Daniel Madrid & Stephen Hughes (eds)

Studies in Bilingual Education

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This book deals with bilingual education in general, but it pays special attention to bilingual education in monolingual areas. One central aim is to study the effects of bilingual programmes during the final stages of Primary and Secondary Education in contexts where the L2 (English) is not normally used as an instrument of social communication in the students' environment, but instead is used only at school, where some subject areas are undertaken totally or partially in this language. The reader interested in bilingual education will find a valuable source of information on different bilingual programmes in the USA and Spain: what schools do and the contents they teach, their timetable and extracurricular activities; the specific objectives that they aim to achieve and the methodology they use, with special reference to the CLIL approach, the schools and the students' level of success with bilingual education, the most common problems that they have to face in monolingual areas and how to solve them.

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Studies in Bilingual Education

Linguistic Insights

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Studies in Language and Communication

**Edited by Maurizio Gotti,
University of Bergamo**

Volume 122

Daniel Madrid & Stephen Hughes (eds)

Studies in Bilingual Education

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Acknowledgements

We also wish to express our thanks to the following groups and individuals:

- Manuel Marchante (Headteacher), Fracisco Javier Lorite García and Francisco Artacho in Santo Cristo de la Yedra School (Granada).
- Manuel Tirado (Headteacher), Francisca Pedrinaci **(**Bilingual Coordinator) and the teaching team of the Bilingual Section in IES "Fco. García Lorca", Churriana, Granada.
- Ana María López Morillas**,** Bilingual Coordinator in IES "Fray Luis de Granada".
- Javier Jiménez (Headteacher), Linda Hollinger and Mª José Martínez Bonillo, bilingual coordinators in "Granada College".
- Antonio Viedma García (Headteacher), Juan Romero Moreno (class teacher) and Mª Carmen Montero, bilingual coordinator in CEIP "Jardín de la Reina", Granada.
- Antonio Tovar (Headteacher), Diego Quiles and José Priego (class teachers) in CEIP "Genil", Granada.
- Juan Pablo Carrillo Gómez**,** CEIP "Lora Tamayo" in Seville
- Elizabeth Bachelor and D. Robert Clarence (Headteachers), and Rosa Mª Vicente Gamboa, bilingual coordinator in "Aloha College", Marbella, Málaga.

Finally, we also want to acknowledge the participation of all those students who took part in the project and to express our gratitude for their collaboration, interest and patience when completing the tests and questionnaires that were administered in their respective schools.

Contents

Introduction

In today's plurilingual Europe second language learning has become a fundamental requirement for mutual understanding, cooperation between nations and responsible international citizenship. Bilingual or plurilingual individuals are more able to share experiences with people from other countries; they are also likely to be in a better position to appreciate and respect their own cultural identity and that of others.

In order to meet the new demands for plurilingual competence and to foster bilingual or plurilingual education among citizens, almost every country in the world has adopted a multitude of initiatives both in the public and private sectors. In the case of Europe, the surge in interest in second language teaching and learning is evident in the numerous projects and studies carried out in the last two decades. An important landmark for language learning appeared in 1995 with the European Commission's White Paper, *Teaching and Learning: Towards the Learning Society*, where it was proposed that the European population should be able to speak three member state languages. As a result of this proposal, recommendations were made in Spain with regards to the introduction of a foreign language in Infant School and a second foreign language in secondary education. More recently, a large number of important initiatives have been made by international language teaching institutions, such as the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML), in terms of language teaching and learning, plurilingualism, intercultural competence and linguistic diversity.

Despite efforts to promote all the European languages, English, French, German and Russian make up 95% of foreign or second languages learned in schools. English, as we know, is the most commonly studied language and is taught in 90% of the secondary school population in Europe.

In the case of Spain, the 1970s marked the predominance of English as L2 over other languages. Similarly, bilingual education which began to form part of public sector programmes in the late1990s, is also

primarily based on a Spanish-English model. Today, this trend continues in over 1,000 public primary or secondary schools which are either bilingual or partially bilingual.

The region of Andalusia is perhaps the clearest example of the introduction for Bilingual Sections, which involves instruction through non-language subject areas to part of the student population in a second language. In addition to pioneering agreements with the French Embassy (30 schools) and the Goethe Institut (8 schools) in the year 2000, Andalusia has also seen a huge development of bilingual education through a regional project initiated in 2005 entitled *Plan de Fomento de Plurilingüismo* (henceforth referred to as the Plurilingual Plan).

As we mention in Chapter 1, Madrid is another area which has developed bilingual programmes intensively. Here, there are two main bilingual teaching and learning projects. The first of these arises from a joint ministerial and British Council scheme, which in 2009 incorporated 114 schools in nine autonomous communities, including the region of Madrid. By the same year, a separate programme developed by the regional government had incorporated 180 schools and 23,600 students (Fernández Agüero 2009). We must not forget, however, that apart from bilingual instruction in monolingual regions in Spain, there are also trilingual projects in bilingual areas such as the Balearic Islands, Catalonia, Valencia and the Basque Country.

With the diverse experiences that have taken place throughout the country and after five years of the introduction of the Plurilingual Plan in Andalusia, we believe that now would be an appropriate time to pause and examine the effectiveness of these programmes. This will allow us to begin to see whether financial investment of the national and regional education authorities and the efforts of all other stakeholders, particularly teachers and students, are worthwhile.

It is necessary to point out at this stage that throughout this book we employ the term "monolingual" and "bilingual" students in order to distinguish between those who learn the foreign language as a subject and those who, in addition to this, are also exposed to the L2 in other subject areas. In this volume, we also refer to bilingual programmes in monolingual contexts; this implies that our study is not situated in nor does it refer to bilingual regions, where what is learned in class is sup-

ported by communication outside the school. In this sense, Andalusia, for example, is in a different position from areas such as Canada, Switzerland or Catalonia, which have a tradition of bilingualism. In our case, we are dealing with pedagogical bilingualism (also known as global or international bilingualism, Vez 2010), which is introduced in school curricula in contexts where opportunities for natural communication outside the classroom are significantly less common.

The work that we present here includes the results of a Research and Development Project (see Acknowledgements) on the effects of bilingual education in relation to a number of competences developed by students in three subject areas: Spanish Language and Literature, Social and Natural Sciences and English as a foreign language. In addition, with the collaboration of specialists, we also take on board the adoption of other bilingual programmes in Spain and the United States. It is hoped that the inclusion of this dimension will provide those interested in this field of study with a more varied perspective on the matter.

The volume presented here is organised in three parts: a) a contextualization of our study within bilingual education; b) our research project in the specific region of Andalusia; and c) a series of case studies from other areas. The first part includes the provision of definitions, concepts, theories and basic principles involved in bilingual and plurilingual education. In addition, we describe various bilingual programmes in regions of Spain which do not have a second official language. Our contextualisation continues with an examination of the Spanish curriculum for primary and secondary education, which provides the legislative backdrop for our research. Since the participants in our study are also affected by regional programmes and initiatives, we also describe the Andalusian Plan for the development of plurilingualism.

