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Cover Page Footnote

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Minority Languages, National State Languages, and English in Europe: Multilingual Education in the Basque Country and Friesland

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This article focuses on minority languages in education in Europe in contexts where they are in contact with national state languages and English. Teaching minority language implies bilingual education because it is not about replacing the majority language, but to come 'alongside' or at 'equal footing'. The cases of Basque and Frisian, comparing and contrasting their similarities and differences, are analyzed. Schools in these regions desire to go beyond bilingualism and to promote multilingualism as an important aim in education. The contribution of Ofelia García's work to research in these contexts is discussed.

Keywords: Basque Country, English in Europe, Friesland, minority languages, multilingualism, multilingual education, national state languages, Ofelia García, translanguaging

The work of Ofelia García has focused on bilingual speakers in the US but her influence has also been extremely important in Europe, particularly in bilingual contexts in which a minoritized language is used (Cenoz & Gorter, 2010; Gorter, Zenotz, Etxague, & Cenoz, 2014). European regional minority languages are autochthonous languages originating from the areas where they are still spoken today and they are in contact with national languages. In regions such as the Basque Country, Friesland, Catalonia, Corsica, or Brittany, all speakers of the minority language are also fluent in the national language and at school they learn English as a third language. European regional minority languages face many challenges regarding their use in education because of their status. In this article, we look at two regions, Friesland and the Basque Country, where three languages, the minority language, the national state language, and English are included in the curriculum. Multilingual education in Friesland and the Basque Country has been influenced by Ofelia García's outstanding scholarly contributions. In the next sections, we explain the sociolinguistic and educational situation of these two regions. Moreover, we discuss her visits to Friesland and the

Basque Country and her remarkable insight into the study of bilingualism and bilingual education.

Friesland, the Frisian Language, and Multilingual Education

Languages in Frisian Society and Education

Fryslân (Friesland) is a province located in the north of the Netherlands, it covers an area of 3,250 square km. The province is the core of the historical living areas of the speakers of the Frisian language along the south coast of the North Sea and the area is called West-Frisia to distinguish it from North Frisia and East Frisia both located in Germany. Almost 650,000 people live in the province and a large part of them can speak Frisian. Their language is a variety of the West-Germanic language branch of Indo-European languages, related to but as a language distinct from the North Frisian dialects and Sater Frisian in Germany. The Frisian language has a co-official status with Dutch, the state language of the Netherlands. The two languages are closely related to each other but not mutually comprehensible. Table 1 shows some family terms in Frisian, Dutch and English.

Table 1

Some examples of family terms in Frisian, Dutch, and English

Frisian	Dutch	English
Heit	vader	father
Mem	moeder	mother
soan	zoon	son
dochter	dochter	daughter
broer	broer	brother
suster	zuster	sister

All Frisian speakers today are at least bilingual as they have also fluency in Dutch. For Dutch speakers, who want to, Frisian is relatively easy to learn and to understand, but harder to speak because of phonological differences. The Frisian-speaking community is basically homogeneous and there are only small differences between the main varieties of this language.



Figure 1. Language map of Friesland

In society in general, as well as at all levels of the education system, Dutch is the language that dominates. Frisian is an indigenous minority language, which has only entered a limited number of the key language domains in current society; this is a circumstance that Frisian shares with many other European minority languages (Extra & Gorter, 2007). Depending on the geographic location, the use of Frisian can prevail in situations of communication in the family, the neighbourhood, the local community, and the lower work sphere. Even though the provincial government stimulates Frisian through its language policy, language use in the administrative domain is modest (Gorter, 1993).

Frisian is the language learned first at home by approximately half of the population, but inter-generational transmission is vulnerable among younger parents. The results of language surveys over a period of almost 50 years show a noteworthy stability, in particular for the receptive ability to understand Frisian. As shown in Table 2 below, the ability to understand Frisian is common among the population. Proficiency in reading remains limited to about half the population, probably due to the limited emphasis on Frisian literacy in education. The competence to speak Frisian has gradually stabilized over the years, although this self-reported ability does not say much about actual use of the language. Finally, reported writing skills apparently have increased, which may be related to changes in the official spelling, education, and use in social media (Klinkenberg, 2017; Provinsje Fryslân, 2007).

