points would be 18 points, without any type of experimentation. This would be attributable to the initial selection process for taking part in the experience. The difference at the end of two years, as measured with the same cohort of students in a longitudinal research of the results would be 70 points.
- The accumulated difference at the end of four years (in this case adding the differences of two distinct cohorts) would be 118 points, on a scale of 1.000 points.

And, finally, the accumulated difference at the end of six years (in this case adding the results of the various distinct cohorts at different levels) would be 160 points on a scale of 1.000 points.

3.7. Level of knowledge acquired in the subjects taught in English and evaluation of the experience by the didactic seminars

One of the objectives of this research is to check whether the level of knowledge acquired in the subjects taught in English decreases if it is compared with the knowledge obtained in these same areas when taught in the usual instruction language (Basque/Spanish). It is also expected to analyse whether there are any unforeseen effects, either desired or undesired, in implementing PE in the participating schools.

To carry out this verification, the teachers of the departments teaching the subjects in English answered a questionnaire.

As a general conclusion it can be said that in all cases the level obtained by the students taking the subjects in English is similar to that of those who learn in their usual language of instruction. If this criterion is applied to the subject of English, the level of knowledge obtained is clearly superior in the PE students. This statement is confirmed by empirical data collected in another part of this research.

Furthermore, it indicates that the academic performance of the students in the groups that participated in the experience is superior to the other groups, due both to the prior selection and to the high motivation and interest on the part of the families and students.

After analysing the advantages and disadvantages of the PE, it must be pointed out that the advantages refer to issues regarding the flexibility and diversity both of the material as well as the curriculum, regarding the positive attitude and willingness of the students in the face of this new teaching challenge, to the increased time exposed to and spent using English as the communication and teaching language, and to the possibility of running a more dynamic and cooperative methodology.

With regards to difficulties, these can be grouped in three areas: those which have to do with the lack of materials, those that refer to the difficulties the students face during the process of acquiring the specific subject's vocabulary, and those referring to the additional effort and time spent by both the teachers and students given the requirements of the experience.

CASE DESCRIPTIONS **4**

4. CASE DESCRIPTIONS

4.1. Characteristics of the schools and their settings

To produce the case descriptions, there were used a questionnaire and an interview. The first was addressed to some of the members of the management team and it contained questions regarding the school's traditions and the socio-economic status of the families and of the environment. In this same way, data were requested about the students and teachers, together with an evaluation of the school's general atmosphere.

During the interview with the person responsible for the project, questions were asked regarding the taking shape of the plurilingual project, as well as regarding its development and evaluation. The aim was to elucidate those positive aspects that reinforced the project and also to present the gaps and deficiencies that in the opinion of those interviewed were more evident and compelling.

The following table contains some of the quantitative data on the schools and their settings, as well as data on their location and their families' social status.

	Historical Territory			Location			Socio-economic level of families	Amount of students			Description of students				Number of teachers	
	Araba	Bizkaia	Gipuzkoa	Capital	Urban	Rural		ESO	High Sch.	Courses	SEN	Inmigrants	Scholarship	Gypsy	1 st ESO course	ESO/ESPO
Center 1	X			X			Med-Low	660	232		24	47	164	33	46	71
Center 2			X		X	X	Medium		260	11						41
Center 3			X	X			Med-High	433	140		10		65	2	26	58
Center 4		X			X		Medium	414	315		8				23	62
Center 5		X			X	X	Medium	102	110				82		7	56
Center 6		X				X	Med-Low	299	91		13				15	42

Regarding the atmosphere of relationships at the schools, it can be said that aspects such as collaboration, a good work environment and a high level of dedication are the terms used to describe the environment of the selected schools. In almost all cases they indicated that a higher level of participation from the families would be desirable. In general, the degree of stability of the teachers varies depending on the stages, as it is higher in the second cycle of ESO and in Post-Compulsory.

4.2. Gestation and development of the project

The decision to participate in the plurilingual experience comes for the most part from the school's management, although it is sometimes a proposal presented by the English or History Departments. Similarly, it is the English Department which, in the majority of the schools, takes responsibility for implementing the experience, although with the

assistance of teachers from the other departments (see table on subjects). In general it can be said that as the projects have been put in place, the subjects offered in English have increased.