Part II deals with the actual research study, which takes place in the above-mentioned context. Here, we provide a detailed description of the project itself as well as the objectives and the type of bilingual programme that is followed by participating students. We also report on the effects of monolingual and bilingual education on the specific competences developed by students in L1 (Spanish). Here the reader will be able to see whether the linguistic interdependence theory is fulfilled in our study and if the time invested in bilingual teaching and learning with English affects student performance in their mother

tongue. Chapter 6 reports on the levels of English developed by mono-lingual students compared to those who received bilingual instruction. At this stage, in addition to test results, we consider the sample texts from students to be of particular interest in helping the reader to see the extent to which different programmes and types of school may affect L2 learning. Chapter 7 reports on performance in Social and Natural Sciences among bilingual students in comparison to the monolingual cohort and Chapter 8 explores cultural knowledge in both groups.

Part III aims to complement the two previous sections with the presentation of various case studies which refer to centres that apply different bilingual and trilingual curricula. Among these, we would highlight the bilingual education programme that is developed in California as a result of the agreement signed by the Spanish Ministry of Education and the Californian Educational Authorities, which has been working for several decades.

Finally, we present various appendices which allow the reader to see the type of tests employed to obtain the data which is presented in our study as well as other relevant information.

We hope that this volume will be of use to those who are interested in bilingual education in monolingual contexts and that it may provide some answers to the questions that parents and teachers have formulated in relation to this new initiative in the region of Andalusia.

Daniel Madrid and Stephen Hughes

Part I:
Contextualization

DANIEL MADRID / STEPHEN HUGHES

Chapter 1: Introduction to Bilingual and Plurilingual Education

1. Linguistic diversity

The phenomenon of linguistic diversity is becoming increasingly common and in many contexts two or more languages coexist in everyday situations of communication. As Tucker (1999) mentions, there are more bilingual or plurilingual citizens than monolingual ones and more students who are receiving instruction in a language that is not their mother tongue (see also Dutcher 1994). Such is the case in Spain, where Catalonian, Basque and Galician are accepted as official languages in their respective autonomous communities and where other European languages, in addition to Spanish, are spoken. Indeed, according to Turrel (2001), more than 34% of the Spanish population (approximately 13 million inhabitants) live in an autonomous community with co-official languages. Therefore, the relevance of bilingual or plurilingual education in Europe, and specifically in Spain, is not to be underestimated.

It is true that bilingualism has, at times, been considered to constitute a social problem (McLaughlin 1984). This tends to occur when bilingual citizens are perceived as disloyal individuals whose identities and aspirations move away from those which are promoted by central governing administrations or when bilingualism is linked with certain forms of nationalism. In bilingual regions there are also linguistic and cultural differences which may cause conflicts of identity and problems such as social discrimination. Nevertheless, as we mention below, linguistic diversity is increasingly being seen and promoted as a source of cultural and social enrichment rather than a barrier between peoples.

2.   The promotion of plurilingualism in Europe

González, Guillén and Vez (2010) have indicated that the concept of monolingual countries no longer exists in absolute terms given that everyone is exposed to linguistic diversity in some form or other. For this reason, plurilingualism or multilingualism is the norm and not the exception. The above mentioned authors define plurilingualism as the ability of individuals to coexist in a plurilingual context. At the same time, a critically conscious democratic citizenship that is open to other ways of understanding this reality represents the foundations upon which interculturality, and hence plurilingualism are based (González/ Guillén/Vez 2010:17). According to Beacco and Byram's (2003; 2007) guidelines for the development of language education in Europe, EU member states may adopt plurilingualism as a desirable competence for their citizens and as a requisite to maintain linguistic diversity. The latter focus implies educating for linguistic tolerance, increasing awareness of linguistic diversity and education for democratic citizenship. In theory, plurilingual education includes both areas; in other words, formal teaching and learning contexts should cater for multilingualism as well as plurilingual awareness.

It is suggested in the *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe* that plurilingualism is a competence that can be acquired by all citizens and that it includes a series of communicative resources which users employ depending on their needs (Beacco/Byram 2003: 37-38). The benefits of plurilingualism appear evident; however, while it is present in society, there does seem to be a need to further promote it. The recognition of languages and of their educational value is essential for a plurilingual culture to exist. In order to make this a reality, Beacco and Byram (2003) suggest that:

- Plurilingualism should be seen as a valid instrument for the education of individuals and the citizenship as a whole. In this sense, it is particularly important for education systems to increase the status and development of languages available to individuals;

- There is a need to develop pluricultural awareness and communication. Here, it is important to distinguish between pluricultural awareness (which implies adapting to another culture in order to be understood) and intercultural competence which involves the appropriate management of relationships with others);
- Although Europe is perceived as a group of linguistic, cultural, economic and social communities, the concept of democratic European citizenship means going beyond the existing differences and considering Europeans as a community of citizens with the same rights and obligations as others within that community.

If bilingualism and plurilingualism are to become a reality, it is also necessary to create a social consensus among citizens and institutions. In addition to other concerns, this involves working against existing false conceptions as to the learning of languages and of plurilingualism itself and increasing ways in which languages are made present in the media, government services and public arenas. The preparation of education systems also involves a series of actions. Firstly, it is important to increase awareness among teaching staff, parents, students and other interested stakeholders. It would appear beneficial that foreign languages be taught at an early age, and that students themselves see the benefits of plurilingualism in terms of meeting personal, cultural and professional needs. Teachers also must be made aware of the importance of plurilingualism and should receive training in this area. Finally, it would appear advisable to re-examine study plans so that teachers from pre-school to secondary school have appropriate knowledge and training in language pedagogy and intercultural education. Through Beacco and Byram's (2003; 2007) publications, the Council of Europe recommends a variety of teaching principles, strategies and assessment techniques in this area. Among the important areas to be addressed, the following are mentioned:

- Educational systems must resolve different administrative problems, including the additional cost of plurilingual programmes, teacher profiles and availability, as well as class time spent in developing plurilingualism.
- There is a need for teachers to diversify their roles and responsibilities;

- In ideal circumstances, teachers would be able to teach in two or more languages at different levels and in order for this to be possible, it is necessary to have various types of teacher (exchange teachers, conversation assistants, etc.);
- Learning should be integrated rather than compartmentalised and there needs to be more interaction between subject areas.

Given the need for integrated learning, it would appear useful for language teachers to receive some form of training in the teaching of other subject areas and non-language specialist teachers to know more about the language and language acquisition. Yet, as important as training and knowledge may be, it could be argued that teachers themselves have perhaps the most important role to play in the promotion of plurilingualism and multicultural awareness.