Table 2

Developments in the proficiency in Frisian over the last 50 years

Skill/year	1967	1980	1994	2007	2011	2016*
Understand	90%	85%	85%	84%	84%	89%
Read	44%	34%	34%	46%	48%	59%
Speak	77%	62%	61%	64%	64%	70%
Write	12%	2%	4%	10%	11%	19%

Sources: Gorter, Jelsma, Van der Plank, and De Vos (1984); Gorter and Jonkman (1995, pp. 67-68); Klinkenberg (2017, p. 11)

*Due to differences in the sampling method in 2016, those figures may have some positive bias for Frisian.

English is a language that has an increasing presence in the province. In the Netherlands and in Friesland, English can be considered more of a 'second' or a 'third' language rather than a 'foreign' language. English is all around and people hear and see the language on an everyday basis through television, advertisements, internet, and tourism. According to the Eurobarometer survey (2012, p. 21) 90% of the inhabitants of the Netherlands claim they speak English "well enough in order to be able to have a conversation". This is the highest percentage in the European Union, although similar to member states such as Malta, Sweden, or Denmark, and more than double the average of 38% for the European Union. The knowledge of German is also quite widespread; according to the same Eurobarometer survey, 71% of the population reports speaking proficiency. In other words, a large majority of the population are multilingual speakers of two, three, four, or sometimes even five languages. Other languages, for example, the home languages of migrants, expats, refugees or other newcomers have a modest place in Friesland. Some years ago, Extra and Kloprogge (2000) reported that primary school children in Leeuwarden/Ljouwert, the capital of Friesland, speak around 50 different home languages. However, in public life none of those languages plays any role of importance. The percentage of people in Friesland not born in the Netherlands, is nine per cent, of those over half are born in European countries [in comparison in the Netherlands the average is 22.6% 'migrants' and about half are born in 'western' countries (CBS, 2017)].

In comparison to other minority languages in Europe, Frisian is viewed favourably in terms of the relative number of speakers and the basic positive attitudes among the population (Gorter, 2001).

The Frisian Language in Education

The Netherlands as a country is characterized by a rather centralised system of education, and schools in Friesland are fully integrated. Just a few legal exceptions were created in the second half of the twentieth century to allow for the possibility to teach the Frisian language. Therefore, Frisian has attained a minor presence at all levels of education.

Playgroups or day-care centers are left free in their choice of language, but through a series of policy measures today about half of them are Frisian-medium or

bilingual (180 out of 375), those are attended by between 30-35% of children aged two to four years old. The situation at this level of education has improved substantially over the past 10 years.

Primary schools are attended by children aged 4 to 12 (grades 1 to 8). According to law, primary schools in Friesland are obliged to teach three languages: Dutch, Frisian, and English. However, the amount of time for each language is not prescribed and a small number of schools have obtained an exemption to teach Frisian as a subject (in cases where the language has only a small presence in the local situation). Usually Frisian has a limited place in the curriculum. A common pattern is to teach Frisian for one session of about half an hour per week as a subject in the two lowest grades and one full lesson in grades 3 to 8, which equals a total of some 200 hours over a 10-year period. As a medium of instruction for other subjects Frisian also has a modest position. Figures collected by the Education Inspectorate from some years ago inform us that in the lowest grades, 34 per cent of the schools use some Frisian for creative subjects and physical instruction. In the higher grades only 11 per cent of all primary schools use Frisian as a medium of instruction (Inspectie, 2006, p. 32). A few years later the Education Inspectorate concluded on the basis of a follow-up study that two-thirds of all primary schools do not reach the expected 45 minutes of teaching Frisian per week and that the existing education in Frisian can be much better (Inspectie, 2010, p. 56). As this sketch of Frisian in primary education makes clear, the position of Frisian as a school language remains rather weak. An important factor is that Frisian is usually not graded for the report card because Frisian is not seen as important for socio-economic success.

As a general obligation in the Netherlands English is taught as a subject for one lesson a week in the two highest grades. In the last few years, schools were allowed to teach a foreign language for 15% of the time (4 hours per week). Several schools in Friesland have started to teach English as a subject from grade one. Bilingual Dutch-English primary education, with 30-50% of teaching time in English, is still limited (until 2019) to one experiment with 19 primary schools, of which one in Friesland.