Level in which the School introduces the PE Areas taught

School 1	1 st course ESO	Arts, TIC, Music y Tutorship.
School 2	Post-Compulsory	History, Culture, Religion y Society, Tutorship.
School 3	Post-Compulsory	Alternative to Religion, Contemporary World History, History of Spain, Geography, Computer science, Chemistry.
School 4	2 nd cycle ESO	Alternative to Religion, Press workshop, Tutorship.
School 5	Post-Compulsory	Tutorship, Contemporary World History, History of Spain, History of Religion. Science, Technology and Society, Literature, Anatomy y Physiology.
School 6	1 st cycle ESO	Press workshop, Religion, Alternative to Religion, Tutorship.
	2 nd cycle ESO	Natural Sciences, Arts, Biology, English workshop, Geology, Design and Art.

The majority of the schools recognize that the proposal to participate in the experience initially generated concerns and fear. In some cases this reluctance was due to the composition of the groups which could entail the most motivated students being in the plurilingual groups and the less motivated being placed in other groups. There was also some resistance due to the loss of hours where Basque language was used. Perhaps the most common came from the uncertainty of having to teach certain subjects in a new language and the possible ramifications on the knowledge level acquired by the students, a situation which was aggravated by the teachers not having materials for teaching in English.

These hesitations only occurred initially and were dispersed little by little as the projects developed.

The most usual way to organize the classes has been to create a specific group for plurilingual teaching, although depending on the size and educational level they have joined others in certain areas.

Regarding the necessary resources to carry out the experience, those of the school, both in terms of humans and supplies, have been generally used and this has not been listed as a glaring deficiency. It should be mentioned that the experience has its own funding that varies in amount depending on the number of students taking part in it.

The training and advice offered by the Department of Education, Universities and Research are deemed adequate and useful, although in some cases it was suggested that it would be more beneficial if it were given through subject groups or at a given level.

4.3. Evaluation of the experience

The six schools all evaluate the experience as being very positive, both in terms of the challenge for the teachers and the results obtained by the students. The involvement by all has been favourable and therefore continuing the experience has been proposed as an objective for the next academic year. The decision is supported by the schools' administrations and the families.

The teachers confirm that the academic level obtained by the students in the subjects taught in English is as good as the remainder and that the progress in the knowledge of the English language is evident.

Regarding issues to be resolved it was mentioned in all cases that the added effort required to prepare the classes and materials was not compensated for in terms of time freed up for the teachers. It was also emphasized that a negative aspect was the lack of substitute personnel available to teach the lessons in English, which means that in case of

sick leave it could be difficult to cover those absent. It is emphasized in certain schools that the ability to extend the experience to other educational stages (Post-Compulsory), is sometimes thwarted by the lack of teachers with the necessary English accreditations.

STUDENTS, FAMILIES,
AND TEACHERS' OPINIONS

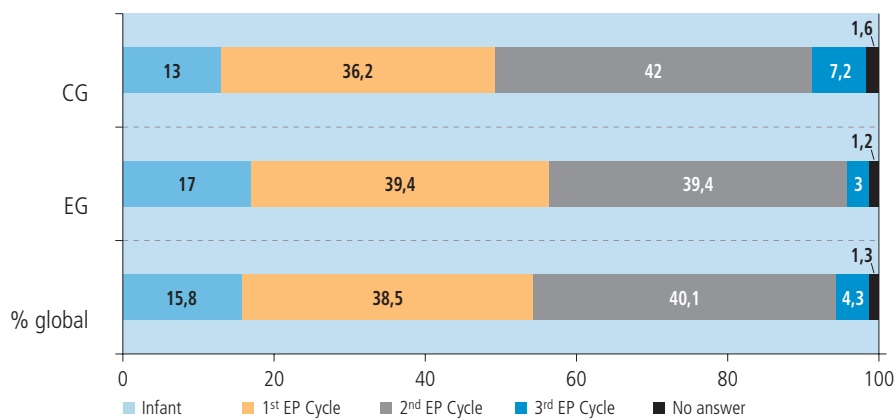
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5. STUDENTS, FAMILIES, AND TEACHERS' OPINIONS

5.1. Students' learning itineraries and strategies

The first verification carried out on analysing the students' questionnaires is that those who participate in the experimental groups have a slightly different profile than the control groups do with regards to their English learning itineraries. The first group begins to study English a little sooner and also dedicates more study hours to that language outside of school hours (72.7% of the students in the EG confirm they study English outside of school hours versus 63.8% within the CG), which suggests an increased amount of time spent on the homework and a greater competence coinciding with the results of the various tests.

