

SOCIOLINGUISTIC EVOLUTION OF BASQUE LANGUAGE (1981-2011)

**Transmission and knowledge,
subjective motivations for linguistic
behavior, and linguistic practice:
evolution and future challenges**

[SUMMARY]




(Euskarazko bertsioa eskuragarri)

(Disponible versión en castellano)



Publisher: Soziolinguistika Klusterra (Sociolinguistics Cluster)
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Design: Iñaki Gozalo (Zirrimarra graphic design)
ISBN: 978-84-943708-2-3

 **Digital edition:** www.soziolinguistika.eus/bilakaera1981-2011



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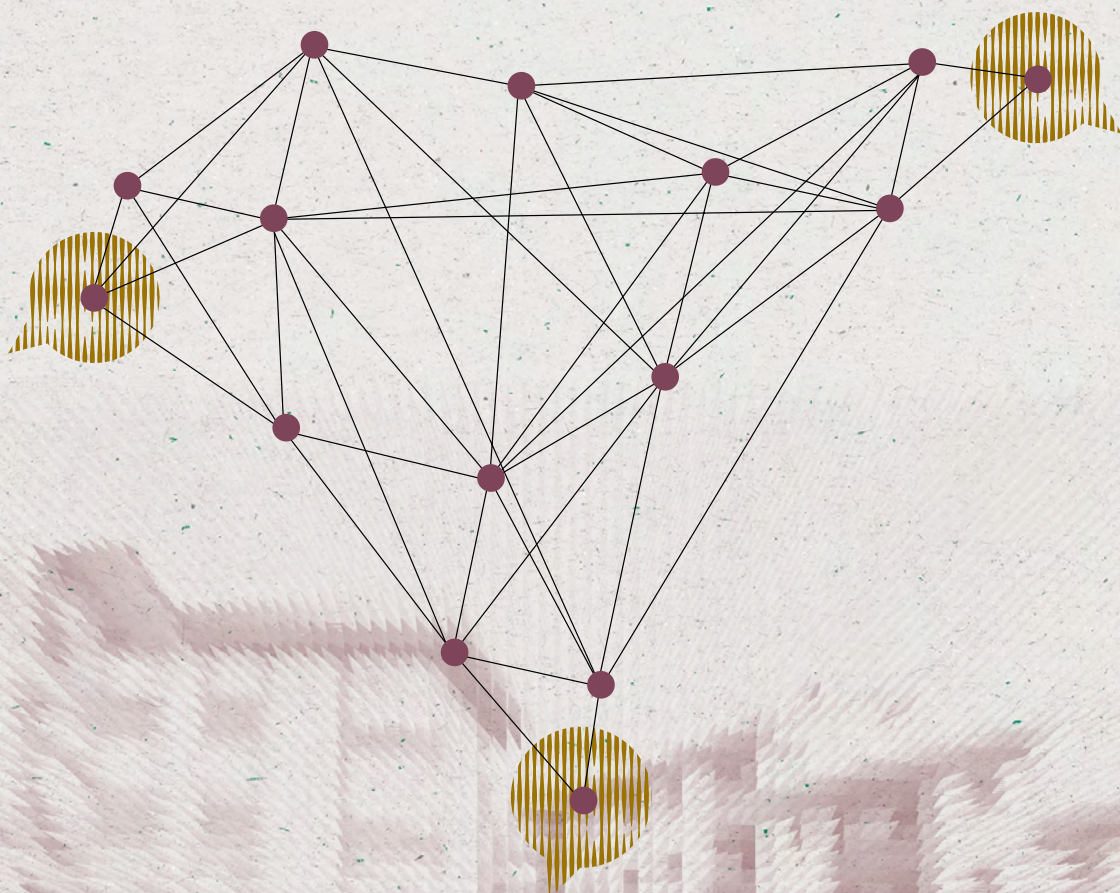
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In 1983, Euskaltzaindia named him as corresponding member, and then as full member in 2006. He has headed the project to study the social history of the Basque language (Joanes Etxeberri egitasmoa) since it began in 2008.

He has had a long career in the area of sociolinguistics and the sociology of language, both in theory and in application, and has given papers at many conferences throughout the Basque Country and Europe.

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PROLOGUE

This booklet, *Euskararen bilakaera Soziolinguistikoa (1981-2011)*, is the summary of a much broader project. The project has been created by the Sociolinguistics Cluster, together with the Deputy Advisor for Language Policy of the Basque Government, and it aims to conduct a deep and detailed study of fluctuations in the social presence of the Basque language over 30 years.

The project's central subject has three pillars: the transmission and capacity of the Basque language, opinions and subjective motives for the Basque language and the use of the Basque language. Two initial tasks have been set: one, to complete a description of the developments of the last 30 years, and the other, to identify challenges for the future.

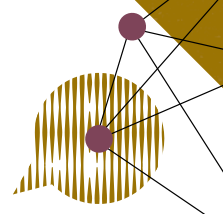
It must be borne in mind that this investigation encompasses the whole Basque-speaking region. It has been conducted using the Basque Government's Sociolinguistic Survey, which is published every five years, and the *Measurement of Public Use of the Basque Language* carried out by the Sociolinguistics Cluster. The authors have, of course, used many other sources of information in addition to these two.

In their diagnosis, the authors have studied these questions: How many Basque speakers are there, by region and by age group? How many were there in the 1980s? How much and what kind of knowledge do these Basque speakers have? How have *euskaldunberris* (speakers of Basque as a second language) developed? What were the opinions, behaviours and representations of the language in the past, and what are they now? What were the opinions, behaviours and representations of the promotion of Basque, and what are they now? How much was Basque used, and how much is it used today? What was and what is that usage like in the different social fields of behaviour?

We have compiled three main reports on these topics: On *language capacity*, by **Iñaki Martínez de Luna**, on *language subjective motives and opinions*, by **Xabier Erize**, and on *the use of the language*, by **Mikel Zalbide**. In addition,

ten experts have made contributions to those main reports: **Iñaki Iurrebaso**, **Patxi Juaristi**, **Jon Aizpurua**, **Jone Miren Hernandez**, **Joxpi Irastorza**, **Nekane Arratibel**, **Asier Irizar**, **Olatz Altuna**, **Lionel Joly**, **Xabier Aierdi**. The papers were presented by their authors on 3rd June 2016 in Donostia-San Sebastián at the 8th Sociolinguistics Conference on the Basque language, organised by the Sociolinguistics Cluster. Videos of the talks given at the conference can be found on this website: <http://www.soziolinguistika.eus/Soziolinguistikajardunaldia2016>. In addition, all the documents have been published in issues 99 and 100 of the *BAT Soziolinguistika* magazine, 2016.

This booklet contains the main contents of the report written by Iñaki Martínez de Luna, Xabier Erize and Mikel Zalbide, summarised by the authors themselves. It will be published in Basque, Spanish and English. We invite the reader to enjoy this interesting and far-reaching subject, and to engage with the reflections and proposals made.



Transmission and knowledge of the Basque language: evolution and future challenges*

Iñaki Martínez de Luna

1. AIMS, DIFFICULTIES AND SOLUTIONS

1.1. CONCEPTUAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SUBJECT MATTER

1.1.1. Language transmission

'Language acquisition planning' is the field surrounding the subject studied here, with reference to Cooper's (1997: 122-193, 187) definition: "organised activities to promote learning a language." This definition's reference to "organised activities" requires the exclusion of certain types of transmission, such as transmission through family, friendships or the media.

The education system is one of the main agents in learning a language (Moreno Cabrera, 2008: 50-51), and also plays an important role in efforts to normalise the Basque language. There is another type of planned teaching that can be understood as a complement to the education system: adult learning and literacy. Conceptually, the education system and adult learning and literacy do fit the definition of 'planning of language learning'. However, adult learning and literacy do not come under the definition of 'language transmission' because it does not occur between generations: "Language transmission: Transmission from generation to generation, mainly through the family and the education system." (Soziolinguistika Hiztegia, 2010: 41). So, on the one hand, 'language learning' does not include transmission through the family, and on the other hand, 'language transmission' excludes adult learning and literacy.

Finally, even though transmission that takes place through either the family (first language or L1) or through the education system (second language or L2) is included in the definition of 'language transmission', it is well-known that

the results of the two processes are very different. Even so, the definition given does not distinguish between these two divergent cases.

1.1.2. Language competence

The definitions of language competence given in *Soziolinguistika Hiztegia* (2010: 49) and *Soziolinguistika Eskuliburua* (2013: 28) leave room for doubt in their application to specific situations. They do not meet this paper's needs due to their formal and abstract nature, which fails to encompass the situations of speakers' actual use of language. For example, an illiterate person who has Basque as their L1 and someone who has acquired it as L2 and is a new Basque speaker may both have a sufficient level according to the definition given in *Soziolinguistika Hiztegia* (2010: 23). Yet their linguistic skills and the difficulties they encounter in the face of real situations and speakers are likely to be very different. Given this lack of clear definition, the concept of 'linguistic profile' (*Soziolinguistika Hiztegia*, 2010: 52) offers a little more precision, in clarifying that the use situation it refers to is the world of work, but it is still not sufficient. This leads us to the question of whether the skill types such as reading, listening comprehension, oral expression and writing considered by the *Commission of the European Communities* (2005: 7) are the right ones to determine competency in Basque, or if only some of them are.

There is another frequently-used term in Basque sociolinguistics: relative linguistic competence. In Sagarduy's definition (2009: 7), as well as competence or incompetence in speaking in Basque, this is compared with the speaker's existing competence to do so in Spanish.

* This is a summary of the report written by Iñaki Martínez de Luna published in *BAT Soziolinguistika Aldizkaria* 99 (2016), performed by the author himself.

As such, many questions will arise when trying to delimit the definition of linguistic competence, unless we first clarify the communicative needs that should be met, according to the situation: a) what these needs are or what they are for; b) what type of skills are needed; c) for what type of sociolinguistic environment: monolingual, bilingual or multilingual.

1.2. THE ULTIMATE AIM

UNESCO (2010: 32, 35) has classified the situation of the Basque language as 'vulnerable', as it does not have a comparable status to the principal or powerful languages. Given this situation, it is reasonable to state that the focus of our analysis should be what Joshua Fishman denominated reversing language shift (RLS), translated into Basque by Zalbide (2015) as *Hizkuntza Indarberritze*, and which consists of: "stopping and reversing the process by which a language loses functions and usefulness" (Soziolinguistika Hiztegia, 2010: 39).

The definitions of linguistic competence are not satisfactory enough to be applied to this aim. Instead, the concept of 'communicative competence', proposed by Gumperz and Hymes (1972, in Zarranga, 2010: 29), is more appropriate: "The knowledge set that a speaker needs to communicate properly in different situations. The choice of the appropriate variety or code, or respect for social and linguistic conventions, is very important" (Soziolinguistika Hiztegia, 2010: 50).

Basque speakers need to have communicative competence or linguistic capital, a term reminiscent of the concept of a 'linguistic market', created by Bourdieu (*Soziolinguistika Hiztegia*, 2010: 34), to successfully tackle the RLS process. With that aim in mind, one more element should be added, given that bilingual or multilingual Basque speakers have other, more comfortable, language options than Basque. Basque speakers would need to be 'complete speakers'; that is, to have: "total linguistic command, to adequately perform all social functions, and an active linguistic awareness" (Soziolinguistika Hiztegia, 2010: 15-16).

1.3. THEORETICAL APPROACH

To become the complete speaker required by the RLS process, we must refer to the concept of socialisation (see Paula Kasares, 2013: 5). Berger and Luckmann (1968) argued that human beings are not born as members of society, but rather we become so gradually, through a long process. Likewise, no one is born as a member of a language community: it is something we gradually turn into.

The idea of linguistic socialisation can be summarised as follows (Martínez de Luna, 2013: 121-123): 1) We acquire the living language, not formal concepts such as grammar; 2) It comprises three processes: cognitive, identification and affective; 3) We internalise the language of the group and relationship networks; 4) We develop adhesion to the language community and cohesion therein; 5) The community is reproduced; 6) We continue learning, and the language continues adapting to new needs, throughout our lives; 7) The first, fundamental, socialisation takes place in childhood, mainly through the family; 8) The second socialisation takes place continually through the education system, free time, friendships, the media etc.; 9) We internalise the adaptation and needs of use for each social situation; 10) The speaker is not completely determined, but rather they are active and can transform what they have learned.

2. SOCIALISATION OF THE BASQUE LANGUAGE

The agents of linguistic socialisation are the same as those of socialisation in general. Those considered here are the family, the education system and adult education.