A positive development for Frisian in primary education has been the development of so-called *trilingual schools* since 1997. In such schools Dutch, Frisian, and English are each taught as a subject and used as languages of instruction. The experiment with trilingual education was set up to stimulate the teaching of Frisian. Approximately 400 pupils at seven primary schools, all located in small villages, participated (Ytsma, 2001). In the original model, languages were strictly separated, with 50% of teaching time given to Frisian and 50% to Dutch. English was introduced as a subject in the sixth grade (a year earlier than other schools) and English was used for 20% of the time in the last two grades (Gorter, 2005). The attainment targets for both Frisian and Dutch are to be met fully and pupils have to reach a basic communicative ability in English (Van Ruijven & Ytsma, 2008).

In a longitudinal study, Van Ruijven and Ytsma (2008) summarised the results of eight years of the Trilingual School Project. The differences between the experimental and the control schools were not significant for Dutch literacy, but on Frisian technical reading skills the children at the experimental schools scored higher. The reading and writing of Frisian is a relatively important part of the curriculum in this project. The

systematic bilingual approach had no negative influence on proficiency in the majority language, Dutch, and positive effects for the minority language, Frisian. Another important result was that literacy skills for English (reading and writing) differed little between the schools. The aim of obtaining better literacy results in English was not fulfilled, although the children of the experimental schools showed more confidence in speaking English.

After the experimental stage, the trilingual schools have become one of the focal points of provincial language policy. The number of trilingual schools has grown considerably over the last years. In 2016, the network of trilingual schools included 73 primary schools (out of 428, or 17%). Currently the trilingual model is undergoing important changes, and variations on the basic model of trilingualism are allowed. Also a number of schools introduce English from the 1st grade onwards and leave the strict compartmentalization of languages behind and those schools aim for a more integrated use of languages or what they call 'translanguaging', an obvious influence of the work of Ofelia García (see below).

Secondary education has a core curriculum, but schools can decide freely how much time they devote to each subject. Frisian is an obligatory subject in secondary education, but almost all secondary schools teach it for one hour per week in the lowest grade. Frisian can be chosen as an optional subject in the higher grades for the final exams, but only very few students do so each year. Dutch is the predominant medium of instruction, although more recently a handful of secondary schools has introduced a bilingual Dutch-English program. In all secondary schools Dutch and English are taught as a subject and often German and French can be chosen as well.

Educational Language Policy

In Friesland, as elsewhere, multilingualism in society is increasing. Today many children come from mixed-language families. In the classroom, the teacher will be confronted with this diversity and has to deal with a more complicated educational practice. In general, speaking different languages is valued positively, but minority languages such as Frisian or immigrant languages are lower on the prestige scale than English or other so-called 'modern' languages such as French or German.

Ofelia García visited Friesland in April 1993 as a keynote speaker at the conference *Bilingual Education in Friesland: Facts and Prospects* (García, 1993). Koen Zondag was the main organizer of the 1993 conference. At the time, he was the specialist for bilingual education of the educational advisory centre in Friesland. Over the years he had been visiting Joshua Fishman and Ofelia García in New York in order to get acquainted with bilingual Spanish-English schools and other forms of heritage education. One of his main tasks as a school advisor was to transfer the knowledge thus obtained to teachers in Friesland. In 1999, when Zondag retired, Ofelia García wrote a two-page contribution to his *Liber Amicorum* (García, 1999). In that short text, she mentions three things worth repeating in this contribution. First, she observes that throughout the world, bilingualism is no longer sufficient. Thus, in the case of Dutch-Frisian bilingualism "English must also be part of the multilingualism of Frisian children" (p. 28). Second, she refers to similarities between the revitalization of Frisian and Basque or Galician in Spain (p. 29). Finally, she makes a curious remark about the

relevant role of grandfathers in the process of intergenerational transmission of minority languages, because they can assure “that there will be another generation of children who will play and dream in Frisian” (p. 30). This is probably as much the case for grandmothers, as Ofelia García will be aware of today.