Graphic 13. When students begin to study English



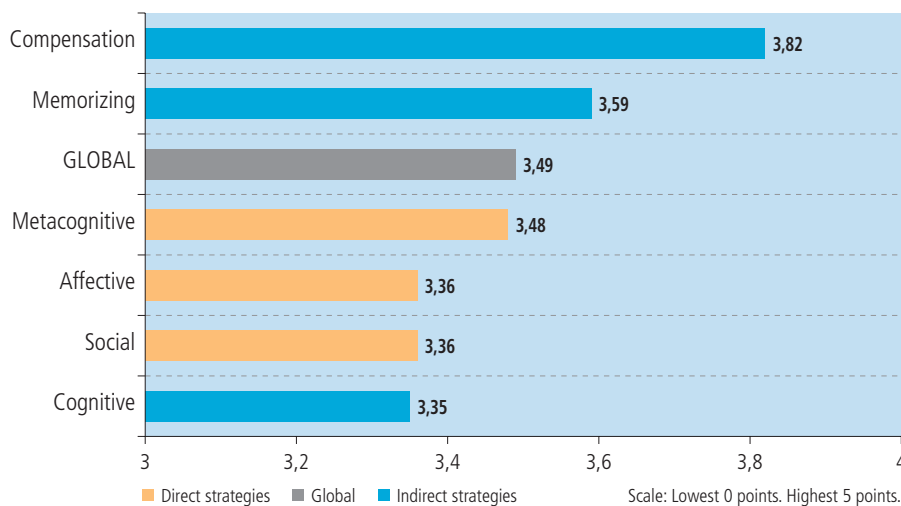
Furthermore, for the purpose of analysing the difference in the use of learning strategies between students of the experimental groups and the control groups, in the questionnaire there were collected a series of questions based on the instrument developed by R. Oxford (*Strategy Inventory for Language Learning, SILL*), version 7.0 (ESL/EFL) on learning strategies. The classification that this author used from the strategies is as follows:

- Memory strategies.** Most efficient use of memory. This is used to store new information in the memory's warehouse and to recover the information when needed for communication.
- Cognitive strategies.** Use of the mental processes. Allow connections to be established from the new information with existing schemes, analyse them and classify them.
- Compensation strategies.** Compensation for nonexistent knowledge. This is needed to fill in the language gaps in knowledge and to confirm the comprehension of the interlocutor.
- Metacognitive strategies.** Organization and evaluation of the actual learning. Planning, monitoring and evaluation are the techniques used to control the learning.
- Affective Strategies.** Managing emotions. Facilitate management of sentiments, attitudes and personal motivation together with the process of learning a foreign language.
- Social strategies.** Learning with others. This activates interaction and cooperation with the others in the learning process.

The results reveal that the use of the learning strategies measured by the SILL questionnaire ranges from a high use of compensation strategies (3.82 points, out of 5) to a medium use of cognitive strategies (3.35), while the remainder of the strategies range within different intermediate levels of use. A wider use of direct strategies were found

(memorizing, cognitive and compensation) than of indirect (metacognitive, emotional and social). In spite of this, the direct cognitive strategies responsible for processing information, training mental maps and producing the language, appear in last place.

Graphic 14. Average marks in the use of learning strategies



When analysing the behaviour of the experimental and control groups, it can be seen that the students participating in the experience use the entire set of strategies more intensively than the control groups do, which confirms that from this point of view they are better trainees of languages than their schoolmates. This fact is in keeping with the correlation established in all the studies between the use of strategies and the effectiveness of learning. Students from the experimental group were selected because of their better command of English among other requirements. The researchers believe that the experience using English as the language of instruction creates a favourable environment where the learning strategies can be developed and then used. This opinion was confirmed by the results when the variable of belong to experimental or to control groups was introduced.

