

**Confederation of Ikastolas of the Basque Country**

# **The Ikastola Language Project**

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"izan zirelako sara. basara, iransa diru"

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Confederation of Ikastolas of the Basque Country

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# the language project

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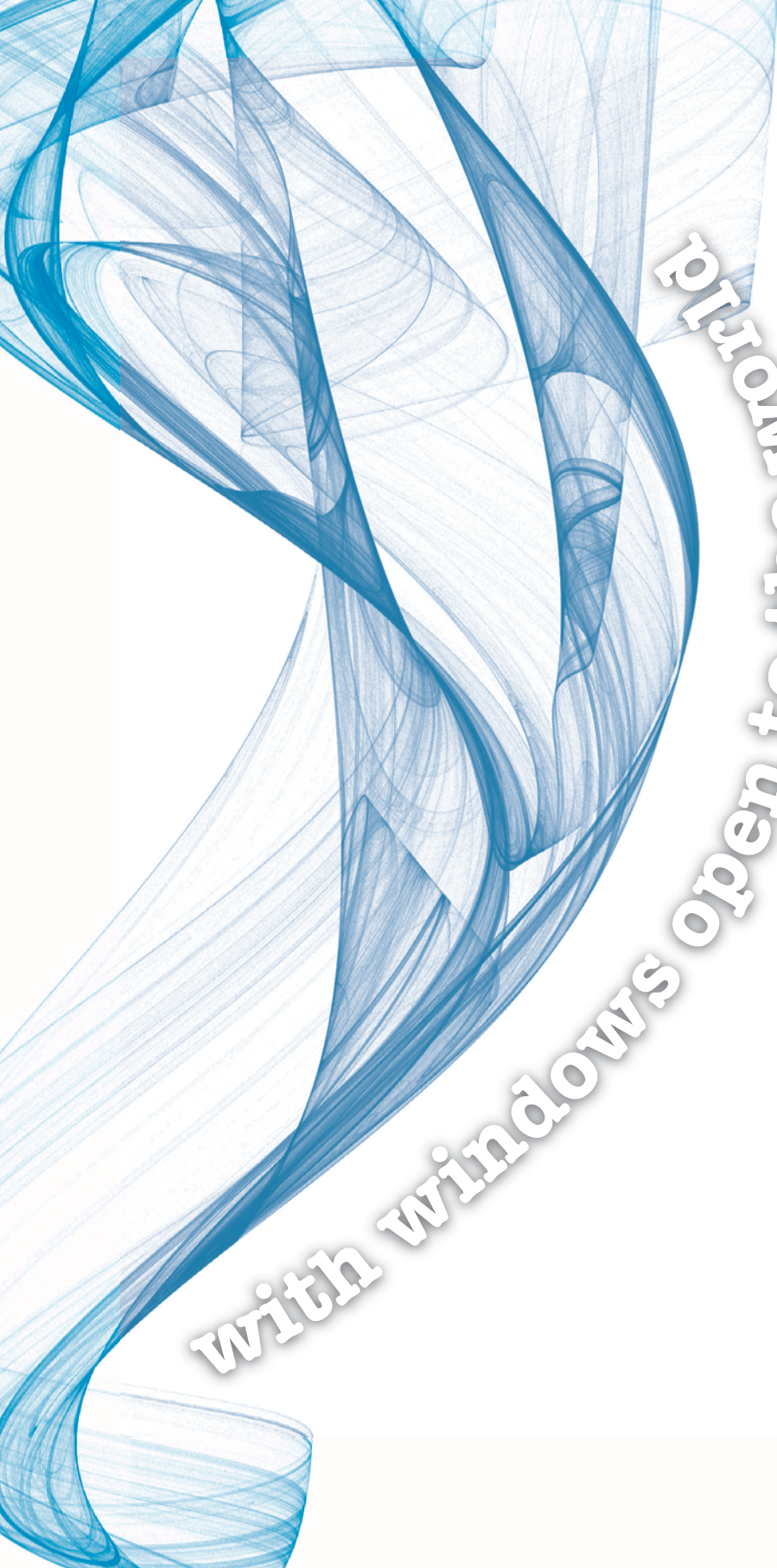
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The image features a series of overlapping, translucent blue lines that flow and curve across the frame, creating a sense of movement and depth. The lines vary in opacity, with some appearing as solid blue ribbons and others as lighter, ethereal wisps. The overall effect is reminiscent of smoke, water currents, or digital data streams.

**with windows open to the world**



prologue prologue prologue  
prologue prologue prologue  
prologue prologue prologue

# with windows open to the world

It gives me great satisfaction to contemplate the fruitful work covered by the Ikastola Language Project we launched at the 9<sup>th</sup> Pedagogical Conference held in San Sebastián in spring 2002, under the motto *Use of Basque*. Similarly, I can only offer my sincere gratitude for having been invited to write some introductory words to this publication – new fruits in themselves of the work carried out. I also wish to give my heartfelt thanks to all those who through their work both within the Confederation of Ikastolas of the Basque Country and in the most diverse Ikastolas have made a huge effort to embody and put the finishing touches to the project that we first outlined in 2002.

It is now a well-established motto among us that refers to the *vanquished impossible*. We/you have taken the steps necessary to make what seemed like a mere dream in 2002 come true – a long journey plagued with hardships, culminating in the construction of a reference model for other educational communities. Indeed, the Language Project essentially analyses the effective and unavoidable resources and instruments required with a view to successful immersion in the education processes and, more specifically, with regard to the languages used in teaching. To this end, the words written at the time by Mitxelena regarding languages come to my mind:

“A language – both our own and others – is nothing but a vehicle for communication and expression in society. It is therefore a good thing because, given that it is useful for communicating with others and for mutually expressing thoughts, it helps us to communicate and to

express ourselves; for that same reason, the sharp axe created to cut is good and, conversely, the blunt axe is bad. We should add that there are no blunt languages in themselves; if they evidence some flaw of this type, the blame falls solely on those who failed to sharpen them as they could have done, as Axular said long ago. (...) Language is an instrument, not the recipient: it contains nothing inside and can contain everything.”<sup>1</sup>

Our society is multilingual, as is the future. Apart from Basque, it also uses French and Spanish. The influx of immigrants has also lent greater diversity to this multilingual reality.

At the same time, ours is a society that is open to the world. Indeed, Ikastolas have shown that action in favour of revitalising the Basque language in no way falls victim to contradiction with the acquisition of foreign languages. Among us, Ikastolas have been – among other things – pioneers in early access to foreign languages: the first to design and use innovative curricula while at the same time producing and putting plenty of material in circulation aimed at responding to new needs. All this is simply a faithful reflection of the contribution linked to the overall vocation for providing a social service attached to Ikastolas. And this publication is one more example of it.

We face major challenges: making Basque - apart from being considered the core language of internal classroom activity - a multi-faceted language that meets the needs both of those who consider it as their family language and new speakers, while at the same ensuring that time more and more people become attached to Basque; providing people who have recently joined our society with a safe haven for their integration (not for their assimilation), by bringing them closer – among other things – to their languages and cultures,

---

<sup>1</sup> Mitxelena (1972); “Pro Domo” in *Koldo Mitxelena entre nosotros*, Alberdania-Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa. pp. 328-329.

by striving to ensure that they enjoy among us what they have not been able to obtain in their countries of origin; continuing to work on French and Spanish, because the Ikastola language model does not seek confrontation between languages (subtraction effect), but rather, its accumulation (addition effect); and, lastly, enabling foreign languages to be acquired.

Contrary to what some might think, monolingualism is an exception in the world and multilingualism is the most widespread situation with regard to language. Moreover, monolingualism constitutes no more than a barrier for current and future generations. Collective work is the key to be able to attain these objectives, as what each person can achieve by themselves is not enough to attain the objectives that have been set out. Therefore, we shall only be able to attain such objectives if we work together with all members of the education community – otherwise, all efforts will be in vain. The Language Project provides us with an unbeatable framework for this joint work.

Ours is a house with many windows. We are used to opening them to air the rooms. We want the languages and cultures attached to them to flow freely around our home, without confining Basque – our language – to a corner, to the extent that it may be used at any time, in any place and under any circumstances.

27<sup>th</sup> January 2009

**Erramun Osa**  
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<b>Prologue</b> .....	8
<b>Introduction</b> .....	14
<b>1. Diagnosis of the situation</b> .....	17
1.1. Ikastolas and languages: historical evolution.....	18
1.2. 21st century and languages .....	21
1.2.1. <i>The knowledge and globalised society</i> .....	21
1.2.2. <i>The current situation facing Basque society</i> .....	22
1.3. Main challenges facing Basque teaching in the field of language	27
1.3.1. <i>Meeting the language needs of the new educational model</i> .....	27
1.3.2. <i>Improving the quality of the communicative environment</i> <i>in schools</i> .....	28
1.3.3. <i>Revitalising the use of Basque</i> .....	29
1.3.4. <i>Revitalisation of Basque culture</i> .....	30
1.3.5. <i>Responding to cultural and linguistic diversity</i> .....	31
1.4. Conclusion: The need for the Language Project .....	32
<b>2. View on language and objectives of Ikastolas</b> .....	35
2.1. Characteristics of Ikastolas .....	35
2.2. Language objectives.....	37
2.2.1. <i>General objectives</i> .....	37
2.2.2. <i>Common levels of reference in the acquisition</i> <i>of languages</i> .....	38
<b>3. The Language Project: definition and characteristics</b> .....	41
3.1. Definition of the Language Project .....	41
3.2. Fields of linguistic intervention .....	44
3.2.1. <i>Pedagogical field</i> .....	46
3.2.2. <i>Institutional field</i> .....	47
3.3. Characteristics of the Language Project.....	50
3.4. Position of the Language Project .....	51
3.5. The Language Project of each Ikastola: conten .....	52
<b>4. Basic theoretical principles of the Ikastola Language Project</b> ....	55
4.1. Principles of the Ikastola educational model .....	55
4.2. Requirements for linguistic and cultural policy .....	58
4.2.1. <i>Function of the school in the Basque language</i> <i>promotion process</i> .....	58

4.2.2. <i>Response to linguistic and cultural diversity: the inclusive school</i> .....	60
4.3. Educational approach.....	62
4.3.1. <i>New competence-based educational model</i> .....	62
4.3.2. <i>Background to the methodology</i> .....	67
4.4. View on language and language teaching .....	68
4.4.1. <i>View on language</i> .....	68
4.4.2. <i>Basque-based multilingual education</i> .....	70
4.4.3. <i>The general “learning to communicate” competence</i> .....	73
4.4.3.1. Language needs within the field of the classroom	76
4.4.3.2. Treatment of the area of language .....	78
4.4.3.3. Contribution of the field outside the classroom ...	82
4.4.4. <i>Treatment of linguistic registers</i> .....	85
<b>5. The Ikastola Language Project: itinerary for its management</b> .....	<b>89</b>
5.1. Graphic sequence of the itinerary .....	90
5.2. Phases of the itinerary .....	91
5.2.1. <i>Reflection and socialisation phase (1<sup>st</sup> phase)</i> .....	91
5.2.2. <i>Diagnosis of the situation (2<sup>nd</sup> phase)</i> .....	92
5.2.2.1. 1st phase of the diagnosis.....	93
5.2.2.2. 2nd phase of the diagnosis .....	94
5.2.2.3. 3rd phase of the diagnosis .....	94
5.2.3. <i>Drafting of the Language Project (3<sup>rd</sup> phase)</i> .....	95
5.2.4. <i>Strategic plan (4<sup>th</sup> phase)</i> .....	98
5.2.4.1. Sections of the strategic plan .....	98
5.2.4.2. Guidelines for drawing up the strategic plan .....	99
5.2.5. <i>Annual plan (5th phase)</i> .....	99
5.2.6. <i>Annual report (6th phase)</i> .....	100
5.2.7. <i>Updating of the Language Project document (7th phase)</i> .....	101
5.2.8. <i>Annual plan (8th phase)</i> .....	101
5.2.9. <i>Assessment of the strategic plan (last phase)</i> .....	101
<b>6. Ikastola network services for the development of the Language Project</b> .....	<b>103</b>
<b>7. Bibliographical references</b> .....	<b>107</b>

During these first decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a school that wishes to focus its educational work within a suitable local and temporary context will have to bring its approaches up-to-date in order to thus provide an effective response to the major changes that are taking place in society.

Among these changes, the processes linked to languages take on vital importance for Ikastolas and for Basque schools in general, as although promoting the use of the Basque language remains one of

promoting the use of the Basque language remains one of our main responsibilities, we also need to educate Basque citizens to ensure they will be capable of living in a multilingual society.

our main responsibilities, we also need to educate Basque citizens to ensure they will be capable of living in a multilingual society. Therefore, we need to develop a multilingual educational model that focuses on Basque and on our status as Basque citizens.

By the year 2000, the Ikastola network felt the need to create a tool which would embrace all the different language-related projects created up until then and give coherence to the treatment of all languages in all spheres of the school setting. This became known as “The Language Project” and a team of technicians from different fields were appointed to draw up its initial framework. Once the framework had been drafted (Ikastolen Hizkuntz Proiektua definitzen, 2002), a pilot programme was set in motion in some Ikastolas so that each school could develop its own Language Project. The experience was put into practice in Ikastolas of different sizes and from different language environments – and with differing levels of experience as far as projects involving language acquisition or the promotion of the use of Basque was concerned. Year after year, new Ikastolas gradually joined the project until a group of thirty-six groups was formed in 2008. This publication constitutes the fruits of the path pursued via the

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<sup>1</sup>. Vide “Ikastolak. Orain eta Gero” (EHIK, 2008).

# introduction

thoughts of the initial team of technicians and also the work carried out by that pioneering group of Ikastolas.

At the present time while this document is being drafted, the Ikastola group is immersed in an “Ikastola model”-defining process, which meets the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century – in other words, we are currently deciding what the educational and common constituent characteristics that unite all us Ikastolas are. Among these decisions is necessarily included the minimum language planning that needs to be shared by all Ikastolas.

However, this publication represents far more than just minimum planning because, as we mentioned previously, this work brings together the comprehensive Basque-centred proposal of multilingualism which has been developed and promoted by Ikastolen Elkarte since the 90s, and which is put forward to the Ikastolas as being a goal to be attained. In short, the aim is to define the reference framework

this publication brings together the comprehensive Basque-centred proposal of multilingualism which has been developed and promoted by Ikastolen Elkarte since the 90s

of the Ikastola Language Project. In other words, not only the concept of Language Project itself is explained, but also the theoretical basic principles are referred to which we Ikastolas have adopted as core elements for its development. In fact, these basic principles depend on the distinct characteristics that define us as Ikastolas and shape an original and specific model for the treatment of languages that may be of interest to other communities in the world where a minority language is spoken.





# 1

## diagnosis of the situation

Language has always been of great importance to Ikastolas; indeed, apart from teaching in Basque, one of our main aims has since the outset been the teaching of Basque and promotion of its use. Our capacity to foresee and adapt ourselves to language needs in society demonstrates our concern for language-related issues; thus, among other initiatives, we have set in motion the linguistic immersion of children whose first language is not Basque, we have created the Euskaraz Bizi project and established early learning in English. The Ikastola Language project constitutes an attempt to take steps forward in this direction and the aim of this document is therefore to respond to the language needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

To this end, we shall on the following pages attempt to carry out a diagnosis of the linguistic situation existing in 21<sup>st</sup> century society. Firstly, we shall refer to the historical evolution of the Ikastolas; we shall then analyse the characteristics of and main challenges facing the knowledge and globalised society in terms of languages and, finally, we shall mention the evolution of the revitalisation/normalisation process of the Basque language.

the Ikastola Language  
Project attempts to  
respond to the  
language needs of the  
21st century

## 1.1. Ikastolas and languages: historical evolution

The Ikastolas were created in the 1960s in order to ensure quality mother-tongue education to Basque-speaking children. However, families whose L1 was Spanish or French began to enrol their children in Ikastolas, turning them into immersion programmes for children whose first language was not Basque. In addition, the Ikastolas aimed to reverse a language shift in Basque society, which meant that they started to play a very active role in promoting and strengthening the Basque language and cultural activities in their local environment.

However, it soon became apparent that promoting the use of language beyond the school context was a goal not easily achieved. Students attained a good level of academic language but there was no generalisation or transfer of that language into informal contexts outside or even within the school itself. Thus, the use of the Basque language in society did not grow proportionately with the number of new Basque speakers created by the education system.

In order to bridge that gap and to promote the use of Basque, in 1980 the Ikastola network created “Euskaraz Bizi” (Live in Basque, Gorostidi, 1991). With this programme were organised, among other things, motivational campaigns, extra-curricular and leisure activities, etc. for students, teaching staff and families.

