# THE LINGUISTIC MODELS OF COMPULSORY EDUCATION IN THE BASQUE AUTONOMOUS COMMUNITY AND IN CATALONIA: A COMPARATIVE VIEW 

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#### Abstract

This article presents a comparative perspective of the linguistic models in compulsory education in the Basque Autonomous Community, where three models coexist; one with Castilian as the main language of learning (model A), another in which Castilian and Basque are both languages of learning (model B) and a third with Basque as the main language of learning (model D), and in Catalonia, where a single common education model has been implemented,, with Catalan as the main language of learning. This article details the process through which each model was implemented since the restoration of self-governance and outlines the results related to the linguistic competences of pupils and to linguistic uses in the school environment. The article concludes with shared thoughts on the social debates around the models and on the challenges that they must address to trilingualise the school population (in a minoritised language, in Castilian and in English), and to update and strengthen schools' contribution to the processes of revitalising Basque and Catalan.


Key words: educational linguistic policy; compulsory education; Basque Autonomous Community; Catalonia; Basque language; Catalan language.

## eLs models lingüístics de l'educació obligatòria a la comunitat AUTȮNOMA BASCA I A CATALUNYA: UNA VISIÓ COMPARADA


#### Abstract

Resum L'article presenta una visió comparada dels models lingüístics de l'educació obligatòria a la Comunitat Autònoma Basca, on coexisteixen tres models, un amb el castellà com a llengua vehicular (model A), un amb el castellà i l'eusquera com a llengües vehiculars (model B), i un últim amb l'eusquera com a llengua vehicular (model D), i a Catalunya, en què s'ha implantat un model únic amb escolarització conjunta i amb el català com a llengua vehicular principal. Es narra el procés d'implantació de cada model d'ençà del restabliment de l'autogovern i se'n presenta un esbós de resultats amb relació a les competències lingüístiques dels escolars i als usos lingüístics en àmbit escolar. Tanca el text una reflexió conjunta sobre els debats socials a l'entorn dels models $i$ sobre els reptes que han d'abordar amb l'objectiu de trilingüitzar la població escolar (en llengua minoritzada, en castellà i en anglès) i d'actualitzar i enfortir la contribució de l'escola als processos de revitalització de l'eusquera i el català.


Paraules clau: política lingüística educativa; educació obligatòria; comunitat autònoma basca; Catalunya; eusquera; llengua catalana.

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## 1 Introduction ${ }^{1}$

In the late 70s, the process of moderate decentralisation of the Spanish State following Franco's Dictatorship meant that a number of languages other than Castilian ${ }^{2}$ were recognised as official languages in their respective autonomous communities, pursuant to Article 3.2 of the Spanish Constitution and the various Statutes of Autonomy. This is the case of Basque in the Basque Autonomous Community (hereinafter BAC) and of Catalan in Catalonia, the two cases discussed in this article from a comparative standpoint. These recognitions of official status alongside Castilian were followed by different initiatives to expand knowledge of the minority languages and to promote their use in specific areas, within a framework of linguistic normalisation policies. The process of revitalising Basque and Catalan, until that time limited to the activities of social movements, became an area of governmental activity (Urla, 2012; Woolard, 1989).

In the case of the BAC, following approval of the Statute of Gernika (1979), the Basque Government worked to create governmental entities responsible for developing Basque normalisation policies. Noteworthy within this framework, are the linguistic policies in compulsory education, since the school domain was believed to be key in the process of linguistic revitalisation (Azurmendi, 1986; Idiazabal, 1986a). In Catalonia, the general framework for linguistic policies was defined by the Statute of Sau (1979), and Law 7/1983, on linguistic normalization (LNL), which recognise Catalan as an official language and as Catalonia's own language (llengua pröpia). The LNL sets out a framework for the promotion of Catalan use in the local and autonomous administrations, in public media and in the education system, which aims to universalise the knowledge of Catalan and Castilian (Milian, 1984). The educational sphere is considered key to promote equal opportunities between native Catalan speakers and Castilian speakers descended from immigrants from other parts of Spain, and to counter the norms that restricted the use of Catalan between the two groups (Woolard, 1991).

Although the sociolinguistic situations of Basque in the BAC and Catalan in Catalonia have been - and remain - vastly different, both at the beginning of the autonomous community period and today, the common emphasis on the importance of educational linguistic policies in the linguistic recovery process, and the difference between the approaches taken in each territory, make it interesting to offer a comparative view, limited in this article to compulsory education. This article is divided into three sections. In the first, we explore the principles that inspired the design of the models in each territory and show how they have evolved. The second section offers an overview of the results in terms of knowledge and use of the languages. Finally, we provide some shared thoughts on the social debate surrounding the models and on the challenges they face.

## 2 Design and evolution of the models

### 2.1 BAC

In the 1980s, Basque was legalised for education and as a language of learning in schools, based on laws for the normalisation of the use of Basque from 1982, and on educational linguistic models, from 1983. Prior to that time, Basque had been present (as a language of learning and as a subject) in the ikastolas, schools created by the pro-revitalisation movement starting in the 1960s. However, it had only a minority presence: as Idiazabal (1986b) wrote, in the 1978-1979 school year, Basque was practically absent from schools.