	Direct Strategies			Indirect Strategies		
	Mem.	Cog.	Com.	Met.	Affec.	Soc.
EG	3,66	3,42	3,93	3,54	3,43	3,45
CG	3,41	3,19	3,56	3,32	3,18	3,16
Difference	0,25	0,24	0,37	0,22	0,25	0,29

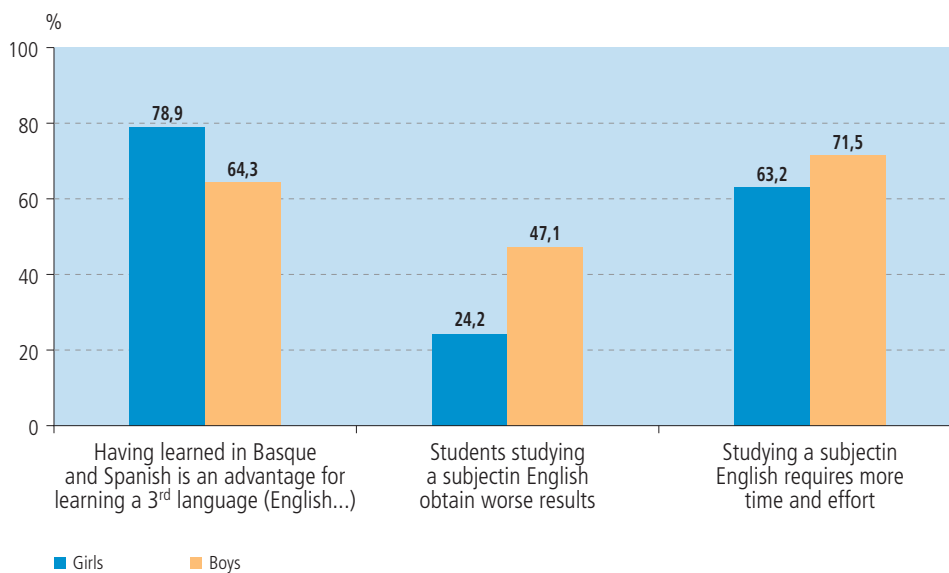
Finally, it must be explained that the differences, which are statistically significant, in the use of strategies between the experimental and control groups can be attributed to two types of reasons: those dealing with the greater linguistic competence of the experimental groups due to the prior selection, and those related to the increased use of English and therefore with stimulating different strategies to ensure the assimilation of the content of the subjects taught in L3.

5.2. Perceptions of students participating in the experience about languages and language learning

The questionnaire directed to the students participating in the experience collects opinions on languages and the learning of languages, and on English as the vehicular language in areas of the curriculum.

Students participating in the experience believe that learning various languages involves personal enrichment, even though this requires additional effort with more time dedicated to study. In the same way, they believe that having taken courses in Basque and Spanish provides an advantage for learning a third language and that it does not cause problems in obtaining better grades. Females have a more positive attitude towards plurilingual learning for this group of items.

Graphic 15. Degree of agreement on some of the aspects of multilingual teaching



The students' pleasure for participating in plurilingual programs is noted when they are asked if they wish to continue studying in this type of programme and if they are satisfied with the results they obtain.

Students recognize the motivation and personal effort required to study in several languages, and affirm that the favourable results obtained are done so through work and dedication.

In as far as the expectations are concerned with the usefulness of English, the majority of students believe that it will be useful in their future, especially when travelling, in order to get to know other cultures and countries, and to find work or to further their studies.

Regarding the viewpoint of using English as the vehicular languages in curriculum subjects, it should be explained that the majority of the teachers use this language in their classes and require their students to also express themselves in the language.

The students confirm that the teachers mostly use the masterly presentation as a didactic strategy, although they also use others such as: working in groups, presentations on themes...

The material most used in the classroom is that created by the teachers themselves, which is an indicator of the existing deficit in English textbooks and didactic materials.

And lastly, with regards to the types of tests being used to evaluate the students, the objective tests predominate (written exams, orals, multiple-choice exams...), although their attitudes and behaviour in class are also evaluated.

In conclusion, it can be confirmed that the students participating in plurilingual learning fit the profile of students motivated about their work, conscious of the benefits to be obtained by learning several languages, and willing to make an additional effort to undertake this type of studies. Moreover, they believe English will be useful both in their personal future as well as their professional future.