The Basque Country, the Basque Language, and Multilingual Education

The Basque Country covers an area of approximately 20,603 square km along the Bay of Biscay, north and south of the Pyrenees in France and Spain. The total population of the Basque Country is just over three million. As it can be seen in Figure 2, the Basque Country comprises seven provinces, three belong to France (Lapurdi, Nafarroa Beherea and Zuberoa), and the other four provinces to two autonomous regions in Spain (the Basque Autonomous Community and Navarre).



Iparralde, the Northern Basque Country covers an area of 2,978 square km, and it has approximately 260,000 inhabitants. The three provinces in Iparralde are part of the administration of the French ‘Department des Pyrénées Atlantiques’. Its main cities are Bayonne (44,506 inhabitants), Anglet (37,897) inhabitants, and Biarritz.

Figure 2. Map of the Basque Country (EuskoSare, <http://www.euskosare.org>, Cenoz, 2008).

The province of Navarre covers an area of 10,391 square kilometers and has 640,647 inhabitants, is administratively an autonomous community in Spain. Its capital is Pamplona-Iruñea with almost 200,000 inhabitants.

Ofelia García has a personal connection with the province of Navarre through her husband, Ricardo Otheguy who is of Basque origin. Ricardo’s family comes from the North of Navarre, an area with a high level of emigration to different countries in North America and Latin America in the XIXth century and early XXth century. Ernest Hemingway describes the landscape in this area in his famous book *The Sun also Rises*. The area and particularly the village of Burguete was a place to relax and to go fishing after the intense Fiesta of Pamplona. The impact of this landscape can be seen in the following passage:

We went through the forest and the road came out and turned along a rise of land, and out ahead of us was a rolling green plain, with dark mountains beyond it. These were not like the brown, heated-baked mountains we had left behind. These were wooded and there were clouds coming down from them (Hemingway, 1926/1976, p. 91).

This area of Navarre is also very well known nowadays because it is on the Way of Saint James, the Pilgrim's way to the shrine of the apostle Saint James in the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela.

The Basque Autonomous Community (BAC) covers an area of 7,234 square km and it is the most populated of the Basque regions. It has 2.1 million inhabitants, which is just over 70% of the total population in the whole of the Basque Country. The Basque Autonomous Community has three provinces: Bizkaia with a population of 1.1 million, Gipuzkoa with a population of almost 720,000, and Araba with a population of 325,000. The main cities in the BAC are the capitals of these provinces: Bilbao, Donostia-San Sebastian, and Vitoria-Gasteiz. Bilbao-Bilbo is the biggest city with a population of 345,000 and a metropolitan area of 1 million. Vitoria-Gasteiz is the administrative capital.

The Basque language, *euskara*, is a non-Indoeuropean language. Basque is not a Romance language such as Spanish or French and is not related to Germanic or Celtic languages either. There has been a lot of controversy over its origin and there have been several theories relating Basque to the languages in the Caucasus, or the family of Berber languages in Africa but there is not enough evidence to confirm these relationships. Most linguists consider that Basque is in a language family by itself, unrelated to other languages.

Unlike Spanish or French, the Basque language has declensions as it can be seen in Table 3. Basque also has a different word order as compared to Spanish and English. The linguistic distance between the languages in the educational system is a necessary factor to be taken into account when considering the different types of multilingual education. The differences between Basque, Spanish, French, and English can be seen when looking at vocabulary for family terms (Table 4).

Table 3

Examples of Basque Declensions Using Qualifiers after the Noun

etxe	home / house
etxea	the home / the house
etxeak	the houses/the house (erg)
etxean	at home / in the house
etxera	to the house/go home
etxearen	belongs to the house
etxeke	of the house, / familiar
etxetik	from the house
etxerantz	toward home

Table 4

Some Examples of Family Terms in Basque, Spanish, French, and English

Basque	Spanish	French	English
aita	padre	père	father
ama	madre	mère	mother
semea	hijo	fils	son
alaba	hija	filles	daughter
anaia	hermano	frère	brother
arriba/ahizpa	hermana	soeur	sister

Basque is also different from its neighboring languages in syntax. We can look at the following examples:

Basque: *Susaneke liburu bat eta bi aldizkari erosi ditu*

Spanish: *Susan ha comprado un libro y dos revistas*

French: *Susan a acheté un livre et deux magazines*

English: *Susan has bought a book and two magazines*

Basque is a minority language in the whole of the Basque Country. According to the most recent sociolinguistic survey, 28.4% of the population in the whole of the Basque Country is proficient in Basque and 16.4% can understand Basque but do not speak it (Nguyen, Doğröz, Rosé, & de Jong, 2016). Speakers of Basque are bilingual and can also speak French or Spanish with the exception of very young children who have Basque as their first language and learn French or Spanish at school. The majority of the population living in the Basque Country do not speak Basque. The sociolinguistic surveys started in 1991 and now it is possible to see the development of the knowledge of Basque. The data from 2016 indicate that the number of speakers who are proficient in Basque has increased in the last 25 years from 22.3% to 28.4%. As we will see, this increase of speakers of the minority language is mainly due to the efforts made in education.

The Basque language was widely spoken in most parts of the Basque Country in the past but the intensive contact of Basque with Spanish and French has resulted in an important retreat in the last centuries. In Spain, Basque was banned from the public domain during Franco's dictatorship (1939-1975). The political and social changes that took place in the last decades of the twentieth century in Spain favored a collective effort to maintain and revive the Basque language.

The process of promoting the Basque languages has been more intense in the Basque Autonomous Community than in the other areas of the Basque Country. There are special language policy plans to increase the use of Basque in different sectors (administration, health, private companies) but the most successful has been education.

In 1979, the Statute of Autonomy of the BAC declared Basque an official language along with Spanish and this implied that all inhabitants in the BAC have the right to know and use Basque and Spanish (Basque Autonomous Community, 1979). A few years later, the Law for the Normalization of Basque (Basque Autonomous Community, 1982) acknowledged the right of every student to receive his/her education in either Basque or Spanish and the parents' right to choose the medium of instruction. Basque was already used in education before this law was passed but in 1982 Basque and Spanish became compulsory subjects in all schools in the BAC. The Basque educational system has three models of language schooling: models A, B and D (there is no letter 'C' in the Basque alphabet). Table 5, below, presents models that differ with respect to the languages of instruction used and the intended student population.

The use of Basque as the medium of instruction has increased steadily over the years and at present, 96.55% school children in kindergarten, 95.63% primary school children, and 91.31% compulsory secondary school children have Basque as a language of instruction for some or all the school subjects (Model B and Model D, see Table 6).

Table 5

Models of Bilingual Education in the Basque Autonomous Community

Models	Use
Model A	Intended for native speakers of Spanish who choose to be instructed in Spanish. Basque is taught as a school subject.
Model B	Intended for native speakers of Spanish who want to be bilingual in Basque and Spanish. Both Basque and Spanish are used as languages of instruction for approximately 50% of school time. Both languages are also taught as school subjects.
Model D	Originally created as a language maintenance program for native speakers of Basque. It has Basque as the language of instruction and Spanish is taught as a subject.
Model X	Students in this model do not learn Basque because they live only temporarily in the BAC.

Table 6

Distribution in the Three Models (percentages)

	Spanish (A)	Basque and Spanish (B)	Basque (D)	No Basque (X)
Kindergarten	2.94	17.13	79.42	0.50
Primary	3.74	19.55	76.08	0.61
Secondary	8.03	24.13	67.18	0.64

Source: Basque Government: Department of Education, 2017

Model D with Basque as the language of instruction is the most popular at all the levels followed by model B. Model D was originally designed for Basque speaking children and practically all children from Basque speaking homes are enrolled in this model. Parents have the right to choose the model they want for the children and many parents choose model D even if they do not speak Basque at home. Sometimes this choice can be due to the feeling that speaking Basque is a part of Basque identity and the idea that even if Basque has been lost in the family children should learn it and use it in the future. Some parents also choose Basque-medium instruction for practical reasons, because it can be easier to find a job for Basque speakers.

The extended use of Basque as the language of instruction has had a very important effect on the increase of the number of speakers in the BAC. According to the sociolinguistic survey, there were 212,000 Basque speakers more in 2016 than in 1991 and the percentage of Basque speakers in the BAC has increased from 24.1% to 33.9% in these 25 years. The survey only includes people who are over 16 years old but it is estimated that most children in the BAC are Basque speaking because of bilingual education. According to the 2016 survey 71.4% of the young people between 16 and 24 are Basque speaking.