The Law on Normalisation of Basque Language Use (1982) acknowledges the right to receive education in Basque and Castilian, and obliges the government to guarantee that pupils achieve "sufficient practical knowledge of both official languages by the end of their compulsory education" (BOPV, 1983, p. 2471). On the basis of these principles, a 1983 decree regulates the use of Basque and Castilian in non-university education based on three models of bilingual education: in model $A$, Castilian is the language of learning and Basque is taught as a subject. In model B, both Basque and Castilian are languages of learning, and also taught as subjects. Depending on the school, these languages of learning may have distribution levels of $50-50 \%, 40-60 \%$, etc. As stated by Idiazabal (2003), in the 1980s model B stood for the most significant

[^1]development: it was based on the classic "one person-one language" principle (Ronjat, 1913), in which bilingual Castilian-speaking and Basque-speaking teachers were responsible for teaching in Basque, while monolingual Castilian-speaking teachers taught in Castilian. This sort of school organisation overcame the scarcity of Basque-speaking teachers, and encouraged coordination among educators. Lastly, in model D, Basque is the language of learning and Castilian is taught as a subject. It is worth noting that, as of the 1990s, and first in the network of ikastolas and then in the rest of the school system, English began to be used as a language of learning in the three models, although Basque and Castilian remained the main languages of learning (Cenoz, 2009: Elorza and Muñoa, 2008).

The 1983 decree on linguistic models was originally conceived taking into account the initial language of the pupils and the sociolinguistic context (Idiazabal, 2003): model D was designed for pupils socialised in Basque in their family and social environments; model A was meant for initially Castilian-speaking pupils who lived in contexts were Castilian was predominant. Model B was considered the "most bilingual", because it was to be built around pupils with mixed sociolinguistic backgrounds. This notwithstanding, and thanks to social trends favourable to increasing the social presence of Basque, families' support for the education of children in Basque, the insistence of school administrators, the training of teachers and the support of the administration, the potential offered by the system of models gradually began to be harnessed. In other words, starting from an education system in which Basque was just a subject, and Castilian was at the fore as the main language of learning, an evolution began that made plausible a gradual advancement toward a new paradigm in which Basque would be used generally as the language of learning. One outcome of this evolution was that model D increasingly came to be a model of immersion, in which pupils with Castilian as L1 were educated in Basque as L2. However, the difficulty of this evolution becomes palpable in the light of enrolment data of that time: at the end of the 1980 s, around $60 \%$ of pupils were enrolled in model A, and only $20 \%$ had Basque as their sole language of learning (model D). Another factor to take into account is that of teachers' linguistic education: in the early 1980s, only $5 \%$ of teachers in the public school system spoke Basque (Idiazabal, 1986b), while nowadays $85 \%$ of the teachers have the required qualification (Mercator, 2020). ${ }^{2}$

Reversing these enrolment figures was an enormous challenge for the education system as a whole. As Zalbide states (1998), this evolution also brought about a new social valorization of bilingual education. Idiazabal (2003) states that improving education in Basque has brought about, and continues to represent, the main reform of the Basque education system. Currently, 40 years after the implementation of the three models, enrolment trends seem clear, as can be seen in the data for preschool education ( $0-6$ years) and primary education ( $6-12$ years), shown in Graph 1: model D (in Basque / "En euskera" in the graph) continues to grow, the decline of model A (in Castilian /"En castellano" in the graph) is constant and model B (bilingual /"Bilingüe" in the graph) remains below $20 \%$. The data for compulsory secondary education show the same trend, although in this context model D is now around $70 \%$, model A nearly $10 \%$ and model B is slightly higher than $20 \%$.

Graph 1. Evolution of pupils enrolled in the different models in preschool and primary education. BAC, 1983-2018. Source: Eustat (2020).


[^2]The current curriculum is aligned with the system created in the 1980s as regards the goals for the bilingual education of pupils, and the right to choose the language of schooling (Basque Government, 2016, p. 14). While making specific reference to the inequality in the social use of Basque compared to Castilian, schools are still assigned an essential role in the process of Basque revitalisation, and there is an insistence on the idea of schools as the backbone of Basque's social normalisation. Having said that, the curriculum makes it clear that this task is not exclusively up to schools but must also be present in any of the pupils' socialising contexts. This approach is also enacted taking into account the current context of the BAC with regard to linguistic diversity. As mentioned, the presence and use of English in schools has increased since the 1990s. Therefore, the education system of the BAC can now be defined by its multilingual nature, insofar as it addresses the need to develop a communicative repertoire in pupils that includes Basque, Castilian and English. Furthermore, multilingualism is a reality in BAC schools as a result of the linguistic diversity found among pupils who have immigrant backgrounds, with the first significant migratory influxes beginning as of the year 2000. According to Moreno (2017), this period marks the beginning of school programmes for the reception of migrant-origin pupils, as well as programmes on how to handle diversity. Currently, the distribution of migrant-origin pupils in the school system is very uneven, depending on the schools' ownership status: approximately $70 \%$ are enrolled in public schools, while the rest attend publicly subsidised private schools (more attend religious schools than ikastolas). On the other hand, although an upward trend in preschool enrolment in model D can be observed in migrant-origin pupils (Fouassier, 2017), model A continues to show enrolment percentages among this profile of pupils that are higher than those of "native" pupils. In fact, the continuity of model A in public schools is largely dependent on the enrolment of migrant-origin pupils (Consejo Escolar de Euskadi, 2020).