Some years later, in the 1990s and within the mood of reflection that came to the fore from the general renewal process underway in education at the time, the Ikastolas felt the need to review and widen their language objectives so that multilingualism, more than bilingualism, would be the new target. In coming to this conclusion, the needs and social status of each of the languages taught at the Ikastolas (i.e. Basque, Spanish/French, English and other languages) were analysed, and new initiatives in multilingual curriculum design were set in motion. Within this context, the “Eleanitz” project was created in order to develop a multilingual school model with the Basque language as its main core element. The project’s main characteristics are as follows:

- An “integrative model” for learners of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds was developed, whereby Basque maintenance and immersion programmes were incorporated into a common curricular and didactic framework adapted to the specific needs of the different languages included (Garagorri, 1995).
- Although Spanish was the L1 of most students, it was considered the L2 second language of the school and was introduced as a separate subject for children from the age of 8. It was integrated with the Basque curriculum and language objectives and contents were treated in a complementary way.
- L3, in this case English, was introduced at the age of 4, on the one hand, in order to take advantage of the language-learning capacity of those early years and, on the other, to increase the total amount of time offered to English throughout compulsory schooling without endangering the status of Basque as the main language of the school.

In 2000, the Ikastola network set in motion the Ikastola Language Project. A general framework has been developed for unifying all the projects that have emerged in each of the Ikastola languages. The aim of this project is to integrate all the perspectives and methodologies used in language teaching, improve the effectiveness of the instrumental use of the language across the curriculum and establish new paths for creating suitable links between language teaching and the social promotion of the minority language.

Nowadays, Ikastolas and Basque schools in general are immersed in a redefinition process. On the one hand, they are dealing with a new model of education based on educational competences that attempts to best meet the needs of modern-day society, and Ikastolas have focused their attention on the Basque Curriculum they have developed together with other social agents. This new model has attained a broad consensus; the Council of Europe, the Spanish and French Ministries of Education and the Departments of Education of Navarre and the Basque Autonomous Community (CAV), among others, have agreed to lay down the basic foundations of education in terms of the development of competences.

the aim both of Ikastolas and the entire Basque education system will be to prepare Basque citizens to play an active role in society, and to ensure they will cope effectively within it. To achieve this, Basque education and Ikastolas will need to face language-related challenges

On the other hand and as was mentioned in the introduction, the Ikastola network is immersed in a reflection process known as “Ikastolak. Orain eta gero” (Ikastolas. Now and Later), the aim of which is to define the new Ikastola model and reach agreement about and establish the direction to be taken by this group over the coming years. Therefore, the contents of this document will need to be adapted and developed according to the conclusions drawn from that reflection process.

Lastly and with regard to the redefining of education, the legal framework corresponding to education is also currently being reviewed. As a result, various proposals are being developed that will go beyond already-existing language models, and these will put new language management models on the table that will, of course, also have a bearing on Ikastolas.

In any event, the aim both of all Ikastolas and the entire Basque education system will be to prepare Basque citizens to play an active role in society, and to ensure they will cope effectively within it. To achieve this, Basque education and Ikastolas will need to face a series of language-related challenges, as we shall see later on.

Indeed, the language demands of 21<sup>st</sup> century society are on a high level, and the response to such demands will need to be successfully combined with promotion of the Basque language.

## 1.2. 21st century society and languages

### 1.2.1. The knowledge and globalised society

There are two characteristics of 21<sup>st</sup> century society that have a direct influence on the sphere of languages: knowledge and globalisation – in other words, the expressions “knowledge society” and “globalised society” are commonly used to describe modern-day society, and these expressions have direct consequences on the sphere of languages.

As a result of advances in technology in recent years, society has increasingly more information at its disposal, and it could also be said that this information is within everyone’s reach. Thus, more than the fact of obtaining information, the real challenge facing citizens would be to be able to critically analyse it and transform it into knowledge - hence the origin of the expression “knowledge society.”

A major characteristic of knowledge is the mutability of information, as in modern-day society knowledge quickly becomes obsolete and is constantly being updated. Therefore, there exist few truths or little knowledge that can be considered absolute, and citizens need to develop their own criteria when assessing the information and news they receive.

Thus, the path from information to knowledge has become one to be pursued throughout life.

Yet, how does information become knowledge?

“Knowledge is always a dialogue: not only with the physical and social world, with what tends to be referred to as “reality” (...), but above all a

there exist few truths or little absolute knowledge, and citizens need to develop their own criteria to assess the information and news they receive. Thus, the path from information to knowledge has become one to be pursued throughout life

dialogue with oneself that requires making one's own beliefs explicit – our implicit theories about the world. Indeed, the genesis of knowledge itself in our species and in our culture is closely linked to a command of communications systems, without which knowledge would not exist” (Poza, 2004; 53).

From this standpoint, generating knowledge would involve a social activity, the channelling of which would make the capacity for dialogue and group work essential – i.e. it demands that both oral and written language competences be developed on an advanced level.

using a single language is no longer deemed enough, which is why multilingualism is a competence that citizens are now compelled to develop

Apart from knowledge, 21<sup>st</sup> century society has other major characteristics which have already been mentioned previously: mobility and globalisation.

Both international relations and mobility are becoming increasingly commonplace and, in certain cases, even becoming essential.

As a consequence of these new trends, using

a single language is no longer deemed enough, which is why multilingualism is a competence that citizens are nowadays compelled to develop. On the one hand, we need to have a good command of a *lingua franca* for international communication purposes; on the other, cultural and linguistic plurality is becoming more widespread in our immediate environment<sup>2</sup> and it will prove increasingly essential to respond to that diversity for the good of social cohesion and in order for language and culture not to be considered exclusive elements.

### 1.2.2. The current situation facing Basque society

Alongside the language needs that the knowledge and globalised society entails, Basque society also has other linguistic characteristics – i.e. the process involving the promotion of Basque, which is a social process

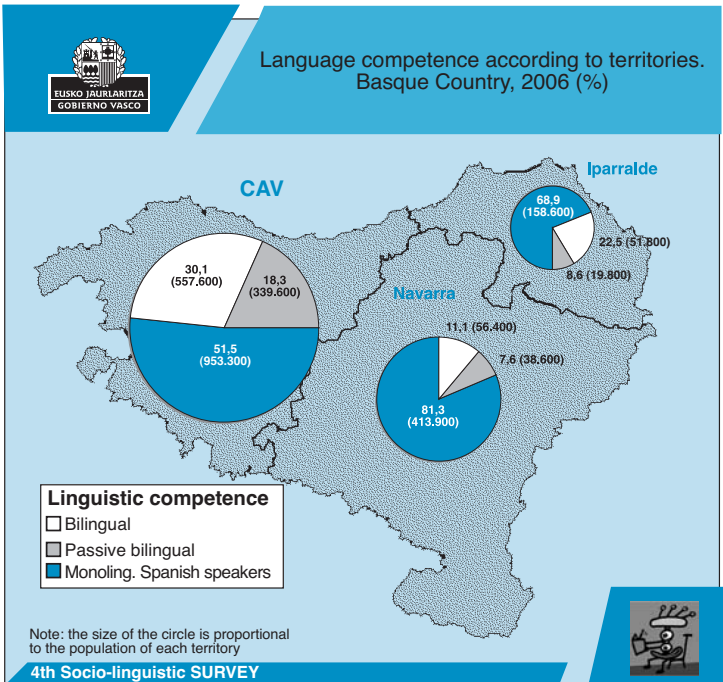
<sup>2</sup> According to the 4th Socio-linguistic Survey, “between 1991 and 2006, the percentage of foreigners in the Basque Autonomous Community (CAV) increased from 2% to 5%, and in Navarre from 2% to 10%.”

aimed at maintaining and increasing the number of Basque speakers and creating new areas for its use.

The Basque language community has undergone both quantitative and qualitative changes over the last few centuries, and even more so over the last few decades<sup>3</sup>:

- Firstly, the number of Basque speakers has increased. According to the 4<sup>th</sup> Socio-linguistic Survey (2006), there are now 137,000 more bilingual speakers than in 1991<sup>4</sup>.

*1<sup>st</sup> illustration: Language competence according to territories. Basque Country. (CAV = Basque Autonomous Community; Iparralde = North Basque Country)*



<sup>3</sup> Vide: Amonarriz, Egaña y Garzia (2004).

<sup>4</sup> The Socio-linguistic Survey includes data from the population of over 16 years of age in the Basque Autonomous Community (CAV), Navarre and North Basque Country (Iparralde).

Taking into account the entire population, the number of bilingual speakers is still greater: in the Basque Autonomous Community (CAV)<sup>5</sup> and in Navarre, an increase in the number of bilingual speakers is taking place especially among young people.

- Secondly, the characteristics of Basque speakers have varied. All current speakers are bilingual; in contrast, their individual situation is different both in terms of L1 and the ease with which they communicate in Basque. On the one hand, those speakers who have learned Basque at school or at *Euskaltegis* (Basque language schools) are taking on increasing importance in the language community; these make up a third of the total number of Basque speakers (30.2%). On the other hand and with regard to the ease with which they communicate in Basque, 30.7% are bilingual with Basque predominating, 30.3% could be considered evenly-balanced bilingual speakers and 38.9% bilingual speakers with Spanish predominating. In the Basque Autonomous Community and Navarre, the highest percentage corresponds to that group of bilingual speakers in which Spanish predominates – i.e. the most numerous group is made up of those bilingual speakers who express themselves better in Spanish than in Basque. This percentage also increases as age decreases.
- Thirdly, there is another characteristic to be taken into account with a view to the future: the cultural and linguistic diversity of Basque society in general and the education system in particular. In 2007, 5.5% of students in the Basque Autonomous Community<sup>6</sup> and 9% of students in Navarre<sup>7</sup> were immigrants. Initially, most immigrants enrolled on model A courses (education mainly in Spanish), but this trend has seemingly started to change; a majority of immigrant students – 56.1% – pursued their studies during the 2007-2008 school year in model D (education mainly in Basque), 23.2% in model B (mixed) and 20.7% in model A. 49% of students are from the Americas, 29% are of European origin, 18% African and 4% Asian<sup>8</sup>; in total and as the following

<sup>5</sup> According to data from the 2006 census, 74% of inhabitants under 15 years of age in the Basque Autonomous Community are bilingual (Baztarrika, P. y Osa, E.: *Euskara XXI aurkezpen-txostena*).

<sup>6</sup> Data from the Autonomous Community refers to the work carried out by Barquin (2008). We have no data for North Basque County (Iparralde).

<sup>7</sup> Data from 2003-2004. Source: Etxeberria y Elozegi (2008).

<sup>8</sup> Ikuspegi (2008).



table shows, there are a further one hundred languages spoken in the Basque Autonomous Community and Navarre apart from Basque and Spanish.

1<sup>st</sup> table: Origin and language of immigrants<sup>9</sup>

	N	%	No. of states. (Nat.)	Local languages	European languages*	Nat./Lang. in ratios
North and South America	75.164	48,7	13	5	4	0,38
Europa	45.414	29,4	24	29		1,2
África	27.892	18,1	20	52	3	2,6
Asia	5.838	3,8	9	14	2	1,66
Oceania and the rest	137	0,1				
<b>Total</b>	<b>154.445</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1,54</b>

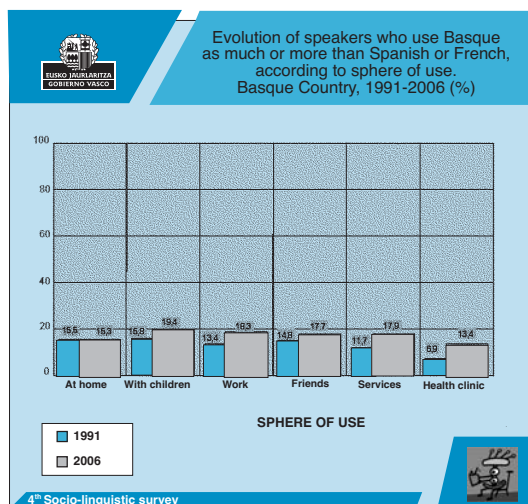
\* Those languages of the former mother countries - French, English, Spanish and Portuguese - have not been taken into account in order not to double the general calculation of the languages identified according to continents (the "Languages of Europe" column refers to these languages).

- Fourthly, the use of Basque has increased over the last fifteen years in the Basque Autonomous Community and has been maintained in Navarre. However, two aspects should be taken into account when analysing this increase: on the one hand, the percentage of bilingual speakers who use Basque as much as Spanish or French is 18.6% in the Basque Autonomous Community, 5.5% in Navarre and 10.3% in North Basque Country; on the other, the use of Basque has witnessed a greater increase on a formal level than on an informal one<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> Ikuspegi (2008).

<sup>10</sup> Baztarrika, P. y Osa, E.: Euskara XXI aurkezpen-txostena.

*2<sup>nd</sup> illustration:  
Evolution of speakers  
who use Basque as  
much or more than  
Spanish, according to  
sphere of use. Basque  
Country.*



although promotion of the use of Basque has made great advances, there still remains much to be done. As far as Basque teaching is concerned, we will need to ensure, for instance, that the new language variants emerging become as enriched as possible in addition to increasing the number of Basque speakers and the spheres in which they use it

The increase in the number of speakers as well as the extent to which language is used has led to expansion in the repertoire of registers. On the one hand, formal and educated registers are being developed and becoming widespread via the unified Basque language or *Batua* (among other areas, regarding education, business and research); on the other, informal and colloquial registers are also emerging<sup>11</sup> (both local variants and adaptations of unified Basque or *Batua*). The interest in and debate about the quality of language that have arisen are proof of these informal registers.

Therefore, although promotion of the use of Basque in recent years has made great advances, there still remains much to be done. As far as Basque teaching is concerned, we will need to ensure, for instance, that the new varieties of language emerging become as enriched as possible in addition to increasing the number of Basque speakers and the spheres in which they use it.

<sup>11</sup> Vide: Barrios, Osa, Muñoa, Elorza y Boan (2008) y Amonarriz, Egaña y Garzia (2004).

## 1.3. Main challenges facing Basque teaching in the field of language

Within this context, the linguistic challenges facing Basque teaching are huge, as it will have to facilitate the acquisition of a high level of multilingual language competence of the type demanded by modern-day society without ceasing to support the Basque language promotion process and ensuring the promotion of Basque culture. We shall now refer to some of these challenges in more detail.

### 1.3.1. Meeting the language needs of the new educational model

To meet the needs of a knowledge and globalised society, a new educational model needs to be developed that is able to effectively educate a person in all their dimensions (as an individual, as a member of society and as a participant in nature). An aim of this new educational model will be to ensure that people acquire the competences required to take an active part in society and to face life's experiences in an effective manner.

In short, the aim will be to educate competent people (i.e. people capable of acting effectively in specific situations and contexts), and the school will need to select and use the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to do so.

As a consequence of the new vision of competence-based education, languages acquire greater importance than ever in the school as, in short, language is the main tool for human development – the intermediary we make use of in all spheres and in all our daily tasks. Therefore, education will need to meet all those language needs that may

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be foreseen in terms of the current and future personal, academic and professional situation facing Basque students.

### **1.3.2. Improving the quality of the communicative environment in schools**

From the point of view of competence-based education, the aim of language learning and teaching should be as follows: *to develop the communicative competences of students in order for them to use language as an effective tool in all situations and for all needs in life.*

Consequently, language learning and teaching will need to be a process shared by all areas of school activity, as each communicative situation that arises in the school (whether within or outside the classroom) will make its contribution to the general communicative competence of the student, and we will need to work on all these situations to be able to develop that competence – in other words, each communicative situations that may arise

a challenge facing schools will be to identify those communicative situations that may take place within the school environment, and to channel their possible application towards language learning and teaching

in each area of activity will have its own linguistic characteristics: Some will be formal and therefore require the use of a formal register; others, in contrast, will be informal and require the use of an informal register.

Therefore, one of the challenges facing schools will be to identify those communicative situations that may take place within the school environment, and to channel their possible application towards language learning and teaching.

In this sense, some actions will take on major importance, such as updating teaching methodologies and re-analysing those activities that are developed outside the classroom from the language standpoint. Thus, students will be able to develop a communicative competence that will enable them to deal with the most varied possible situations.

### 1.3.3. Revitalising the use of Basque

As we have already mentioned previously, one of the characteristics of Basque teaching is the fact that it is an active agent in the revitalisation of the minority language. Education has fulfilled two main functions in revitalising the use of the Basque language, as has been proven in its development over the past fifty years: one of its functions has been to preserve the language – that of trying to pass down cultural heritage from one generation to another that a specific society has gradually built up; the other has been an innovative function – that of finding a way to respond to the need for change and society’s new demands.

However, if the school is really going to try and fulfil these functions and act as a social agent capable of regenerating the language, it must not confine its activities to the academic teaching of that language:

“In all cases (with the possible exception of academic linguists) languages are not their own rewards. If they remain functionally locked away in the schools, they may be learned (youngsters have an amazing ability and capacity to learn “useless” matters which they never need again, once their schooling is over), but they will not accomplish the wonderful goals of communication with neighbours far and near, improvement of commerce and diplomacy, attainment of social mobility, and familiarity with the brightest stars of world literature –and much, much less yet will they accomplish RLS –unless they are linked to “real life” stages before, during and after school. The RLS school must keep reality firmly in mind. Schools tend to be compartmentalising institutions ... it is very easy for them to become sheltered workshops, a world apart and unto themselves. When that happens, they effectively cease to contribute to the RLS process” (Fishman, 2001, page 471).