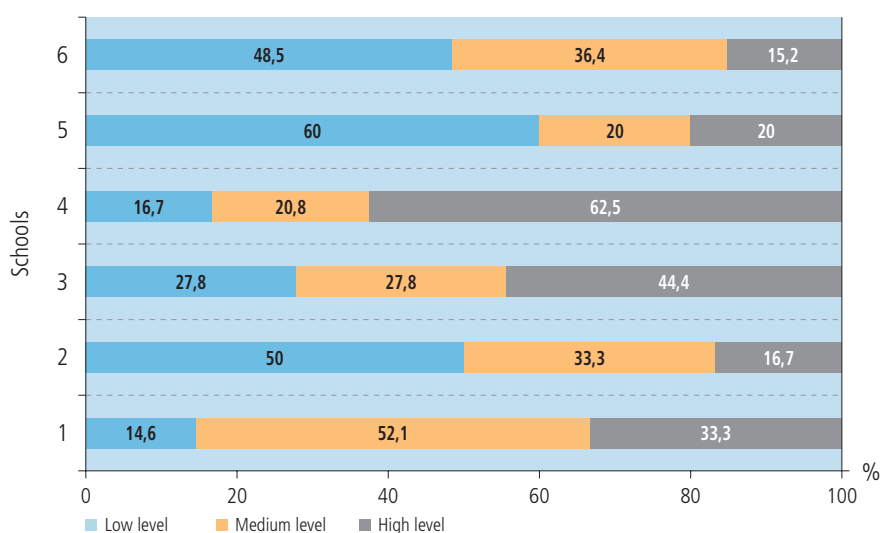
5.3. Opinions of the families regarding plurilingual learning

The questionnaire was answered by the families of the students participating in the experience and this was used to analyse aspects related to the educational and professional level of the mothers and fathers, to the learning trends of their children and to the opinions regarding learning English and its usefulness in the near future.

The first question analysed refers to the level of studies. According to the data collected, in 40% of the families both of the parents have university degrees. This indicates that the study level is clearly superior to that of the average in the BAC, which in 2001 was 20.5%.

Regarding the professional level, or the group comprised by profession and the type of work they carry out, the variation between the six schools taking part in the research is obvious, as three are located in low or medium level and the other three are in medium-high level. This suggests that although the entire group of families are in a higher socio-economic status than the average in the BAC, when the analysis is conducted among schools there can be seen appreciable differences among them.

Graphic 16. Families' professional level



According to the families, almost half of their children (44.2%) started studying English in the first grade of Primary School, which is ahead of that required by law (3rd grade of Primary School). Furthermore, a high percentage of students (73%) are studying English as an out-of-school activity, of whom 44% have been studying between 4 and 7 years. The majority of these students attend academies and to a lesser degree take private lessons.

The vast majority believe that it is very important for their children to learn various languages.

The families, together with their children, believe that being able to speak English will be useful both for travelling and for getting to know people and countries, as well as for the professional and work-related future.

5.4. The teachers' personal variables and teaching strategies

The questionnaire for the teachers asked questions regarding the subjects taught in English, the beliefs concerning the languages and learning them, their own linguistic gift, motivation and self confidence, and the requirements and needs for professional development.

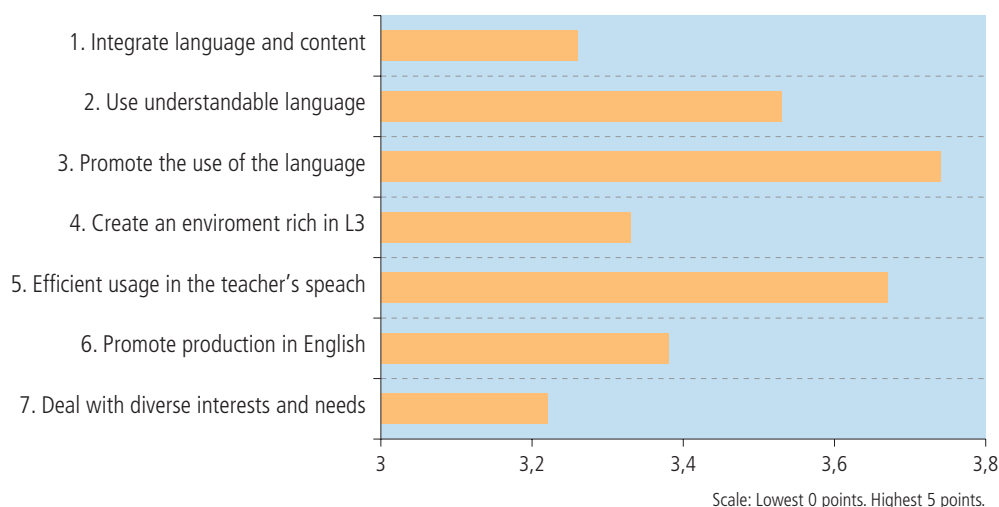
There is a large disparity in the subjects taught in English. Only Alternative to Religion (3 schools) and History (2 schools) are recurring, the remainder teach Economy, Music, Art History, Computer Science, Laboratory Techniques, Chemistry, Literature, Press Workshop, World Religions, Tutorship, Science... Such a varied outlook represent a wealth of materials and subjects offered but a weakness in the interchange of materials created and intervention strategies with specific content.