### 2.2 Catalonia

The educational linguistic model of Catalonia, known as the "Catalan conjunction model" (Milian, 1984) began its development with the adoption of Law 7/1983, on linguistic normalisation (LNL). Before that, the General Education Law of 1970 decriminalised the teaching of Catalan in schools, and later, Royal Decree 2092/1978 allowed -but did not encourage- teaching in Catalan in schools. In 1983, with the LNL, the framework principles were established for a model that entailed the teaching of and in Catalan in a framework that expressly prohibited the separation of pupils into different schools or classes on the basis of their first language. ${ }^{3}$ Therefore, the educational linguistic model could be considered the chief expression of the integrationist ideologies, generalised throughout the democratic spectrum in the years of late Francoism, meant to mitigate the perceived risk of an internal ethnicisation of the Catalan population (Vila, 2005). Additionally, the LNL set as an objective that all pupils had to achieve equivalent fluency in Catalan and in Castilian by the end of their compulsory education.

In this initial stage, schools had leeway to set the proportion of Catalan and Castilian use to learn contents, and three profiles of school were defined (Alsina et al., 1983, as cited by Pradilla, 2016, p. 299): maximum Catalanisation schools, with Catalan as the language of instruction and Castilian as a subject, which included the linguistic immersion programmes; intermediate Catalanisation schools, with progressive use of Catalan as a language of learning until reaching equivalence with Castilian by the end of the compulsory education, and minimum Catalanisation schools with Castilian as the language of learning and Catalan as a subject. Therefore, at that time, the Catalan model worked with a logic similar to that still in effect in the Basque education system. The data summarised in Graph 2 show that by the 1992-1993 school year, less than a decade after adoption of the LNL, nearly three out of four primary education schools stated that they conducted their education in Catalan, while the number of schools that claimed Castilian as the language of learning was practically residual.

[^3]Graph 2. Evolution of primary education pupils in Catalonia according to language of education. Catalonia, 1986-2000. Percentages. Source: Vila and Galindo (2009).


The fourth and final defining trait of the model, the "normal" use of Catalan as the language to learn contents throughout all compulsory education, was established by decrees $75 / 1992$ and $96 / 1992$, on the organisation of compulsory preschool, primary and secondary education, and consolidated with Constitutional Court judgement 337/1994, which recognises the constitutionality of a model in which Catalan is the "centre of gravity", and with he incorporation of this principle into Law 1/1998, on linguistic policy (LPL). Taking a new look at the graph, it is apparent that nearly all primary schools claimed to conduct teaching in Catalan in the 1999-2000 school year, after the adoption of the LPL. Pons and Vila (2005), who recommend that these data be interpreted with a certain degree of scepticism, state that in the same school year, the secondary education schools that claimed to carry out teaching in Catalan account for around $50 \%$ of the total. Beyond these data, and as shown in numerous studies, the principle of Catalan as the normal language of learning has not led to a monolingual model in which Catalan is used exclusively in the classroom (Bretxa and Vila, 2014; Flors-Mas, 2018; Llompart, 2016; Unamuno and Nussbaum, 2006). Rather, the original linguistic diversity of pupils often turns Catalan classrooms into heteroglossic spaces (García 2009) in which different languages and varieties are used simultaneously by both pupils and teachers to fulfill various communicative and interactional purposes in the framework of teaching-learning activities.

This model, designed for the education of the population established in the territory, and competent in at least one of the two official languages (which are close to one another from the typologic standpoint, and to a large degree intercomprehensible) was disrupted at the turn of the millennium by the arrival of "new immigrations" from diverse geographic, socio-economic and linguistic origins. Initially, this supervening diversity was handled with the adaptation of existing instruments, such as the Compensatory Educational Programme (Llevot, 2005) or the promotion of school adaptation workshops, which promote new pupils' learning of Catalan prior to their entry into regular classrooms (Purtí, 2006). This strategy was modified with the approval in 2004 of the Language and Social Cohesion Plan, known as the Pla LIC in Catalan. Among its various initiatives are the "reception classrooms" (aules d'acollida), a resource that limits the time of separation and strengthens the new student's initial integration into the regular classroom group (I. Vila, 2011). Reception classrooms are designed not only as places for new pupils to learn the language but also to receive emotional support in the migratory process. They have had positive results in terms of integration and attitudes toward the Catalan language (Trenchs-Parera and Patiño-Santos, 2013).

Additionally, the Language and Social Cohesion Plan consolidates a plurilingual and intercultural perspective of the educational system that aims to highlight and appreciate new pupils' mother tongues. The same principles inspire the document El model lingüístic del sistema educatiu de Catalunya [The Linguistic Model of the Education system of Catalonia] (Catalan Ministry of Education, 2018), which emerged from he workings of a group of university experts and proposes a reinforcement of multilingual and translingual (Garcia and Wei,
2014) approaches to the teaching and learning of languages. Another catalyst of this evolution is the inclusion of English and other foreign languages as the medium of instruction of different content subjects within different experimental programmes (cf. Pérez-Vidal et al., 2016) as facilitating access to this global lingua franca answers one of the aspirations held by families (Sunyol, 2019) and the pupils themselves (Flors-Mas, 2013). It has even been included in the 2006 Statute of Autonomy as a duty of public authorities (Art. 44.2).