2.1. IN THE FAMILY

First language (L1) is the one learned in the first three years of life in the family environment, and it is considered the most important when measuring a language's vitality (Fishman, 1991, in UNESCO, 2003: 9).

When both parents are bilingual, 92% of people in the Basque Autonomous Community (BAC), 83% in Navarre and 80% in the Northern Basque Country acquire Basque as their L1, either alone or together with Spanish or French. When only one of the parents is bilingual, Basque is transmitted to 36% in the BAC, 29% in Navarre and 15% in the Northern Basque Country (Hizkuntza Politikarako Sailburuordetza, 2013: 29). In recent generations, the greatest growth in transmission has occurred between parents who have acquired Basque as a second language (L2), as transmission has increased threefold in a few years (Sagarduy, 2009: 9, 13).

Between the 25-34 age group and the 16-24 age group, transmission of Basque as L1 (alone or with another language) has increased from 18.4% to 22.8%. However, the group with Basque as L1 is still a minority: 537,000 people aged 16 or over, or 20.3% of the Basque Country's population. Among bilingual 16-24 year-olds, the majority (51.8%) have Basque as L2 (Hizkuntza Politikarako Sailburuordetza, 2013: 29-31).

2.2. IN EDUCATION

UNESCO (2003: 5) places the education system among the priority areas of action for recovery of endangered languages.

Education in Basque caters to two types of speaker: 1) those who have Basque as their L1, and who continue and complete their socialisation in the language at school; 2) those who have another language as their L1 and who acquire Basque as L2 at school. In the 2011-12 academic year, the majority of non-university pupils in the BAC studied in Basque-based language models: 63% in model D and another 20% in B. The rest studied in model A (16%) (Euskararen Aholku Batzordea *et al.*, 2014a: 49-50). The question now is what potential each language model has to produce Basque speakers.

In the 2004-05 academic year, ISEI-IVEI carried out a test with pupils in their fourth year of compulsory secondary education in the BAC

who were studying in models B and D.¹ The aim was to find out what proportion of pupils met the B2 level in Basque, according to the criteria of the Common European Framework for Languages. 53.7% achieved level B2: 27% in model B and 57.2% in model D. Among those for whom Basque was L2, 38.6% reached B2 level, compared with 72.6% of those for whom it was L1 (ISEI-IVEI 2005: 35, 47). In recent years, model D has gained in weight, mainly to the detriment of model A.

Through university studies, the education system offers another option for more in-depth socialisation in Basque to students who enrol in that language. In 2009-10, there were 51,963 students at the Deusto, UPV-EHU and Mondragon universities: 61% enrolled in Spanish and 39% in Basque (Unceta and Luna, 2012). The trend in UPV-EHU shows a 12-point increase in the Basque stream, reaching 48.1% in 2013-14.

2.3. ADULT EDUCATION

Basque courses for adults and the *Mintzapraktika* programme seek to provide Basque teaching and socialisation for those who have not previously learned it (Basque is their L2). In the BAC, in 2012-13, 32,739 people took courses (Euskararen Aholku Batzordea *et al.*, 2014b: c), that is 2.5% of non-Basque speakers.

The Mintzapraktika programme was followed by 2,840 people in the BAC and Navarre in 2008-09. The participants believe the programme to have been useful: to speak more in Basque (85%), to maintain what they have learned (77%), to improve their level of Basque (74%), to increase their desire to use Basque in everyday life (62%), to make friends (50%), to prepare for the EGA or another qualification (36%) and for work (35%) (Aztiker, 2010).

¹ It may be implicit that the level achieved with model A is insufficient to pass the B2 level test.

3. LANGUAGE COMPETENCE

It is important, in the RLS process, to halt the loss of Basque speakers and to start to win new ones.

3.1. SCOPE AND DEVELOPMENT

In 2011, 27% of the population of the Basque Country population aged 16 and over were Basque speakers and, at 714,000 people, amounted to 185,000 more than in 1991. 15% of the population (388,000 people) was passive bilingual (some knowledge, not able to speak) and 58% (1,547,000 people) were Spanish or French speakers (no, or almost no, knowledge of Basque).

The development of the more Basque-speaking sociolinguistic environment of the BAC has been very different, as the proportion of bilingual speakers dropped from 90% in 1991 to 83% in 2011 (Euskara Aholku Batzordea *et al.* 2014b: 6).

3.2. RELATIVE COMPETENCE

26.2% of bilingual residents of the Basque Country aged 16 and over are *Basque bilinguals*; that is, they are more fluent in Basque than in Spanish or French. 30.6% are *balanced bilinguals*: similar levels of fluency in the two languages (Basque and Spanish [or French]). 42.7% are *Spanish (or French) bilinguals*: they are more fluent in Spanish or French than in Basque. Among young people, Spanish (or French) bilinguals outnumber the other two groups together, making up 51.2% in 2011 (Hizkuntza Politikarako Sailburuordetza, 2013: 25-27).

4. FINAL REFLECTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

In this quantitative and qualitative analysis of the transmission of and competence in Basque, the lack of precise definitions has posed difficulties. As a solution to this, and bearing in mind the fact that UNESCO has classified Basque as 'vulnerable', the Reversing Language Shift approach (or RLS) has been adopted as a framework for this paper, with the socialisation paradigm as a support. The guiding principle here is that, if a minority language is to survive and prosper, it must go beyond the transmission of competency to include identity and affective aspects, so that its speakers can be 'complete speakers'. This means full socialisation in Basque in order to give adequate fuel to the RLS process.

To achieve this, language transmission in the family, occurring in the first socialisation (L1) is fundamental. At present, the opposite trend can be seen in this type of transmission in the case of Basque. The strengths are: the almost complete transmission that takes place when both parents are bilingual and, if only one is, although that transmission is significantly weaker, it has increased in recent decades. This trend suggests that the number of complete speakers will remain stable. A weakness is that those with Basque as their L1 are a minority, as this can weaken both the use of Basque and the density of the language community.

The education system's contribution to RLS is significant but limited. One such limitation is quantitative: in the BAC, approximately one third of those who complete compulsory education have a good level of Basque. In spite of everything, the weight of model D is gradually increasing, including in professional training. In qualitative terms, the education system helps those to whom Basque is L1 to deepen their socialisation in the language and become complete speakers. Meanwhile, those who have another L1 have the opportunity to familiarise themselves with Basque, although they are unlikely to become complete speakers through

the education system alone. Therefore, with regard to those who have another language as L1, the education system makes a double contribution: on the one hand, those who are not yet complete speakers of Basque have the chance to become so, and on the other hand, if the Basque-speaking community manages to attract them, the contribution to the RLS process is significant.

Education allows for a more complete socialisation at university level, in the Basque stream. Especially in the BAC, a third of students choose this option and, more recently, this figure reaches almost half in some institutions. The majority of this group can confidently be considered complete speakers of Basque.

With regard to adult education, around 2.5% of those who speak little or no Basque have chosen to learn. The *Mintzapraktika* programme is also proving successful among its participants, and can be considered complementary to the Basque socialisation process that results in complete speakers. Both channels make a valuable contribution to the RLS process.

The RLS process is also making progress in terms of the number of speakers. Losses have halted, and those who have partially or totally forgotten the Basque language are generally over 50 years old. At the same time, in 2011 around 250,000 people had Basque as L2: an increase of 178,000 since 1991. These are all gains for the Basque language, in the form of new Basque speakers. In other words, this is the net contribution of the second socialisation that takes place in the education system and adult education/*Mintzapraktika*. As such, the number of bilingual people is increasing in the BAC and Navarre. In the Northern Basque Country, losses still predominate, although there is evidence of a different trend among young people.

With regard to relative competence in Basque, once again the RLS perspective offers an ambivalent interpretation. Competence and fluency are higher in Spanish or French than in Basque among those who have been socialised in the latter as L2. Similarly, these new

Basque-speakers may have weak relationship networks with the Basque-speaking community and little sense of belonging to it, depending on their language awareness. Many others, however, despite having limited competence in Basque for certain language functions, may well have a good level of integration and desire to gradually connect with Basque-speaking networks. The high proportion of Spanish (or French) bilinguals among bilingual young people is the result of that partial socialisation.

In spite of the above, the fluctuating trends in the municipalities that form the heart of the Basque-speaking community are worrying. The downward trend of the strongest Basque-speaking sociolinguistic environment is a threat to the RLS process.

Finally, the evaluation that emerges from the RLS perspective is full of both threats and opportunities. From a static perspective, it is true that Basque speakers are still a minority, that many of them are more competent in Spanish (or French) and do not reach the level of complete speakers of Basque. Furthermore, this profile could cover half the young bilingual population. And yet, despite the limitations and difficulties, considering RLS from a dynamic perspective, it seems that those who have that level of incomplete competence in Basque have attained that level through second socialisation, starting out with another language as L1. The key lies in whether such bilingual individuals will have the desire and the opportunities to continue their socialisation in Basque. If they do, they are within reach of becoming complete speakers and thus driving RLS; but if not, they will remain trapped in the powerful languages.

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Subjective motives of the Basque population for their linguistic behaviours (1991-2016), and prospects for the future*

Xabier Erize

I would like to show my gratitude to the professors Ricardo Feliú and Carlos Vilches for the help they have given me in the writing this paper, in particular in relation to sociology and statistics issues.

1. AIMS OF THIS PAPER, KEY CONCEPTS AND STATUS OF STUDIES ON THE TOPIC

This paper has two *aims*: (i) to analyse the development (1991-2016) of the subjective motives of the Basque population for their linguistic behaviours and identify possible future lines of research; and (ii) to contribute to positioning motives for linguistic behaviours as a subject for study within Basque sociolinguistics, on both a research and an applied level.

Whether it is the 55% of citizens in the whole of the Basque Country (the Basque Autonomous Community [BAC], the Chartered Community of Navarre and the Northern Basque Country) who have a favourable attitude towards the promotion of the Basque language and the other 45% who do not, according to the 5th Sociolinguistic Survey (Eusko Jaurlaritz-Gobierno Vasco, 2013); or whether it is the fact that there are more 13-14 year old BAC pupils (2nd year of secondary education) who like Spanish (quite a lot + very much: 71%) than those who like Basque (55%), according to the Arrue Project study (Departamento de Educación, Política Lingüística y Cultura del Gobierno Vasco, y Cluster de Sociolingüística, 2013, p. 24), it is clear that the people and organisations that promote the Basque language still have a significant challenge on their hands if they wish to win over the majority of the population.

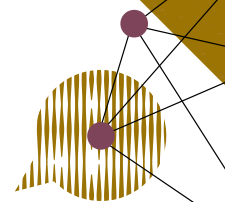
How can we justify the promotion of the Basque language or other small- or medium-sized languages to the public? This is a key question that has existed for a long time and is still open today.

These are issues that, one way or another, belong to the people's subjective dimension of the language.

One of the keys to effective language planning resides in the systematic study of the subjective motives for people's linguistic behaviours and in taking those motives into account, in the sense that one could ask the people and organisations from the world of the Basque language, "I have my motives for doing what I do with Basque and with Spanish: do you want to know what they are and take them into account?" (Erize, 2014).

With reference to the work of social organisations, Philip Kotler and Peter Drucker (Kotler, 1990) have a similar approach: the key to promoting social causes is truly knowing the people's values. It is not a question of these promotional bodies talking about what, in their opinion, should be important for the people, but rather truly understanding what is important to the people and working around it: "[In non-profit organisations] you have to start out with knowing what the customers really consider value, what is important, before you communicate, rather than telling the things

* This is a summary of the report written by Xabier Erize published in BAT Soziolinguistika Aldizkaria, 99 (2016), performed by the author himself.



you believe should be important to the customer" (Kotler, 1990, p. 63).

Status of studies of subjective motives in Basque sociolinguistics. Many valuable studies have been conducted on the subjective dimension of linguistic behaviours. As a whole, however, it can be said that the interest in understanding and taking into consideration the subjective motives behind linguistic behaviours in the Basque population has remained in the background (on both a research level and an applied or social activism level), in comparison with the attention that has been paid to issues relating to the knowledge or use of the language. If, in the future, this interest remains a secondary concern, those working to promote the Basque language will encounter serious difficulties, as it is unlikely that the necessary level of effectiveness will be reached without understanding and taking into consideration the linguistic wishes, values and needs of the people. An illustrative example of this is the double 'invitation', to both go into the subjective aspects of language in greater depth and to leave them aside, which is implicit in the successive editions of the Sociolinguistic Survey (e.g. Eusko Jauriaritza-Gobierno Vasco, 2013) and the Sociolinguistic Map (e.g. Eusko Jauriaritza-Gobierno Vasco, 2014) of the Basque Country.