3. Definition and theories on bilingualism

In general, bilingualism has been defined at the ability to use two languages fluently; however, the degree to which this fluency is attained can be described in levels of competence. Today, Bloomfield's (1933) definition appears to be rather extreme in the light of what has been mentioned, since it considers bilingualism as the mastery of two or more languages at native-like level. Weinreich (1953) defines it as the practice of alternately using two languages and Andersson and Boyer (1978) state that bilingual education involves the use of two languages for curricular instruction in non-language subjects. This definition is fairly close to the context described in our study, which refers to bilingual education in formal learning contexts where some parts of the curriculum are studied in a second language.

In the Common European Framework, the concepts of bilingualism and plurilingualism are understood as the capability of speakers to use more than one language. Plurilingualism is defined as the ability to use several languages for communicative purposes. This

ability incorporates the element of intercultural competence given that communication with others requires certain intercultural activity; at the same time, it represents an educational value associated with linguistic tolerance, which is an essential element in intercultural education. The Framework also establishes a difference between multilingualism and plurilingualism, where the former is defined as 'the knowledge of a number of languages, or the co-existence of different languages in a given society' (CEF, 2001: 4), while the latter implies the development of communicative competence which is facilitated by acquired linguistic knowledge. Is spite of this difference, both terms are often used interchangeably.

In this Project, and following the descriptions provided by the Common European Framework in relation to learning in the classroom, we will consider bilingual individuals as those who study the contents of different curricular areas in two languages, despite differences they display in linguistic proficiency between L1 and L2. Strictly speaking, however, it would seem more appropriate for bilingual students to have a level of B1 or higher in the second language in order for bilingual instruction to be effective, since it is at this level that users may be considered to be independent and competent.

The context in which bilingual learning takes place is important. In general terms we can distinguish between 'balanced bilingualism', which takes place when two languages are used at more or less the same level, and 'semilingualism', which occurs when the mastery of one language is considerably higher than another or when the speaker has a low level of competence in either of the two languages (Baker 2001). The semilingual speaker is considered to have qualitative and quantitative deficiencies in both languages in comparison with monolingual users. In the context of our study, learners generally begin language acquisition as monolingual students with the objective of moving gradually towards a form of balanced bilingualism.

In addition to this, Cummins (1984) has established two types of communication or competence among bilingual individuals:

1)   BICS (basic interpersonal communicative skills): this term refers to the ability to maintain a simple conversation, for example in a shop or in the street, which may be acquired in a rela-

tively short space of time. It is developed with contextual cues (including gestures) and often occurs in face-to-face situations.

2)   CALP (Cognitive/academic language proficiency): this refers to the ability to cope with study programmes in academic contexts. It is developed in reduced contexts (i.e. the classroom, conferences, seminars, etc.).

The difference between BICS and CALP has been illustrated with the image of an iceberg (Cummins 1980) where the different skills intervening in communication processes are shown (see Baker 1993:39). Again, in order for bilingual learning to be effective, students would ideally have appropriate levels in both areas.

Apart from these general considerations, it might be useful to look at other aspects which may need to be taken into account when dealing with language learning and bilingualism. This may shed light on the potential effectiveness of bilingual programmes, and at the same time serve as a reference point for interpreting research results. Several of these aspects are discussed below.

3.1.   Balance theory

This theory represents two languages coexisting in equilibrium and has been illustrated with a scale on which the second language increases at the expense of the first and also with an image of two linguistic balloons inside the head of the learner; the monolingual individual has one large balloon whereas the bilingual individual two smaller ones (see Baker 1993:190). Cummins (1980, 1981) refers to this as the separate underlying model of bilingualism and sees the two languages operating in isolation. Research, however, has ruled out this theory and several studies show that linguistic competence is not isolated within the cognitive system but instead is transferred and is interactive. In this way, what is learnt in one language may be accessed in order to help comprehension and production in other languages.

3.2.   *Common underlying proficiency*

Cummins (1980, 1981) illustrates the principle of common underlying proficiency with an image of two separate icebergs which are joined at the base (Figure 1).
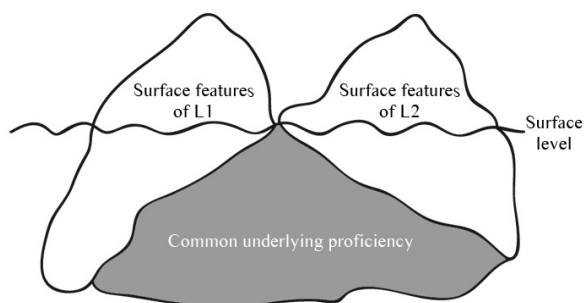
Figure 1. Illustration of common underlying proficiency based on Cummins and Swain (1986: 83)

The theory is sustained with six basic principles (Baker 1993:192-193):
1)   When a person has the use of two or more languages, the thoughts which accompany the interaction between them come from a common source;
2)   Individuals can function with two or more languages with relative ease;
3)   Cognitive functioning may be enhanced either by a monolingual channel or by several well-developed channels of language (plurilingualism);
4)   The language used by the learner must be developed in order to process the cognitive challenges which present themselves in the classroom;
5)   Listening, speaking, reading and writing in the L1 or L2 help the development of the cognitive system as a whole; however, if learners are working with an L2 which is insufficiently developed in qualitative and quantitative terms, what is learnt is weak and poor;

6)   When negative attitudes towards the L2 exist and the competence level is limited, academic performance is negatively affected.

3.3.   *Threshold theory*

The Threshold Theory, which was proposed by Cummins (1976) and Skutnabb-Kangas (1979), describes the relationship between cognition and the level of bilingualism. The theory suggests that the closer the students are to being bilingual, the greater the chance they have of obtaining cognitive advantages. This has been graphically represented as a house with three floors and two linguistic ladders (L1 and L2) on each side (Baker 1993:194):

1)   On the first floor (or threshold) we have students whose competence in two languages is insufficiently developed and who may consequently suffer negative cognitive effects;

2)   On the second floor are those students whose competence is appropriate to their age in one language (L1) but not in the other (L2). They may be able to work in class in the L1 but not in the L2 and, therefore, cannot benefit from the significant cognitive advantages that may be obtained when working in the second language;

3)   On the third floor we have students who are closer to having a balanced bilingual level. These learners have an appropriate degree of competence for their age in two or more languages and can cope with subject matter in either of the languages. It is here that cognitive advantages appear.

The disadvantage which may be seen in this theory is that it does not define the specific level of competence that the learner must attain in order to avoid the negative effects of bilingualism and to obtain the aforementioned cognitive benefits (Baker 1993:196).