According to Fishman, a school that is integrated in society will be what is required: a school that can contemplate the new educational model which, apart from the purely academic sphere, is also able to assume other spheres of influence. J.I. Etxezarreta explains this as follows:

“The school is one of the essential environments for socialisation, communication, relations and coexistence among individuals on many levels: in terms of children and young people, the services provided to families, the interrelation between the school or Ikastola and the social or institutional milieu, in terms of the Basque language learning process of parents and education of both parents and school administrators, and as regards networks created between schools or Ikastolas and different places. All these components form part of the school’s activity and it is clear they are not confined merely to people’s academic life. He or she who wishes to promote use of the language in order for it form the basis for revitalizing the use of the Basque language will need to take all of them into account” (Etxezarreta, 2008, page 91).

therefore, the school that attempts to be an active social agent in the Basque language promotion process will need to suitably exploit the opportunities offered by the education community as a whole. Moreover, it will need to maintain close and effective relations with society

Therefore, the school that attempts to be an active social agent in the Basque language promotion process will need to suitably exploit the opportunities offered by the education community as a whole. Moreover, it will need to maintain close and effective relations with society.

#### 1.3.4. Revitalisation of Basque culture

Languages, however, are not mere intermediaries that enable people to share ideas, desires and experiences.

A language is also a product that is deep-rooted in a culture or a conveyor of that culture, whereby it becomes the cornerstone

of community identity. We individuals observe the world around us via our language: having a command of a language also entails familiarising oneself with its culture.

We consider the Basque language to be the creator and basic representative of our cultural heritage; having a command of the language enables us to become aware of our Basqueness. At the same time, this bond with the language will be strengthened owing to the fact that culture and language form an inseparable system in activities developed in all cultural spheres, - i.e. with Basque. Therefore, revitalisation of the Basque language and culture will necessarily involve a joint action, with Basque culture being deemed to be the way we Basques have of understanding the reality of the situation (Garagorri, 2004).

In addition, as other languages are acquired, the foundations of cultural diversity and interculturality are laid, and the way is paved for the mutual understanding and respect which are essential for peaceful coexistence.

Therefore, the field of Basque education will need to fulfil the following two functions: it will have to ensure the transfer and revitalisation of Basque culture, the core element of which is the Basque language, as well as ensuring the development of the type of universal knowledge demanded by modern-society – in order for paths to be pursued to help achieve the type of coexistence referred to above.

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### **1.3.5. Responding to cultural and linguistic diversity**

Globalisation, as we have already mentioned, makes people's mobility increasingly common and, as a consequence, makes the need to manage cultural and linguistic diversity even greater. On the one hand, we Basque speakers will need to develop our capacity to cope abroad; on the other, we will need to be able to coexist alongside foreign cultures and languages. As far as this last-mentioned point is concerned, we have

education will need to channel the integration of these students. On the one hand, it will be compelled to help them develop the linguistic and cultural skills required to live in Basque society; on the other and if our aim is to continue promoting Basque language and culture, it will prove essential for them to adopt an attitude in favour of Basque language and culture, albeit without ever putting to one side or underestimating their own culture and language of origin

already seen that the number of immigrants of different origin has increased in our society and that the diversity this entails is present in the classroom.

Education will need to facilitate the integration of these students. On the one hand, it will be compelled to help them develop the linguistic and cultural competences required to live in Basque society; on the other and if our aim is to continue promoting Basque language and culture, it will prove essential to bring these students closer to our language, albeit without ever putting to one side or underestimating their own culture and language of origin.

#### **1.4. Conclusion: The need for the Language Project**

As we have seen, the linguistic challenges facing Basque schools are considerable: providing a comprehensive response to Basque language and culture by meeting the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century society, ensuring decent teaching of two or three languages spoken within our milieu and, lastly, suitably dealing with the cultural and linguistic characteristics of students of different origins.

In facing these challenges, schools will need to review their areas of work and draw up a new framework. This framework will necessarily include all fields of communication in school life and encourage the involvement and collaboration of all educational agents. Such a framework will need to take into consideration the following aspects, among others:



- Taking into account the socio-linguistic situation of schools, this framework will need to involve effective planning for all languages; at the same time, it will have to ensure equal and consistent treatment in terms of the learning-teaching of those languages. To do so, the functions and areas of each language will have to be established within schools, and the time and teaching methods to be allocated to each of them will have to be specified.
- The different communicative situations existing in schools will need to be identified (both in pedagogical and institutional fields), their characteristics analysed and, by encouraging the participation of the entire education community, the specific strategies to be pursued in managing such situations defined.
- Close and effective relations will have to be developed with society and systematic and coherent planning determined.

schools will need to review their spheres of work and draw up a new framework with which to face these challenges.

This framework will necessarily include all fields of communication in school life and encourage the involvement and collaboration of all agents

As we shall see below, the **Language Project** will constitute that wide-ranging and multilateral framework that the school needs. However, before we move on and define this and describe its characteristics, we should mention the linguistic approach and objectives set out by Ikastolas, as these will be the aspects that determine the areas where the work and initiatives to be set in motion within the Language Project will be put into practice.



# 2

## view on language and objectives of Ikastolas

As we mentioned in the previous chapter, the Ikastola response to the language needs of modern-day society will need to be based on the characteristics of the Ikastola model, as this model will be the one that determines the actions and conditions required to carry out our work.

### 2.1. Characteristics of Ikastolas

This work focuses on the basic definition of Ikastolas as “quality Basque-medium education”. The main stance that this definition grants to the treatment of languages may be expressed by the following characteristics of the Ikastola model, which set out the direction to be pursued by the Language Project common to all Ikastolas<sup>12</sup>

the Ikastola response to the language needs of modern-day society will need to be based on the “Ikastola model”, as this model will be the one that determines the actions and conditions required to carry out our work

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<sup>12</sup> Vide, catalogue of images of Ikastolas: Ikastola: imajina ezazu nor garen, EHIK, 2007.

- **Basque identity – that he/she should promote Basque language and culture:** The Ikastola movement emerged as a tool for conveying Basque language and culture, and from a commitment to developing and strengthening the effective use of Basque. That is its main characteristic, although it will always remain open to other cultures - above all to contact cultures - and will develop intercultural educational approaches.
- **Basque-based multilingualism:** With a view to covering the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century society, the purpose of language planning<sup>13</sup> on the part of Ikastolas is to attain the following two objectives: on the one hand, for Basque to be fully developed within its natural linguistic setting and, on the other, for Basque speakers to be able to learn and use other languages.
- **Integrated into society:** Ikastolas are schools that were created via popular initiative and have organisational and management models that came into being as a result of that initiative. Therefore, they are adapted to society's needs while at the same time transforming it.
- **Active participation of the entire education community:** The Ikastola has already chosen the democratic alternative. All members of the education community (families, teachers, monitors, workers from other areas and students) have to take part in its management and actively help in its running.
- **Innovative, R&D.** The Ikastola opts for a structure that is capable of continually learning and adapting itself in a world that never ceases to change, while at the same time acting as an education network prepared for renewal and continuous improvement.

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<sup>13</sup> Language Planning: a collection of decisions and approaches that specify the role of each language in different fields of action of the educational establishment.

## 2.2. Language objectives

### 2.2.1. General objectives

This school model pursues the following language objectives:

1. **To offer a Basque education** to students so that they may then gain a command of the Basque language, and be committed to the transfer, development and promotion of Basque language and culture. Thus, the Ikastola strives to train speakers of Basque by constantly encouraging motivation and a positive attitude towards this language.
2. To educate **multilingual Basque citizens**, enabling them to acquire a knowledge and use of other languages, i.e. attempting to ensure that apart from the local and contact languages (Spanish and French), citizens suitably use the main language of international relations; another objective is in turn for students to acquire basic notions in the language of the cross-border state<sup>14</sup>.
3. Living in **Basque within one's education community**: to ensure the transfer, development and dissemination of Basque language and culture in any type of relation and in the means created for such purpose.
4. To be **agents in the normalisation process** in the community of which students form a part; Ikastolas are willing to work with other social agents and with different institutions in order to achieve this objective.

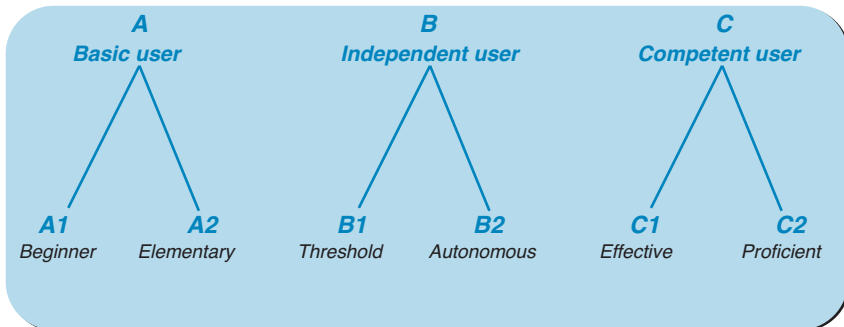
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<sup>14</sup> Proposal recommended in the document "Ikastolak. Orain eta Gero".

### 2.2.2. Common levels of reference in the acquisition of languages<sup>15</sup>

Our aim is to ensure that “multilingual Basque speakers” who have studied in Ikastolas manage to attain a specific level for each language on completion of their education process. By the end of Compulsory Basic Education, students should – in addition to the language levels established by law – attain the levels of acquisition proposed in the *Basque curriculum for the compulsory school period* (2006). The grading system proposed by the European Framework of Reference (Council of Europe, 2005) has been taken into account at all times in establishing this curriculum:

3<sup>rd</sup> illustration: Levels of language acquisition



- The aim in the case of Basque and the other official language (Spanish-French) is to attain level B2 corresponding to that of an independent user; the European Framework of Reference describes this as follows (op.cit.):

“Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.”

<sup>15</sup> Proposal recommended in the document “Ikastolak. Orain eta Gero” (EHIK, 2008).

- In the case of English and in response to its status as international *lingua franca*, the aim is to attain level B1 corresponding to that of an independent user:

“Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered at work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.”

- As far as the State language is concerned, the aim is to attain level A2 corresponding to that of a basic user (French/Spanish):

“Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.”

To these objectives should be added what the practices of some Ikastolas have shown us - as they have already established the linguistic objectives regarding *Baccalaureat* studies and Vocational Training: attaining level C1 of the European Framework both in Basque and in Spanish/French, and level B2 in the third language.

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# 3

## The Language Project: definition and characteristics

### 3.1. Definition of the Language Project

To attain the objectives that have been referred to, a comprehensive tool is required to work on language whose influence extends to the entire communicative context of the Ikastola (to the teaching-learning process, to relations within the education community, to relations with the society of which it forms a part). The functions of such a tool are as follows: a) to analyse the different linguistic actions that take place in the pedagogical and institutional fields of the Ikastola, and b) to direct the joint work carried out by the entire education community in a systematic and integrated manner based on common criteria, so as to be able to reasonably cover the needs detected. The Ikastola Language Project has been devised for such purpose – a project that brings together and gives coherence to aspects related to the teaching-learning process and to the use of Ikastola languages, and one which lends coherence to the treatment of these aspects.

the Ikastola Language Project – a project that brings together and gives coherence to aspects related to the teaching-learning process and to the use of Ikastola languages, and one which lends coherence to the treatment of these aspects

Each communicative field of the Ikastola has its own socio-linguistic characteristics; a specific use of the language emerges in each field when providing a response to such different characteristics – for instance, the language of the teaching-learning process (both written and oral), of

informal relations outside the classroom, the language of work of the governing and operational bodies of the Ikastola, and of administrative relations with municipal institutions.

From such diversity in terms of use emerges a broad and varied language repertoire. Indeed, having a command of a language means possessing a language repertoire with which a person may be capable of expressing themselves effectively in each of those situations.

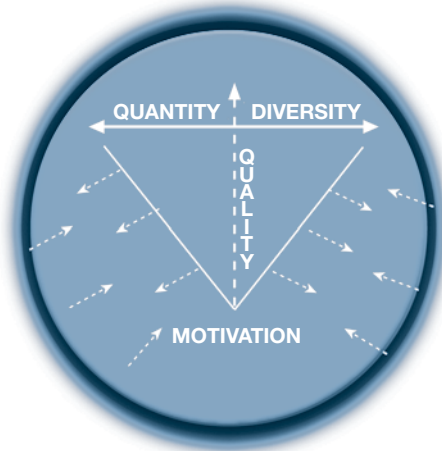
Therefore, our aim is to influence the amount and diversity of the language repertoire of members of the education community; they will thus develop their communicative competence as the number of situations increases in which they are capable of making use of the language; this will also

improve quality and they will express themselves in a suitable, coherent and proper manner in each of the situations referred to in an increasingly effective way.

Motivation to use a language will grow by itself as the usefulness of the language is proven and the speaker gradually becomes more secure in using it. However, in the case of minority languages (i.e. in the case of Basque), their use is also the fruits of a conscious choice and it will prove necessary to encourage motivation in a specific way; consequently, the area of motivation will need to be taken into account in our Language Project.

As may be observed in the following graph, language development is based on all those elements we have already mentioned (John H.A.L. de Jong, 2004; adapted):

#### LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT



*4<sup>th</sup> illustration: Elements of language development*

It will prove necessary for people to develop a language repertoire as complete as possible for them to have the opportunity to communicate in each of these social contexts; ensuring that they have that opportunity (in so far as this duty falls on the school) will be the main function of the Language Project. Furthermore and in order to ensure that language use steadily improves and develops, work will have to be carried out on each of those contexts by means of specific, focused planning. Such planning will therefore comprise the following, which will also constitute the basis for the Language Project: the analysis and description of these linguistic actions, a work methodology for improving such actions, and the profile and training of those agents that will take part in them.

In this respect, the Language Project is a comprehensive framework that brings together all the fields of activity of the Ikastola which are related to language, and also deals with those areas that may emerge from relations

the Language Project is without doubt a strategic project for the Ikastola: it influences all its fields of activity and demands the responsibility and involvement of the entire community

the Language Project will develop within the school's communicative fields of activity. Indeed, each area possesses its own socio-linguistic characteristics and specific language uses emerge when taking such characteristics into consideration

maintained by the Ikastola with its immediate surroundings. For this reason, the Language Normalisation Plan forms part of it and the promotion of the minority language one of its main functions.

Yet the Language Project goes far beyond this, as the integrated treatment of all languages taught in Ikastolas also forms a part of it. Thus, among the main areas of work carried out to ensure that this development of Basque-based multilingualism takes place in a suitable manner, we find that this involves the following: establishing effective language planning that specifies the functions and spaces open to each languages; integrating the approaches and methodologies used in the teaching-learning of languages; and ensuring

effectiveness in terms of the instrumental use of all languages across the curriculum.

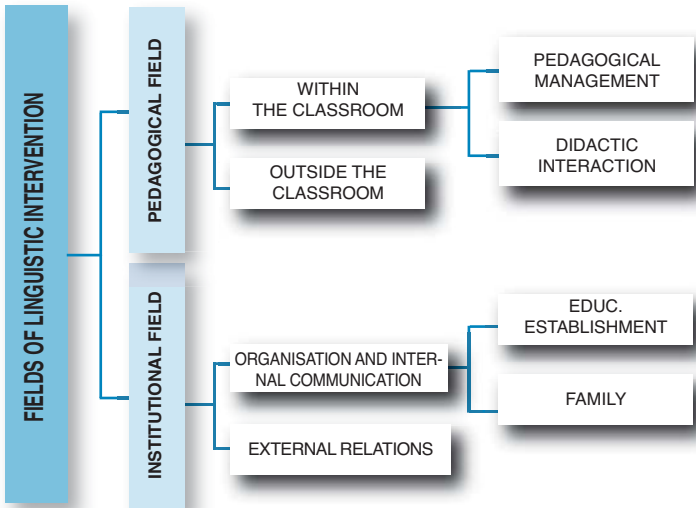
Apart from being comprehensive, the Language Project is without doubt a strategic project for the Ikastola: it influences all its fields of activity and demands the responsibility and involvement of the entire community. It is therefore a document that, after having been shared and agreed upon by all Ikastola agents, has to then be approved and promoted by the relevant governing bodies, and requires the involvement of the management team.

### 3.2. Fields of linguistic intervention

According to the reasoning referred to above, the framework of the Language Project cannot be organised by depending on the language users or subjects, as frequently

occurs in the language normalisation plans of the school, but rather, by developing within the school’s communicative fields of activity. Indeed, each field possesses its own socio-linguistic characteristics and specific language uses emerge when taking such characteristics into consideration. For this reason, it is essential to conduct a detailed analysis of the communicative context of the Ikastola and identify all the fields that may have an influence on language development – i.e. *the fields of linguistic intervention*. Thanks to this identification, we shall have the chance to treat languages via a systemic approach and ensure interaction and coherence between different fields and agents.

This would be the classification of the fields of linguistic intervention of Ikastolas, which we shall later describe in more detail.