It is, however, worth noting that over recent years a series of solid projects have been developed that may well contribute to consolidating the place of subjective aspects in the foreground of Basque sociolinguistics. They include:

- "Euskarak duen *Framing Berri* baten premia asetzeko proposamena" [Proposal for responding to the Basque language's need for a new framing] (Martínez de Luna, 2013).
- *Análisis de los discursos básicos sobre el euskera. Proyecto EGOD* [Analysis of the key discourses on the Basque language. EGOD Project]: a new and complex empirical investigation of the whole of the BAC population, by the authors Martínez de Luna, Erize, Akiizu, Etzaniz and Elizagarate (2015 and 2016),

at the request of the Vice Ministry on Language Policy of the Basque Government for the Basque Advisory Council's *Comisión Euskera* 21.

- Document: *¿Y a partir de ahora qué?* [And now what?] (Consejo Asesor del Euskera, 2016), that positions the wishes and feelings of the people at the centre of proposals to foster the Basque language: "Wanting' it to be that way, feeling it 'necessary and attractive' and considering it as such: these are the keys."

The four main *concepts* used in this paper are: *social action*, *motives*, *language choice* and *resonance*. These four concepts are to be understood as interrelated. I take the concept of *social action* from the classic author Max Weber: "A human behaviour (whether it consists of an internal or external action, or an omission or permission), whenever the subject or subjects of the action *link* it to a subjective *meaning* ... with reference to the behaviour of *others*" (Max Weber, 1922/1993, p. 5). The concept of *motive*¹ is also taken from Max Weber: "the meaningful connection that, for the actor or observer, appears as the meaningful 'basis' for

¹ By extension, together with the term "motive", we have the full set of aspects of the subjective dimension to language behaviour, including motivations, attitudes, opinions, subjective meaning, discourses, reasons, values, ideologies, mentalities, beliefs, representations, wishes, interests, sympathies, emotions, feelings, loyalties, incentives, or prejudices: "The vocabulary associated with motivation is large; such terms as purpose, desire, need, goal, preference, perception, attitude, recognition, achievement, and incentive are commonly used" (Motivation, 2016).

Most of the terms mentioned share the basic idea of considering subjective motives as the inspiration for behaviours. See, for example, the classic definition of "attitude" by Gordon Allport: "A learned predisposition to think, feel and behave towards a person (or object) in a particular way" (Allport, 1954, cited in Erwin, 2001, p. 5).

The concept of "motive" has, in my view, two advantages in this particular area with respect to the aforementioned terms: (i) it clearly shows that it refers to a concrete characteristic of people, and not something that exists in an abstract sense; and (ii) it provides us with a distance from complex and frequently fruitless discussions about the definitions of each of them and their similarities and differences.

a behaviour" (Weber, 1922/1993, p. 10). The concept of speakers' *language choice*, though little studied in Basque sociolinguistics, is very important in international sociolinguistics and I have principally based my understanding of it (Erize, 2013a) on the concepts of Ralph Fasold (1984/1992) and François Grin (1990, 1999, 2003): speakers choose between the languages or language varieties they are able to speak, and these choices are loaded with social significance. Among other things, these choices are used to express reference values in order to be identified as speakers from a certain language community. In short, as Susan Ehrlich (2016, p. 233) indicates, an entire language can also be loaded with social and cultural significance. I take the concept of *resonance* as defined by David Snow and Robert Benford (1998): a social cause or movement reaches success when the discourse or framework that it promotes (values, ideas, beliefs, actions) aligns with the subjective motives (interests, values, beliefs) of the people, and a new kind of resonance or harmony emerges between the two. When it occurs that the discourse or framework of a movement is successful and achieves a positive resonance with the population, new consensus are reached and the movement that promotes them is able to mobilise its members, attract the undecided and demobilise its opponents. In the opposite scenario, if a positive resonance or harmony does not emerge between the movement and the people, it is unlikely to achieve success, or it will reach it only in certain sectors.

Between the different possible approaches that coexist in social science, this paper is basically positioned from an *interpretative perspective* (Erize, 1997; Neuman, 1997) that considers human actions to be motivated and meaningful, and, as such, takes their subjective aspects into account. I consider that this approach may shed the most light on this topic, and is also the most invigorating for Basque sociolinguistics. Likewise, this paper seeks to consider the agency of the subjects/actors (i.e. their capacity to act independently and make their own choices) and social structures in conjunction and without setting them against each other, moving away from approaches

that give precedence to the determinism of social conditions.

This paper's *methodology* is mixed: on the one hand, I conduct a critical examination of sociolinguistic literature on the subject, and use it as a principal source of both quantitative and qualitative information about past developments; and, on the other hand, I use demolinguistic projections based on a plausible reference scenario in order to discuss prospects for the future (section 4). It is of particular importance that discussions about the future are based on objective data of a plausible scenario and not merely on the wishes of promoters of the Basque language.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF THE SUBJECTIVE MOTIVES FOR LINGUISTIC BEHAVIOURS OF THE BASQUE POPULATION (1991-2016)

The development of the Basque population's subjective motives for their linguistic behaviours (1991-2016) presented in this paper come from three types of source:

- Information about attitudes from the Sociolinguistic Survey of the Basque Country in its five editions.
- Practical application of language choice by the population: choice of the language model in school education (1983-2014).
- The information provided by the study, *Análisis de los discursos básicos sobre el euskera. Proyecto EGOD*. [Analysis of the key discourses on the Basque language. EGOD Project].

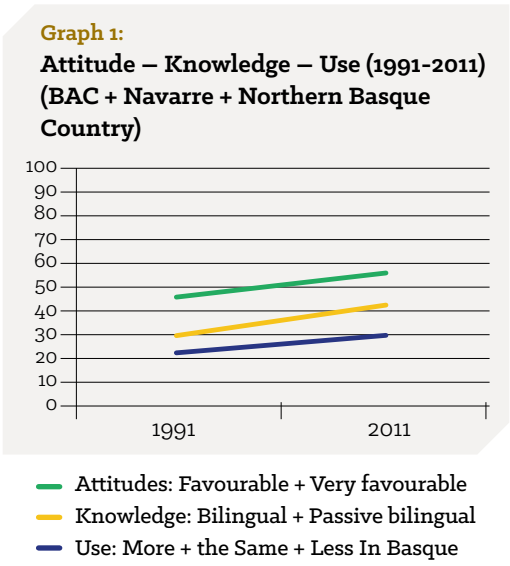
2.1. INFORMATION ABOUT ATTITUDES IN THE SOCIOLINGUISTIC SURVEY OF THE BASQUE COUNTRY

This paper extracts two aspects from the rich information provided by the Sociolinguistic Survey of the Basque Country (across its five

editions, from 1991 to 2011). They are: (i) comparative development of attitudes, knowledge and use of the Basque language; and (ii) detailed development of attitudes to the promotion of the Basque language.

2.1.1. Comparative development of attitudes, knowledge and use of the Basque language

It clarifies the issue greatly to view, in graph form, the joint development of the comparative development of attitudes, knowledge and use of the Basque language:



Author: Xabier Erize. Source of data: Eusko Jaurlaritza-Gobierno Vasco, 2013; and EUSTAT, 2016a and c.

As shown in the graph, there is a clear correlation between attitudes toward the promotion of Basque, the level of knowledge thereof and the level of use. The three lines are practically parallel in shape and, as suggested in the study *Análisis de los discursos básicos sobre el euskera. Proyecto EGOD*. [Analysis of the key discourses on the Basque language. EGOD Project] (Martinez de Luna, Erize, Akizu, Etxaniz and Elizagarate, 2016, p. 24), it seems that the line representing attitudes towards the promotion of Basque forms a sort of ceiling beyond which knowledge and use cannot grow. In other words, if the attitudes line were higher, the lines representing knowledge and use would

have more “space” or more “oxygen” to grow too; and without growth in the attitudes line, it would be very difficult for knowledge or use to grow substantially, beyond a certain optimisation of their current values. All this demonstrates the importance of investigating attitudes (and subjective motives as a whole), for the subject in itself and for its repercussions on knowledge and use of the language.

The data that was used to prepare graph 1 is the following, shown here in table form:

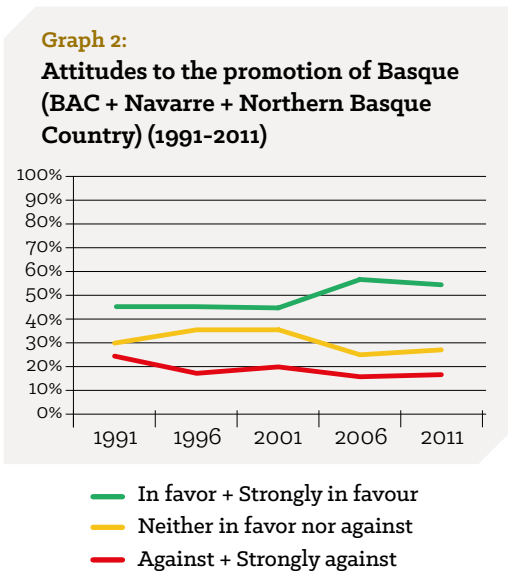
Table 1:
Attitudes – Knowledge – Use (BAC + Navarre + Northern Basque Country (%))

	1991	2011
Attitudes: Favourable + Very favourable	46	55
Knowledge: Bilingual + Passive bilingual	30	42
Use: More + the Same + Less in Basque	22	29

Author: Xabier Erize. Source of data: Eusko Jaurlaritza-Gobierno Vasco, 2013; and EUSTAT, 2016a and c.

2.1.2. Detailed development of attitudes to promotion of Basque

This section offers further detail on the development of attitudes to the promotion of Basque (1991-2011), as summarised by the following graph:



Author: Xabier Erize. Source of data: Eusko Jaurlaritza-Gobierno Vasco, 2013; and EUSTAT, 2016c.

According to the 5th Sociolinguistic Survey (Eusko Jaurlaritza-Gobierno Vasco, 2013), a little more than half of the population (55%) displays a favourable attitude towards the promotion of Basque, i.e. they feel subjective motives for it; and the other almost-half (45%) does not display a favourable attitude, i.e. they do not have subjective motives to say "yes" to the promotion of Basque. In the double challenge facing promoters of Basque (conserving the level of acceptance reached and spreading acceptance to the majority of the population), the last 20 years have seen the levels maintained, and even increased by 9% (with an annual increase of 0.45%), but they have yet to achieve the acceptance of the remaining 45%. The shape of the graph is also worth noting: more like a plateau than a rising curve which, in terms of an organisation's life cycle, could correspond to a stable maturity stage.

This is the data on which Graph 2 is based:

Table 2:
Attitudes to the promotion of Basque (BAC + Navarre + Northern Basque Country) (1991-2011)

	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011
In favour + Strongly in favour	46	46	45	57	55
Neither in favour nor against	30	36	35	26	28
Against + Strongly against	24	18	20	16	17

Author: Xabier Erize. Source of data: Eusko Jaurlaritza-Gobierno Vasco, 2013; and EUSTAT, 2016c.

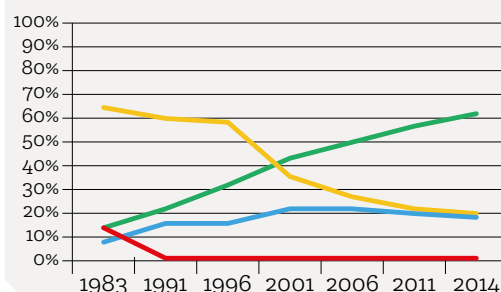
2.2. A SIGNIFICANT EXAMPLE OF PEOPLE'S LANGUAGE CHOICE: CHOICE OF LANGUAGE MODEL FOR SCHOOLING (1983-2014)

In non-university teaching in the Basque Autonomous Community (BAC), people can choose between three school language models available: model D (Basque as the vehicular language and a course in Spanish), model B (Basque and Spanish as vehicular languages) and model A (Spanish as the vehicular language and a course in Basque). Model X also existed (only in Spanish), but it no longer exists today, or only in a residual form.

From the point of view of the people's subjective motives, the choice of school language model in which they wish to educate their children is of the utmost importance because, through that choice, they express their linguistic wishes and values (what linguistic future they desire for Basque society) and convert this into practical individual and social behaviour, as indicated in section 1. It must be borne in mind that these decisions are very well thought-out, given the critical implications of schooling for their children's futures.

This graph shows the development of school language model choice (1983-2014):

Graph 3:
A significant example of language choice: choice of school language model (BAC) (1983-2014)



- Model D (in Basque, with a course in Spanish)
- Model A (in Spanish, with a course in Basque)
- Model B (in Basque and Spanish)
- Model X (Spanish only)

Author: Xabier Erize. Source of data: EUSTAT, 2016b.