3.4.   Linguistic interdependence hypothesis

The relationship that exists between the development of L1 and L2 has been recognised by Vygotsky (1934, 1986) and by Cummins (1978) through what has come to be known as the linguistic interdependence hypothesis. According to this principle, competence in L2 depends, in part, on the level of competence already acquired in the mother tongue; the higher the level of development in L1 the easier it will be to develop the L2. Vygotsky established this relationship in the following way:

> Success in learning a foreign language is contingent on a certain degree of maturity in the native language. The child can transfer to the new language the system of meanings he [or she] already possesses in his [her] own. The reverse is also true – a foreign language facilitates mastering the higher forms of the native language. The child learns to see his [or her] language as one particular system among many, to view its phenomena under more general categories, and this leads to awareness of his [or her] linguistic operations.
>
> Vygotsky (1986:195-196)

This hypothesis is related to the mentioned concepts of BICS and CALP and is illustrated in Figure 2, where we can situate several classroom tasks in relation to the cognitive load for students (Cummins 1981, Baker 2001:176).

Cognitively undemanding

	Greeting someone. Talking about the weather today. Developing simple vocabulary: colours, family, etc. Following simple demonstrated directions. Make their own books based on their own spoken or written stories.	Copying notes from the blackboard. Reading and writing e-mails. Reciting nursery rhymes. Listening to a story or poem on DVD. Filling in worksheets. Describing stories heard or seen on TV	
Context embedded	Giving instructions about making a painting. Social studies projects. Use simple measuring skills. Summarising. Role play. Dramatic stories. Solution seeking. Explaining and justifying.	Listening to the news. Understanding academic presentations. Reading a book and discussing the contents. Relate new information in a book to existing knowledge. Discuss ways that language is written: styles and conventions. Reflecting on feelings.	**Context reduced**

Cognitively demanding

Figure 2. Context embedded/reduced and cognitively undemanding /demanding quadrant (Cummins / Swain 1986:153)

The two dimensions illustrated refer to communicative competence on the cognitively demanding/undemanding axis and on the context embedded/reduced axis. In context embedded communication we can see that there are abundant specific contextual cues such as gestures, whereas on the right, context reduced communication is much more abstract and verbal. At the same time, communication is determined by the level of cognitive demand, which can vary from simple situations that require little effort in information processing to more demanding cognitive tasks. In relation to the previously mentioned basic

skills and academic performance, BICS would appear in the first quadrant whereas CALP would be situated towards the fourth quadrant. Cummins (1984) suggests that competence in the context reduced and cognitively demanding quadrant can be encouraged in the L2 or interactively with the L1 and L2. The learner needs one or two years in order to have basic communicative skills but six or seven to acquire fluency in a context reduced and cognitively demanding scenario. Riagáin and Lüdi (2003:44) have also established a time scale of at least five years' study in bilingual programmes before students acquire mastery which is sufficient enough to allow them to successfully perform in non-linguistic school subjects.

3.5. Stages in second language acquisition

Krashen (1983) identified five stages in the process of second language acquisition that take place both in natural communication situations and when the L2 is used as a vehicle for instruction (Table 1). Each stage has a specific duration and is characterised by student levels of attainment (see García Garrido 2010:163-167).

Stage	Characteristics	Duration
1. Silent period or preproduction (BICS)	- Minimal compression - No verbalization - Nod "yes" and "no" - Unable to communicate	0 to 6 months
2. Early production (BICS)	- Limited comprehension - Participates using key words and familiar phrases - Uses present tense verbs - Reads environmental labels, chart and easy stories.	6 months to 1 year
3. Speech emergence (BICS)	- Good comprehension with pictures and props - Produces simple sentences and texts - Makes grammar and pronunciation errors	1 to 3 years

| 4. Intermediate fluency (BICS) | - Good compression
- Makes some occasional errors
- Limited, though acceptable, academic writing skills | 3 to 5 years |
| 5. Advanced fluency (CALP) | - Near native level of speech
- Initiates and sustains conversations
- Responds with elaborate language
- Reads quality children literature
- Edits own writing | 5 to 7 years |

Table 1. Krashen's five stages in second language acquisition (Krashen 1983)

While understanding that learning contexts may differ, the above table may provide valuable insights into how acquisition may develop over time, and, hence, the considerations included may help to form the basis for the selection of appropriate strategies for different stages of bilingual education.

4.   Types of bilingual education

It is necessary to point out that the contexts in which bilingual education takes place may be very different from one another and, in consequence programmes themselves will vary depending on the settings. In very general terms we could mention at least the following three scenarios:

a)   Those cases in which the objective of the bilingual programme is one of integration within a basically monolingual community and where students are submersed in the foreign language from the beginning or shortly after some form of transitory bilingual instruction. This is the case of many bilingual programmes in the United States.

b)   Situations whereby the objective is to promote the use of two languages at virtually the same level in order to maintain the status of bilingualism. An example of this can be seen in the dual immersion programmes in Canada.

c)   Contexts which are predominantly monolingual in which majority foreign languages are promoted in addition to the L1. Here we can find marked differences in the cases where the L2 is socially present (e.g. English in Holland, Denmark or Finland) and situations in which exposition to the L2 outside the classroom is much more limited (e.g. in Andalusia and other regions of Spain which do not have co-official languages).

In the first of these cases, known as bilingual education by submersion (or 'sink or swim' modalities), students are thrown into the 'pool' in order to learn to swim without floating aids or swimming lessons. The pool is seen as the majority language (e.g. English in the United States) in which students receive lessons. The basic objective of submersion education is to assimilate the majority language and culture. The school becomes a melting pot to help create social, political and economic ideals that are common to all. These programmes often include one to three years of CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) type learning in the L1 of the learner with parallel classes in the L2. Here, the L1 is considered to be an obstacle which must be overcome in order to allow for integration into the culture of the majority language. These programmes may incorporate an early leaving option (with a maximum duration of two years) or a late leaving option (with 40% of bilingual instruction up to sixth grade).

The second approach, immersion education, derives from the Canadian programmes which began in the 1960s (see Lambert/ Tucker 1972). Here, students can begin at kindergarten level (early immersion), at nine or ten years of age (intermediate immersion) or during secondary school (late immersion). Total immersion often begins with 100% instruction in the second language during the first two years and is reduced to 80% in the three or four years following, and by the end of primary education 50% of immersion takes place in the L2. Partial immersion, on the other hand, offers approximately 50% immersion in the L2 throughout kindergarten and primary education. These types of programmes have generally had high levels of success.

Finally, we have the case of bilingual education through dual language programmes. This involves the use of two majority languages in the school. The majority language (an international lan-

guage) is used in instruction along with the mother tongue in order to train students to become bilingual. An example of this can be seen in the European schools in Belgium, Italy, Germany, Holland and the UK. In these schools, the native language is employed from the beginning, but another majority language (e.g. English, French or German) is also offered. Instruction in this language is often taught as a subject before being employed in other areas of the curriculum.