5<sup>th</sup> illustration: Fields of linguistic intervention

Two main fields of intervention should be distinguished, taking into account the Ikastola as a whole:

- **Pedagogical field:** within this section are included all those teaching and learning processes that influence language development, and all those out-of-school activities that have a pedagogical purpose.
- **Institutional field:** the aspects included in this field are related to the organisation of the Ikastola and to social relations whose main aim is to promote and secure the use of the minority language outside the Ikastola.

### 3.2.1. Pedagogical field

The pedagogical field may be further divided into two sub-fields: **the field within the classroom environment** and **the field outside the classroom**.

**The field within the classroom environment** covers all teaching-learning processes and is itself divided into two sub-fields. On the one hand, we have the *pedagogical management* section, which includes those decisions aimed at developing the integrated language curriculum and those that meet the language needs of any other subjects.

On the other hand, this field will also include *didactic intervention* that covers all subjects. The aims of the latter are to ensure the language quality of the relational network within the classroom, and to ensure that communication of the teaching-learning process is both rich and effective.

This field in turn includes *resources* and *training* deemed essential for teaching staff, such as improvement in the language, methodology and didactics, and language attitudes.

**The field outside the classroom** refers to activities that take place outside the classroom which are run by teachers, educators and monitors. It is a field geared above all to the promotion of the use of the minority language, i.e. Basque. However, according to the socio-linguistic context of the Ikastola and the objectives set out for each language, the possibility exists that other languages could also be present in this field.

Intervention in this field constitutes an attempt to influence the non-formal field of student life and to provide means by which Basque- high quality Basque- may become the language of habitual communication in such situations. Therefore, the quality of communication outside the classroom will be analysed, methodologies and strategies aimed at enriching such communication devised, and both the training of educators and the resources needed to carry this out specified.

### 3.2.2. Institutional field

**The institutional field** corresponds to the Ikastola's language policy and may also be divided into two sub-fields: **organisation and internal relations** and **external relations**.

The **organisation and internal relations** section includes decisions referring to language management that may be deemed necessary in order for the Ikastola context to be as Basque-speaking as possible. Thus, apart from establishing criteria for taking care of the language landscape and ensuring that it is monitored, strategies will be specified with which the obstacles preventing the use of Basque within the relational networks of the language community will be specified. We have drawn a distinction between relational networks – *the educational establishment* and *the family* – so as to be able to deal with them separately.

Among **external relations** are included bonds and commitments which need to be promoted by the Ikastola in collaboration with the society of which it forms a part in order to promote the use of Basque.

The fields mentioned are specified in the following table:

## FIELDS OF LINGUISTIC INTERVENTION

### EDUCATION PROJECT

#### Language Project and Language Planning

PEDAGOGICAL FIELD		INSTITUTIONAL FIELD	
WITHIN THE CLASSROOM		ORGANISATION AND INTERNAL COMMUNICATION	
OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM (Break, sports activities, dining hall, transport, outings, etc.)		SCHOOL	FAMILY
<p><b>PEDAGOGICAL MANAGEMENT</b></p> <p><b>DIDACTIC INTERACTION</b></p>	<p><b>WITHIN THE CLASSROOM</b></p> <p><b>DIDACTIC INTERACTION</b></p>	<p><b>EXTERNAL RELATIONS</b> (Other educational establishments, associations of a social nature, town councils and political institutions, suppliers)</p>	<p><b>EXTERNAL RELATIONS</b> (Other educational establishments, associations of a social nature, town councils and political institutions, suppliers)</p>
<p><b>1. INTEGRATED CURRICULUM OF THE AREA OF LANGUAGE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Language of relation in each area</li> <li>o Language of relation in each area criteria</li> </ul> <p><b>2. CURRICULA OF OTHER AREAS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Objectives, contents, assessment criteria (instrumental use of languages).</li> </ul> <p><b>3. COMPLEMENTARY PROJECTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Linguistic treatment of transversal subject matters</li> <li>o Activities for promoting Basque language and culture</li> </ul> <p><b>4. TRAINING OF TEACHERS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Improvement in the language</li> <li>o Methodology and didactics of the area</li> <li>o Attitudes to language</li> </ul> <p><b>5. RESOURCES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Didactic material of each area</li> <li>o Arrangement of spaces and treatment of language</li> <li>o Language of sources of information and other resources</li> </ul>	<p><b>1. USE OF LANGUAGE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Language of relation in each area</li> <li>o Language model of the teacher and their attitude towards the language</li> <li>o Use of language among students</li> </ul> <p><b>2. METHODOLOGY AND DIDACTICS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Significant communicative situations</li> <li>o Group types and criteria</li> </ul> <p><b>3. TRAINING OF TEACHERS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Improvement in the language</li> <li>o Methodology of the activity</li> <li>o Attitudes to language</li> </ul> <p><b>4. RESOURCES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Linguistic treatment of each space and service</li> </ul>	<p><b>1. USE OF LANGUAGE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Use and treatment of the language among the governing, administrative and operational bodies</li> <li>o Language profile of employees</li> <li>o Documents that gather together decisions taken regarding the treatment of languages</li> </ul> <p><b>2. TRAINING OF EMPLOYEES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Improvement in the language</li> <li>o Attitudes to language</li> </ul> <p><b>3. RESOURCES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Linguistic treatment of financial and administrative documentation</li> <li>o Linguistic treatment of ICT media</li> <li>o Linguistic treatment of spaces within the Ikastola</li> </ul>	<p><b>1. USE OF LANGUAGE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Type of families according to language</li> <li>o Treatment of the language within the family</li> <li>o Relations between Ikastola and family</li> </ul> <p><b>2. TRAINING OF PARENTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Improvement in the language</li> <li>o Attitudes to languages</li> </ul> <p><b>3. RESOURCES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Media: magazines, etc.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1. USE OF LANGUAGE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Use of educators' language</li> <li>o Use of language between educators and students</li> <li>o Use of language among students</li> </ul> <p><b>2. METHODOLOGY AND DIDACTICS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Strategies for exploiting communicative situations</li> </ul> <p><b>3. TRAINING OF TEACHERS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Improvement in the language</li> <li>o Methodology of the activity</li> <li>o Attitudes to language</li> </ul> <p><b>4. RESOURCES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Linguistic treatment of each space and service</li> </ul>	<p><b>1. USE OF LANGUAGE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Use and treatment of the language among the governing, administrative and operational bodies</li> <li>o Language profile of employees</li> <li>o Documents that gather together decisions taken regarding the treatment of languages</li> </ul> <p><b>2. TRAINING OF EMPLOYEES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Improvement in the language</li> <li>o Attitudes to language</li> </ul> <p><b>3. RESOURCES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Linguistic treatment of financial and administrative documentation</li> <li>o Linguistic treatment of ICT media</li> <li>o Linguistic treatment of spaces within the Ikastola</li> </ul>	<p><b>1. USE OF LANGUAGE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Language criteria in external relations</li> </ul> <p><b>2. PROMOTION OF AREAS OF USE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Reinforcement of relational networks</li> <li>o Promotion of Basque cultural activities</li> <li>o Promotion of activities in Basque</li> </ul>	<p><b>1. USE OF LANGUAGE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Language criteria in external relations</li> </ul> <p><b>2. PROMOTION OF AREAS OF USE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Reinforcement of relational networks</li> <li>o Promotion of Basque cultural activities</li> <li>o Promotion of activities in Basque</li> </ul>



Intervention will need to be forthcoming in all the fields and sub-fields we have just mentioned, as these help students to develop the communicative competence they need to make use of the language(s) effectively in daily life.

Fields outside the classroom and those related to the institutional field are essential for a minority language-based school, as they create and foster social spaces (outside the classroom) where use of that language is guaranteed.

As for the field within the classroom environment, schools that use a minority language as the teaching medium should opt for those methodologies that take best advantage of the communicative context offered by the teaching-learning process.

Furthermore, they will need to choose teaching methodologies in languages that encourage the use of communication and language (within the classroom and within the field of school in general), as the social milieu tends not to offer students all the communicative situations they need for their comprehensive language development.

fields outside the curriculum and institutional fields are essential for a minority language-based school, as they create and foster social spaces (outside the classroom) where use of that language is guaranteed



as for the curriculum field, schools that use a minority language as a teaching medium should opt for those methodologies that take best advantage of the communicative context offered by the teaching-learning process

This description of fields of linguistic intervention provides us with the opportunity to include each project designed and set in motion by the Ikastola network in the corresponding field of intervention. It also enables us to carry out a complete diagnosis of the linguistic situation, draw up a balanced, coordinated and coherent language plan, monitor the influence of that plan, and assess that influence.

### 3.3. Characteristics of the Language Project

The Language Project will need to feature the following characteristics in order for the conditions laid down by a general framework of that type to be met.

- **Coherence.** It should be coherent with the nature and objectives set out by each Ikastola in its Education Project. This determines all the decisions that will be taken within the Language Project due to the fact that the Education Project contains the educational and linguistic objectives and approaches set out by the Ikastola. The Education Project will therefore constitute the starting point for any Language Project.
- **Adaptation. The Language Project** set in motion by each Ikastola should develop a linguistic and educational itinerary adapted to its own socio-economic, linguistic and cultural context.
- **Legality.** The Language Project will need to take the legal language framework into account as set out by the Education System of the administrative territory where the Ikastola is located (Basque Autonomous Community – CAV –, Nafarroa – Navarre –, or Iparralde – North Basque Country).
- **Integration and participation.** The Language Project has a bearing on the entire education community, and the criteria formulated within it will be put into practice via the participation and involvement of all the members of that community.

- Decisions will require the commitment of all members of the educational community. Furthermore, the principles contained in the Language Project and the initiatives deriving from them should take the form of dynamic language agents within the Ikastola.

### 3.4. Position of the Language Project

After agreeing as to the distinctive characteristics of the Ikastola, these are then gathered together within the **Ikastola Language Project (ILP)** with the following aim in mind: to coherently reflect the educational activity adapted to the reality of the situation facing each Ikastola and to their socio-economic, linguistic and cultural context. The characteristics assumed by all members of the education community, the common educational objectives, the pedagogical foundations and the core elements of the organisational structure, etc., will also then be gathered together.

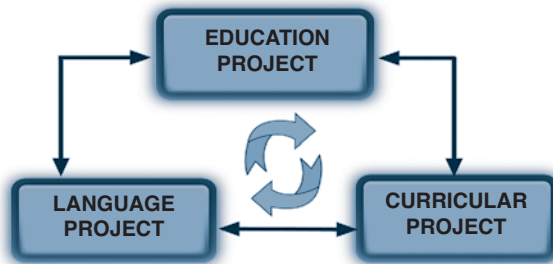
The Language Project will be responsible for ensuring that the principles regarding the treatment of language set out in the Ikastola's Education Project are adhered to. To do so, it will deal with those aspects related to teaching-learning and use of the Ikastola languages, and will also give coherence to that treatment.

The decisions included in the Language Project will also have a direct influence on the Curricular Project, as it is in the latter in which the criteria are established for managing the teaching-learning process. Indeed, those aspects related to languages are very important within the Curricular Project because languages constitute a major content, and because generally speaking it is the main tool of the entire teaching-learning process.

the Language Project will be responsible for ensuring that the principles governing the treatment of languages set out in the Ikastola's Education Project are adhered to

Therefore, these three projects we have just named will constantly interact with and feed each other, as shown in this illustration:

*6<sup>th</sup> illustration: Position (of the Language Project)*



However, the Language Project will also have an influence over other documents related to the organisation and management of the Ikastola, as the guidelines set out in the Language Project for the treatment of languages will be embodied in them. Among these documents are to be found the following: the Ikastola's internal regulations, the annual plan, the budgetary project and the Ikastola's management report, etc.

### 3.5. The Language Project of each Ikastola: content

The Language Project of each Ikastola should consist of the eight sections listed below<sup>16</sup>. Each Ikastola will need to analyse this framework of reference when drawing up each section and select those points it takes on as its own.

<sup>16</sup> This list does not necessarily have to make up the index of the Ikastola's Language Project. Each Ikastola will decide how to organise these sections.

- Definition and characteristics of the Language Project
- View on language and objectives
- Basic theoretical principles of the Language Project
- Language planning
- Training criteria
- Itinerary for the management of the Language Project
- Composition and functions of the work teams in charge of the Language Project
- Diagnosis and strategic plan

The Language Project strives to be a dynamic and living document; for this reason, it will be gradually corrected, completed and adapted from an initial version following assessments of the annual plans to be carried out over future school years, and thus successively as the Ikastola advances towards the objectives that have been set out. Even though some of these adaptations may be directly incorporated in the Language Project, others will need to be made in the Curriculum Project in the form of didactic units or in similar documents.

Of course, the Language Project we have described in this section contains certain very specific basic theoretical principles, and the purpose of the next section will be to explain them.

the Language Project strives to be a dynamic and living document; for this reason, it will be gradually corrected, completed and adapted from an original version following assessments of the annual plans to be carried out over the coming years. This will be the way to proceed as the Ikastola advances towards the objectives that have been set out



# 4

## Basic theoretical principles of the Ikastola Language Project

Each Ikastola will need to respect the basic principles and criteria defined in its Education Project when taking decisions and specifying the plans that will make up its Language Project. These principles and criteria will derive from those gathered together by the group of Ikastolas as a whole in their educational and organisational model, as well as in their curricular proposals. This chapter contains a summary of these basic theoretical principles.

### **4.1. Principles of the Ikastola educational model**

According to the document “Ikastolak. Orain eta gero” (EHIK, 2008), the pillars of the common basic curriculum of the Ikastolas are as follows:

- **Education, the driving force behind human rights and basic freedoms**

Ikastolas echo the content of article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) which demands the right to basic, free-of-charge education of all people. They coincide with the aim of education: the comprehensive development of the individual and their strengthening as a person. In turn, they coincide with the priority right of parents to decide the type of education they wish for their children.

- **An inclusive school for all**

In anticipation of the fact that modern-day Basque society and, above all, future Basque society, is going to be a multicultural one, Ikastolas are committed to providing an inclusive school for all where integration and equilibrium are sought in terms of the different ways of thinking and social, political and religious forms of behaviour existing in the Basque Country. In other words, Ikastolas strive to be within reach of all individuals, irrespective of their social or financial status, guarantee equal opportunities and ensure that students learn to live together in peaceful coexistence in a united Basque society that is integrated in Europe and bonded with the rest of the world.

- **Model of individual and society**

The aim of the education process is to ensure that the indivisible dimensions of the person as an individual, as a member of society and part of nature, achieve the highest and most balanced possible level of development. Based on this perspective, the parameters that need to be established to achieve the educational objectives and success in life should be as follows: firstly, the level of development of the competences acquired by the person as an individual; secondly, the contributions made in order to improve conditions of coexistence and the level of development in society; lastly, the contributions made to help look after nature and sustainability.

The Ikastola Education Project will aim to ensure that its students acquire the basic competences recommended by the European Parliament with a view to achieving this comprehensive approach to education for one's whole life.



Put in other way, the aim will be to develop the basic competences required by everyone for their satisfaction and personal development, so that they may be active citizens and become fully integrated into society and the world of work.

To this end, Ikastolas will promote those general educational competences proposed in the Basque curriculum for the compulsory school period, and such competences will therefore merge with areas of study and, in general, all situations faced in daily life.

Therefore, each Ikastola will establish the principles of basic education and training for one's whole life and, to do so, will cover the comprehensive development of the person, make access available to other levels of training and to the world of work, and prepare the student to be an entrepreneurial, professional, economic and social agent who will be capable of leading a life with meaning and able to make responsible choices with regard to his or her future.

- **Basque school**

It is both a duty and a right of the community as a whole and all people to defend, live, redefine and develop all the dimensions inherent in their culture, and to pass them on to members of that community via the family, the school and the different means of communication within their reach. The birth and characteristics of the Ikastola movement are based on a commitment to passing on, developing and promoting the Basque language and culture, albeit while always maintaining its doors open to cultures that are both close at home and far away.

Each Ikastola proposes a concept of Basque identity linked to Basque language and culture and encourages an integrating approach to languages and cultures, because it considers competences in all languages and all cultures to be complementary.

We shall now explain the main options put forward by the Ikastola group as a whole with regard to education, language, culture and teaching of languages, in order to describe these general principles in more detail.

## 4.2. Requirements for linguistic and cultural policy

### 4.2.1. Function of the school in the Basque language promotion process

The sociological situation of the Basque language may be summarised thus: Basque is immersed in a normalisation process or, put more specifically, needs social normalisation and dual language normalisation - social normalisation, because we are a minority in the Basque Country, and dual language normalisation, because our language is in the process of being developed both in terms of usage (still recent in certain fields) and in terms of corpus (a lexicon is being created in some fields, and syntax is being prepared, etc.). This situation requires greater motivation and effort on the part of those of us who learn and teach Basque and in Basque; it demands

that more functions be adhered to than would normally be the case in theory, i.e. it demands that we become agents of language normalisation, that we become social and language normalisers.

even though in the course of this long and complex language normalisation process it may prove essential for all social agents to take part, “the school is one of the fundamental agents involved in the normalisation process of a language”

Even though in the course of this long and complex language normalisation process it may prove essential for all social agents to take part, “the school is one of the pillars and one of the fundamental agents involved in the normalisation process of a language” (EHIE, 1991, page 27).