The teachers consider that they are highly qualified to teach in a foreign language, are comfortable, and believe they have sufficient personal and institutional resources to carry out this teaching activity. They recognize that the task they are developing is complex as it requires combining specific subject knowledge with a good linguistic competence in English. Besides, the lack of didactic materials requires an extra effort in preparing the classes. However, the majority confirm that they like teaching their subject in English.

When teaching, they pay attention both to the subject matter and to the development of the language they are working in, paying special attention to the proper use of the language. They combine different linguistic registers depending on the different communication situations and try to work with a type of register that is understandable for the student. This promotes the practice and understanding of English in the student providing a context within which the students have the opportunity to produce new forms of the language and within which their attempts at communication are valued and corrected in the right manner. It promotes also cooperative work to facilitate the active use of the language.

From a didactic point of view, they believe that an environment rich in stimuli awakens the student's curiosity both with regard to learning the language and the content being taught, and therefore promotes the application of different stimuli to adapt to the various learning rhythms and interests.

Graphic 17. Teaching strategies



All in all, the teaching strategies used by the teachers participating in the experience allow the students to learn to activate and consolidate efficient learning strategies, as it is understood that there can be no teaching without learning.

RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS AND
GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

6

6. CONCLUSIONS

This research was intended to study cases applying different methodologies of collecting information. All of these components –quantitative results, perceptions and qualified opinions, documentary information– sometimes converged and secured evidence that became apparent in a natural manner. At other times, the data and evidence did not come together, which caused contradictions and discrepancies that are shown in the report.

The general conclusions of the research can be summarised in the following viewpoints:

- The PE increases the rate of learning the vehicular language used and the improvement in linguistic and communicative competence appears to be substantial. This statement is based on the fact that at the end of two years, the groups participating in the experience obtained better results than the control group in all the tests. Even so, there were other variables that could have influenced the results which should be taken into account. These include: the prior selection of the students, the early start in learning English, or the participation in out-of-school activities to improve their English.
- The informed opinion of the didactic seminars assures that the assimilation of the content in the different subject areas taught in English is similar, if not superior, to those groups taught at the same level that did not participate in the experience. Therefore, the PE does not create any obstacles in learning the subjects taught in English as the language of instruction.
- The opinion of the teachers indicate that there are no unforeseen effects in implementing the experience, and therefore its application does not cause any problems in the development of the student's ability to learn in other languages.
- Extending the experience is conditional on a series of requisites that deal with three types of variables:
 1. The structural framework and rules of the innovation. They must take into account the amount, distribution and typology of the plurilingual schools, the instruction languages, the subjects taught and the desired objectives in linguistic competence.
 2. The intervention context, i.e., the schools. Starting from the fact that the intention is to go from a mainly bilingual to a trilingual education system, it is essential that there be an integrated treatment of the languages and a flexible offer of itineraries that accommodate the needs of the students and the objectives of the curriculum.
 3. The entire set of people implementing the PE: teachers, consultants and researchers. With regards to teachers, it is necessary to obtain a sufficient number of people with a high professional competence both from the linguistic and the methodological point of view. They must also have a network of consultants and researchers to support and validate the entire process.

6.1. General considerations

Taking into account the consolidation and possible spread of the experience, the following aspects should be taken into consideration.

Regarding the educational Administration

- Given that at this time no objective has been established on the desired level of linguistic knowledge, it would be advisable to set up a series of linguistic objectives for students to participate in plurilingual projects. The levels to achieve could use the CEFR as a reference, establishing the B1 level at the end of the ESO and B2 for the end of Post-Compulsory.