5.   Studies in favour of bilingual education

Some of the first work examined during the Luxembourg Congress in the late 1920s indicated that bilingual education had an adverse effect on academic performance. Students who studied in two languages seemed to progress more slowly in comparison to monolingual students. For this reason, it was maintained that the teaching of a foreign language should be postponed until the age of 12 (see Arnau 1985, Siguán 1985). From the 1960s onwards, however, several studies began to show evidence which challenged this belief. For example, Lambert and Tucker (1972) published the experience of St. Lambert school in Montreal where students received bilingual education in French and English from kindergarten. In the intelligence tests conducted, these students outperformed other children from a similar socio-economic background who had experienced mono-lingual instruction. Furthermore, the skills of reading, writing and arithmetic that had been acquired through French were virtually the same as those acquired through English, possibly due to the transferral effect which had taken place in subject matter studied in both languages. Around this time in the US, the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 was passed and funds were made available for the promotion of bilingual training. Cohen's (1975) studies showed that Spanish speaking students who took part in this type of programme attained a similar level of English as those who followed instruction in English alone. Arnau (1985) also reported that Spanish speaking students who were taught

in Catalonian obtained similar results to those who were native Catalonian speakers. In all of these studies it was concluded that the socio-cultural conditions of the group, along with levels of motivation, values systems and other circumstances, were more important than the language which was used for instruction.

Much has been written with regards to bilingual programmes and today the matter is of considerable political relevance in North America and in Europe. In the case of the United States, the increase in the immigrant population has been accompanied by critical voices which have warned of the potential dangers that this phenomenon represents for the social structure of the country. During the 1990s there was an increased influence of groups which called for tighter restrictions on immigration and, to a certain extent, organisations such as English for the Children, English Only, U. S. English or English First, campaigned in favour of monolingual English programmes. The pressure mounted by these groups appears to have brought about the dismantling of bilingual programmes in several states. James Crawford, the founder of the Institute for Language and Education Policy, ex-president of the NABE (National Association for Bilingual Education), ex-editor of the prestigious *Education Week* and defender of bilingual education, states (Crawford 2006b):

> English Only has always been about fear. Fear of demographic and cultural change, as American communities are transformed by immigrants. Fear of strangers speaking Spanish in public places or posting business signs in Chinese. Fear among Anglos about losing their majority status and, with it, their political dominance. Fear of "the other."

Stephen Krashen, who has been one of the major promoters of bilingual education in the USA has also participated in this ongoing debate and has defended the idea that students in bilingual programmes attain better overall results than total immersion programmes which are offered to immigrants (see Krashen 1996, 1999; Krashen/McField, 2005).

5.1.   *Negative effects of bilingual education*

As mentioned, certain resistance to bilingual programmes has existed from some sectors in the United States. The Only English movement, for example, has contributed to the dismantling of many bilingual programmes in several states, including California and Georgia. Several critics of bilingual education argue that allowing students not to learn the language of the host country may lead to some form of separatism within the state and only serves to benefit ethnic leaders. Rossell and Baker (1996), for example, state that the results of bilingual programmes are inferior to total immersion programmes offered in the USA for ethnic minority groups. Glen (1997) has also argued that it is better for students to participate in sink-or-swim programmes than in bilingual ones. Among the difficulties which may be found among bilingual individuals, we could mention the following:

- Abandonment of the L1 in favour of the L2;
- Alternative use of the L1 or L2 depending on the needs of the learner (coordinate bilingualism);
- The mixture of L1 and L2 in a single system (here there are potential problems of interference, particularly in children in infancy);
- Possible negative linguistic and cognitive development on the part of students in certain circumstances (see MEC 1982);
- Difficulties in linguistic expression due to phonetic, semantic, lexical and morphosyntactical interference from the L1 and L2;
- Written expression in L2 is often influenced by L1 as a result of lack of competence in the second language;
- Anxiety, insecurity or frustration in oral communication in L2 which often has negative knock-on effects in acquisition of written skills.

As discussed below, however, it would appear that the possible disadvantages to bilingual education are outweighed by the potential benefits.

5.2. Benefits of bilingual education

In spite of the above-mentioned reservations, there are many authors who point to the benefits of bilingual education. On an international level we could mention Peal and Lambert (1962), Hakuta (1986), Krashen (1996, 1999), Krashen and McField, (2005), Cummins (1981, 1989), Green (1997), Genesee (1987; 1994), and Riagáin and Lüdi (2003). Nationally we could also point to the studies of Cenoz (2005), Etxeberria (2003) Lasagabaster (2000) and Siguán (1986, 1992, 1993, 2001).

In the last few years, given the controversy that has surrounded the effectiveness of bilingual programmes, several relevant meta-analyses have been carried out (Genesee/Lindholm-Leary/Saunders/Christian 2006, Krashen/McField, 2005, Rolstad/Mahoney/Glass 2005, Slavin/Cheung 2005). All of these studies conclude that bilingual programmes produce better results than immersion programmes. Among the multiple advantages of bilingual education we could highlight the following:

- Peal and Lambert (1962) found a positive correlation between bilingualism and high intelligence quotient. In their study, bilingual students obtained better results in 15 activities which required high levels of intelligence. They concluded that bilingualism helped mental agility and the formation of abstract concepts.
- Byalistok (1991) and Diaz and Klingler (1991) also found a positive relationship between bilingual individuals and thought processes, organisation skills, reasoning and visual and spatial skills.
- Bilingual education gives considerable cognitive advantages to participating students (Cenoz 2003, Lasagaster 2000, Siguán 1986, 1992, 1996). The majority of students in total immersion programmes attain near native performance levels after six years of early immersion, particularly in receptive skills.
- The time spent in bilingual instruction in non-linguistic subjects (e.g. Natural Science, Social Sciences etc.) does not have a negative effect on these subject areas even when there is a reduction on the time spent in these subject areas in the L1. Furthermore, global academic performance is not adversely affected by bilingual instruction or total immersion (Baker 1993: 248). The competences which are developed by the students in

subjects taught totally in the L2 are similar to those acquired in L1 and there are no significant differences.