The school that takes on this obligation will manage to adhere to it via comprehensive and strategic planning, rather than via isolated courses of action. Among the elements comprising the plan will need to be the core elements listed in the original document referring to this work (Aldasoro *et al.* 2002):

“Strengthening the teaching of Basque and in Basque, devising one’s own channels for integrating immigrants, seeking to ensure the quality of the Basque language and striving to teach a suitable model,

encouraging the use of Basque and strengthening and disseminating multicultural and multilingual approaches with Basque language and culture as the main core element”.

The first condition for developing the core elements referred to above is to consider the survival of the Basque language as being the responsibility of the entire education community. Thus, it is essential to foster the relations and coordination among agents from the whole sphere of activity of schools. It is necessary to establish a structure that will make permanent, united and systemised work possible. In this respect and taking into account the fields of linguistic intervention there might be in the school, either the agents or possible agents operating in each field must be identified in order to set an effective plan in motion.

Likewise, the Ikastola will need to administer an effective language policy that is able to take into account its immediate surroundings: “(...) we cannot by ourselves guarantee the future of Basque as it stands. The help and collaboration of society are essential to achieve this” (Osa, 2004). Only in this way will we be able to gradually strengthen our attachment to the minority language and, as a consequence, perceive advances in its usage, if we consider out-of-class and institutional fields as forming part of the school (without under any circumstances avoiding them). We will thus have to influence other social agents and institutions, as well as collaborating with them.

“The school is one of the most important pillars and driving forces behind the normalisation process of a language. Its task is, however, related to all other sectors of Basque society in the form of a collaboratory process in which the school will become the driving force behind the Basque-learning process. Yet, at the same time, society

the purpose of Ikastolas, apart from teaching high quality Basque for all types of situations in life, is also to influence society, as well as being a promoter of Basque, strengthening its community of speakers and extending its areas of usage

will need to gradually adapt its situation to the reality facing language in the near future. Public administration and society in general cannot be confined to meeting current demands, but rather, must plan and create suitable conditions for today’s children to learn Basque in schools, and for them to be able to develop their skills in Basque in any sphere of social life tomorrow”(EHIE, 1991, page 27).

To sum up, the purpose of Ikastolas is, apart from teaching high quality Basque that may be used in all types of situation in life, to also influence society by promoting Basque, strengthening its community of speakers and extending its areas of usage.

#### **4.2.2. Response to linguistic and cultural diversity: the inclusive school**

As we have described in the section on diagnosis, a society with diversity and mobility takes into consideration new challenges to the promotion process of Basque language and culture. It would not be appropriate to consider this process outside this broad linguistic and cultural context.

in responding to linguistic and cultural diversity, we Ikastolas have opted for inclusive cultural integration

Conversely, we are striving to develop Basque language and culture as the core element of coexistence as they form a part of the diversity of modern-day society.

In responding to linguistic and cultural diversity, we Ikastolas have opted for the inclusive model, which is defined as follows in the

Basque Curriculum for the Compulsory School Period:

“We propose inclusive cultural integration as a model for coexistence. i.e. the path that combines diversity and unity by, on the one hand considering Basque language and culture to be the common heritage of all we cultural groups who live in contact with each other in the Basque Country - which must in turn be both open-minded and changing – and, on the other, diversity, in so far as we use intercultural channels as a means for respecting, getting to know and valuing the identity of every community (...). The underlying idea is that the fact of feeling Basque – the same as feeling Spanish or French – need not be a sentiment that

excludes other identities and shared around Basque language and culture; every individual must shape their own identity via an individualization process in which they will choose their own option of priorities among the identity-based options available” (A. A., 2008, page 18).

With this approach there are no immigrants or foreigners, there is no-one who is “different.” Every student has their own characteristics and the school welcomes them just as they are, without making any comparisons with the hypothetical image of the “standard student.” The fact that a student may be from a foreign family signifies “diversity” (in terms of gender, social class, competences, interests and learning styles, etc.). The inclusive model should offer the children of immigrants the chance to develop a “plural identity.” This means it should make them feel they belong to this society. The school’s responsibility does not involve constructing the original identity of the family, but rather, providing that construction with its place in the school and value it positively. Therefore, the Basque language also belongs to them –it is also their cultural heritage.

In this way, the inclusive school opens its doors to linguistic and cultural diversity, and considers the challenge posed by it in a positive light; it considers it to be a new option for promoting our culture and our language as, thanks to it, the number of Basque speakers and users will increase. Therefore, the inclusive school is well-disposed to Basque language and culture. If the Basque language is to survive, it will have to learn to live alongside and intermingle with other languages and cultures without becoming isolated; indeed, if we recall for a moment the words of Fishman, it is impossible for a minority language to be maintained and strengthened on its own. Basque needs to become an integrating rather than an exclusive tool via the inclusive school approach. Basque must be considered a tool for ensuring equal opportunities, a means for helping us to find out about our cultural wealth, a tool via which we relate to our equals, a bridge towards social integration – even within contexts in which Basque may not necessarily be the first language of all speakers. To achieve this, recent arrivals must be taught to appreciate our language and our

Basque must become an integrating rather than an exclusive tool via the inclusive school approach. Basque must be considered a tool for ensuring equal opportunities

culture in order to feel attached to them and maintain a positive attitude towards them.

However, we would not be able to achieve this objective if we underestimated what they bring with them. On the contrary, the multilingual process becomes enriched if we value the languages and cultures of origin of the immigrant student. Acknowledging a space for their languages of origin in the school environment encourages a positive attitude towards learning the new language:

“Additive bilingualism – that which adds to rather than subtracting from the emotional and intellectual experience of the student – starts from recognition, regard and a positive valuation of their language and cultural baggage. It is necessary for them to cultivate their mother tongue as a way of ensuring firm support for their learning a second one. Insisting on the development of broader language skills in the mother tongue helps to improve their self-image and the transfer of skills to their second language – the language they are learning at school” (Ruiz Bikandi and Miret Bernal, 2000).

To summarise, we are in favour of the multicultural and multilingual student taking part in the *Ikastola*, and we would like to consider such a situation as being part of the *solution* for adapting our educational model to the new society, rather than as a *problem* that requires a solution; we therefore agree with Cummins’s vision:

“In short, the cultural, linguistic and intellectual capital of our societies will increase dramatically when we stop seeing culturally and linguistically diverse children as “a problem to be solved” and instead open our eyes to the linguistic, cultural, and intellectual resources they bring from their homes to our schools and societies” (Cummins, 2008, page 5).

## 4.3. Educational approach

### 4.3.1. New competence-based educational model

The *Ikastolas* have since the time they were first set up insisted on the desire to create an innovative educational model integrated into society

and, for that reason, have since the outset distanced themselves from the sole purpose of the school as a conveyor of knowledge.

A great deal of progress was made in this direction in the 90s thanks to the constructivist approach put forward by educational reforms. We are currently advancing towards a redefinition of the school, which demands that the Ikastola ratifies the commitment it has taken on with society. As we have explained in the section of this document devoted to diagnosis, the characteristics of modern-day society pose challenges to the education system that it never had to face before. The fact of having to teach students to successfully take on board the information society and multiculturalism demands a major rethink of the objectives set out by education, the curriculum and teaching-learning methods. There has been major consensus on new educational plans in this diagnosis and its corresponding answers<sup>17</sup>. Ikastolas (together with other social agents) have taken on the basic notions of this renewal as their own and set out specific proposals in the Basque Curriculum for the Compulsory School Period (A.A. 2005).

According to this proposal, the aim of the education system is to educate people to *develop* effectively in all their dimensions (as individuals, as members of society and as participants in nature).

Thus, the main function of the school would in such case be to develop the *competences* necessary to actively take part in society and to effectively face the challenges that arise during one's life.

The **competent** person sought by the school is a person who is capable of effectively dealing with specific situations and contexts by making use of their knowledge, their skills and their attitudes in a unified and integrated manner.

the competent person sought by the school is a person who is capable of effectively dealing with specific situations and contexts, and who to do so makes use of their knowledge, their skills and their attitudes in a unified and integrated manner

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<sup>17</sup> See the frameworks, laws and decrees that have been recently approved by the Council of Europe, the Ministries of Education of Spain and France, and the Departments of Education of Navarre and the Basque Autonomous Community.

The core element of an educational curriculum aimed at attaining this objective will contain five general competences that closely interact with each other: **learning to learn and to think; learning to communicate; learning to be myself; learning to live together; learning to do things and to acquire enterprising skills.**

This new perspective brings the treatment of language to the forefront. Indeed, language has a special function when acquiring all general educational competences as it is the main tool for human development – the intermediary we use in all spheres and tasks in our personal lives (Elorza, 2004).

### **Language is the main tool for the development of identity**

this new perspective brings the treatment of language to the forefront. Indeed, language has a special function when acquiring all general educational competences as it is the main tool for human development – the intermediary we use in all spheres and tasks in our personal lives

On the one hand, language is a tool for internal organisation and self-regulation – a tool with which to construct personal criteria and behaviour. On the other, it is also important as a communication system, as social relations have an essential function in the development of the identity of the human being. Every person constructs their own system of knowledge, values and beliefs by expressing their opinions, thoughts, experiences and emotions, and contrasting and completing them with those of others.

Lastly, elements which complement and enrich identity such as creativity, aesthetic values, the recreational aspect, humour and pleasure are to a large extent developed by language, expressed in oral or written literature. The cultural knowledge required to confirm one's identity is also to a large extent acquired via literature – that which

ensures we are participants in a community.



## **Language is the main tool for structuring thought and internalising reality**

It is via language that we express and internalise new concepts, organise and arrange our system of knowledge, and gather together and relate new concepts; it is language – both oral and written – that enables us mainly to acquire the competences needed to find out information, interpret it in a critical manner, select it, organise it, create it and pass it on. Consequently, suitable language development will be the key to academic success, as it constitutes the basic medium for the entire teaching-learning process.

## **Language is the main tool for taking part in society and for living together**

Competences for suitable interpersonal communication are the keys to our social life. Taking part in formal or informal conversations, finding solutions, convincing others, negotiating about situations or working as a team are social skills that develop via language and are a basic prerequisite for living together.

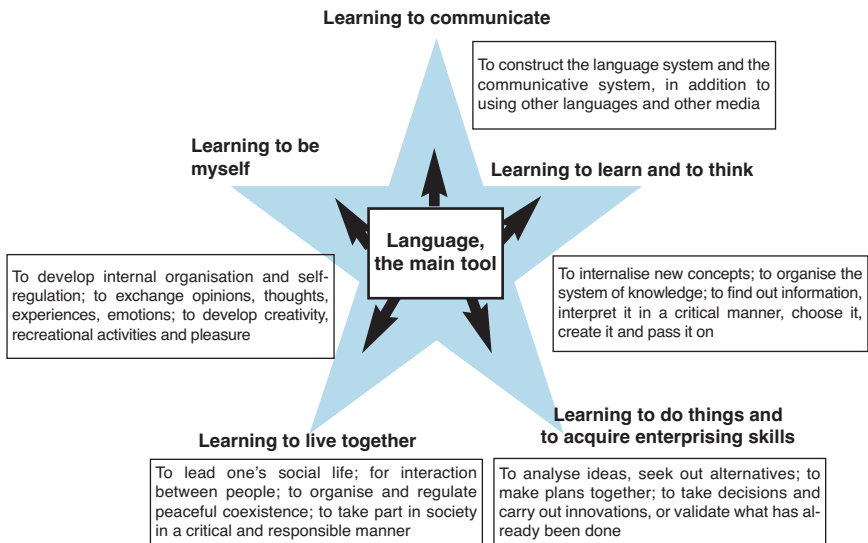
Moreover, language is the instrument that organises society. Indeed, one of the main functions of written language is to organise peaceful coexistence, which manifests itself in the laws and regulations that structure society. On the other hand, it is the discourse issued by institutions that to a great extent channels the dynamics of society.

The media also plays a major role in structuring society – an increasingly important role, as we have explained previously. As a consequence of the growing amount of information, it also proves increasingly necessary to select the messages we receive, arrange them in order of importance, and lend critical thought and creative use to them.

Therefore, to be able to take part in society in a critical and responsible manner, it is necessary to gain a command of the text genres created in the field of relations with institutions and in the media: informative, argumentative and instructive texts.

The following graph shows the essential contribution made by language to the development of each basic educational competence.

*7<sup>th</sup> illustration: Language, the main tool in the development of basic competences*



If we take a close look at all these contributions, we can state that language education and communicative education in general take on greater importance than ever in the functions of the school. Additionally, the weight of orality should be stressed, above all oral discourse for interaction, which derives from this new approach. On the other hand, it is clear that to be able to ensure the suitable development of language competences that will enable the person to deal with daily situations and necessities, teaching cannot be confined merely to the classroom setting

– even less so to the area of language. The school will need to take into account diverse language experiences gained by students in the environment in which they live, and deal with all of them systematically.

#### **4.3.2. Background to the methodology**

The view on learning we Ikastolas have used for a long time now is very well-adapted to this approach to competence-based education. Our general education framework is based on the constructivist theory of learning (Piaget, 1937, 1945, 1970; Piaget & Inhelder, 1975), and has been especially developed from the “social interactivism” put forward by Vygotsky (1973) and Bruner (1986).

These two authors add a main element to the constructivist view - namely, they stress the importance of social interaction in the development of young people. Therefore, the core element our educational proposal would be to promote the social construction of knowledge, starting from students’ needs and interests.

Current reflections on education according to competences add a further dimension to this view, which is that of the context in which such social construction - social situations - has a place. Learning would therefore be developed in three dimensions: the individual dimension – i.e. interaction between new knowledge and prior knowledge on the part of the student, the social dimension or, in other words, the interaction that arises with teachers and colleagues, and lastly, the interaction with the context in which such learning takes place, in respect of the conditions that emerge from the situations experienced by the student.

“Un apprentissage scolaire est un processus dynamique par lequel un apprenant, à travers une série d’échanges avec ses pairs et l’enseignant, met en interaction ses connaissances avec des avoirs dans l’objectif de créer de nouvelles connaissances adaptées aux contraintes et aux ressources de la situation à laquelle il est actuellement confronté dans l’objectif d’utiliser ses nouvelles connaissances dans des situations non didactiques” (*Jonnaert et Vander Borgh*, 1999, page 266).

Therefore, this approach – which establishes interaction and social relations (both with individuals and the environment) as the core

therefore, this approach – which establishes interaction and social relations (both with people and the milieu in which they live) as a core element of the teaching-learning process and which highlights the importance of the context and the situation – makes suitable treatment of language a priority need, i.e. the Language Project

element of the teaching-learning process and which highlights the importance of the context and situation – makes suitable treatment of language a priority need, i.e. the Language Project.

## 4.4. View on language and language teaching

### 4.4.1. View on language

This new form of competence-based education has its own view regarding language. The European Framework of Reference provides us with an approach that is fully adapted to competence-based discourse: a framework aimed at social interaction. The European Framework of Reference defines it as follows:

“The approach adopted here, generally speaking, is an action-oriented one in so far as it views users and learners of a language primarily as “social agents”, i.e. members of society who have tasks (not exclusively language-related) to accomplish in a given set of circumstances, in a specific environment and within a particular field of action.

While acts of speech occur within language activities, these activities form part of a wider social context, which alone is able to give them full meaning. We speak of “tasks” in so far as the actions are performed by one or more individuals strategically using their own specific competences to achieve a given result. The action-based approach therefore also takes into account the cognitive, emotional and volitional resources and the full range of abilities specific to and applied by the individual as a social agent” (Council of Europe, 2005, page 29).

As in the previous section, this approach places the treatment of languages within a more comprehensive framework; indeed, it analyses the language act in relation to a broader social context closely linked to other tasks and competences. It is to be precise language acts which regulate all human activities and organise relations between the world and individuals.

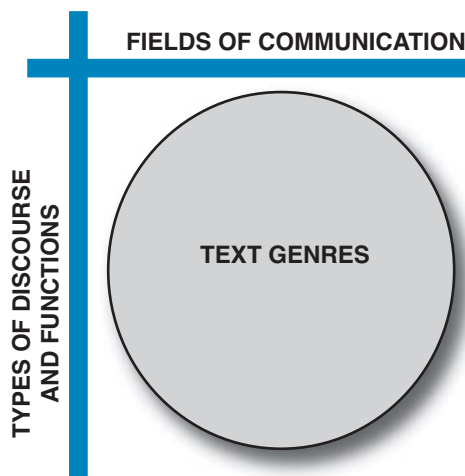
When transferring this action-based linguistic approach to the teaching-learning process, we tend to focus above all on the *socio-discursive* approach put forward by J.P. Bronckart (Bronckart, 1997) and in the *text pedagogy* that derives from it, although we also take into account some other contributions, such as task-based teaching (Nunan, 1989), or the method based on Bruner's format theory (1986). According to this approach, people act in the world via language acts in multiple contexts and situations in order to attain a variety of objectives (Lousada, 2007). These language acts take the form of oral and written texts.

people act in the world  
via language acts in  
multiple contexts and  
situation, in order to  
attain certain objectives

Therefore, texts are complete units of communication – language units that take on shape and meaning when adapted to the characteristics of any given situation. In this way, the student will be considered as a person that acts via language in a specific situation and to attain a specific objective. Language will be treated within the context of that activity by working both on the formal characteristics and content of the text created in that situation and for that context.