- They should also take into consideration that the level a student should obtain need not be the same in the distinct skills that make up the learning of a language. It is possible to set up models for acquiring skills which, depending on the school year, place special emphasis on those skills needed to understand texts (of easier access) than in their production (more complex).
- It would also be necessary to establish an adjustment of the linguistic objectives to be obtained by the students, taking into account the number of years they will be studying the L3 and the percentage of school time it will be used as a language of instruction.
- Taking into account the breakdown of subjects and the unequal distribution of schools by territories (of 18 schools 15 belong to the Bizkaia territory, 2 to Gipuzkoa and 1 to Araba), it would appear necessary for the Administration to set up a stable regulatory framework which defines aspects related to the number of schools to offer plurilingual teaching, the set of subjects offered in L3 and their ideal distribution throughout the courses or stages and territories.
- Even if at present the strength of English as a relational language is indisputable, the interest in also offering the chance to study subjects in other languages as close to the Basque reality, as for example French, should not be forgotten.
- Given the results obtained in the tests on language level and the research dealing with the subject of plurilingual teaching, it would be interesting to offer the plurilingual programs for a minimum duration of four academic years (both cycles of ESO or the second cycle of ESO plus Post-Compulsory) which could be extended to six (ESO, 4 years, and Post-Compulsory, 2 years).
- The prior selection of students for linguistic competence in the teaching language appears to be reasonable for taking certain subjects in L3 at non-compulsory educational levels; however, in compulsory education the possibility to take certain subjects in L3 should be offered without a prior selection.
- The least difference in linguistic competence is found in the 1st year of ESO and the difference continues to grow as students progress through the education system. Therefore starting the PE during the first course of ESO guarantees more students being incorporated than were in previous courses and stages, should selective processes be used.
- As verified in the opinions obtained from the questionnaires and interviews with the teachers and school directors, an increase in resources, both material (economic aid, specific training, etc.) and human (reducing teaching time for plurilingual teachers, obtaining substitute teachers accredited in the languages, etc.) is a request that should be taken into consideration.

Regarding the schools

- Given the fact that the schools have given a very positive evaluation regarding their participation in the experience, it would be advisable to allow them to extend their offerings to other educational stages should they request it.
- The schools should take into account that the projects are sometimes excessively dependent on a few teachers, and this implies a certain weakness with regard to increasing their stability.
- The lack of coordination among the linguistic areas indicated by the Educational Inspectorate in the evaluation of the experience, suggests the need to establish an integrated treatment of the languages through the linguistic projects of the school.
- It appears to be advisable that the schools establish a series of principles on the order and priorities in the areas and subjects to be taught in L3, setting up some criteria on progression and suitability.

Regarding the students

- The PE students have a good perception of their own work and the results they obtain. Likewise, their attitude towards learning and using English, as well as towards languages in general, is frankly positive. A clear determinant of these results is the work, their persistence with the work and the personal responsibility when the time comes to do homework and prepare for class. The collaborative environment in class is reasonable, although interest in the subjects is not especially high.
- The above characteristics define a student especially motivated to study, and to a degree, with higher level of personal demands than the average student, which should be taken into account when evaluating the results of the tests and their attitudes towards the task.
- The research shows that the learning strategies are essential tools enabling the students to become self-motivated and independent learners. Plurilingual teaching promotes the use of these strategies and facilitates their assimilation by the student. The choice of strategies that promote learning is developed gradually through the teachers' modelling.

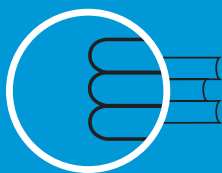
Regarding the teachers

- Teachers of the Basque Autonomous Community have created an important theoretical and practical reflection through 25 years of working on models of linguistic immersion. This accumulated knowledge is easily transferred to the new situation of introducing L3 and should therefore be considered as an excellent starting point in developing plurilingual experiences.
- The teachers who are participating in the experience feel that the most pressing concern is on how to resolve the problems and difficulties arising from teaching a subject in a foreign language. This task requires an additional effort that should be recognized and facilitated by the administration.
- One of the major difficulties facing the teachers is the lack of instructive materials in English, and therefore any initiative to alleviate this deficit would be welcome (exchanges through seminars, working as a network, creating a data bank, collaborating over the internet, blogs...).
- The teachers recognize that the linguistic requirements vary depending on the type of content to be taught. Subjects such as Mathematics, Physics, or Chemistry can be mostly taught with a good command of the fundamental terminology in the teaching language, others such as Philosophy or History require a greater versatility and command of the language. Recognizing this, makes it advisable to use flexible criteria and an optimisation of resources, at least initially, when requiring the linguistic accreditation of teachers wanting to participate in plurilingual projects.
- It would be desirable that when conducting the initial training of teachers (Universities for Teacher Education, Pedagogy Faculties), the new requirements of the education system be taken into account with regard to command of languages in future teachers.

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