- Dual bilingual programmes obtain better results than total immersion or submersion programmes (see Genesee *et al.*, 2006, Krashen/McField 2005, Rolstad/ Mahoney/Glass 2005, Slavin/ Cheung 2005).
- The level of knowledge acquired by students in L1 has a strong influence on the results obtained in the subject area when instruction takes place in L2 (Chiswick 1991, Cummins 2000).
- The use of L2 as a means of instruction does not have a negative effect on the development of L1 (Baker 1997, 2001; Riagáin/ Lüdi 2003). Furthermore, students who have a high level in L1 obtain greater gains than underperforming students in L2 (linguistic interdependence hypothesis). Riagáin and Lüdi (2003) found that bilingual students do not suffer any loss in competence in L1; on the contrary, bilingual education helps them to attain and maintain high levels in both languages (Krashen/Crawford 2007). In addition, there is a positive relationship between the languages that are studied, which permits transferral between them and which aids the learning of academic and conceptual aspects in both L1 and L2.
- Bilingual education also allows for intercultural education over the long term (González/Guillén/ Vez, 2010, Riagáin/Lüdi 2003) and helps the learning of a third language (Lasagabaster 2007).
- Students from bilingual programmes develop greater metalinguistic capacity than those in monolingual programmes (Galambos/Goldin-Meadow 1990).
- Bilingual students develop a greater attitudinal competence (*savoir-être*) towards languages than monolingual students.

However, success in bilingual education will, to a large extent, depend on various interacting variables. Firstly, effectiveness is likely to be affected by factors pertaining to the students themselves, including student motivation, commitment, skills and L1 as well as family, social or cultural environment. The teacher characteristics and approach as well as the type of programme offered, available resources, group characteristics and class variables also play a crucial part. Other variables which

have been considered important in immersion programmes in Canada include the following (see also Baker 1993: 250-251):

1) There should be time spent developing receptive skills (listening and reading) in L2 particularly between the ages of four and six;
2) The programme of study should be the same for immersion students as other students;
3) It is advisable to separate the languages of different subject areas rather than to mix them (i.e. one language is used of one subject and another is used for a different one);
4) The L2 should be used for at least 50% of class time.
5) The commitment and enthusiasm of parents with the bilingual programme must be high;
6) Classes should be homogenous: in early total immersion programmes students all start at the same level.
7) There should be an additive bilingual environment: students study L2 without jeopardising performance in L1;
8) Teachers need to have adequate training.

Finally, at classroom level the approach should favour the development of favourable attitudes towards subjects taught in L2 and employ appropriate methods. Snow (1990) mentions ten effective techniques which are generally employed by expert teachers in bilingual programmes:

1) Provision of rich contextual support (e.g. through body language);
2) Reiteration of instructions and organisational guidelines for immersion students;
3) Relate and connect what is already known with new material;
4) The ample use of visual materials, *realia*, and resources which allow the senses to engage in learning;
5) To ask for feedback to check student comprehension
6) Repetition of what is said and done in class and use of summarising practices;
7) The teacher becomes the linguistic model that students wish to emulate;
8) Provision of indirect correction instead of more brusque forms of treatment of errors, allowing students to internalise the corrections made;
9) Variety of learning tasks;

10)   Use of varied methods to check the level of student understand-
       ing; use of assessment and comprehension techniques.

Finally, it would be important to remember the need for high levels of
comprehensible input (Krashen 1985) and the desirability to use expe-
riential, implicit, global and interlingual strategies in the L2 (Harley
1991, Stern 1992).

6.   Social values of bilingualism and plurilingualism

Given the linguistic diversity that exists in Europe, and in our own con-
text of Spain, it appears that bilingualism and plurilingualism should be
promoted as a social value and a competence to be developed among
citizens (Siguán 1996). In this sense, two of the possible aims of bilin-
gualism are (Beacco/Byram 2003, González/Guillén/Vez 2010):
a)   To develop intercultural competence, since communication with
      others implies interaction and understanding between cultures;
b)   To increase linguistic tolerance as a social value, which also has
      positive effects on intercultural education.

We believe that this is possible given that all students are potentially
bilingual (or plurilingual) and can reach acceptable levels of compe-
tence in other languages if they are given the right conditions and
opportunities to do so.

6.1.   *Towards a plurilingual pedagogy*

As Cummins (2006: 60) states, a plurilingual pedagogy increases the
chances of students from minority languages to develop their intelli-
gence and imagination as well as their linguistic and artistic skills in
the L1. This can be done through the elaboration of texts and produc-
tions which reinforce student identity. These productions may be writ-

ten, oral, visual, musical or dramatised. When work such as this is shared with classmates, parents and other members of the community, there is usually positive feedback and personal reinforcement of identity for several reasons:

- This type of multilingual pedagogy constructs an image of the student as an intelligent, imaginative individual with linguistic skills;
- Teaching builds upon the linguistic and cultural capacities of students;
- It explicitly encourages cognitive development and the personal identity of learners;
- It allows students to improve their knowledge base, to produce literary and artistic works and to act in social realities through dialogues and critical thinking processes;
- It allows for the use of a variety of techniques.

6.2. *Plurilingual pedagogy and multilingual education*

In the opinion of Hélot and Young (2006)**,** several schools in France are plurilingual although the classes are not. A school is not plurilingual simply because they teach various languages or use the L2 as a vehicle of communication in certain subject areas. Instead, schools are plurilingual when languages are valued, shared, developed and the linguistic instruction of the students is built on these foundations, rather than considering the process as one which exists in order to simply attain some sort of national unity. According to these authors, the bilingualism which is present in ethnic minority groups established in France is either ignored or is considered to be an obstacle in the way of learning the French language. On the one hand, attempts are made to educate children in a plurilingual context; however, the linguistic and cultural diversity of the minority groups is frequently disregarded. For the French administration, which has enjoyed a somewhat centralised approach to education, the idea has existed that linguistic diversity is much less important than the need to promote French as the language upon which the Republic was built. It is suggested that the majority of teachers apply the educational policy which

comes from the Ministry of Education and School's Inspection in order to keep this *status quo* in place.

In spite of this, however, initiatives such as the Didenheim Project, which was established as a scheme to promote a pedagogy of plurilingualism and multicultural education in France (see Hélot/ Young 2002), adopted an inclusive approach and incorporated the languages of all students in order to transform the existing linguistic and cultural diversity into a learning environment for all. Didenheim focused the teaching of German as L2 in such a way that the knowledge of minority languages could be valued and turned into an inclusive learning resource. The objectives of the project were the following:

a)   To help students come into contact with other languages and to have sufficient awareness of them in order to use them and promote an equality of status among cultures;

b)   To familiarise them with other cultures through the presentation of festivals, traditions, customs, etc.;

d)   To accept differences so as to learn about others and eliminate stereotypes and false conceptions about minority groups.

The Project incorporated the study of 18 languages and corresponding cultures and included: Turkish, Moroccan Arabic, English, Polish, German, Spanish, Berber, Portuguese, Serbo-Croatian, Mandarin Chinese, Italian, Alsatian, Malayan, Japanese, sign language, Russian and Finnish. Of these 18 languages, 14 were employed as a mother tongue in the community and the first five were taught in the school (Hélot/Young, 2006:78). In these linguistic scenarios, González, Guillén and Vez (2010:146-147) have identified three areas of value:

•   The area of pragmatic value, where the participants give importance to the language in terms of social integration;

•   Social and cultural prestige, which is accompanied by the desire to know a language which has a certain social status;

•   Political value, which is associated with political and ethnic motivations.