Given that there are an infinite variety of texts, these have been grouped together into text genres depending on the function they carry out in the different social fields; these are the genres we will be using to organise the teaching-learning process. Therefore, we have given preference in the Ikastola curricular project to the methodology based on comprehension and the production of *text genres*.

8<sup>th</sup> illustration: Core elements for the classification of text genre



#### 4.4.2. Basque-based multilingual education

As we already have seen, one of the main functions of the school in responding – as is due - to the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century society is that of guaranteeing a quality multilingual education. Such multilingual education will need to ensure suitable training in order to meet any language needs that may arise in terms of the current and future personal, academic and professional situation of Basque students.

As far as linguistic diversity is concerned, Ikastolas have opted for Basque-based multilingualism. Indeed, in a globalised society such as ours, it is impossible to maintain and promote a minority language if it is considered to be the only language in society. The future that lies ahead for us Basques is a multilingual one. For the Basque language to survive, it must be the main language within its linguistic sphere of influence, although at the same time we Basque speakers must also be able to speak other languages - otherwise, the Basque language will be at risk. As a consequence, the main aim is to combine these two ideas: on the

one hand, that the Basque language should manage to achieve the full development it needs within its linguistic sphere of influence and, on the other, that Basque speakers be capable of speaking other languages.

The inhabitants of the Basque Country will need to take on an active commitment to normalisation of the Basque language and consider it as the main language. They will also need to be familiar with the contact language and know how to use it appropriately. At the same time, they will have to be able to gain a command of at least one of the main languages of international communication. Lastly and in order to achieve the cultural integration of the two communities that exist on both sides of the border, it will be necessary for citizens to acquire some basic notions of the cross-border language.

Tackling such a complexity would prove impossible if we attempted to design curricula in the four languages by arranging them parallel to each other and treating each language separately. On the contrary, we will deal with these curricula in an integrated manner, and that is why the Ikastola multilingual project – *Eleanitz* – is based on the linguistic interdependence principle (Cummins, 1979). According to this principle, languages do not develop of their own free will without maintaining any type of relationship between each other; On the contrary, languages develop in an integrated manner, i.e. there is general language competence that administers comparison, contrast and interaction between languages. Encouraging this main competence is essential for the purpose of being able to create an integrated and balanced multilingual competence. To confirm this vision, let us now see what the European Framework of Reference says about it:

Ikastolas have opted for Basque-based multilingualism. Indeed, in a our globalised society it is impossible to maintain and promote a minority language if it is considered to be the only language in society

the inhabitants of the Basque Country will need to take on an active commitment to the normalisation of the Basque language and will need it to consider it as the main language

“From this point of view, the purpose of learning languages changes completely. The aim is not to learn two or three languages in isolation from one other, by following the model provided by native speakers. On the contrary, the aim is to develop a basic language repertoire in which all language skills can be expressed” (Council of Europe, 2005, page 24).

Given all the above-mentioned criteria regarding languages, Ikastolas have abandoned the initial view of the abstract ideal of bilingualism, the aim of which was a native-like mastery of both languages. Nowadays, bilingualism (and multilingualism) is considered to constitute a dynamic process that reflects the communicative needs of speakers. The *dynamic model of bilingualism* proposed by Herdina and Jessner (2002) is the one that best states our position as it takes into account the significant effect of socio-cultural conditions on the use and development of language. In other words, languages do not fully and abstractly develop in bilingual or multilingual people, but rather, do so depending on the situations and fields of action appropriate to each person. Furthermore, the communicative competence that a person may develop in a specific language will never be total or definitive; instead, it will be maintained, expanded or lost depending on the use made of that language.

As far as a minority language such as ours is concerned, it is clear that the socio-cultural aspects that influence the acquisition of that language are related to the investment made in replacing the language and to achieving language normalisation. Within such a context, the school has an essential function in guaranteeing a social environment that is able to create real communicative needs which may require use of the minority language. As a result, Ikastolas have drawn up a proposal for a minority language-based multilingual education system – in other words, they are trying to ensure that students reach a level of foreign language learning needed by 21<sup>st</sup> century Basque citizens, albeit while always giving priority to the Basque language in all spheres of use.

This model of dynamic multilingualism put forward by Ikastolas has opted for the following general lines of work with regard to the development of the target languages:



- It considers Basque to be the main language of communication and learning, and wishes to use it in the maximum possible number of communicative contexts within the school.
- In the case of Spanish/French and taking into account their dominant position in society, it considers them as a second language and will work in particular with a view to strengthening formal usage related to the academic sphere.
- As far as international languages are concerned, the contexts of natural usage available at any given time are the basis for teaching the language, thus, the model takes into account the real communicative possibilities of students and the contexts in which they live, i.e. the main resources available to us will be the school and school activities. Therefore, we shall opt for the guidelines referred to as CLIL (*Content Language Integrated Learning*).

However, treatment of the two international languages selected will be very different. In the case of English and taking into account the role of *lingua franca* it has acquired in the globalised society, we shall link its learning to a work-related context or to tertiary studies. In accordance with the *Global English* model subsequently described by Graddol (2006), we shall not take into account elements of Anglophone culture. As far as French/Spanish is concerned, however, the proposal will be put into practice from a more functional and cultural perspective due to the fact that the main purpose of treating these languages will be to cultivate relations with the cross-border community.

#### **4.4.3. The general “learning to communicate” competence**

In response to the approach put forward, the linguistic objective set out by Ikastolas will be the following: *to develop the communicative competences of students in order for them to*

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each sphere of the communicative context of the Ikastola and each member of the educational community who may take part in it (students, professionals or family) will make their contribution to the general communicative competence of the student, and we will have to deal with all

Therefore, we shall place the teaching-learning process of languages on the level of general competences, as a main element of the **“learning to communicate”**<sup>18</sup> competence. It will consequently take the form of a process shared by all spheres of activity of the school, as tasks of all type that may arise in each sphere will have their own text genres (with their own linguistic features) and specific language requirements, which will only be able to be dealt with and learned via these specific actions – in other words, each sphere of the communicative context of the Ikastola and each member of the education community who may take part in it (students, professionals or family) will make their contribution to the general communicative competence of the student, and we will have to deal with all spheres in order to develop that general competence.

This being the case, it will be the task of the area of languages to provide guidelines for reflection and systematic learning with regard to the language activities of all communicative spheres of student’s life. In this way, the main contents of the area will be the text genres corresponding to the academic, interpersonal and institutional fields. Similarly, the natural contexts of these text genres will need to become spaces for teaching-learning, and will need to consciously promote the development of language competences.

As for the academic sphere, for instance, each teacher will need to take the language needs corresponding to their area into account, and

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<sup>18</sup> Regarding the general competences proposed by the Basque Curriculum, vide: A. A. (2005, 2008).

consider the following as basic elements of that area: cognitive-linguistic operations corresponding to the area, the most common text genres, and the main language competences and procedures the student will need to use to deal with them successfully.

At the same time, interaction within the classroom will need to be considered as an important area for the acquisition and development of language. We will need coordinated planning that covers all the areas and all teachers involved in them in order to be in a position to exploit the possibilities offered by didactic interaction to the utmost when encouraging use of the language and promoting interactive oral genres.

Additionally, pre-established action will also have to be taken in out-of-school and leisure situations so as to be able to develop varieties of language and competences for informal interpersonal relationships. Specific pedagogical and didactic resources will need to be developed for such situations, and the training of individuals who work in that field will need to be overseen.

Lastly, the language criteria incorporated in the institutional field will need to be rigorously established for all situations; this will be necessary in order for all internal and external relations on the part of the Ikastola to be able to be conducted in Basque, and to thus extend the range of possibilities open to students to use the language. Special importance will be given to all initiatives aimed at encouraging the passing on of language within families.

interaction within the classroom will need to be considered as an important area for the acquisition and development of language



additionally, pre-established action will also have to be taken in out-of-school and leisure situations so as to be able to develop varieties of language and competences for non-formal interpersonal relationships

If we intend to help students to suitably develop their language competence in all communicative fields, we will need a common framework of criteria to be able to work on all these areas in an integrated manner – and it is precisely the Language Project that must offer us such a framework.

We are now going to refer to the contributions that need to be made by the sub-fields of the pedagogical field to the **learning to communicate** competence.

#### 4.4.3.1. Language needs within the field of the classroom

As far as the academic sphere of the classroom is concerned, suitable language development will be the key to academic success, as language is the main tool of the entire teaching-learning process<sup>19</sup>. Apart from the understanding and processing of information, the fact of having acquired cognitive-linguistic competences related to structuring and

as far as the academic sphere of the classroom is concerned, suitable language development will be the key to academic success, as language is the main tool of the entire teaching-learning

communication and having a command of informative and argumentative text genres related to the academic field is also an essential condition in all spheres of activity.

This perspective is accentuated with the competence-based educational model. Being competent in tasks in any field not only means knowing some details or facts and being able to repeat them. To possess a competence, one also needs to know how to manage different sources of information offered by increasingly complex information, i.e. students must know how to find

information, choose that which may be suitable by taking into account the objective being sought, process that information and, by developing their own opinion, make a critical assessment and creative use of it.

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<sup>19</sup> Vide: section 4.3.1.

At the same time, the social construction of knowledge necessarily involves comparing and expanding on one's own ideas and knowledge with those of others. Students will be required to work together with others to construct new knowledge by setting out their ideas and their knowledge, comparing them and arguing the case for them.

All these cognitive processes are developed above all via oral and written language. These cognitive-linguistic competences are essential for achieving success in the field of learning and for the development of thought and knowledge. All areas of knowledge have to be worked on in this way, as each one possesses their own procedures and text genres (the description of an experience in the laboratory, the formulation of a mathematical problem, a narration, or the exposition of social or physical facts, etc.).

As a consequence, all teachers have to consciously teach the language, regardless of the subject being taught. To do so, the communicative context of the classroom has to be organised on the one hand with a view to improving the language, so as to be able to take the fullest possible advantage of the possibilities available for strengthening and enriching the production of language. On the other hand, the types of text and the language competences corresponding to each subject need to be perfectly integrated into the curriculum of the relevant area – not only to teach the language, but also to teach the subject itself, as language is the main tool by means of which the contents of that subject are acquired. Therefore, an appraisal of the quality and effectiveness of the language related to the given area will be something to be taken into account.

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language, regardless of  
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#### 4.4.3.2. Treatment of the area of language<sup>20</sup>

the curriculum for the subject of Languages and Literature is based on the discursive approach to the language

We have already mentioned that the main objective of the area of languages is to develop the communicative competence of students in order to prepare them for different situations in life. To achieve this objective, the curriculum for the subject of Languages and Literature is based on the discursive approach to language, i.e. learning to use the language will form the basis for defining competences and the choice of contents.

Consequently, the main content of the area of languages will comprise text genres, as the social usage of any sphere comes to fruition in these genres (see the illustration in section 4.4.1.). Likewise, the analysis of

we have brought together the teaching-learning of all languages in a single curriculum proposal via the design of an integrated curriculum that includes all the languages subject to study

the language system will need to be based on a reflection of such usage as well as on the work carried out with texts that arise from that usage. Language cannot be described abstractly outside the scope of human activity. On the contrary, this can only be done by taking into account the social and cultural parameters that structure its use.

- ***Integrated approach to languages: integrated curriculum***

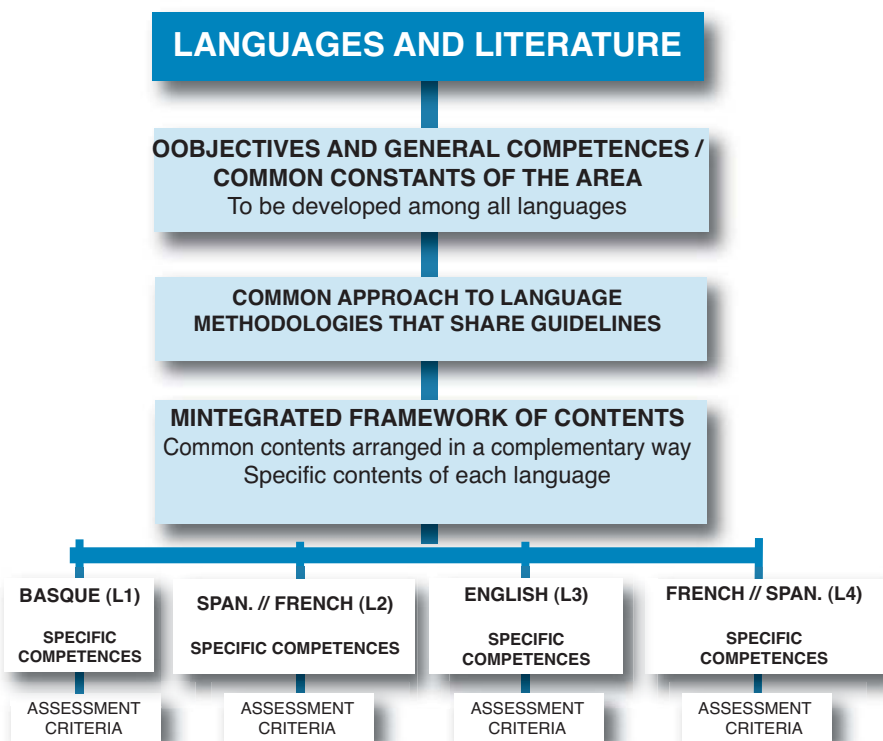
We have already mentioned before that if Ikastolas intend to develop Basque-based multilingualism, it will prove essential to work via an integrating approach to languages and to draw up an integrated curriculum.

<sup>20</sup> Vide: Area of Languages and Literature of the Basque Curriculum for the Compulsory School Period. Elorza, Aldasoro, Goiri (2005).

For this reason, we have brought together the teaching-learning of all languages in a single proposal via the design of an integrated curriculum that includes all the languages subject to study. In this way, the complementary nature of learning is embraced, as well as enabling the linguistic aspects typical of each language to be compared with the others and the application of what is learned in each language. to other languages.

As a result, the definition of content blocks and main competences in the area and the criteria for choosing the basic contents will be the same for all languages included in the curriculum, thus ensuring their complementary development. The level of acquisition of each language will be specified when defining the competences attached to them and, above all, when they are defined by means of assessment criteria.

*9<sup>th</sup> illustration: Structuring of the integrated language curriculum*



- **Methodological approach**

the discursive approach  
influences the choice of  
specific methodological  
references

Designing the curriculum for the subject of Languages and Literature depending on general educational competences requires – as we have already pointed out – adopting a discursive approach to teaching.

This approach entails planning language work via communication and usage. According to this approach, speaking and writing consists of creating texts aimed at achieving certain objectives within a communicative context, which has a directly

influence on the choice of specific methodological references.

Such methodological references will need to adhere to the following characteristics:

- Learning processes guided by communicative projects that may be significant for students.
- The text as a communicative unit. Each text genre has its own characteristics, meaning it requires specific learning processes in order to understand and produce it.
- Structuring learning in didactic sequences by organising and articulating activities around didactic objectives whose ultimate goal is to ensure that the specific communicative activity is carried out.
- Predominance of procedures and development of cognitive strategies at a higher level; apart from acquiring knowledge of a language and applying that knowledge, the main aim will be for students to learn to do things with words.
- Integrating instrumental and formal knowledge into a single process. The text is the starting point for grammatical reflection; the objective and the context of the communicative act are inseparable from the content that one wishes to express and from the words and the forms used to do so.



- Strengthening interaction between students, and between teachers and students, so that the classroom may be transformed into a real communicative context and cooperative learning is reinforced.

- **Assessment approach**

We have already seen that a language teaching-learning process whose aim is to develop language competences requires major changes in the treatment of objectives and contents, and specific methodological options. Assessment would therefore become a cornerstone of this transformation; when all is said and done, decisions regarding the assessment system will have a major backwash effect, as what is going to be assessed is being taught. This is true to the extent that assessment means and criteria necessarily mark the full development of the curriculum.

Therefore, it will prove essential to pursue the path taken from assessment of knowledge to assessment of competences in order for the transformation of the language teaching-learning process to be successful. The functions of assessment, the format, the participants, the contents, the indicators and all other elements will need to be significantly updated (both in terms of language assessment and in that of any other area).

The following are the characteristics that an assessment of the approach of the Language Project proposal should include:

- **Formative:** an assessment that should be present throughout the education process, not just at the end.
- **Comprehensive:** an assessment that should take into account all the elements of communicative competence.

assessment means and criteria necessarily mark the full development of the curriculum

therefore, it will prove essential to pursue the path from assessment of knowledge to assessment of competences in order for the transformation of the language teaching-learning model to be successful

- **Contextualised:** an assessment that analyses language within the communicative context of a specific human act, rather than as an abstract formal element
- **Textual:** an assessment that contains the text created in the human act referred to above as the unit of reflection.
- **Diverse:** an assessment that uses the moment and the type of tool that is best adapted to each element and situation.
- **Procedural:** an assessment based on the regulatory function of learning.
- **Shared:** an assessment that is able to offer students the chance to take part in it as a core element of interaction.