The following table shows the data on which graph 3 is based:

Table 3:

A significant example of language choice: choice of school language model (1983-2014) (%).

	1983	1991	1996	2001	2006	2011	2014
Model D	14	22	32	43	50	58	62
Model A	64	60	49	36	28	22	20
Model B	8	17	17	21	21	20	18
Model X	14	1	1	1	1	1	1

Author: Xabier Erize. Source of data: EUSTAT, 2016b.

As the graph and table show, the majority of school pupils in the BAC study in model D in Basque, which means that the parents, or the pupils themselves after a certain age, have chosen the Basque language community as their present and future reference, with all that that implies as an expression of their linguistic wishes and values. Selections of model D have shown a clear increase from 14% in 1983 to 62% in 2014. Selections of model B (Basque + Spanish) have also increased (from 8% to 18%). In contrast, selections of model A (in Spanish, with a course in Basque) have clearly declined from 64% in 1983 to 20% in 2014.

Likewise, it is worth noting that there is a clear correlation between choice of school models in Basque (62% in model D + 18% in model B) and the favourable attitudes towards the promotion of Basque (62%) shown in the 5th Sociolinguistic Survey. In other words, in this case there is a clear coherence between the attitudes and the behaviours of the population with regard to the Basque language, despite the fact that on some occasions it is stated that there is a dissonance between people's attitudes and behaviours.

2.3. INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE STUDY ANALYSIS OF THE KEY DISCOURSES ON THE BASQUE LANGUAGE (EGOD PROJECT)

The study, *Análisis de los discursos básicos sobre el euskera. Proyecto EGOD* [Analysis of the key discourses on the Basque language. EGOD Project] (Martínez de Luna, Erize, Akizu, Etxaniz and Elizagarate, 2015 and 2016; and Vice Ministry for Language Policy, 2016), provides, among many valuable contributions, information about the most relevant discourses in the period 1991-2016, and about the main characteristics of the elements of discourse present in Basque society in 2015:

- Main structured discourses on Basque in the period 1991-2016:
 - A discourse of social consensus on the promotion of Basque.
 - A critical discourse from those who consider the work in favour of Basque to be insufficient.
 - Another critical discourse from those who consider the work in favour of Basque to be excessive.
- Linguistic ideas or values that are shared by the majority of the population (at least 66% of society) (2015). They include:
 - The importance and compatibility of Basque, Spanish and English.
 - Respect between Basque speakers and Spanish speakers, on the basis of respect for the language choices of each.
 - Practical importance of Basque in modern society.
 - Desire to increase the presence of Basque in the future.
- Linguistic ideas or values that are not shared by both bilingual people (Basque + Spanish) and Spanish speakers (2015). They include:
 - Different opinions about which is the native language or languages of the Basque Country:
 - Bilingual people: Basque is the only native language of the Basque Country (60%).
 - Spanish speakers: both Basque and

Spanish are the native languages of the Basque Country (74%).

- Different opinions of the following statement: "Knowing Basque is essential to feel like a full member of this community":
 - Bilingual people: agree (72%).
 - Spanish speakers: disagree (58%).
- Different language of personal identification:
 - Bilingual people: Basque (62%) or both (18%).
 - Spanish speakers: Spanish (89%) or both (5%).

Sections 3 and 5 discuss the implications of this information.

3. WHY HAS THIS DEVELOPMENT IN PEOPLE'S SUBJECTIVE MOTIVES FOR THEIR LINGUISTIC BEHAVIOURS (1991-2016) OCCURRED?

The basic answer is very simple: the people's subjective motives for their linguistic behaviours have changed in the way described above because the citizens have wanted it. The people themselves are the protagonists of their subjective motives for their behaviours: this may seem obvious but it is all too often overlooked in Basque sociolinguistics.

A second answer could be based on the concept of "resonance" described in section 1. Many people and organisations, both institutional and social initiatives, have worked hard for decades to foster the Basque language. On many occasions, positive resonance has arisen between the subjective motives of the people and messages from the people and bodies that promote Basque, but on other occasions, promoters of Basque have not been able to generate positive resonance with the community.

The development occurred can be considered the result of this positive resonance that emerged, and failed to emerge, between people or bodies promoting Basque and the

population as a whole. For example, it could be thought that working to promote Basque within the framework of the language ideas shared by the majority of the population has had more possibilities of generating positive resonance in the whole of society, in contrast with working in the framework of ideas supported only by the bilingual portion of society. However, it is important to acknowledge the effectiveness of the latter ideas in mobilising the bilingual segment of Basque society.

Furthermore, it is worth bearing in mind that there are social tendencies and actors in opposition to fostering the Basque language, and these too are factors that influence the development of the people's subjective motives.

A rich and clear source of material for going deeper into the subject is the analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats in language motivations and attitudes (a SWOT analysis) identified by the Basque Advisory Council (Euskararen Aholku Batzordea, 2015), because, in short, they are all factors that have influenced the development of the people's subjective motives. The main elements are given in the complete report of this paper but, due to space restrictions, it is not possible to include them all in this summary.

4. HOW MIGHT SUBJECTIVE MOTIVES DEVELOP OVER THE NEXT 20 YEARS?

4.1. IT WILL HAPPEN WHAT THE PEOPLE FEEL AND WISH

The first idea is that the Basque community's subjective motives will develop according to the feelings and wishes of the people themselves. The people themselves are the subject, as indicated in section 3.

4.2. PROJECTIONS

The projections given in this section are based on the plausible scenario that Basque society's current demolinguiistic trends, and the

strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats mentioned in section 3, continue in a similar fashion; i.e. that a similar level of social pressure in favour of promoting the Basque language to the current one will continue to exist.

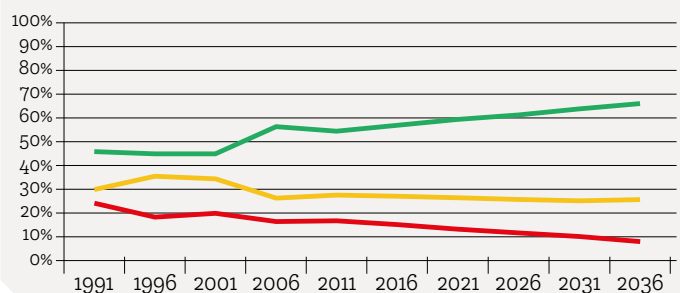
I present two projections: (i) attitudes toward the promotion of Basque (BAC + Navarre + Northern Basque Country): actual development 1991-2011, and projection until 2036; and (ii) practical application of language choice in school language model selection (BAC): actual development 1983-2014, and projection to 2036, taken from the document, *¿Y a partir de ahora qué?* [And now what?] (Consejo Asesor del Euskera. Viceconsejería de Política Lingüística [Basque Advisory Council. Vice Ministry for Language Policy], 2016). It should be made clear that, in this paper, the projections, in addition to being numerical forecasts about the future, are also considered as a call to action for promoters of the Basque language, and as a guide to help maintain the social pressure in favour of Basque.

4.2.1. Projection of attitudes toward the promotion of Basque

According to this paper's forecast for 2036, favourable attitudes toward fostering the Basque language would rise from 55% to 66% in the whole of the Basque Country (BAC + Navarre + Northern Basque Country), and 34% of the population would remain not favourable.

Graph 4:

Attitudes (BAC + Navarre + Northern Basque Country): actual development 1991-2011 and projection until 2036



— In favor + Strongly in favour — Neither in favor nor against
— Against + Strongly against

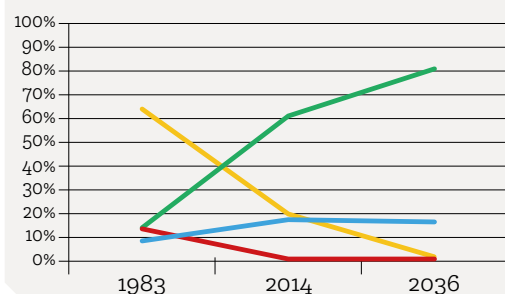
Author: Xabier Erize. Source of data (1991-2011): EUSTAT, 2016c.

4.2.2. Projection of school language model choice (BAC): practical application of language choice

According to the projection data up to 2036, the majority of the population would continue choosing school language models in Basque and expressing their values through choosing the Basque language community as their reference group (see sections 1 and 2.2). Within that, selections of model D (Basque as the vehicular language, with a course in Spanish) would rise to 81%. Conversely, model A (Spanish as the vehicular language, with a course in Basque) would suffer a significant decline to 2%.

Graph 5:

Language choice in practice: school language models (BAC) (actual development 1983-2014 and projection until 2036)



— Model D (in Basque, with a course in Spanish)
— Model B (in Basque and Spanish)
— Model A (in Spanish, with a course in Basque)
— Model X (Spanish only)

Author: Xabier Erize. Source of data: EUSTAT, 2016b; and Consejo Asesor del Euskera. Viceconsejería de Política Lingüística, 2016.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

The main conclusion is that the people have their *own motives* to behave in the specific ways that they do in Basque or in Spanish, and the main proposal is that the people and organisations that promote Basque take those motives into account: in language policy and planning, in practical application, in research and in social activity. Assumptions should not be made about the people's motives. We must ask the members of the community, and do so methodically rather than in an irregular or disorganised fashion, and many routes are available for this, from scientific investigations to simple satisfaction surveys for Basque service users, as well as all the possibilities in between.

It is not easy to act on speakers' language motivations through top-down processes. Nor is it easy to take a top-down approach to acting on their linguistic behaviours, especially in informal settings (and even less so by authority), as deep down, the people are the ones who feel and act on those feelings (within a context, of course). One of the keys lies in whether a climate of positive resonance emerges or not between the population and the people and organisations that promote Basque, as this paper maintains.

Similarly, as indicated by the sociolinguist Ofeilia García (2015), although it is true that the field of language planning has shown clear tendencies to act using top-down models, lately doubts have been raised regarding the idea that a community's way of speaking can be planned or changed by people or organisations with power or authority: "scholarship has challenged the idea that a community's way of speaking could be planned and changed by authoritative agencies" (García, 2015, p. 353). Instead, a more dynamic approach seems to be gaining in weight, taking into consideration the agency (see section 1) of the speakers and the presence of a context with different factors: "The line of power is not always linear from top to bottom since speakers have agency and language policy interacts with

ideologies, global, national, and local forces. This more dynamic view of language policy..." (García, 2015, p. 355).

In addition to this, it should be made clear that this paper takes the point of view that it is both possible and desirable to work to foster the Basque language, as has been taking place in recent decades. In short, this work needs to move towards boosting the positive factors (strengths and opportunities) in the SWOT analysis mentioned in section 3, and to counteracting the negative (weaknesses and threats).

Below, I present suggestions for future actions in favour of the Basque language, split into two groups: (i) fostering the Basque language, and (ii) new research.

Suggestions for fostering the Basque language:

- Understand that the speakers who make up the community have linguistic behaviours, make choices between the language resources available to them and have their own subjective motives for doing so, all within a social context. In other words, accept that people have their own motives for behaving in the way that they do in Basque or in Spanish.
- Foster and develop a positive social environment for Basque and equality between all language options. To achieve this, it is best to start with the linguistic ideas and values shared by the majority of the population (section 2.3), in both the adoption of practical measures and the dissemination of general visions or messages.
 - As the sociolinguist Sánchez Carrión "Txepetx" suggests, the proposal does not have to consist of "turning the minority language into a majority or turning the majority language into a minority, the terms into which the state perspective, from one side or the other, repeatedly tries to channel the problem" (Sánchez Carrión "Txepetx", 1999, p. 282).
 - Care must be taken when acting on values

that are shared only by the bilingual portion of the population (section 2.3). The majority of the people who do not share those values are unlikely to embrace the Basque language, and may in fact distance themselves further. The same care must be taken not to act on those values that are shared only by the monolingual Spanish-speaking part of the population.

- Remember that, with regard to the regulation of Basque and Spanish, the concepts of obligation and legal requirements provoke a great deal of social contention, especially regarding the provision of jobs, and this contention could in fact call into question the legitimacy of the language policy of fostering the Basque language. Without sufficient social legitimacy, legal obligations or requirements could easily give rise to feelings or suspicions of discrimination among Basque or Spanish speakers.