Although Constitutional Court judgement 337/1994 upheld the constitutionality of the guiding principles behind the "Catalan conjunction model", its supposed monolingual nature, and the subsidiary position granted to Castilian in the school system have led Castilianist groups (cf. Woolard, 2016) to dispute it on various fronts: the media, lobbies, and legislative and judiciary branches (Pons, 2013, 2014; Pradilla, 2016). We will discuss the social and political opposition to the educational linguistic model in the last section of this article, but for now a few initial considerations can be made on its judicialisation. Constitutional Court judgement 31/2010 on the Statute of 2006 paved the way for the Supreme Court to reinterpret "the 'principle of proportionality' [in the educational use of languages], which in constitutional case law has a finalistic, or results-based meaning, in relation to knowledge, linguistic normalisation or social cohesion objectives [...], turning it into 'proportion of hours or subjects"" (Pons, 2014). This reinterpretation has been espoused by the High Court of Justice of Catalonia (TSJC) to establish in various judgements that the "reasonable" proportion of use as a language of learning be $25 \%$ of teaching time, in an arbitrary manner, without any pedagogical or educational criteria or grounds and with no consideration whatsoever of the results of the model (see following section). This has brought about a steady stream of judgements ${ }^{4}$ which first individually affected the pupils of claimant families, and then the entire class in which they were enrolled. Following a recent decision (TSJC judgement $5201 / 2020$ ), a universal application throughout the education system was attempted. State legislative activity must be added to this front, with the approval of the Organic Law to improve educational quality (LOMCE), the education law promoted by the government of the Popular Party (Pons, 2014). In line with the arguments of the Supreme Court, the Law included the principle of Castilian as the language of learning "in a reasonable proportion" in its additional provision 38a, and even outlined a system of penalties and the possibility for interested families residing in territories that did not guarantee a sufficient educational offering in Spanishin the public system to enrol their children in private schools, with the costs charged to the "non-compliant" autonomous administration. The recent approval in the Spanish Congress and Senate of a new educational law (LOMLOE), promoted by the PSOE-Podemos coalition government, has repealed these precepts.

## 3 Results of the models

### 3.1 BAC

The Basque Government began measuring the Basque and Castilian language competences of pupils aged 7-8 and 10-11 in the 1983-1984 school year (Basque Government, 1986). Three years later, it re-evaluated the same pupils from the first age group when they had reached ages 10-11 (Basque Government, 1989). Pupils 7 to 8 years old were evaluated again in the 1987-1988 school year (Basque Government, 1990) and finally, pupils in the 13-14-year age group were evaluated in the 1989-1990 school year (Basque Government, 1992). In the evaluations of 10-11-year-old pupils, items related to oral comprehension, oral expression, reading comprehension and written expression competences were measured. In the case of $7-8$-year-old pupils, only oral comprehension and expression were tested. Last, only written comprehension and expression were assessed in the 13-14-year-old age group. The results of the four evaluations confirmed that pupils enrolled in model D programmes achieved the most advanced levels of bilingual competency: the scores in Basque were better than those of model B, and especially model A pupils, who had low scores. Conversely, when it came to Castilian, the differences between model D and model A (which had better scores) were not significant.

The evaluations of Basque and Castilian at primary and secondary school level carried out in the first decade of the 21 st century confirmed the trends detected in previous studies: in Basque, the best results were found in model D , with a noteworthy difference with respect to those of model A . On the other hand, the results of model B were significantly better than those of model A, though they did not reach the levels of model D. In contrast, and regarding their competence in Castilian, the results of model D were very close to those

[^4]of model A. It is also worth noting that the results were better in publicly subsidised private schools than in public ones in all three models (Cenoz, 2009).

Since 2009, the Basque Institute for Educational Evaluation and Research (ISEI-IVEI) has conducted diagnostic evaluations on a census basis, for 4th year primary and 2nd year secondary pupils. The results of the sixth and latest evaluation, carried out in 2017, were published in 2018. The six available editions have evaluated competences in Basque and in Castilian, in addition to mathematics, while other competences have been intermittently measured (for example, competences in English or science).

The results are presented as follows: on occasion, reference will be made only to the 2017 evaluation, and on others, we will offer an evolutionary perspective of the years between 2009 and 2017 (ISEI-IVEI and Basque Government, 2018). Although second-year secondary pupils who had Basque as their first language (uniquely or together with another language) stood for only $19.2 \%$ of the total, the data show that the percentage of pupils who pass the initial level of Basque in secondary school is $54.7 \%$ (the sum of the intermediate and advanced level in the ED17), as can be observed in the Graph 3 (below, on the right). In other words, at a general level, these percentages indicate that pupils who achieve intermediate-level bilingual competency nearly triples the number of pupils who speak Basque at home. Notwithstanding, the percentage of pupils who do not pass the initial level of Basque has remained around $35 \%$ in 4 th year primary, and $40 \%$ in second year secondary since 2009. Additionally, in secondary school the percentage of pupils who only achieve the initial level is higher than in primary school. To the contrary, the percentage of pupils with advanced levels has been in constant decline since 2010.

Graph 3. Evolution of the percentage of pupils by performance levels in Basque in 4th year primary (on the left), and 2nd year secondary school (on the right). BAC, 2009-2017. Source: ISEI-IVEI and Basque Government (2018)


On another note, as shown in Graph 4, in the case of competence in Castilian, the percentage of pupils who only achieve an initial level has decreased to $10 \%$ in 4th year of primary school, and remains stable in 2 nd year secondary school pupils, at approximately $13 \%$.