In spite of the important increase of Basque in the BAC, Basque is still weak in many areas of the Basque Country. Even in the BAC, there is no communicative need to use Basque in many situations. Many Basque speakers who learned Basque at school use mainly Spanish in their daily life.

The shift from Spanish into Basque as the main language of instruction has required an enormous effort on part of teachers and institutions. Many teachers had to receive courses to be qualified to teach through the medium of Basque and materials to teach all the school subjects through the medium of Basque have been developed over the years. Many students go on having Basque as the language of education in higher secondary education and at the university.

English is also taught in Basque schools and it is becoming increasingly important. Being proficient in English is seen as necessary by many people in the Basque Country. In the last years there have been two main trends in Basque schools so as to increase the hours of instruction in English. The first is the introduction of English in kindergarten, at the age of 4 or even earlier. Another trend is the use of English as an additional language of instruction in primary and secondary school.

The use of English as an additional language of instruction in a bilingual educational system adds additional challenges. Teachers need to have a high level of proficiency to be able to teach school subjects in English and some teachers who had Spanish as a first language already had to learn Basque and now they face the need to improve their competence in English as well. Another challenge is that the use of English as the language of instruction implies the development of specific materials in accordance with the Basque curriculum. In spite of these difficulties, there is an increasing number of schools teaching a few subjects through the medium of English.

An additional challenge for the Basque educational system is to adapt the educational system so as to integrate immigrant children. The percentage of immigrants who have Basque as the language of instruction is much lower than for the total number of students and this creates a concentration of immigrant students in some schools.

On May 15, 2015, Ofelia García and Ricardo Otheguy visited a D model school in the Basque Country. The school is Landako, a primary Basque-medium school in the town of Durango. The school has around 600 students and about 60 teachers divided over preprimary and primary education. The majority of the students belong to lower and middle socioeconomic classes. Some students have Basque or/and Spanish as their first language and others speak other languages at home. Landako school has a pedagogical system with its own special characteristics which is shared with a network of 19 schools. The space of the classroom is distributed into four or five areas where students work in groups and change to a different area every few weeks. Students of two different grades are in the same classroom with the idea of creating a more diverse and richer environment for learning. The school has its own radio and Ofelia García was interviewed by the school children as it can be seen in the picture below (Figure 3).



Figure 3. Ofelia García being interviewed at Landako school

Part of the Interview

St 1 [Ofelia García is visiting] our school. We are going to ask her some questions because we want to know more about her work.

St 2: Egunon Ofelia, ¿en qué país trabajas?

[Good morning Ofelia, in which country do you work?]

OG: Yo trabajo en los Estados Unidos, en Nueva York.

[I work in the United States, in New York]

St 3: ¿Qué beneficios crees tiene trabajar con tres idiomas simultáneamente?

[In your opinion, which are the advantages of working at the same time with the three languages?]

OG: Me parece que hay mucho beneficio, como, por ejemplo, porque ustedes hablan en inglés, en castellano, y en euskera. Yo no sé euskera y ustedes tiene muchos más beneficios que yo.

[I think that there are many advantages because you speak English, Spanish, and Basque. I do not speak Basque so you have more advantages.]

St1: ¿En que consta tu trabajo?

[What is your job about?]

OG: Pues, mi trabajo consiste en investigar y estudiar la adquisición de diferentes lenguas, y el desarrollo de multilingüismo, tanto el multilingüismo escolar como el multilingüismo en el mundo ... //

[Well, my job consists on conducting research and studying the acquisition of different languages and the development of multilingualism, both multilingualism at school and multilingualism in the world.]

The school also has an online magazine and a blog with news where Ofelia García's interview was reported (Figure 4).



Figure 4. Landako school on-line magazine

Translation from Basque:

Ofelia García in our school

Today Ofelia García (Graduate Center, City University of New York, USA) researcher working on languages, after visiting the Amara Berri school in Donostia, has visited our school. She has visited some classrooms and has seen our work.