Suggestions for new research

Sociolinguistic research is of utmost importance to ensuring that language planning and policy are appropriate in the real social context. In particular, we know less about subjective aspects of sociolinguistic dynamics than we do about objective aspects. Below are some suggestions for new studies:

- Position subjective aspects as a sociolinguistic research topic, along with knowledge and use, which are already solidly positioned: "The members of the community have this level of *knowledge* of the language, this level of *use*, and express that these are their *subjective motives* for that." There are several means of doing this:
 - In new editions of the Sociolinguistic Survey, further exploit the information about subjective aspects: in the main reports, in the summaries and in the dissemination materials.
 - Include "attitudes" in the next Sociolinguistic Map – something that has not been included in previous editions.
 - Conduct regular investigations similar to the aforementioned study of key com-

munity language discourses (Martínez de Luna, Erize, Akizu, Etxaniz and Elizagarrate, 2015 and 2016), and launch these investigations also in Navarre and the Northern Basque Country.

- Study and take into consideration the community's language motives and values when designing and implementing language planning and promotion work (both on a state and a social or individual level): understand what is really important to the people and act on it. Remember the question, "I have my motives for doing what I do with Basque and with Spanish: do you want to know what they are and take them into account?" (section 1).
- Study in depth the community's interpretation of the concepts of legal obligation or duty with regard to language, and the level of consensus or debate that these concepts provoke due to their wide-reaching repercussions on language policy. This issue affects employment in particular, but also other areas such as education.
- Further analyse concepts of an advanced positive democratic theory of language diversity, and methods for application thereof. This means understanding the people who make up a community as the key elements in a democratic society (see Erize, 2013b).
- Develop an open environment for research and reflection that does not penalise those who step outside the lines of orthodoxy, creating a friendly and welcoming atmosphere for people who venture into Basque sociolinguistics.
- Take inspiration from other related social disciplines:
 - Anthropology, sociology, psychology, pedagogy, philosophy etc.
 - Adopt concepts and methodology from other areas of specialisation with long histories of work in the community, such as public health or the work of business and organisations.

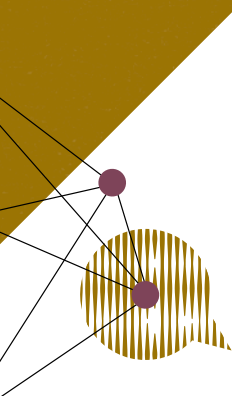
- Further analyse the concepts and ideas that have the following characteristics: ethical coherence, intellectual rigour, adaptation to reality and the capacity to generate positive resonance among the community.

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Status and development of social use of the Basque language. Some challenges*

Mikel Zalbide

1. CONCEPTS, TERMINOLOGY AND OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS: SOME CLARIFICATIONS.

Bearing this paper's aim in mind, and with a view to facilitating comprehension, some key concepts, terms and operational definitions are clarified below:

- ▶ **Basque/hegemonic language:** Given that the language use situation of the speech community as a whole is to be analysed, along with references to the Basque language we will also use the term *hegemonic language* to refer to Spanish, French and, in some cases, English.
- ▶ **Scope of the use of Basque:** This phrase encompasses the *number of speakers* and the *frequency or intensity of their use* of Basque.
- ▶ **Frequency of use:** The following scale has been chosen: E4 (more Basque than the hegemonic language), E3 (Basque and the hegemonic language equally), E2 (more hegemonic language than Basque) and E0 (exclusive use of the hegemonic language). We have also added ET (consistent use of Basque). $ET = E4 + E3$.
- ▶ **Sources of variability in language use:** Place (geographical location), function (sociofunctional space: home, school, work, friendship group, public administration), oral or written, style and, finally, speaker age.
- ▶ **Geographical dimension of the analysis:** In view of the availability of data, three administrative regions have been identified (the Basque Autonomous Community or BAC, Navarre and the French Basque Country or

FBC) and nine geographical areas: Álava, Biscay and Gipuzkoa in the BAC; Basque-speaking, mixed and non-Basque-speaking zones in Navarre, BAB (the Bayonne-Anglet-Biarritz conurbation), IL (interior of Labourd/Lapurd) and LNS (Lower Navarre and Soule) in the FBC.

- ▶ **Intergenerational continuity** (of the mother tongue), abbreviated to **ICMT**: This concept is not an exact equivalent of family language transmission (Veltman, 1983), or of a language's vehicular or curricular use at school. Intergenerational continuity is based on the long process of socialisation, usually taking around 35 years.
- ▶ **Physical breathing space** (of Basque usage) is a concept taken from J. A. Fishman (1991). In the Basque context, these physical breathing spaces are characterised by: high concentrations of Basque speakers; frequently a regional dimension; little demographic change; significant distances (comparatively) from the main channels of communication and transport, as well as industrial and commercial clusters; dominance of geographically nearby interaction networks, usually face-to-face; dominance of Basque in domestic and public areas of use; work *in situ* or in a nearby place (frequently in Basque); diglossia, through stable sociofunctional compartmentalisation (dominance of Basque in everyday verbal interaction and of Spanish/French in reading/writing; absence of language shift); Basque as mother tongue (Basque-speaking population); vitality of traditional culture (some features: food and drink, games and sports, verse, faith and beliefs, value of "giving one's word"); prevalence of the *Gemeinschaft* community life network (rights and responsibilities as a group, direct contact

* This text is a summary of the report by Mikel Zalbide published in BAT Soziolinguistika Aldizkaria 100 (2016) and it was produced by the author.

with neighbours, via *auzolan* or collective acts); and, in general, dominance of intra-community links over supra-local links and influences. All this has contributed to ensuring the intergenerational continuity of the Basque language.

These Basque breathing spaces are undergoing a weakening process: a lower concentration of Basque speakers; decreasing geographical area;¹ increase in language shift (exodus of young Basque speakers, arrival of hegemonic language-speaking or bilingual individuals and couples); greater access to main channels of communication and transport, which propel the expansion and diversification of face-to-face interaction networks; increasingly distant workplaces, with increasing use of the hegemonic language; movement to shopping and leisure facilities in the local or regional capital; erosion or rupture of sociofunctional compartmentalisation (hegemonic language's entry into everyday speech, simultaneous introduction of Basque into reading and writing); start of language shift; appearance of mother-tongue hegemonic language speakers or bilinguals; strengthening of the supra-ethnic culture, with a decline in the community life network (*Gemeinschaft*); intensification of links outside the locality and weakening of intracommunity links. All this contributes to a weakening and interruption of the intergenerational continuity of language use: not in absolute terms, but to a significant extent. It is therefore important to differentiate between *full* breathing spaces (*BZ-5*, *BZ-6a*) and *partial* ones (*BZ-6b*). See section 5.

(375,000), with 29,000 ET users in Navarre and 23,000 in the FBC. In percentage terms, 87.8% of ET users live in the BAC, 6.8% in Navarre and 5.4% in the FBC. The distribution of E4, E3 and ET users by geographical area is as follows:

Table 1:
% of E4, E3 and ET users. Total numbers of ET users

Geographical areas: ranking	E4 %	E3 %	ET %	ET total
1 Navarre / Basque-speaking area	38.0	10.6	48.6	24,500
2 Gipuzkoa	26.6	12.4	39.0	235,000
3 FBC - LNS	10.2	20.4	30.6	10,100
4 Biscay	7.4	5.4	12.8	128,000
5 FBC - IL	2.2	8.00	10.2	10,900
6 Álava	1.3	3.00	4.3	11,700
7 FBC - BAB	0.3	1.8	2.1	2,000
8 Navarre / mixed area	0.1	1.6	1.7	4,700
9 Navarre / non-Basque-speaking area	0.0	0.2	0.2	500

Source: 5th Sociolinguistic Survey, 2011

In percentage terms, the Basque-speaking area of Navarre and Gipuzkoa stand out. In absolute terms, Gipuzkoa and Biscay stand well above the rest. A combined analysis of the two perspectives indicates that Basque is actively used in Gipuzkoa, in the Basque-speaking area of Navarre and in Biscay, followed at a significant distance by FBC - LNS. A more detailed separation of areas in the BAC would give a different ranking. The overall panorama would, however, be predictably similar.

2. STATUS IN 2011

2.1. GENERAL INFORMATION

The 2011 Sociolinguistics Survey indicates that there are a total of 427,000 consistent users (ET). That use is concentrated in the BAC

¹ Progressive reduction in towns, villages and neighbourhoods, which lose their regional character.

2.2. DATA BY AREA OF USE AND SPEAKERS

The declared data for domestic use and the measured data for public street use give the following results:²

Table 2:

ET level use at home: ET at home

ET level use at home			
Speakers	BAC %	Nav. %	FBC %
Parents with children	22.8	8.0	11.1
Between brothers/sisters	20.1	7.0	13.6
Children with parents	14.3	3.8	7.3
Between parents ³	14.1	4.3	10.8
Overall use at home	17.2	5.4	10.7

Group use of Basque in the street: public use

Álava	Biscay	Gipuzkoa	Navarre	FBC	Basque Country
4.0 %	9.4 %	32.7 %	5.7 %	6.2 %	13.3 %

The data suggests one “world” in the BAC, and in Gipuzkoa in particular, and another that is very different in the rest of the region (although Biscay stands out somewhat in the latter group). A significant fact that is not shown in the second table is that public use increases significantly in the presence of children. This is largely in keeping with ET at home: Basque is spoken more with children.

2.3. ET USERS IN 2011, BY AGE

There are divergent trends. In Álava, the percentage of ET users increases as age decreases (albeit based on low numbers), while in the FBC (and in LNS in particular), that percentage drops sharply as ages decrease.

² Sources: for domestic use, Sociolinguistic Survey 2011; for use on the street, street measurement 2011 (Soziolinguistika Klusterra).

³ In the absence of, or without the verbal participation of, children.

Table 3:

Total ET users, by age group

	geographical area	>= 65	50-64	35-49	25-34	16-24
		%	%	%	%	%
BAC	Álava	1.7	3.2	4.3	7.0	6.9
	Biscay	13.2	11.2	12.5	13.9	15.0
	Gipuzkoa	36.7	31.7	38.7	44.0	55.4
Navarre	Basque-speaking area	49.5	43.1	43.9	56.7	60.9
	Mixed area	0.8	0.9	1.7	1.8	4.0
	Non-Basque-speaking area					
French Basque Country	BAB	4.2	1.4	1.6	0.4	0.9
	IL	17.8	11.4	4.7	8.5	6.9
	LNS	49.2	30.4	23.0	15.9	14.4

Source: 5th Sociolinguistic Survey, 2011

The percentages of overall ET users by age group are, in part, indicators of intergenerational continuity. The first, third and fourth columns seem to be the most significant in that regard.⁴ For an approximation, if you compare each figure in the first column with the result of the third and fourth columns, a sharp loss in ICMT can be seen in the FBC. The Basque-speaking area of Navarre and Biscay seem stable, and Álava and, in particular, Gipuzkoa, seem to offer the highest levels of intergenerational continuity.⁵

⁴ It is worth bearing in mind the operational definition given in the introduction (Veltman, 1983).

⁵ This is, as mentioned above, just an initial approach to the issue. For a more detailed discussion, see the base document.

3. WHAT HAPPENED BETWEEN 1991 AND 2011? EVOLUTION OF THE USE OF BASQUE

3.1. OVERALL EVOLUTION OF ET USERS IN THE BAC, NAVARRE AND THE FRENCH BASQUE COUNTRY

Table 4:

Overall evolution of ET users (%)

BAC			Navarre			French Basque Country		
1991	2001	2011	1991	2001	2011	1996	2001	2011
15.5	17.5	20.0	5.9	5.8	5.5	13.3	10.0	9.6

Source: Sociolinguistic Survey 2011

The following trends can be observed in the total percentages of ET users in the nine geographical areas: a) Increase in Álava, Biscay and, in particular, Gipuzkoa. b) Slight increase in the Basque-speaking area of Navarre. c) In the other geographical areas, the ET index has dropped or remains at a very low level. The decrease is particularly sharp in LNS and IL. The language shift process of the last 150 years appears to be very advanced in these areas and displays a significant consolidation as the mechanisms of translinguification have multiplied in the last quarter-century.

3.2. EVOLUTION OF ET USERS BY AGE: BAC, NAVARRE AND FBC

The following table provides a summarised overview.

Table 5:

Development of ET users (%) by age group

Age group	BAC			Navarre			French Basque Country		
	1991	2001	2011	1991	2001	2011	1991	2001	2011
>=65	25.3	20.6	19.3	7.2	6.6	5.8	26	18	16.6
50-64	16.6	15.5	16.7	6.0	6.1	4.9	20.3	10.4	10.2
35-49	13.3	16.6	19.7	6.5	5.5	5.1	7.5	8.9	6.0
25-34	14.2	16.6	22.3	4.1	5.0	5.6	4.5	3.7	6.0
16-24	12.4	18.9	26.8	5.7	6.4	7.3	1.3	2.2	5.5

Source: Sociolinguistic Survey 2011

In general, ET use has fallen in older age groups and grown among younger age groups. In light of the data from the three highest age groups, intergenerational continuity seems to be strong in the BAC but not in Navarre and the French Basque Country.