Graph 4. Evolution of the percentage of pupils by performance levels in Castilian in 4th year primary (on the left), and 2nd year secondary school (on the right). BAC, 2009-2017. Source: ISEI-IVEI and Basque Government (2018)


With respect to the differences in the results between the models, depending on whether they are publicly subsidised private schools or public schools, the percentage of secondary school pupils that do not achieve bilingual competency (in other words, do not pass the initial level in Basque and/or Castilian) is very high especially in model A ( $98.2 \%$ of pupils in public, and $77.6 \%$ in subsidised private schools), but also in model B public schools ( $77.7 \%$ ). This percentage is slightly lower among pupils enrolled in model B programmes in subsidised private schools ( $57.8 \%$ ). Regarding the results of model D, $43.6 \%$ of pupils in public schools do not pass the initial level in one of the two languages, a percentage that drops to $32.5 \%$ in the case of pupils from subsidised private schools.

To conclude this summary, we will briefly discuss the results of the Arrue project, which studies the linguistic uses in school contexts of the BAC, though questionnaires distributed to all 4th year primary (9-10 years) and 2nd year secondary (13-14 years) pupils (Basque Government et al., 2017). In addition to calculating the overall use of the languages, the following areas of linguistic use are studied: in the classroom with classmates, in the classroom with teachers, in the schoolyard with classmates, and with teachers outside the classroom. The results from 2015 show a difference of over 17 points between the overall use of Basque in primary and secondary school ( $59.4 \%$ and $42.3 \%$, respectively). This trend is also present in previous studies ( 2011,2013 and 2015), although in 2015 there was a slight increase in the language use with respect to the use recorded in 2011 in both age groups. On the other hand, the use of Basque with teachers doubles the use with classmates in both primary and secondary schools, and once again, the percentages are higher in primary than in secondary school. For example, in primary school the use of Basque with teachers is $79.9 \%$, while its use with classmates in the schoolyard drops to $40.9 \%$. In secondary schools, these percentages are $70 \%$ and $23.6 \%$, respectively.

As for the contrast between models, we only mention the result in overall use, a trend maintained through 2011, 2013 and 2015: in primary school, in model D the percentage of overall Basque use is $70 \%$, in model B it is around $38 \%$ and in model A it ranges from $7 \%$ and $11 \%$ in the three years studied. In secondary school, the use diminishes in all three models, but the contrast among them remains: in model D , the percentage over the three years studied hovered around $55 \%$, in model B, around $23 \%$ and last, in model A, roughly $4 \%$.

In short, the results summarised in this section confirm that the BAC education system has clear margin for improvement in relation to the twofold objective of achieving bilingual competency of pupils, and promotion of Basque language use in the school environment.

### 3.2 Catalonia

As in the BAC, the evaluation of results of the linguistic model in Catalonia's compulsory education system focuses, first and foremost, on the results of Catalan and Castilian competence as an indicator of the achievement
of the objective that "all children, whatever their habitual language upon beginning their education, must be able to use normally and correctly the two official languages by the end of their compulsory education" (LPL, Art. 21.3), also included in Law 12/2009, on education (Art. 10.1). In this field, Antoni Milian has reported on an initial evaluation of results that have arisen from the introduction of Catalan Language as a subject in the early 1980s which indicate that without a generalised use of Catalan as a language of learning, the pupils whose L1 was Castilian "were far from achieving fluency in Catalan more or less comparable to Catalan-speaking pupils' fluency in Castilian" (1984, p. 33). Later, once the use of Catalan as a "normal" language of learning was consolidated, Joaquim Arnau wrote, as a general conclusion to various evaluations, that although "perfect bilingualism does not exist [...] Catalan-speaking pupils are closer to this ideal than Castilian-speaking pupils", that "Castilian language competence of schoolchildren in Catalonia is not lower than that of schoolchildren from the rest of Spain" and that "in Catalonia there are more factors that limit the knowledge of Catalan than factors that limit the knowledge of Castilian" (2004, p 1). These conclusions validated the approach to educate pupils in Catalan and even called for it to be reinforced and, in general terms, coincide with the research compiled by Strubell et al. (2011) on the results of the conjunction model and the linguistic immersion programmes in the initial stages of implementation.

The most recent data, from the evaluations by the Catalan Ministry of Education compiled by the Consell Superior d'Avaluació del Sistema Educatiu [High Council for Evaluation of the Educational System] (CSASE, 2017), point in a similar direction. Graph 5 shows the results registered at the end of the compulsory period (4th year Compulsory Secondary Education, ESO) and indicates that on average, Catalan pupils achieve relatively high, and quite similar, results in Catalan and Castilian in the different academic years analysed (and therefore, albeit with room for improvement, in general the model responds to the objective set out in the legislation). On another note, the studies by Oller and Vila (2010) show that newly enrolled immigrant pupils take a number of years to achieve competences in Catalan and Castilian similar to those of their classmates born in Catalonia. These authors identify key conditions such as age upon arrival, the years the pupil has been in the education system and socio-linguistic setting, that only affect the pupils' results in Catalan (which are better in predominantly Catalan-speaking contexts).