Of special interest here are the tasks which these three authors propose in order to promote plurilingual education and respect for cultural

diversity, interculturality and its relationship with plurilingualism (2010:143-250).

6.3. The development of linguistic awareness

As Hélot and Young (2006) point out, linguistic awareness does not only involve learning a certain variety of languages in order to understand how they work in society; bilingual students must also be able to experience specific linguistic and cultural varieties. In their project, students showed curiosity towards the peculiarities of languages which they had never studied before. Instances of this included (2006:80-81):

- The use of Mandarin Chinese in songs;
- Enjoyment in practising the rolled /r/ or the "z" in Spanish;
- They liked to learn words in the German dialect of Alsatian and wanted to know why it was a dialect and not a language;
- In terms of Vietnamese, they expressed interest in knowing more about the war in Vietnam;
- They enjoyed practising sign language;
- They were introduced to Moroccan with mint tea;
- The Italian lesson consisted in making pizza with an Italian recipe and they had to guess the meaning of words (cognates) through their similarity to the French language:
- They were introduced to Turkish with a Turkish mother;
- In Art class Cyrillic and Arabic calligraphy were practised;
- Activities for parents included songs, cooking recipes, expressions of courtesy, information about migration from countries of origin, etc.

In this way, with the close collaboration between parents and teachers, plurilingualism was introduced and promoted and the authors report that the students learned how this phenomenon formed part of our lives and how they should learn to value it.

The development of plurilingualism and plurilingual awareness can also be promoted through reflective tasks on the process following guidelines such as those suggested by authors like González, Guillén

and Vez (2010) in their chapters on the management of strategies for the learning of languages (2010: 87-110). This may also be developed through the use of plurilingual competence profiles seen for example in the Common European Framework (2010: 11-140).

7. Bilingual programmes in Spanish autonomous communities

The road towards bilingualism in Spain has taken place at varying levels throughout each autonomous community. In this section, while providing a general overview of the current situation, we shall also examine some of those regions which are most relevant to our study.

7.1. *Autonomous Communities with co-official languages*

Given the laws applied for linguistic normalisation, bilingualism has been intensely developed in those regions of Spain which have a co-official language (Muñoz 2005, Siguán 1992, Vila 1992). Today, in schools and universities in Catalonia, the curriculum is taught predominantly in Catalonian. In the Basque Country, on the other hand, various models of bilingualism have been applied (see Bilbatua 1992, Cenoz 2005, Etxeberría, 2003, Lasagabaster 2000, 2001, 2005), including:

a)   teaching in Spanish with Basque being a separate language subject;
b)   teaching in Basque and Spanish;
c)   teaching of the curriculum in Basque.

The third model is predominant at this moment in time.

In Galicia, something similar has occurred with the establishment of the *Galescolas*; however, Spanish still holds an important position within the education system (Sobrado 2004). The considerable

changes that have been taking place in this region are treated in greater depth by Vez Jeremías in Chapter 12 of this volume.

7.2. Andalusia

In Andalusia, the programme to promote plurilingualism (*Plan de Fomento del Plurilingüismo: Una política lingüística para la sociedad andaluza*), was approved by the regional government in 2005 (BOJA nº 65, de 5 de abril). The plan consists in an ambitious initiative through which the educational administration aims to provide the Andalusian population with sufficient plurilingual competencies in order to deal with the new challenges arising from technological, social and economic changes (see Barrios 2007, 2010; Madrid 2005, 2006).

Within the framework of what has been called the 'Second Modernisation of Andalusia', the plan represents the most important step towards the teaching and learning of modern languages in our autonomous community since the regional authorities took charge of educational policy. The scheme includes a series of measures which are not limited to the school context alone, but which also directly or indirectly involve the Andalusian population as a whole, including the training of parents and the establishment of agreements with the media in Andalusia. As Barrios (2007: 2) has indicated, the size of the programme can be measured to a certain extent in the fact that 140,764,799 Euros were invested for the periods of 2005 to 2008. From this budget, 62,200,373 Euros were allocated to the provision of specific measures (technological, curricular, teaching, and other human resources, including collaborating native speakers, etc.). These funds were used for 400 Bilingual Schools and Official Language Schools, while authorities also invested 6,612,944 Euros in teacher training.

At present, there are 762 bilingual schools, 394 in the primary sector and 368 in secondary education. Most of them (693 schools) use English as a vehicular language for the curriculum, 57 schools use French and 12 institutions use German. This means that 73,560 students are receiving bilingual education in Andalusia. There are 4,415 teachers implied in the project and 1,234 native assistant teachers.

The objective of improving competences among the Andalusian population in the mother tongue and to enhance plurilingual and pluricultural competencies provides the drive behind the 60 actions which make up this plan. Most of these actions (49) are linked to the five specific programmes that are included within this plan: a) Bilingual Schools; b) Official Language Schools; c) Plurilingualism and Teachers; d) Plurilingualism; and e) Plurilingualism and Interculturality (see Chapter 3 of this volume).

7.3.   Madrid

Another autonomous community that has shown great interest in the development of bilingual education is that of Madrid. In the academic year of 2004-2005 the corresponding educational administration began an ambitious project known as the Bilingual Programme (*Programa Bilingüe*) through which grant-maintained schools had the opportunity to introduce English as a fundamental element in their curricular organisation. English, then, was given the status of essential or basic subject and other subjects were taught through this language. A total of 26 schools were selected to receive bilingual instruction in their first year of primary education (1,300 students). By the year 2008-2009, 180 public schools (23,600 students) were participating in the Bilingual Programme (see Fernández-Agüero 2009: 276-286).

In order to be included in the programme, the schools had to present a written request for bilingual status, the documentation of which included the following:

a)   Level of acceptance by the school community shown through support received by the school's governing body;

b)   Viability of the request in terms of previous experience of the school, teachers available, particularly in terms of English language teachers, as well as resources present in the school and the number of classes and students;

c)   Balanced distribution of schools selected in the different territorial areas, taking into account the school population between the ages of three and sixteen (Orden 796/2004 de la Consejería de Educación de la CAM).

According to the educational administration, the main characteristics of this programme are:

- the three basic subjects in the curriculum are Spanish Language, Mathematics and English Language;
- instruction for Spanish Language and Mathematics is always in Spanish;
- a total of 5 hours per week are given to the subject of English in primary education;
- English can be used in the rest of the subject areas, including Physical Education, Art, Science and Religion or its alternative subject;
- students receive class in English for at least one third of school time.