3.3. EVOLUTION OF ET USERS BY AREA OF USE: BAC, NAVARRE AND FBC

On the basis of the data provided by the 5th Sociolinguistic Survey, the evolution of ET in the home, on the street, at work and in public services and administration is as follows:

Table 6: Level of ET use in the home: %

Speakers	BAC			Navarre			French Basque Country		
	1991	2001	2011	1991	2001	2011	1996	2001	2011
In the home, overall	17.3	17.0	17.2	6.6	6.3	5.4	16.0	11.9	10.7
Couples	14.7	12.1	14.1	5.7	4.7	4.7	16.5	12.2	10.8
Parents with children	18.1	20.5	22.8	6.5	6.7	8.0	16.5	10.7	11.1
Children with mother	16.0	14.8	16.4	6.5	6.1	4.9	19.2	13.9	9.9
Children with father	13.9	14.1	15.9	6.3	6.2	5.1	17.8	13.6	8.2
Between brothers/sisters	17.0	18.1	20.1	6.2	7.2	7.0	19.6	15.0	13.6

Table 7: Level of ET use on the street %

Speakers	BAC			Navarre			French Basque Country		
	1991	2001	2011	1991	2001	2011	1996	2001	2011
Friends	16.1	18.2	21.4	7.2	7.4	7.2	17.2	14.1	14.5
Establishments	14.8	16.9	20.4	4.7	5.0	5.1	10.7	7.6	6.6

Table 8: Level of ET use at work: %

Speakers	BAC			Navarre			French Basque Country		
	1991	2001	2011	1991	2001	2011	1996	2001	2011
Colleagues	15.4	18.0	24.6	5.3	5.4	7.0	11.9	8.5	10.9

Table 9: Level of ET use in public services and administration: %

Speakers	BAC			Navarre			French Basque Country		
	1991	2001	2011	1991	2001	2011	1996	2001	2011
Municipal services	13.9	20.0	24.7	4.2	6.7	±6.3	14.4	9.1	8.4
Health services	8.3	14.1	19.8	2.6	4.7	4.9	5.7	6.2	3.5
Banks	14.4	19.9	21.2	4.0	5.7	5.4	9.1	6.9	3.1

Source for all four tables: Sociolinguistic Survey 2011

Some conclusions: a) In the home, the level of ET use seems to be stable in the BAC. It drops somewhat in Navarre and it is seriously weakened in the FBC; b) On the street, ET use is increasing in the BAC, stable in Navarre and decreasing in the FBC; c) In public services and administration, ET⁶ is increasing in the BAC (significantly) and in Navarre, with a relatively small decrease in the FBC.

3.4. EVOLUTION OF LANGUAGE USE IN THE STREET (DATA FOR THE BASQUE COUNTRY IN GENERAL)

Comparing the data from 2001 and 2011, Olatz Altuna, the principal technician responsible for the measurement system, indicates that “the use of Basque on the streets has remained stable or stagnant (13.3%) since 2001. If we compare it with 1991, that use has risen by 2.5%.”

3.5. ANALYSIS CENTRED ON “PHYSICAL BREATHING SPACES”

Xabier Bengoetxea has studied certain “physical breathing spaces” in detail in Tolosa, through the area’s student population. Here are some of his conclusions: a) There remains a dominance configuration⁷ of Basque among young people: they mainly use Basque at home, at school, in sports and at church; inter-generational transmission of Basque occurs in the majority of families; b) That dominance configuration begins to dilute, slightly but perceptibly, at home: parents speak to each other in the hegemonic language more frequently than with their children; the use of Basque in the streets and neighbourhood drops slightly, but less so among friends than among other speakers; school remains a bastion of Basque language use for these young people, but even there a decline can be seen; in the area of communications (newspapers, magazines, radio, television, internet) the dominance of the Spanish language is complete.

⁶ However, we are not entirely sure the interpretation of the data is correct: see base report.

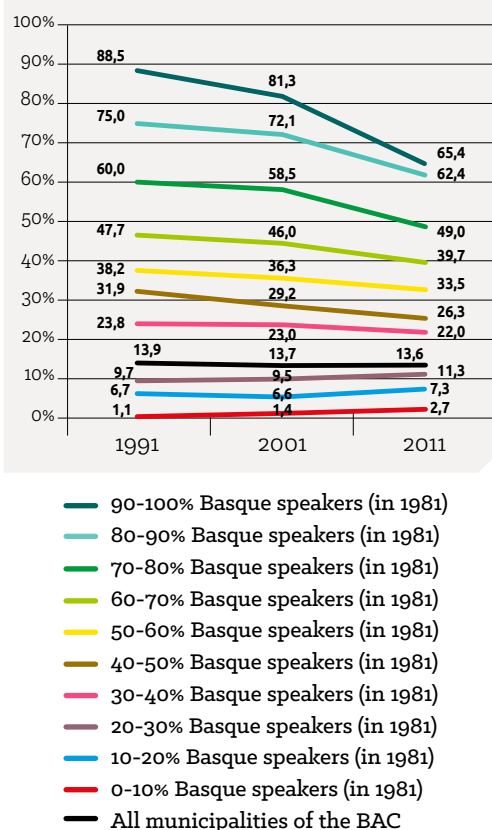
⁷ Fishman’s concept of dominance configuration is different from Weinreich’s original formulation.

3.6. ANALYSIS BASED ON BASQUE-SPEAKING MUNICIPALITIES⁸ AND PHYSICAL BREATHING SPACES

Focusing on the data for prevalent use of Basque (E4) at home (2011 census, BAC), Iñaki Iurrebaso has recently published the following conclusions: a) Although in overall terms the level of E4 use is stable in the BAC (13.9% in

Graph 1:

Evolution of the level of E4 use in the BAC, 1991–2011, compared to the density of the municipalities’ use of Basque in 1981



Source: Iñaki Iurrebaso, 2015, 39.

⁸ These two concepts are not equivalent, although there is significant overlap between them. Basque-speaking municipalities are defined on the basis of language competence, not the prevalent use, of their inhabitants. They are much easier to use in statistics, but they offer less deep analysis of the social organisation of language behaviour.

1991, 13.6% in 2011), the result is very different if we analyse what is going on inside: in Basque-speaking municipalities, the E4 index has fallen from 56.4% to 47.5% and E3 has descended from 15.2% to 13.3%. b) The decline is even greater in the “physical breathing spaces”: they display a sharp drop in prevalent use of Basque at home. c) A “scissor effect” is gathering momentum in the BAC. By virtue of this, places in which the use of Spanish at home has been and is hegemonic show a slight increase in Basque, while this descends abruptly (in some cases to the same level as Spanish, with no significant compartmentalisation) in places where it had been hegemonic or prevalent. This process accelerated in the 2001-2011 period, although it was already in progress in the previous period.

The contributions made by Xabier Bengoetxea and Iñaki Lurrebaso are of particular relevance if we wish to identify what exactly the priorities should be in preserving and revitalising social use of the Basque language.⁹ The overall analyses (both systematic surveys and measurements of use on the street) are essential and offer advantages and potentialities that should not be underestimated. Even so, there are certain intrinsic limitations in terms of their prescriptive application. It is therefore necessary to combine these wide-scope studies with detailed analysis of what happens in places where the use of Basque shows the highest levels of vitality.

4. CAUSES, INDICATORS AND MOTIVES

In recent decades we have witnessed different, and sometimes contradictory, evolutions. In the basic areas of use, those which provide the principal support for intergenerational continuity in any living language, the Basque language demonstrates relative strength, while other areas show an unstable balance, and in the most weakened, transmission is se-

riously compromised. At the same time, in the BAC in particular, Basque has reached new areas of shared use (formal education, written and audiovisual channels of communication, administration), with greater scope and intensity than ever before. Developments are, therefore, multiform. Why? Further studies are needed to analyse the causes, but there is no shortage of evidence-based information. Below are some current advanced hypotheses.

4.1. REASONS FOR RECESSION

To summarise Fishman (1991), it is worth considering, in general terms,¹⁰ the occurrence of five dislocation factors: deliberate action by centres of power, with coercive measures (including express prohibition in some cases) against using the weak language; physical dislocation (famine, natural disaster, punitive “scorched earth” action); demographic dislocation (cf. emigration of Basque speakers and immigration of hegemonic language speakers, significant or drastic reduction in birth rate); social dislocation (social dependency interactions) and cultural dislocation (assimilation of the framework and values of the supra-ethnic environment).

4.2. REASONS FOR PROGRESS

The number of people who speak the language is increasing (in some areas and age groups). The language has expanded to previously excluded areas of use (school and university, public administration, printed press and, in part, skilled work sectors). The language has unified, adapting to the needs of modern usage. Speakers are becoming literate in Basque. Use has been promoted intensely (both top-down and bottom-up) and the sociology of language is increasingly invoked to analyse our situation, incorporating external information and disseminating our own in the process.

⁹ The combination of the two contributions has substantial results.

¹⁰ In other words, taking a global perspective, analysing past and present situations.

4.3. WHY DO BOTH PHENOMENA OCCUR AT THE SAME TIME AND AT DIFFERENT SPEEDS?

The current deputy advisor on language policy to the Basque Government considers that “the factors that determine the social development of the Basque language include its legal status, public bodies’ language planning and policy, and the level of adhesion among the people, as well as the strength of the links between those factors” (Baztarrika, 2014: 12).

4.4. WHY IS BASQUE SPOKEN MORE OR LESS IN CERTAIN PLACES OR MOMENTS?

The Sociolinguistic Survey writing team considers that this variability can be explained mainly by the level of density of Basque speakers in the interaction networks and the ease with which the speakers can express themselves in Basque. Add to this the predictive value of the first language, the sociolinguistic surroundings and interest in the language.

4.5. WHICH ENVIRONMENTS PROMOTE THE USE OF BASQUE? WHICH WEAKEN IT?

To answer this we need a detailed analysis of the demographic,¹¹ econotechnical,¹² sociocultural,¹³ politico-operational¹⁴ and territory-or-

ganisational evolution of the region.¹⁵ This combined analysis is essential to embark on a study of the development of language use, the concurrent circumstances and motives.

5. TOOLS TO DIAGNOSE THE VITALITY OF LANGUAGE COMMUNITIES. A POSSIBLE APPLICATION: OUR CURRENT SITUATION.

There are many tools aimed at diagnosing the level of vitality or weakness of a language community (or a part thereof). There we have, to start with, the *Ethnolinguistic vitality* construct (Giles, Bourhis eta Taylor 1977). In light of the last quarter-century’s publications, the following five are of particular significance: a) Fishman’s *GIDS* (1991);¹⁶ Michael Krauss’ *level of (linguistic) viability or weakness* (1992);¹⁷ c) the scales of the *Red Book of Endangered Languages* (1994) and the *Atlas of the World’s Languages in Danger of Disappearing* (1996, 2001); d) *Language Vitality and Endangerment* by UNESCO’s *Ad Hoc Expert Group on Endan-*

Basque is explicitly recognised by Spain’s legal framework, especially in the BAC. This framework sustains, promotes and protects the promotion of Basque usage, within a clear framework of superordination of the state. The inherent potentialities and limits of top-down promotion of Basque are increasingly evident.

¹⁵ The roads network is weakening the previous spatial protection of the “physical breathing spaces” of the Basque language and facilitating more communication between the five capitals, their airports and industrial areas. Differences between the provinces are becoming diluted. Cities have grown and occupy up to their peripheries. Industrial reform and the creation of technology parks is changing the residential location of thousands of professionals.

¹⁶ *GIDS* stands for the *Graded Intergenerational Disruption Scale*. (In Basque this is rendered as *BAEN* or *Be-laun Arteko Etenaren Neurria*, and in Spanish as *GDI* or *Grados de Discontinuidad Intergeneracional* (Margarita Hidalgo, San Diego State University).) <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/descarga/articulo/1708820.pdf>.

¹⁷ The terms “degree of viability” and “degree of (language) endangerment” are both used.

¹¹ Sharp decline in birth rate, emigration of the Basque-speaking population and immigration of non-Basque speakers.

¹² More hegemonic language speakers than before work in largely Basque-speaking areas, and many young people from this environment move for work to areas that speak little or no Basque. Conversely, thousands of professionals (around 40,000 in the BAC) work in areas linked to the promotion of the Basque language.