Graph 5. Average scores in Catalan and Castilian language for 4th year Compulsory Secondary Education pupils in Catalonia, 2012-2016. Source: CSASE (2017: 13)


The studies discussed are based on evaluations taken from written tests. As for speaking competence, in the 2018-2019 academic year, a pilot test was administered to a representative sample of 4th year ESO pupils
within the framework of the general evaluation (CSASE, 2020). ${ }^{5}$ The results of the test, which also evaluated pupils' knowledge of English, indicated once again that pupils achieved high, and very similar, average scores in Catalan $(73.0 / 100)$ and Castilian $(73.1 / 100)$ and somewhat lower in English $(66.0 / 100)$, for which the maximum level of achievement is B1 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. Among the factors that explain the variation in the results, the frequency of language use is noteworthy: the greater the use of Catalan and English, the better the results in the three languages examined. On the contrary, the most positive results for the three languages are concentrated in the groups with nonexclusive uses of Castilian. This is probably because, beyond the direct relationship between the use and speaking competence in a given language, frequency of use is an indicator of the pupils' socio-economic background (with exclusive usage of Castilian correlating mostly to lower socioeconomic status). Along these lines, a significant variation was also detected in the results depending on one's birthplace, parents' level of education and the family's socio-economic and cultural level.

In terms of the impact on use, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, it was found that the use of Catalan as a language of learning did not generalise its interpersonal use among pupils who did not have Catalan as their first language (Vila, 1996, 2004; Woolard, 1991). These uses are more conditioned by factors such as the first and/or habitual language of the pupil and their interlocutors, and by the demo-linguistic make-up of the schools, with the highest use of Catalan occurring in settings with the greatest densities of initial Catalan speakers (Comajoan, et al., 2013; Flors-Mas, 2017; Vila and Galindo, 2009; Vila and Vial, 2000).

Graph 6, which displays the results of a socio-demographic and sociolinguistic study of 4th year ESO pupils (CSASE, 2014) shows an example of this phenomenon. First, it indicates that, pursuant to the design of the model, pupils state that Catalan is their teachers' predominant language of choice when they address the class as a whole. This choice matches the language used by pupils when speaking to teachers, although the greater degree of pupils' control over the choice increases the presence of other languages (basically Castilian), especially outside the classroom. The biggest difference comes about in language use among peers, in which the predominant use of Catalan accounts for only $41.9 \%$ inside the classroom, and falls even further ( $35.0 \%$ ) outside the classroom. Pupils' initial language, or language of identification, is the main explanatory factor for these choices, as has also been indicated, based on the results from the RESOL project, by Flors-Mas (2018) or Bretxa and Vila (2014) who, furthermore, restrict the significant use of Castilian in the classroom to schools with lower densities of initial Catalan speakers. Further, Bretxa and Vila found a slight drop in Catalan use inside the classroom following the transition from primary to secondary education, which does not, however, achieve the proportions described in the Arrue project of the Basque Autonomous Community (Basque Government et al., 2017). The RESOL results did not detect any marked changes in interpersonal uses with peers in the transition to secondary school, and although overall the use of Castilian increased slightly, trajectories of Catalanisation of uses are also detected (Vila et al., 2018).

Graph 6. Linguistic uses of 4th year Compulsory Secondary Education pupils with different interlocutors and communication situations, and uses of teachers with the class as a whole. Catalonia, 2013. Source: internally developed from CSASE data (2014)


[^5]Outside the classroom, the impact of the model on interpersonal uses with peers is not very obvious, and in any event, indirect. The teachers interviewed by Bretxa et al. (2017), for example, identify as one of the "fissures" in the model its low capacity to modify the unwritten social norm that encourages the choice of Castilian in exolingual interactions between Catalan L1 speakers and native speakers of other languages. In a different light, the qualitative studies by Woolard (2016, p. 211-256) and Flors-Mas (2017) have pointed out that, generally speaking, enrolment of pupils in the conjunction model generalises throughout the school population a sense of "legitimacy" and "social permission" to use Catalan that is not necessarily activated in the uses with peers in school environments, but that facilitates inclusion of Catalan language use in other social spaces and appropriate stages of life (provided, of course, that they occur). This is how the aforementioned studies have detected that education in the Catalan conjunction model has effects on the subjectivity (Pujolar, 2020) of children and adolescents, as it "normalises" bilingual and adaptive stances and decouples, to a degree, the use of Catalan from the first language of the speakers (Flors-Mas and Vila, 2014; Pujolar and Gonzàlez, 2013; Sorolla and Flors-Mas, 2020; Trenchs-Parera, et al., 2014).

## 4 Social debate and ongoing challenges

We begin this section by examining the debate on the implementation of a single linguistic model. As we have already seen and will be shown in the following lines, the debate has developed differently in the BAC and Catalonia, both in terms of how it has been anchored in time and the way in which it has been resolved. We conclude the section by referring to the objective of achieving trilingualism in the school-age population and updating the contribution of schools to the process of linguistic revitalisation, which are presented as challenges that the educational system in the BAC as well as in Catalonia must address.

In the case of the BAC the unsatisfactory results in universalizing bilingual competence among pupils and in the use of Basque at school continue to fuel the debate on whether the models A, B and D should be kept as they are or, on the contrary, progress should be made towards the implementation of a single model D. Although this constitutes a weighty issue that education authorities and stakeholders have wrestled with since the beginning of this century (Idiazabal, 2003), in the current landscape, it is worth recalling the shortterm outlook for the three-model system: "in the very near future the entire public system will operate under model D and the subsidised private network will be predominantly D , with a significant presence of B , while preserving a small core of special projects that would continue under model A," (Consejo Escolar de Euskadi, 2020, p. 100).

