

3.4. Case Study 4. Towards a multilingual model of education in the Basque Country

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Dr. Eneko Antón is a professor at the Faculty of Humanities and Education Sciences in Mondragon Unibertsitatea (Spain) and an external affiliated researcher at Universidad Nebrija (Spain). He holds an international PhD in Linguistics from the University of the Basque Country, for which he gained a fellowship from the Basque Government, and he has more than seven years' research experience in the field of education and psycholinguistics, in collaboration with national and international colleagues. Dr. Antón's research expertise and interests are linked to bilingualism, neuroscience, education and psycholinguistics. Dr. Antón has participated in several national and international studies and projects, as well as in various activities to disseminate science, presenting his findings at numerous international academic conferences. Since 2014, he has published nine research articles in highly ranked international journals, six of them as first author. After obtaining his PhD, he first continued with his research at Nebrija University, with which he is still affiliated, and later moved to Mondragon Unibertsitatea, where he currently teaches.

The development of multilingual⁴⁴ education in the Basque Country

Euskera or Basque is an isolated language that shares official status with Spanish in the Basque Autonomous Community (BAC), also known as the Basque Country or Euskadi, as well as in the north of the Autonomous Community of Navarra in Spain. The sociolinguistic reality of Euskadi has undergone substantial changes in the last half-century. As a direct consequence of this, its educational system has been adapted in order to respond to a plural and varied linguistic landscape. The present case study discusses the manner in which the Basque educational system has aligned dynamically with the sociolinguistic changes that have taken place in Euskadi over recent decades, with a special focus on changes in language allocation strategies within schools. These changes have been accelerated and become more marked since the end of the 20th century, when socio-political circumstances within Spain affected the use and expansion, and even enhanced the legal position of Basque.

As a result of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and the period of dictatorship by Francisco Franco (1939-1975), Basque lost the co-official status it had won under the Autonomy

⁴⁴ In this study, the use of the term 'multilingual' is intended to reflect the same nuances of meaning as the term 'plurilingual'. In line with the Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on key competences for lifelong learning (OJ 2018/C 189/01), here multilingualism emphasises the acquisition, development and use of effective communication skills in the different languages present within the community (majority, minority and foreign languages).