#### 4.4.3.3. Contribution of the field outside the classroom

The school which has assumed responsibility for helping students to develop an effective language for all spheres of life cannot confine its duties to the language subject or the academic sphere of the other subjects. Apart from these, it will need to give special importance to the environment outside the classroom<sup>21</sup>. The main reason for dealing with this area is to transform the entire school context into support for the Basque language. The aim is therefore for the Ikastola to become a place where Basque is reinforced in order to guarantee or encourage students to continue speaking Basque outside the classroom. To achieve this, more opportunities will be offered to increase interactive situations and Basque will be related to activities enjoyed by children and young people.

The first condition for achieving this will of course be to provide varied activities in the Basque language.

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<sup>21</sup> In the sphere of activity outside the classroom are included all those out-of-school activities carried out within the school environment, such as breaks, excursions, arrival and departure from the Ikastola, summer camps, leisure activities and out-of-school sports activities, and other studies (music, languages, etc.).

Yet we should also assure ourselves that the range of activities we offer is genuinely effective and useful for promoting the use of Basque.

If the use of Basque is to become one of the educational objectives of this sphere of activity outside the classroom, what is offered should not be considered as a mere service; it must be stressed that, apart from being a pedagogical area, it is also a didactic one. According to this explanation and based on the approach of education in terms of competences, the **learning to communicate** competence would be included in all the activities referred to above (the other competences would also be included, as the ultimate goal would be to achieve the comprehensive development of the student). If one of the main objectives of the field outside the classroom is to create space for the Basque language, and if we endeavour to ensure that this function bears its fruits, it will need to feature a didactic approach that is still being developed.

if the use of Basque is to become one of the educational objectives of this field outside the classroom, what is offered should not be considered as a mere service; it must be stressed that, apart from being a pedagogical field, it is also a didactic one

Each activity will need to be accompanied by its own planning, by its sequencing; it will need to contain objectives, contents, methodology and assessment in addition to an infrastructure for putting it into practice. That didactic approach will have to be drawn up while maintaining consistency between all the fields of intervention and coinciding with general methodological criteria and the training of professionals.

Therefore, the following would be the specific objectives for the field outside the classroom from the point of view stated above:

- **Ensuring and encouraging oral interaction.** We need to ensure that there is suitable oral interaction in out-of-school activities – whether sports, artistic or recreational – in order for such activities to have a genuine influence on language behaviour and on the level of language acquisition on the part of students. To do so, we need to highlight the conditions of those real communicative situations.

If what we are seeking is interaction (and, consequently, the use of language) among participants, we will need to organise and plan the social context of out-of-school activities. Among other aspects, this task will entail devising oral action based on situations that are typical of this field, reflecting on the relationship between students and educators, and agreeing and working together on the strategies to be applied. In other words, the “curriculum” will need to be drafted for these activities and to do so, some of the methodological proposals drawn up for the sphere of activity within the classroom will be valid.

- **All educators are language teachers.** This field enables use to be made of the most expressive aspects of the language as, bearing in mind they involve more liberal relations, a colloquial register prevails. The communicative situations that arise in the field outside the classroom tend to be informal and familiar, whereby they become an essential medium in the development of more colloquial registers in Basque. Apart from showing that language may be a tool for entertainment, students need to be taught the necessary language registers, and that is exactly the role played by those agents who work in this non-formal field. The body of language required by students for such linguistic situations will have to be looked after and developed: the technical Basque required by the activity, and the register corresponding both to the socio-linguistic context and to the age of the students, among other factors.
- **Developing and agreeing upon language behaviour.** To preserve a language that has an imbalanced presence in society, we need to ensure that we have an explicit bearing on the behaviour of its speakers, as using the minority language in some fields, situations and functions requires a conscious choice on the part of the speaker. Therefore and without putting multilingualism and multiculturalism to one side, arguments need to be constructed that are able to counter negative prejudices about the minority language or any assimilative discourse.

To this end, it is essential to identify the type of language behaviour and plan how we can have a bearing on it – always via communicative situations which are typical of this sphere of activity.

The language behaviour we consider most suitable will be able to be developed thanks to this work, i.e. that behaviour that proves beneficial to the learning process, to understanding different socio-linguistic situations and to the progress made towards coexistence.

Therefore, the Ikastola Language Project will promote the application of this approach and philosophy regarding the use of Basque as well as redirecting the field outside the classroom and, as a result, embracing an analysis of the features of services and their didactic approach.

Reflections regarding the fields outside the classroom will need to be linked to reflections regarding other areas of language use, as only in this way will it be possible to design a plan that enables permanent, unified and systematised work to be carried out that focuses the survival of the Basque language not only as the exclusive task of teachers but of the entire education community.

#### **4.4.4. Treatment of linguistic registers<sup>22</sup>**

What type of Basque takes into consideration the diversity of communicative contexts that arise in the different fields of intervention? Paying attention to the quality of Basque and teaching suitable varieties of it has always been one of the main concerns of the Ikastola movement, in addition to promoting the use of Basque among young people. When all is said and done, using the language and doing so in an appropriate way are fundamental basic principles for the suitable development of communicative competence. That is why it is so important to develop and promote more than one variety of speech or linguistic register, because this enables students to use the language appropriately in all spheres of activity. Indeed, the speaker who is unable to use suitable Basque at a given moment is not going to achieve

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<sup>22</sup> This subject has been dealt with in considerable detail in the book *Zenbait orientabide erregistroen trataeraz* (Ba-rrios et al., 2008); among others, those aspects which are included are the registers, characteristics of each register, the general shortcomings, theoretical and practical treatment of registers, and the framework proposal for working on these registers.. Anyone who wishes to learn more about these general aspects may consult the book and its bibliography.

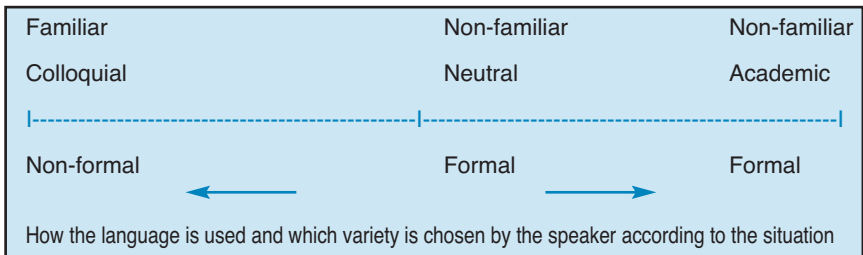
any communication, is not going to enjoy use of the language and lastly, is going to put Basque to one side in favour of another language.

having a command of a language does not mean using a single refined register skilfully, but rather, skilfully coping with the different registers depending on the characteristics of each communicative situation

Therefore, students need to learn to clearly speak fluently and effectively using the register corresponding to any given situation, because having a command of a language does not mean using a single academic register skilfully, but rather, skilfully coping with the different registers depending on the characteristics of each communicative situation. This variety of registers must be present in the area of language didactics in order to establish special forms of treatment for the countless possible uses of that language; among other proposals put forward, that of distribution according to register is therefore suggested.

When we speak of registers in Basque, we are referring to the varieties of speech that are related to some factors such as the relationship between interlocutors, their intention, the subjects being discussed or the degree of formality. Every speaker has several common registers at their disposal and chooses one or other according to the context of the communicative act. These registers should not be considered as being something firm and stable, but rather, as a *continuum* that exists between two extremes, as may be observed in the following illustration:

10<sup>th</sup> illustration: Continuum of linguistic registers



However, within the school context it is the teachers, educators and other professionals who promote the appropriate linguistic register, who act as a role model and who encourage motivation both within the classroom and outside it. For this reason, they will be the first to have to distinguish between registers and will need to pave the way for students by putting formal and non-formal registers into practice in many different situations.

At the present time and bearing in mind that the Basque language is immersed in a normalisation process - sociological normalisation and dual language normalisation (use and corpus) – the most suitable variety of language for the school is the standard, academic one. The question is which Basque should be used and taught in situations and discourse that do not belong to the formal register, as this aspect is not currently being taken into consideration.

Thus, the education community must take into account all its characteristics – the presence of Basque culture within its context, the type of students, etc. – and decide which variety of language it is going to develop; to do so, it needs to consider the fact that informal speech is based on dialect or subdialect and formal speech, in contrast, on unified Basque or on academic usage of dialect<sup>23</sup>.

Generally speaking, the characteristics of the environment have to be taken as a starting point when organising the work carried out by Ikastolas; especially as far as language is concerned, the fact of where

the educational community must take into account all its characteristics and decide which variety of language it is going to develop; to do so, it needs to consider the fact that informal speech is based on dialect or subdialect and formal speech, in contrast, on unified Basque or on academic usage of dialect

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<sup>23</sup> We have drawn up a specific proposal for models of formal and non-formal registers in the book "Zenbait orientabide erregistroren trataeraz" (Barrios et al., 2008).

the Ikastola is located should be taken into account, as well as what its socio-linguistic characteristics and the variety of language used in its environment are (the local dialect, where appropriate; and if there is no local dialect, the dialect used throughout the territory will need to be taken into consideration). Then, more removed linguistic characteristics will need to be taken into consideration step by step. Students' prior knowledge will also have to be taken into account and their way of speaking respected.

Therefore, although teaching standard language may be a major aim among the functions of the Ikastola, local dialects and other varieties will also have to be borne in mind.

Each Ikastola will need to adapt the proposal to its own context and design a tailor-made Language Project when putting the basic theoretical principles set out in this chapter into practice. We shall now explain the main steps to be taken by each individual Ikastola in order to develop the proposals put forward by the Language Project.



# 5

## The Ikastola Language Project: itinerary for its management

Each Ikastola should set in motion a cyclical itinerary of approximately five years' duration in order to develop its Language Project.

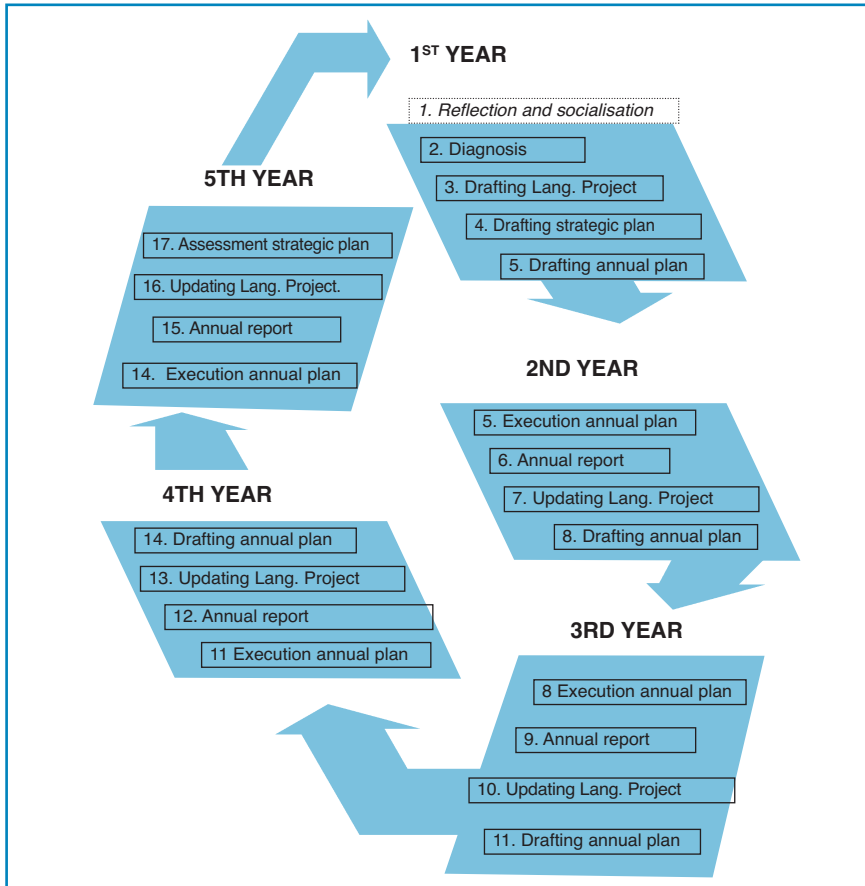
The main phases of this itinerary will be divided into two periods:

- **During the first school year** the main steps would be taken to set the Project in motion:
  - All the education agents involved in the Ikastola should reflect on the reference framework of the Ikastola Language Project.
  - The need for the Language Project would be discussed and consensus would be reached among all agents involved as to the path to be pursued in the future.

- The global communicative context of the Ikastola would be analysed and a diagnosis of the use and treatment of the relevant languages be carried out.
  - The first version of the Ikastola Language Project would be drawn up.
  - A strategic four-year plan would be drawn up to meet the needs identified in the diagnosis.
  - A specific one-year plan would be drawn up – the annual plan – to try and attain the objectives set out in the strategic plan.
- **From the second school year onwards**, the following tasks would be repeated over four school years:
    - The implementation of the annual plan and its assessment via the work carried out; the drafting of the annual plan for the following school year and that of the initial Language Project document.
    - The initial strategic plan would be assessed during the fifth school year and a second strategic plan would be drafted based on this assessment; a new phase would then get underway.

## 5.1. Graphic sequence of the itinerary

The Ikastola Language Project must be a dynamic project that undergoes constant transformation and requires long-term planning for such purpose. The effort that constructing its own Language Project entails for an Ikastola could be sequenced in a thousand different ways; the sequence we propose below consists of seventeen essential phases.



12<sup>th</sup> illustration: Graphic sequence of the itinerary.

## 5.2. Phases of the itinerary

### 5.2.1. Reflection and socialisation phase (1<sup>st</sup> phase)

The importance of the subject for the entire education community should be analysed in this phase. Once the Ikastola management has detected the need for the Language Project and looked into its reference framework, it should then embark on a reflection process on the matter with all the education agents involved in the Ikastola. The objectives of this first phase would be to share the need for the Language Project and

to reach consensus and for all concerned to approve the path to be pursued in the future. In the course of this reflection, special attention should be drawn to the influence the Language Project would have on various aspects such as:

- The aim of the area of language, the central core of the methodology, the integration of languages, the didactic materials to be used, and the complementary nature of the objectives, contents and assessment criteria.
- An analysis of the language needs of the other subjects based on the notion that we are all language teachers, and a reflection as to whether the didactic materials employed are suitable for the purpose of covering these needs.
- A review of the interaction both within and outside the classroom necessary for students' communicative development and the use of strategies to enrich it.
- Teacher training: methodology, language improvement and courses on attitudes towards languages.
- The language policy and planning of the Ikastola (both within and outside the classroom and in the institutional field): for instance, the language of activities that take place outside the classroom (model, attitude, training, etc.), the language used in the Ikastola's management and internal communication, the language used in external relations, etc.

This first phase - i.e. the task of sharing the need for the Language Project with all education agents involved – would be the work of the management team.

### **5.2.2. Diagnosis of the situation (2<sup>nd</sup> phase)**

Before designing any plan, it is essential to observe the reality of the situation in detail. Thus, it would be advisable for the Ikastola to carry out a diagnosis of the use and treatment of languages in all fields of

linguistic intervention (both in the pedagogical field and the institutional field). This diagnosis could be carried out in three phases:

**1<sup>st</sup> phase: analysing the previous work carried out by the Ikastola**

This would involve drawing conclusions from everything related to the treatment of languages such as the Language Project, internal regulations and curricular projects in areas of language, etc.

All data related to measuring the use of Basque or similar possessed by the Ikastola should also be gathered.

**2<sup>nd</sup> phase: analysis according to fields of linguistic intervention**

Data would be gathered in this phase about the linguistic situation with regard to the pedagogical and institutional fields via surveys and other tools.

**3<sup>rd</sup> phase: conclusions drawn from the results**

Lastly and based on the data gathered, the strengths, weaknesses and needs of the linguistic situation of the Ikastola would be identified, and the results would be made known.

This work could be carried out in one term and the Language Project Committee would be the body in charge of doing so, although the participation of all education agents would be required in the gathering of information.

**5.2.2.1. 1<sup>st</sup> phase of the diagnosis**

Those documents related to the education processes and language policy pursued by the Ikastola should be examined during this phase of the process (the Education Project, the Curricular Project, the language policy pursued by the school, and other research work, etc.), in order to gather information about the linguistic situation of the Ikastola and analyse which approaches within the reference framework of the Language Project are already being applied and which decisions have already been taken, etc. Among other things, it would be advisable to gather information about the following areas:

- Characteristics of the socio-linguistic context of the Ikastola.

- Results of the measuring the use of Basque in the Ikastola.
- Educational, linguistic and cultural approach and objectives of the Ikastola.
- Decisions and references about the treatment of languages that are already being applied in the Ikastola.