On the one hand, a single model D has been advocated, with Basque as the sole language of learning, and introducing Castilian as a subject from age 8 onwards (Kontseilua, 2008, 2018). It is argued that the higher scores in competence evaluations and studies on linguistic uses are achieved in model D , and that generalising education in Basque could help improve the performance of pupils from predominantly Castilian-speaking contexts and linguistic profiles.

Furthermore, it has been noted that generalising model D throughout the school system could have counterproductive effects on reinforcing the social acceptance of model D (Idiazabal, 2003). The study on the "basic discourses of the Basque language" can be seen as a source of arguments in favour of this second position. Among the results of this study, conducted by the Basque Language Advisory Board, especially noteworthy is the near-unanimous social acceptance of what has been identified as the "discourse of respect", which includes ideological elements such as, "There must be a promotion of respect between Basque speakers and Castilian speakers," and "The entire population, including individuals who do not speak Basque, should feel proud of the fact that Basque is spoken here and only here," "Basque speakers must understand that many people cannot learn Basque," "Every individual must have the right to choose the language they prefer, and the obligation to respect the choice of others" (Basque Language Advisory Board, 2016, p. 73; authors' translation). From the latter idea, the concept of the right to choose one's language of education comes to the fore. Therefore, it seems that the (ever-growing) social support for model D is founded on values tied to respect and consensus among different social groups vis-à-vis the linguistic reality. That is why, taking into account the expected evolution of the three models in the short term, generalising model D by decree could contribute to the emergence of opposing positions, which could even alter this evolution in favour of model D.

In the case of Catalonia, the transition to a single model with Catalan as the "centre of gravity" that took place as of the 1992-1993 school year, was the starting point for certain conflictive attitudes toward a model that engenders opposing interpretations between those in favour of it and its critics. The latter group is concentrated around Castilianist social and political groups that have historically claimed a supposed right to choose the language of education that is not recognised in the Constitutional Court (TC) case law. ${ }^{6}$ On the one hand, advocates of linguistic Catalanism, and the social and political majority in Catalonia see the conjunction model as one of "consensus". In fact, the gestation of the model was in itself a result of compromises among numerous political actors (Argelaguet, 1999), and in a show of citizen support (or at least acquiescence), the political groups in favour of it have always been predominant in the Parliament of Catalonia, and continued to represent $70 \%$ of the electorate even after the elections of 21 December 2017, which were held in an atmosphere of extreme polarisation (Vila, 2018). Additionally, the model has scientific support in the form of endorsements by diverse international institutions, as well as the Constitutional Court (Constitutional Court judgement 337/1994). But despite it all, it is clear that opposition to the model has been gaining ground and social influence since the first mobilisations by families in favour of the continuity of education in Castilian in the mid-1990s (Voltas, 1996). ${ }^{7}$ This complaint later made its way into the political agenda with the presentation of two manifestos by "Foro Babel" (Santamaría, 1999), and most poignantly, the creation of the Ciutadans-Partit de la Ciutadania political party, which made the challenge to the educational linguistic model one of its leitmotifs (Campabadal and Miralles, 2015), joining the Popular Party in the bloc opposing the model in Parliament. To this social and political opposition, of a minority nature, the judicial and legislative actions are added, which we already discussed in the first section.

Nonetheless, the impact that these campaigns have had on public opinion is unclear. From a demoscopic standpoint, and beyond the electoral support for parties that are for or against the model (clearly inclined in favour of the former), a 2013 survey by the La Vanguardia newspaper found that $81 \%$ of respondents approved the conjunction model. In contrast, Garvía and Santana (2018) and a survey by GAD3, which was commissioned by the anti-independence lobby Societat Civil Catalana [Catalan Civil Society] (GAD3, 2020) detect much lower levels of support. Additionally, as Vila wrote (2018) in his response to the interpretation of Garvía and Santana's results, what can be taken from these surveys is not so much a lack of support for the current model, which achieves bilingualism in Catalan and Castilian, but rather "a fairly widespread desire for trilingualism" in Catalan, Castilian and English, and therefore, the desire to advance towards a model that enables achievement of this goal.

Progress towards models that effectively achieve trilingualism in Basque/Catalan, Castilian and English among pupils can be understood as a challenge that the BAC as well as Catalonia must address. A transition to multilingual and translingual models that, as noted by Cenoz and Gorter (2017) among others, cannot be done uncritically or ignoring the reality of linguistic minoritisation, which makes it necessary to reserve certain spaces for the use of the minoritised language to guarantee effective fluency in it. In this direction, the establishment of clear, evaluable objectives for each language, on the one hand, and the creation, experimentation with and dissemination of efficient teaching resources, on the other, are key elements for multilingual education in contexts with minoritised languages (Aldekoa et al., 2020; Idiazabal and Manterola, 2009). Still linked to this challenge, another factor to consider is the debate and research on the impact of these processes of the new pedagogical models, which tend to favour horizontal peer-to-peer interaction in the context of the classroom, where the teacher's role is conceived as something of a "companion" to the autonomous learning process of the pupils (Vila et al., 2019).

The revision and promotion of the role of schools as actors in the process of linguistic revitalisation represent a second challenge to be addressed. In this field, in the case of the BAC, improvement in Basque oral skills among pupils, and the promotion of proactive attitudes toward the use of this language, are high-priority goals (Diaz de Gereñu, 2017), that also speak to the need to improve teacher training (Manterola, 2020). In Catalonia, the proposals mainly seek to facilitate a process of colloquialisation of Catalan, understood as an essential step

[^6]for the incorporation to interpersonal use of the language and to facilitate access to domains where Catalan is (and can be) effectively used from the education system (Vila, 2006; Vila and Boix-Fuster, 2019) and through the formation of synergies with the world of associations and recreational activities (Bastardas, 2012).