With these measures, the aim is to attain various objectives throughout the different stages of the six years spent in primary education. During the first stage (years 1 and 2) the overall aim is to provide effective initiation in reading and writing. The focus of the second stage (years 3 and 4) is to reinforce reading and writing and to develop oral interaction. Finally, during the third stage (years 5 and 6) apart from developing all communicative skills, the subject of Social Science is taught in English.

At the same time, in addition to the school management team, who normally encourage this type of programme, each bilingual school has a certain number of teaching staff who are directly involved in the running of the project. This includes:

- a programme coordinator;
- specialist teachers who provide instruction in English;
- non-specialist teachers who teach in the bilingual groups;
- conversation assistants who help teachers who intervene in the bilingual programme.

These conversation assistants are native speakers of English and come from Australia, Canada, the United States, Ireland, The United Kingdom or New Zealand. Their main function is to support teachers in the classroom in the following ways:

- they help in class for 14 hours per week as native speakers and experts on the culture of their countries of origin with the objec-

tive of stimulating the interest of students for their language and culture;

- they may work with reduced groups of students to develop oral and written communication skills and to facilitate cultural understanding;
- in order to help with the aspect of cultural understanding they may provide material related to the schools and countries from which they come;
- they may also give two hours of conversation class per week to specialist and non-specialist teachers with the aim of helping them to practice the language and enable them to use it in the classroom and to facilitate the elaboration of school materials;
- they may attend staff meetings, carry out class presentations and participate in extra-curricular activities.

However, it should be stated that conversation assistants do not possess full teaching competencies nor are they responsible for the assessment, discipline or supervision of students.

The educational administration works in extensive collaboration with Trinity College, London which acts as an external evaluator at the end of each cycle. The examining board assesses those students who teachers deem to be prepared for the examination. The test at the end of the first cycle, for example, includes a five-minute question-answer session and corresponds to levels two or three of the Trinity certificate. Similarly, the examination at the end of the second cycle includes five minutes of spoken interaction but also incorporates a five minute presentation. This assessment corresponds to levels 4 or 5 of the Trinity certificate.

In addition, the administration is also responsible for initial and in-service training of participating teachers. Primary school teachers, for example, generally receive 500 hours of initial training in Spain through the British Council and in the UK through British institutions and universities. Afterwards, they may receive further training in their place of work.

According to information made available by the educational administration, those professionals who are involved in the Project recognise the difficulties that such an educational model may create

for participating families. However, they also believe that the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages. Helping the students with their homework and keeping in touch with teachers are obligations which are sometimes difficult for parents; nevertheless, participating teachers believe that the interest shown by teachers, students and parents allow for the creation of learning opportunities which will help students in the future.

7.4.   Agreements between the Ministry of Education and the British Council

For more than a decade there has been a national agreement between the Spanish Ministry of Education and the British Council, which helps a considerable number of schools throughout the state to receive instruction in English. According to data provided by Fernández-Agüero (2009), this joint initiative began in February 1996 as an experiment within the national education system. The agreement set out the objective of creating a cooperative framework which would allow for the development of integrated curricular projects in several schools. By the end of their studies in compulsory education, this would lead to the provision of simultaneous certificates from the UK and Spain (Orden de 5 de abril de 2000 del Ministerio de Educación y Cultura).

During the year 2004-2005, the project had reached secondary education levels. From this point, students from assigned bilingual primary schools automatically receive admittance to the programme in secondary education, although students from other schools may also enrol upon successful completion of an initial test. Other students who have not received bilingual education but who obtain a place in the school have extra English support classes with a view to joining the normal bilingual classes at a later stage.

Today, after the successive incorporation of new schools, a total of 114 centres make up this national project: 72 of these are public nursery and primary schools, and 42 are secondary schools. The schools involved come from nine autonomous communities in Spain, which are Aragon, Asturias, Balearic Islands, Cantabria, Castilla y León, Castilla-La Mancha, Extremadura, Madrid, Murcia and

Navarra, as well as the autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla (see Fernández-Agüero 2009: 287-292).

This aim of this agreement between the Ministry and the British Council is to 'provide children from the age of three to sixteen with a bilingual bicultural education through an integrated Spanish/English curriculum' (Baldwin 2006: 94). The curriculum is officially recognised and is based on the Spanish model of education along with elements which exist in the curricula for England and Wales. The curriculum, then, includes contents which each administration considers essential in terms of the historical, social and political reality of each respective area and, theoretically, takes on board those methodological and pedagogical principles which are considered to be relevant.

The specific objectives of this Project include the following (Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, 2004: 13):

- to encourage the acquisition and learning of both languages through an integrated curriculum based on contents;
- to create awareness of diversity between the two cultures;
- to facilitate exchanges between teachers and students;
- to encourage the use of new technologies in the learning of other languages;
- if appropriate, to encourage the certification of studies from both educational systems.

At the beginning of 2001, the commission responsible for supervising the programme found several positive results. Firstly, there was a great amount of interest and a high level of motivation among students. There was also a large degree of enthusiasm on the part of parents and schools, many of which were situated in economically underprivileged areas. Finally, the teachers spoke of the positive effects that learning two languages had on the cognitive capacity of students. However, it was also reported that in order for the project to be successful, it was necessary to fulfil two conditions:

- A clear definition of the contents taught and materials used in English as well as a specific time-line for the teaching of certain subject areas;
- A definition of assessment criteria at the end of nursery school and at the end of each two-year stage of primary education

which allow students to pass to the next level (Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, 2004: 14).

With a view to facilitating the development of the programme, providing common courses of action and guidelines with regards to methodology and necessary resources, the experience of the Integrated Hispano-British Curriculum was disseminated in two publications: one for nursery school and the other for primary education (Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia 2004). At the moment, this curriculum is at a stage of revision and currently specifies, among other aspects, which subjects should be taught in English, the assessment criteria, guidelines for teachers and tutors, methodological recommendations, suggestions as to timetable distribution as well as resources and use of new technologies.

In practice, the implementation of this curriculum involves studying through English, as can be seen in the Ministry's own words for nursery schools:

> [It is important to remember that this is about teaching in English and not teaching English. The children participating in this bilingual project enter an environment where Spanish and English are used and they become accustomed to hearing the English language in a natural way, thus beginning to acquire understanding in this language. In the same way as they acquired their own mother tongue, as they progress in understanding, they begin to use the language]
>
> (Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia 2004).

In primary education, the three subject areas to be taught in English are: a) Language, Reading and Writing; b) Science, Geography and History; and c) Artistic Education. At least 40% of class time is spent on these subjects, in other words, 10 of the 25 weekly sessions. Physical Education is another subject which may be taught in English providing that it is added to the 10 sessions already mentioned and does not take away from the hours of English employed.

In secondary education, class time in English may be increased to 12 hours per week. This includes five hours per week in English class with the remaining time for English being distributed in Natural Science and Biology, Social Sciences and Ethics. At the end of this stage, students participating in the programme obtain a certificate