#### **5.2.2.2. 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the diagnosis**

More specific data about the situation regarding all fields of intervention would then be gathered and new fields analysed in the second phase of the diagnosis. As far as the classroom is concerned, this would be the moment to take an in-depth look at the fields of pedagogical management and didactic interaction. There should therefore be reflection about the situation – among other areas, regarding the following aspects: the suitability and consistency of curricular projects, the transversal treatment of language, the didactic treatment of classroom communications, consistency between the area of languages and other areas in terms of methodology and teacher training plans, etc.

It would also be advisable to analyse the use of language outside the classroom, the linguistic and methodological training of educators and their language habits – both in terms of the organisation and in internal relations within the Ikastola, and in their external relations.

#### **5.2.2.3. 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of the diagnosis**

The information contained in the Ikastola's official documentation and in terms of the situation regarding all fields of intervention would be summarised during this phase.

Once the results of the diagnosis have been made known, the time would then come to draw conclusions so as to be able to pinpoint the strengths, weaknesses and needs of each sphere of activity of the Ikastola.

This summary will reflect what we might refer to as “a snapshot of the situation regarding the Ikastola”, and to bring this phase to its conclusion, it would be advisable to make this situation known and reach agreement among all the education agents involved in the Ikastola as far as the needs identified are concerned. This internal document published by the Ikastola community would constitute the main reference point when drawing up the strategic plan for the Language Project.

### **5.2.3. Drafting of the Language Project (3<sup>rd</sup> phase)**

Once the diagnosis has been completed, the Ikastola should then draft the first version of the document containing details of the schools’ Language Project. The Ikastola Language Project should try to be a dynamic and lively document, meaning it is important to take into account the fact that this is an initial version that will need to be assessed and adapted on a yearly basis.

The Ikastola Language Project would consist of eight chapters, as mentioned in section 3.5 of the reference framework.

#### **• Definition and characteristics of the Language Project**

The Ikastola will need to analyse the characteristics referred to in section 3 of the reference framework and choose those it considers to be appropriate to its own circumstances.

#### **• Language approach and objectives**

After analysing the objectives set out in the reference framework described in section 2, the Ikastola will then need to choose those it wishes to adopt as its own. The general linguistic objectives set out by the reference framework would be binding for all Ikastolas and the Language Project for each Ikastola should therefore bear this in mind. These general objectives are as follows:

- The Ikastola wishes to offer Basque-speaking education to students in order for the latter to gain a command of the Basque language and take on a commitment to passing on, developing and promoting Basque language and culture. Thus, the Ikastola endeavours to educate Basque speakers by constantly encouraging motivation and a positive attitude towards this language.
- The Ikastola that uses Basque as the core element of its Education and Language wishes to educate multilingual Basque speakers, enabling them to acquire knowledge and competence in the use of other languages.
- The Ikastola wishes to live and breathe Basque within its education system; and wishes to ensure that Basque language and culture are passed on, developed and disseminated in any type of social or business relationship, and within the means used to do so.
- The Ikastola endeavours to be an active agent in the language normalisation process of the community to which it belongs, and in this respect is willing to work together with other social agents and institutions.

- **Basic theoretical principles of the Language Project**

The Ikastola will need to analyse, select and include its principles regarding the treatment of languages in this section, which would be based on section 4 of the reference framework.

- **Language planning**

Those decisions or pedagogical and institutional approaches drafted in the Language Project, in the Idearium and in the Curricular Project need to be taken into account in putting together this section. Depending on the results of this analysis, the decisions that have already been taken in the Ikastola would be maintained or redrafted, and subsequently included in the Language Project. The drafting of this chapter would be completed by the information obtained from the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the



diagnosis, as all those decisions and guidelines that were not formally gathered would be included in the latter.

- **Itinerary for management of the Language Project**

The Ikastola would specify the itinerary to be pursued for management of its Language Project by taking into account that proposed in section 6 of this document.

- **Structure and functions for management of the Language Project**

Creation, development and assessment of the Language Project would, apart from the involvement and close collaboration of all the governing and operational bodies of the Ikastola, require the school's own permanent organisation made up of the following three groups: Language Project Committee, Integrated Language Department and *Euskaraz Bizi* Committee (programme for promoting the use of the minority language). The last two mentioned would be subgroups of the Language Project Committee.

- **Diagnosis of the Ikastola and its strategic plan**

This chapter would comprise two tables. The first would be a table that would bring together *the needs and priorities of the Ikastola* deriving from the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the diagnosis. The strengths and weaknesses that had been identified with regard to the objectives and indicators defined by the Ikastola would therefore be included in this table, together with the needs identified in terms of treatment of languages.

The second table would be the four-year plan strategic plan designed to meet these needs.

The Language Project Committee would be responsible for carrying out this 3<sup>rd</sup> phase – i.e. the drafting of the Language Project – which should contrast the first version of the document with the management team, in order for it to be given approval by the latter. It would also be important for the work carried out to obtain the approval of the entire education community.

***The first three phases (awareness-raising, diagnosis and the first draft of the Language Project) should be carried out during the first two terms of the school year, so that the last term may be set aside for drawing conclusions from all the work carried out (strategic plan and annual plan).***

### 5.2.4. Strategic plan (4<sup>th</sup> phase)

The strategic plan would be a four-year management plan that the Ikastola would draw up to meet up its needs, given that it would be difficult to confront all needs in a suitable manner while at the same time, it will prove necessary to establish priorities. To be able to properly deal with these strategical priorities, it would then be advisable to define the strategies that could most influence the development of languages and the normalisation of Basque, and draw up a specific plan to carry them out.

#### 5.2.4.1. Sections of the strategic plan

The strategic plan would cover all the fields of linguistic intervention. The strategic objectives or priorities referring to each field would be defined and specific objectives, strategic activities and assessment indicators established for each of them. Who will be responsible for developing each objective and within what deadline or in which school year each task is to be carried out should also be taken into account.

The following table provides a possible template for the strategic plan using one item as an example.

LANGUAGE PLANNING						
FIELD	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIC ACTIVITIES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA	THOSE IN CHARGE	DEADLINE
Language planning						

#### **5.2.4.2. Guidelines for drawing up the strategic plan**

Given that a strategic plan that covers all fields of intervention is a very complex one, the Confederation of Ikastolas has drawn up a series of guidelines and a complete model of the strategic plan that it makes available to schools. In the model, in addition to establishing clear models for the purpose of drafting each section of the plan, an attempt is made to offer examples of the objectives, activities and assessment indicators of all the items included in each field. The Ikastola therefore has at its disposal some guidelines for a standard situation subsequent to the diagnosis phase – guidelines that will need to be adapted to its own specific situation.

The Ikastola group has created a computer application to carry out this work, which may be accessed via [www.ikastola.net](http://www.ikastola.net).

Those in charge of the strategic plan of the 4<sup>th</sup> phase would be the management team and the Language Project Committee. The latter would draw up and propose the strategic plan, and its approval would depend on the management team.

#### **5.2.5. Annual plan (5<sup>th</sup> phase)**

The annual plans would be drawn up from the data obtained from the strategic plan and their aim would be to gradually meet the needs detected.

As it derives from the strategic plan, the annual plan would also cover all fields of linguistic intervention. The specific objectives of the strategic plan would constitute the starting point when taking assessment indicators and specific activities into consideration. As in the case with the strategic plan, it would also be advisable in the annual plan to establish who will be responsible for developing each activity and the deadline within which this will be carried out.

The computer application provided by the Ikastola group via its website, [www.ikastola.net](http://www.ikastola.net)., would be used to develop this task.

Those in charge of this 5<sup>th</sup> phase would be, as in the case of the previous phase, the management team and the Language Project Committee. The latter would draw up and propose the annual plan, and its approval would depend on the management team.

***It would be advisable for the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> phase (strategic plan and annual plan) to be completed by May, as the management team would need to organise training, resources, timetables and any other matters according to these plans in the month of June.***

#### **5.2.6. Annual report (6<sup>th</sup> phase)**

This phase refers to the assessment process of the annual plan – the phase in which the planning file would be monitored. It is recommended that the annual objectives be assessed every term, in addition to providing an appraisal of what has been achieved during the school year. Any modifications or adaptations made to the annual plan should be included in the report.

The sections assessed derive from the annual planning file. The following sections would, in contrast, be different: assessment indicators (the extent to which these have been attained and the degree of success of both the objectives and activities are specified with a view to their systematisation) and the improvement proposal for the new annual plan.

The computer application provided by the Ikastola group via its website, [www.ikastola.net](http://www.ikastola.net), may be used to carry out this work.

The management team and the Language Committee Project should work together in this 6<sup>th</sup> phase.

### **5.2.7. Updating of the Language Project document (7<sup>th</sup> phase)**

The Language Project Committee should update the first version of the document containing the Language Project based on the work carried out and embodied in the annual report.

This would be a function of the Language Project Committee as the work carried out in this 7<sup>th</sup> phase is technical.

### **5.2.8. Annual plan (8<sup>th</sup> phase)**

Two documents should be used when drawing up the following annual plan: the strategic plan and the annual report. The new plan would need to meet the needs set out in these two documents. Consequently, those objectives that have not been attained should be re-included and the reasons for this should be analysed.

As is customary, those in charge of the 8<sup>th</sup> phase would be the management team and the Language Project Committee.

***The itinerary pursued from the 6<sup>th</sup> (annual report) to the 8<sup>th</sup> (new annual plan) phase would be repeated four times in their entirety, i.e. until the period set aside for the strategic plan has come to an end.***

### **5.2.9. Assessment of the strategic plan (last phase)**

It would be advisable to assess the strategic plan after four years have elapsed, for which purpose the reports from the previous years would have to be used in addition to the assessment indicators of the strategic plan itself. The extent to which the objectives have been attained during this period should also be analysed.

The needs and priorities identified in the initial diagnosis should then be reviewed and the possibility of re-diagnosing some fields considered (i.e. the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase).

Following this analysis, the priorities would be then be adapted or completely renewed and the cyclical itinerary embarked on again with the drafting of the new strategic plan. Lastly, the Ikastola Language Project would be updated.

The computer application provided by the Ikastola group via its website, [www.ikastola.net](http://www.ikastola.net), could be used to carry out this work.

The management team and the Language Project Committee should work together in this last phase.

# 6

## Ikastola network services for the development of the Language Project

Once both the theoretical framework and the guidelines for introducing and developing it have been analysed, the all-encompassing and strategic nature acquired by the language Project for the future of each Ikastola in particular and the Ikastola network in general becomes clear. The tasks we have specified in this document are numerous, profound and broad in scope and it would probably be impossible for a single Ikastola to adhere to all of them. We have already mentioned in the introduction that this Language Project is not a new proposal that has been created from nothing, but rather, the result of a great deal of work by a large group of professionals, as the reflections gathered by the Ikastola network with

regard to languages and the resources it has developed from these reflections over many years are included, organised and completed here in the document. In other words, the starting point for this framework may be found in all the other projects set in motion by the Ikastolen Elkartea organisation. The framework uses these projects to develop the principles and criteria established here, while at the same time fostering and orienting them.

Each Ikastola may base itself on the different projects set in motion by Ikastolen Elkartea when applying the working guidelines put forward in this Language Project and, as it gets more involved in these projects, it will have the chance to progress via group work. In this respect, the following projects – among others – would be highlighted:

The **Curricular Project** determined by Ikastolen Elkartea, its **Production of didactic material** (Urtxintxa, Txanela, Ostadar, Eleanitz English, Eleanitz Français, Xiba, Bertsolarismo, ICT project, etc. ), and the **assessment** services deriving from it, in which we find clear pedagogical management and different sources of back-up for administering suitable didactic interaction.

Apart from the didactic material and with the aim in mind of working on the competences and skills required by the Language Project, the **training** service would enable parents, students and professionals to gain access to up-to-date training. The **Euskaltegi Leizaur** (Basque language school) belonging to Ikastolen Elkartea offers training for improvement in the Basque language and various courses on language teaching – all with the aim of meeting the needs of the Language Project.

The activities and materials designed for the promotion of the Basque language by the **Euskaraz Bizi -Living in Basque-** programme (reflective sessions on the use of Basque, criteria and strategies for influencing both organisation and internal communication and external relations, joint activities among students of different ages and Argitxo materials, etc.) will constitute a major back-up in providing guidance for use of the language both outside the classroom and within the institutional field. At the same time, the Ikastola also has at its disposal various services related to **free time**: didactic games, summer language



camps, Xiba programmes in traditional sports and games, and the Aisiola School of Leisure Time Monitors and Managers, etc.).

The Ikastola also has at its disposal various forums when running its own Language Project in order to work together with other Ikastolas and to train facilitators to carry out this work in the Ikastola. Thus, the aim of the **Hizpro and Euskaraz Bizi seminars** would be to help each Ikastola to set its own Language Project in motion. The Hizpro seminar would be the forum in which all those in charge of facilitating the Language Project of each Ikastola would take part; the Euskaraz Bizi seminar, on the other hand, brings together all those who facilitate both the field outside the classroom and the institutional field. There is also the **Immigration Seminar**, which is the collaboratory forum that brings together all those in charge of those students who enrol late in the Ikastola. Among its functions, mention should be made of those involving the developing, completing and correcting as far as possible of all the proposals put forward regarding the inclusive school within the Language Project.

All these projects will enable the Ikastola Language Project to be equipped with contents and plans of action to the extent that we may be able to effectively meet the educational and language needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century Basque society and, as the poet says, may in turn enable the ancient source of Basque to continue to abound with new water.



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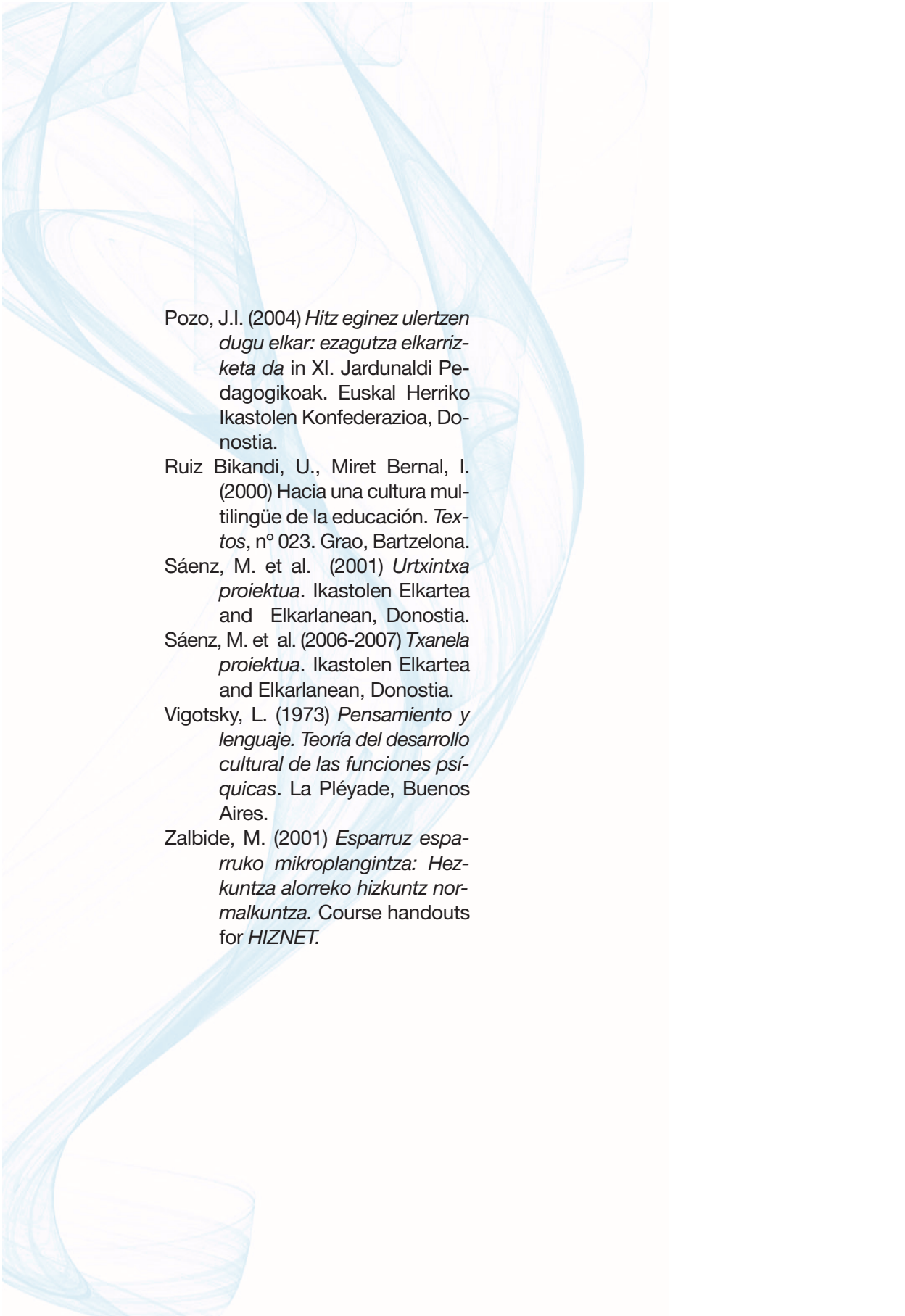
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