## 5 Conclusions

A comparative reading of the principles, evolution and results of the linguistic models for compulsory education in the BAC and in Catalonia would lead to an initial general conclusion that the triple model of the BAC education system renders unequal results in the generalisation of bilingual competency and promotion of the use of Basque, especially in the programmes with less presence of Basque as the language of learning. Second, that the single model with Catalan as the "normal" language of learning found in the Catalan education system provides more satisfactory results, which are nonetheless improvable as regards the generalisation of fluency in Catalan and consolidation of bilingual subjectivities among Catalan pupils. When interpreting the results, it is worth asking to what extent the interlinguistic distance between Basque and Castilian, on the one hand, and Catalan and Castilian, on the other, makes for a heavier burden for pupils in the BAC, especially those who do not have Basque as their L1. Additionally, the difference in the social presence of the minoritised language in each context, more fragile in the BAC, is another conditioning factor that must be taken into account.

Against this background, in the BAC, the debate around the models has focused on the opportunity (or lack thereof) of moving beyond the current paradigm, and advancing towards a generalised application of model D, with the aim of raising the overall results. On the other hand, in the case of Catalonia, where this transition came about in the mid-1990s, a higher presence of conflictive stances can be observed around the Catalan conjunction model, even though, in finalistic and results-based terms, it seems like the best guarantee for the generalisation of a bilingual repertoire, and with it, the equality of opportunities for pupils of different linguistic origins. Therefore, it would appear that the degree of social support for Catalonia's current model, and for the progress towards model D and/or a hypothetical implementation of a single model in the BAC, is dependent on the degree to which it is (or is not) considered that generalising bilingualism throughout the population has a higher value than the (supposed) right to choose the language of education and, concominantly, to monolingualism in the predominant language. Finally, in both contexts, common challenges have been identified in order to increase the social acceptance and effectiveness of the models: on the one hand, improvement of the results of competence in third languages, basically in English, and therefore the promotion of plurilingual methods in a framework sensitive to the reality of linguistic minoritisation; and on the other, updating the role of schools in the process of linguistic revitalisation.

We can conclude, within a framework of general reflection on the contribution of educational linguistic policies to the processes of linguistic revitalisation, that the case of Catalonia demonstrates the need for linguistic minorities to have relatively monolingual institutional spaces. In this case, a single common education system in Catalan seems an indispensable condition to generalise the type of bilingual subjectivities that enable consolidation of a shared, equitable public space, marked by reciprocity of linguistic rights and obligations, and minimising relationships of subordination and domination between speakers of the dominant and minoritised languages (cf. Morales-Gálvez, 2017; Riera, 2017). In the case of the BAC, there would seem to be a broad consensus on the need to improve the teaching of Basque, in terms of clearer objectives (especially as regards oral expression), more efficient teaching resources, and improvement in teacher training, all of which should contribute to the achievement of similar results. From this standpoint, which is more "educational" than "socio-political", the establishment of spaces and times in schools that are relatively monolingual in Basque does not seem to be under debate.

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    Article received on 31.12.2020. Blind review: 09.03.2021 and 16.03.2021. Date of acceptance of the final version: 12.04.2021.
    Recommended citation: Flors-Mas, Avel•lí and Manterola, Ibon. (2021). The linguistic models of compulsory education in the Basque Autonomous Community and in Catalonia: a comparative view. Revista de Llengua i Dret, Journal of Language of Law, 75, 27-45. https://doi.org/10.2436/rld.i75.2021.3590

[^1]:    1 This study was completed with support from a research projected financed by the Basque Government (reference: IT983-16/HIJE-2).
    2 Throughout the text, Castilian will be used instead of Castilian, as it is the common, historical, and legal name of the language in both the Basque and the Catalan contexts.

[^2]:    2 For more details on the evolution of teachers' education, see Mezo (2008) and Zalbide (1998).

[^3]:    3 As a collateral effect, it is worth noting that a single education model has made it possible to prevent the intensification of certain school segregation dynamics, resulting from the co-existence of different linguistic models, as has been observed in the BAC or in Valencia (Colom, 2012). Thus, as Gonzàlez and Benito wrote (2009), the existence of linguistic segregation in Catalan schools cannot be attributed to the design of the model but rather responds fundamentally to previous processes of social and residential segregation.

[^4]:    4 For a chronicle see Pradilla (2016, p. 304-306).

[^5]:    5 For more in-depth discussion on the speaking competence results, see Vila et al. in this edition.

[^6]:    6 Citing the content of STC 337/1994, Eva Pons concludes that "from the content on the fundamental right to education of Article 27 of the Spanish Constitution [...] there 'cannot be derived the right to receive education in only one of the two co-official languages in the Autonomous Community, at the choice of the interested party'"(2013, p. 67; authors' translation).

    7 According to Miquel Angel Pradilla, it must not be overlooked that at that time, certain "professional voices" in favour of education in Catalan were of the opinion that it would be "counterproductive to legislate by law the adoption of a single model, when the growth dynamics of education in Catalan already had de facto preeminence". (2016, p. 299).