¹³ Socialisation takes place progressively through powers beyond the home; the secularisation process, now almost complete, has implemented a new values system; organised leisure and mass tourism have a huge impact on “who talks which language to whom”; we are part of the rest of the world (English making clear inroads).

¹⁴ Being Basque loyalist is not a shared political value, and nor is there uniform intensity among the “seven provinces”. Despite gradation in intensity and scope,

gered Languages (2003);¹⁸ e) Lewis and Simons' *Extended GIDS*, or *e-GIDS*(2010).¹⁹

Each measurement instrument has advantages and disadvantages. Given the diversity of the circumstances surrounding the world's language communities, it is unlikely that a single scale can adequately measure all of them. In our particular case it is needed that the instrument, as well as giving an overall estimation,

identifies the language's health on a local, regional or district level, pivots on key sociolinguistic concepts and, where possible, is easy to apply. On the basis of Fishman's (1991) original *GIDS* construct, developing Lewis and Simons' (2010) formulation and including certain contributions from UNESCO (2003), we have created the following application, structured by three basic areas and fourteen levels:

Table 10:

Application to diagnose the vitality of Basque: where are we?

G	BZ-2	Channels of communication, public services and administration in Basque
	BZ-3	Work environments in Basque
	BZ-4	Formal education in Basque
J	BZ-5a	Colloquial, everyday speech overwhelmingly in Basque. Reading and writing mainly in Basque
	BZ-6a	Colloquial, everyday speech overwhelmingly in Basque
	BZ-6b	Colloquial, everyday speech mainly in Basque; a substantial part in the hegemonic language
	BZ-6c	Colloquial, everyday speech mixed: one part expressed mainly in Basque, one part in the hegemonic language, and a third part in both Basque and the hegemonic language
	BZ-6d	Colloquial, everyday speech mainly in the hegemonic language; a part of citizens speak Basque in the home, with friends and, occasionally, on the street
	BZ-6e	Colloquial, everyday speech overwhelmingly in the hegemonic language; a part of citizens speak Basque or bilingually in the home or with friends
	BZ-7	The child-rearing generation, despite speaking Basque, does not transmit it. The hegemonic language is spoken in the home and on the street
	BZ-8a	Only the grandparents' generation speaks Basque.
U	BZ-8b	Only the grandparents' generation speaks Basque, but they have very few people with whom to speak it.
	BZ-9	Basque is the evidence or symbol of ethnic origin
	BZ-10	Basque has lost its status as evidence of ethnic origin, even in symbolic terms

The fourteen levels of vitality are grouped, as mentioned above, in three main areas: area G (BZ-2, BZ-3, BZ-4) with diverse sociofunctional expansion of Basque language use, area J (BZ-6a/b/c/d/e, BZ-7, BZ-8a/b) with a detailed scale of informal, day-to-day use and of intergenerational transmission, and area U (BZ-9, BZ-10), where the spectrum of attitudes is varied. The application pivots on area J.

Where are Basque speakers within this application? The answer is clear and simple: we are

¹⁸ The set of determining factors used to evaluate the vitality of a language.

¹⁹ In Basque, *BAEN-zabal* (abbreviated to *BZ*).

in all of the levels. To what extent are we in each level? This second question requires us to enter into certain technical explanations. Below is an attempt at a summary:

a) In recent decades, a lot of effort has been made in area G. This effort is particularly great in comparison with many weakened language communities in Europe. Basque has entered these levels to a significant extent but, except in BZ-4, the hegemonic language still prevails. BZ-2, BZ-3 and BZ-4 have an invigorating effect on the social use of the language and, in modernised contexts, they are increasingly pervasive. However, they are not able to guarantee complete intergenerational transmission: they are an auxiliary, not self-sufficient, element.

b) The highest levels of vitality and use of the language is in the *physical breathing spaces*: BZ-5, BZ-6a and BZ-6b where everyone, or a clear majority, uses Basque at home and in the local area, with friends and, in general, in the informal day-to-day speech of the people. As far as these physical breathing spaces are not undergoing drastic transformations of a demographic, econotechnical, social, cultural, politico-operational or territory-organisational nature, they currently offer the greatest potential for intergenerational transmission of Basque.

c) It is important to differentiate between full breathing spaces (BZ-5, BZ-6a) and partial ones (BZ-6b). In BZ-5 and BZ-6a, Basque is habitually spoken (and, to some extent, written); this day-to-day use of Basque also forms the majority in BZ-6b, but part of the population habitually uses the hegemonic language and this affects overall linguistic behaviour. Full breathing spaces are very small and, for the purposes of work and general communications, depend increasingly on their district's main town or even the regional capital. Partial breathing spaces (especially Azpeitia) are somewhat larger and their interaction networks (including work

networks) have higher levels of self-regulation.

d) Level BZ-6c locations are weaker than the physical breathing spaces. Day-to-day informal language use of Basque is not a majority and, in part, the language's intergenerational transmission seems to be compromised. Despite that, habitual use of the Basque language remains active. This level is well-represented by numerous towns and the populations of district capitals (which are frequently surrounded by physical breathing spaces). They are, on average, larger than the previous group.

e) BZ-6d locations display lower vitality: these area include numerous main regional towns along with San Sebastián and, as such, cover a significant portion of the population. Their internal intergenerational continuity is undergoing a significant downturn, despite model D education: there is internal displacement from Basque to the hegemonic language. The effect, however, is mitigated and sometimes even reversed by the sizeable Basque-speaking influx coming from locations with greater vitality. In addition, many revitalisation initiatives start in and focus on this environment.

f) A more urgent situation is found among Basque speakers in BZ-6e locations, which include the other capital cities. These environments experienced a significant immigration and shift from Basque to the hegemonic language in the 20th century. This level also includes Basque speakers from the usually non-Basque speaking areas of Labourd, Biscay, Álava and Navarre. As these are areas where habitual speech on a collective level is in the hegemonic language, the potential for intergenerational continuity for these Basque speakers is in serious jeopardy.²⁰

²⁰ Here there is a particularly important subgroup: parents and young people from Basque-speaking areas or communities. It is considerably less certain that, without involving one another in a resolutely Basque-speak-

They are obliged to navigate a different sea: the street, friendship groups and relationships habitually function in the hegemonic language, so language shift from Basque to the hegemonic language reaches very high levels. They benefit, however, from the influence of sociofunctional expansion and the contribution made by migration from areas where Basque has a higher level of vitality.

g) The situation of the BZ-7 level is particularly critical. In the absence of a change in parents' linguistic behaviour and of the contribution of a Basque-speaking migration or particularly intense revitalisation action, the Basque language can be expected to disappear completely as a language of habitual use within two generations, including the present generation.

h) In the BZ-8a/b levels, the situation is beyond serious: it is in its death throes. Here we can observe the last generation of Basque speakers: they represent the final remnant of interpersonal use of Basque, with full language shift. There is a total absence of any revitalising potential.

i) The levels BZ-9 and BZ-10 are based on the exclusive use of the hegemonic language as the language of habitual use. There is no loss of intergenerational continuity in the use of Basque: you cannot lose something you do not have.

The vigorous effort to increase the use of Basque (through schools and language academies) that has been made so far is not producing a reversal in language shift in BZ-7, BZ-8, BZ-9 and BZ-10 areas. The small but significant number of people who, having become Basque speakers through school or language academies, are at the forefront of the drive for a continued Basque-speaking environment, belongs not to the overall social norm but to their individual biographical circumstances.

ing environment (at work and in life as a couple), their children can create a Basque-speaking breathing space or a significantly Basque-speaking zone.

After a certain age, BZ-7, BZ-8, BZ-9 and BZ-10 inhabitants tend to submit to the trend of interaction in the hegemonic language.

6. HOW TO RESPOND TO CURRENT CHALLENGES: PROPOSALS FOR PRIORITY INTERVENTION

The risks and possibilities of the current situation are a long way off offering simple, effective and evident guidelines for priority action with a view to the stable coexistence of languages. This topic requires a rigorous analysis and a fresh formulation, discussion and agreement on its scope. In other words, a new paradigm. The list below, while not exhaustive, gives six possible criteria for prioritisation.

6.1. ACCEPT THAT "THE PATH IS MADE BY WALKING"

For a long time we have been anchored to the maxim, "learn it now, use it later", placing the bulk of the language revitalisation burden on the shoulders of schools. An understanding and acceptance of the inconsistency of this method is urgently needed: languages are learned through spontaneous, colloquial, practical use, not prior to that use. The potential of schools is, therefore, significant but clearly insufficient on their own. We should not underestimate what schools can and do contribute,²¹ but they can only do what lies within their

²¹ Schools a) reinforce students' oral abilities in their native (or co-native) Basque, expanding them into reading and writing and providing resources to build up their use in formal and expository contexts; b) promote knowledge (not full functional mastery) of Basque among the clear majority of students who do not learn it at home, or do so to a limited extent; c) implement the Basque dimension of the curriculum; d) assist in the development of future Basque-speaking key intellectual figures, and e) provide space and encouragement for the thousands of professionals who have embarked on the huge task of strengthening the social use of Basque and/or reversing the language shift that has taken or is taking place. At present, there is no bigger system for social reward, in terms of numbers and geographical scope, that explicitly addresses that task.

powers, no more. It is of little use to sit down and learn, without practical engagement: the path is made by walking.

6.2. INCREASE THE INFORMAL DAY-TO-DAY USE OF THE LANGUAGE AND, WITH IT, ITS INTERGENERATIONAL CONTINUITY

It is highly necessary to identify the verbal interaction environments that require, favour or allow the spontaneous, informal use of the Basque language, to understand the nature and scope of the processes that sustain them and, as far as possible, strengthen them. We urgently need to adopt measures to preserve and reinforce colloquial use in places where there are clear signs of it decreasing. The task of strengthening the informal, day-to-day use of the language and, with that, its intergenerational continuity, is the priority: expansion initiatives are subsidiary and should be treated as such.

6.3. RECREATE AN EFFECTIVE SOCIOFUNCTIONAL COMPARTMENTALISATION FRAMEWORK

Real life in the Basque language takes place in terms shared with the hegemonic language. Unlike among speakers of Spanish or French, there is no Basque-speaking community (even in the Basque breathing spaces) that is sustained by the exclusive use of Basque at home, on the street, in sport and at work, in cities and in holiday resorts, for leisure and for business, on television and on the internet. What is more, with the levels of vernacularisation achieved by the hegemonic language, there is no majority of Basque speakers demanding such exclusivity in their day-to-day practical affairs: they resort to the hegemonic language (Spanish/French and sometimes English), where it is “necessary” to use it. As such, in the best of cases, we have to consider a Basque-speaking community with mixed Basque/hegemonic language use.

That fact clearly has a profound impact on the language’s viability. How are we to structure this shared use in terms that do not lead to

the gradual loss and eventual disappearance of the weaker language? It is known that, outside of code switching (or the use of humorous or affectionate expressions, which are very common in bilingual contexts such as ours), the use of two or more linguistic codes to convey verbal interaction in a single usage environment²² is a clearly dispensable social behaviour: a mere redundancy, incapable of preserving the intergenerational continuity of the weaker language community. If two or more languages must coexist in a long-lasting way in the same place, each one needs its own undisputed space²³ for use. The social (and not just individual) configuration of stable bilingualism is, therefore, in our case, a *sine qua non*. So, it is necessary to define criteria for compartmentalisation that allow Basque speakers²⁴ the broadest possible range of interaction in Basque,²⁵ cementing its position in a framework where the hegemonic language has an active, not transitional, presence. A new compartmentalisation framework, that adjusts to our sociolinguistic conditions in the present and the foreseeable future, needs to be formulated, discussed, agreed and implemented. In technical terms, a new diglossia system must be drafted (Zalbide, 2011). The places where this project is most viable are the Basque breathing spaces: they do not accommodate the largest number of active Basque speakers, but they largely²⁶ retain Basque

²² i.e. the same speakers, topics and communicative strategies.

²³ It is not necessarily a geographical area (that would have a great potential for stabilisation and as such is highly desirable, but the possibility is very weak in our case and as such barely applies). That space can be (and, in our case, often must be) sociofunctional. For the geographical formulation of diglossia, see Fishman.

²⁴ This refers to people who habitually speak Basque in their day-to-day, colloquial activities, and not to those who, despite knowing Basque, usually express themselves in those activities in the hegemonic language.

²⁵ An agenda that is capable of preserving basic intergenerational continuity and, in addition, recovering physical or sociofunctional spaces that have been lost and settle in new ones.

²⁶ A significant but varying, and frequently decreasing, level: see section 3.4.

dominance configuration,²⁷ which is the main source of its survival over time.

6.4. PRACTICAL ACCEPTANCE OF THE CRUCIAL NATURE OF PHYSICAL BREATHING SPACES

It is necessary to progress from recognising their importance to adopting operative measures to halt or reverse the deterioration that they have suffered in the last 15 or 20 years. If this is not done, their future is easy to predict. The Basque language community, if it is to survive, needs compact, not dispersed, physical spaces where the inhabitants continue to habitually use Basque for their informal, day-to-day speech. These spaces are what guarantees overall, rather than circumstantial, intergenerational continuity of the mother tongue. No language community in the world has been known to maintain the habitual use of its own language without the contribution of this intergenerational mechanism. This day-to-day environment, with its limited but intense and continuous scope, is where the habitual use of a language is generated and consolidated.

The preservation and consolidation of informal, day-to-day use of Basque in places where it is prevalent is urgently needed. Strengthening the habitual speaking of Basque in children, young people and adults whose mother tongue is Basque must become a practical priority, not a rhetorical practice. It is of primary importance to care for the healthy as much as or more than the sick. And, above all, it is not recommended to focus our efforts on bringing the dead back to life. First things first.

The preservation of informal, day-to-day use of Basque in places where it is prevalent is an urgent priority. It is easy to say so, but it involves a particularly delicate task: as well as a keen resolve, it requires intense ongoing effort, broad theoretical knowledge and great professional expertise.²⁸ Schools, health centres

and local or regional administration²⁹ are crucial actors in top-down institutional planning. The key task, however, lies elsewhere: a) The demolinguistic stabilisation of Basque breathing spaces: adopting measures to encourage the (young) population to remain resident in their place (or their environment) and to prevent the arrival of an avalanche of new residents who speak the hegemonic language.³⁰ To achieve this, the local population has to retain, to a significant extent, the capacity to regulate migration flows and, furthermore, to make good use of that capacity for sociolinguistic purposes; b) Ensure the social and economic viability of Basque breathing spaces and their surroundings: without work, there is no life, and where there is no life, any language becomes useless; c) Urban planning in Basque breathing spaces requires particular attention;³¹ and d) In the end, it falls to the residents themselves of these Basque breathing spaces to perform the arduous task of agreeing and applying a new intra-group sociolinguistic and sociocultural compartmentalisation system: they must retain, update and renew a *modus vivendi* that, without abandoning historic links like *Gemeinschaft*, allows the creation of an attractive living environment for young and old, both present and future.

These four tasks are difficult to approach and, above all, to apply. In each and every one of them there is a risk of breaking deep-rooted organisational guidelines of modern democratic societies and, in particular, colliding with fundamental ethical principles. Scepticism and

sources are not required. We are squarely in the realm of “bide batezko plangintza” (i.e. covert policy and planning).

²⁹ In general, such bodies must be staffed by people with competence in the mother tongue of the majority, i.e. competent in speaking and, where necessary, in reading and writing.

³⁰ Speakers of the hegemonic language or, what is relatively similar, bilingual speakers for whom the hegemonic language is dominant.

³¹ When planning new urban developments, especially in the regions’ main towns with a BZ-6c level, it is important to evaluate the viability and relevance of measures to safeguard “model D spaces” (houses, parks and key services where Basque is used habitually).

²⁷ For the technical definition of the sociocentric version of dominance configuration, see, for example, Fishman 1972.

²⁸ Nevertheless, significant amounts of financial re-

mistrust are, therefore, more than justified. Furthermore, who would be prepared to take on such significant risks, to tackle issues that affect a numerically and typologically “marginal” community? Even so, we understand that the matter well deserves serious consideration: any sociolinguistic proposal that aims to ensure the shared use of two languages in the foreseeable future³² must face this challenge and resolve it. Anyone who explicitly or implicitly plays the single-language game (whether Basque or the hegemonic language) can, clearly, save themselves the bother.

6.5. RETURN, AS FAR AS POSSIBLE, PLACES WITH CURRENT LEVEL BZ-6C TO LEVEL BZ-6B

These places are particularly relevant for the future of the Basque language because of both their demographic volume and their geographical position.³³ After the Basque breathing spaces, these are the places that have highest viability for preservation and revitalisation of Basque language use. Here it is also necessary to analyse overall migratory flows, socioeconomic plans, sociocultural renewal and land planning, giving precedence to approaches that do not harm and, where possible, restore, the habitual use of Basque in the communities concerned. With regard to environments with lower vitality, this task is particularly delicate, both when applying top-down institutional measures and when generating bottom-up citizens’ initiatives. Planning of aspects linked to day-to-day, informal or intimate coexistence is always a difficult task, as well as an openly questionable one. However, it is not an unheard-of event in advanced societies: on the contrary, the thousand and one suggestions with which the media and agents of socialisation gently seduce us every day are evidence that such action is “our daily bread”. It is therefore a good idea to approach the issue with resolute prudence, calmly evaluating

the viability, desirability and scope of each proposal.

6.6. APPLYING SPECIFIC MEASURES IN CAPITAL CITIES AND REGIONAL MAIN TOWNS: ACTIONS TO TAKE IN LEVELS BZ-6D AND BZ-6E

Most citizens do not live in Basque breathing spaces, or in level BZ-6c locations. The majority inhabit capitals or regional main towns, some of which are level BZ-6d (e.g. Donostia and its surrounding conurbation, from Irun to Andoain) and others (the majority) are level BZ-6e locations. Both levels currently constitute the native or adopted residential locus of numerous Basque speakers. The majority of them live immersed in a linguistic environment where the hegemonic language is clearly dominant³⁴.

The fundamental challenge facing these places is to preserve or reactivate the habitual use of Basque in daily life: in the “pockets of basic, everyday, informal life” mentioned by Fishman. This is a tremendously difficult task. It requires intervention in environments where the hegemonic language is prevalent, sometimes exclusive, in order to retain or reconstitute groups of speakers or interaction networks where Basque is used habitually. How is this done? By resorting not to the usual promotional planning, but rather to what we have denominated *bide batezko euskalgintza* or *bide batezko plangintza*,³⁵ which is perhaps synonymous with Richard B. Baldauf Jr’s con-

³⁴ Among them there is a subgroup that carries out its professional activity bilingually or with a preference for Basque: teachers in model B and D systems (from primary education through to university), Basque press and audiovisual media professionals, and cultural and public administrators. Despite being a considerable community, they remain a clear minority (less than 10%). It does not seem likely that this percentage will change much in the foreseeable future.

³⁵ For a clarification of concepts in terms of national documentation, see Zalbide, 2007a and 2015, and Rodríguez, 2016b: 138-9. For a broader perspective, refer to Richard B. Baldauf Jr’s analysis of covert policy and planning: “Rearticulating the Case for Micro Language Planning in a Language Ecology Context”. See also Jordi Pujol Nadal, 2000: 86.

³² By “foreseeable future” we mean a period of 50 to 100 years. Beyond that, conjectures abound and the intellectual exercise is diluted.

³³ A large proportion of these BZ-6c level main towns act as hubs for their BZ-6a and BZ-6b level surroundings.

cept of *covert policy and planning*, or a *by-the-way planning*. In other words, by creating and organising the provision of services in Basque for Basque speakers who want, accept or need them. As a complement to the current provision of literacy in Basque in schools, which is institutionally guaranteed to a large extent,³⁶ it is also necessary to preserve, revitalise or reconstitute³⁷ informal interaction networks for Basque speakers located there, in their own language. To achieve this, the most effective means is to set up and offer, in “model D”, the key services required by Basque speakers in those environments:³⁸ organise and strengthen measures to promote the informal use of the language in daily, local, community activities, serving the basic needs of the Basque-speaking population. By focusing mainly on serving communities that live, or wish to live, in Basque, two more important objectives are incidentally met: activating the habitual use of the language in day-to-day environments and offering³⁹ financial support to Basque-speaking citizens who offer these services. It is a tremendously delicate task but, if it is correctly applied, it is a modern, creative and highly effective one.

³⁶ The provision of audiovisual media in Basque also contributes to this.

³⁷ Normally with bottom-up proposals and initiatives.

³⁸ For example: care and minding services for children and adults, either at home or in the neighbourhood; restaurant and hotel services; tourism and weekend excursions; places and devices that create and support interaction networks for adults and, in particular, young people. In relation to the latter, special attention is required for places where new couples can meet, get to know one another and receive support. That is where, to a great extent, the final game in the long intergenerational league is played.

³⁹ To varying degrees, the voluntary, un paid or low-paid nature of these initiatives should not be ignored.

7. URGENT NEED: CENTRE FOR LANGUAGE REVITALISATION STUDIES

Even when habitual use of a language may be stable, it is common for it to undergo variation of one form or another: accelerated expansion, sustained increase, moderate decline, sharp loss or extinction. This variation in use is normally associated with social changes of a demographic, econotechnic, politico-operational, sociocultural or territory-organisational nature. These changes need to be analysed in order to explain the variation in habitual use of a language, both in society as a whole and in specific groups or interaction networks. The majority of language revitalisation measures, and *RLS*⁴⁰ or *RDL*⁴¹ in particular, squarely fit that multifaceted perspective. It is for specialists to rigorously study and shed light on the topic: their task is to identify precisely the best indicators of that variation and to determine aspects of strategic, tactical and evaluative order in revitalisation activities.

The Basque language community shows an unequal balance in this regard: we have 120 years of great activity on a tactical level, we have a more uneven balance on the evaluative realm and, although there is no shortage of proposals of varying solidity or self-fulfilling prophecies of different types, the area of strategic reflection is the least developed. Work towards informed discernment in this area requires, among others, the following four conditions: a) solid theoretical knowledge of dominance configuration in bilingual contexts, intergenerational continuity, substitution processes (language shift) and language revitalisation mechanisms; b) a broad and precise knowledge of

⁴⁰ Acronym of *Reversing Language Shift. Theoretical and Empirical Foundations of Assistance to Threatened Languages*. Fishman 1991.

⁴¹ Acronym for the Spanish *Reversión del Desplazamiento Lingüístico* (Reversing Language Shift). There is an alternative version: *PRLS* or *Promotion of Reversing Language Shift* (Margarita Hidalgo, 2003-4). In Basque, *HINBE*, the acronym of (*ahuldutako*) *Hizkuntza INdar-BErritzea* (Zalbide, 2003 and 2004).

our past and present sociolinguistic situation in terms of language shift, revitalisation plans and their results; c) access to the sociolinguistic know-how needed to conduct a comparable diagnosis of the current situation, and d) the ability to identify the priorities in areas of use and interaction mechanisms to maintain and reactivate, "here and now", the intergenerational continuity of the Basque language.⁴² We need this theoretical reflection, rooted in a research process that is collective and continued, not individual and episodic, with a well-structured process for disseminating the results and for their comparison with internal and external specialists. We need, in the light of that, to redefine our knowledge and interpretation systems. This cannot be achieved without a Centre for Language Revitalisation Studies.

In our opinion, the Centre's priorities are to shed light of the following matters: a) elements that sustain the intergenerational continuity of contextually weak language communities; b) mechanisms that enable or promote the interruption of intergenerational transmission; c) priority criteria to optimise the intergenerational transmission of the mother tongue; d) the place of physical breathing spaces of the Basque language in the overall revitalisation task, on the basis of an operational definition thereof, and e) clarification of the general sociolinguistic and juridical system(s) on the basis of which, in the 21st century, we can configure the coexistence of a contextually strong language (Spanish, French) and a weak one (Basque): in other words, how to form a *modus vivendi*, not *morendi*, for the Basque language in terms of widespread bilingualism.

The Centre should also help to design the operational elements needed to clarify the necessary basic concepts with certainty and facilitate the application of relevant research methods. It should develop, check and, where possible, agree with experts on the conceptual and methodological tools needed to improve measurement of vitality, with a view to apply-

ing them in a more uniform and stable way. We believe that that improvement and homogenisation should, on the one hand, apply to measurements of habitual use at home, on the street and in the population in general and, on the other hand, serve to provide a more precise and reliable definition of language use at work. We do not see these as the only areas that need improvement, but rather as the most urgent.

Of course, empirical evidence is not a universal remedy. However, little progress can be made without its help. The positive experience of our ethnic and cultural identity, the desire to work hard and the firm conviction that a more promising future can be forged for the community are all attributes that favour the positive outcome of the task in hand, but they are not sufficient. To overcome the difficulties we are facing, we need to base our actions on proven knowledge and accumulated experience. To quote Samuel Johnson, "a lost cause is a cause whose adherents permit hope to take precedence over experience" (Fishman, 2007 [1996]). It is very difficult to accumulate such experience without rational reflection. To that effect, a study centre as described here seems to us to be indispensable.



⁴² Full transmission of mother tongue is, in that respect, the central mission.

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