Ofelia García and Ricardo Otheguy were visiting the Basque Country to give lectures at the University of the Basque Country. Our research group, Donostia Research on Education and Multilingualism (DREAM) organized a symposium on translanguaging on May 14, 2015 at the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU) and Ofelia García was our keynote speaker. She gave a brilliant lecture on theoretical and practical aspects of translanguaging. The symposium also included a presentation giving the details of the pedagogical intervention based on translanguaging that our research group has carried out in Landako. The aim of the intervention was to develop language awareness about multilingualism, the Basque language, and metalinguistic awareness by using the students' resources in their whole linguistic repertoire. Students in the 5th and 6th years of primary school worked on planned and sequenced activities that combined two or three languages and highlighted similarities and differences between them (Leonet, Cenoz, & Gorter, 2017). The director and teachers from Landako school also explained the way they were applying translanguaging in their classes. Participants were mainly teachers from Basque-medium schools who were not very familiar with the concept of translanguaging. Teachers had the opportunity to ask questions and make comments and some of them expressed their surprise about translanguaging because they had always been told that languages should be isolated from each other.

We also kept Ricardo Otheguy busy while he was in Donostia-San Sebastian. On May 13, 2015 he gave a lecture on the concept of Spanglish and the incomplete

acquisition of Spanish in New York. The lecture was well attended by university staff, graduate students, and some teachers and there was an interesting discussion at the end of the session.

Both of them also had some interviews with the media. They were on the Basque television; Ricardo Otheguy had an interview on a Basque radio and Ofelia García in *Diario Vasco*, a daily newspaper. The headline of the article says that she explained that “Languages such as Basque have to be protected but without isolating them from other languages” (Figure 5).

«Hay que proteger las lenguas como el euskera, pero sin aislarlas del resto»

La doctora Ofelia García es una experta en el 'translanguaging', entendido como el uso de elementos de dos o más lenguas de forma espontánea

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Es catedrática de lengua y educación en el Centro de Estudios de Postgrado de CUNY (City University of New York), una de las investigadoras de mayor prestigio internacional en educación bilingüe, sobre todo en el bilingüismo español-ingles en Estados Unidos. De origen cubano, la doctora Ofelia García ha realizado un gran número de publicaciones y ha impartido conferencias en congresos y universidades de todo el mundo. En su última visita a San Sebastián ofreció una charla sobre el fenómeno 'translanguaging'. Un sistema lingüístico que García recomienda aplicar con fines pedagógicos.



Ofelia García, ayer en el Paseo de Chillida, en Donostia / USOZ

Figure 5. Newspaper clipping *Diario Vasco*, May, 21, 2015

Ricardo Otheguy, Ofelia García, and Wallis Reid also refer to the Basque language “euskara” in their article in *Applied Linguistics Review* (2015) and their influence is important on research conducted in the Basque Country. The interest for researching language in the Basque Country can also be seen in the inclusion of chapters on the situation of Basque in volumes edited by Ofelia García. For example, M^a José Azurmendi and Iñaki Martínez de Luna wrote about the success-failure of “euskara” in the Basque Country in the *Handbook of Language and Ethnic Identity* (2nd ed. 2011) edited by Joshua Fishman and Ofelia García. Another example is the chapter on minority languages, state languages, and “English in European Education” by Cenoz and Gorter in the *Handbook of Bilingual and Multilingual Education* edited by Wayne E. Wright, Sovicheth Boun, and Ofelia García (2015).

Key Lessons from Ofelia García’s Work

In her contribution to the conference *Bilingual Education in Friesland: Facts and Prospects* that took place in Friesland, Ofelia García (1993) highlighted that teachers have a societal role also beyond the classroom. She illustrated how in Spanish-English transitional bilingual programs in the US “*Latino teachers think they are contributing to the maintenance of Spanish when in fact, they are only accelerating the groups shift to English*”. Working from the paradox of how increased use of the minority language

Spanish explains an accelerated shift to English, she presented four sociolinguistic principles:

1. *“Stigmatization leads to shift to the prestigious language*
2. *Absence of language-identity link leads to shift to the unmarked language*
3. *Lack of compartmentalization leads to shift to the dominant language*
4. *Lack of usefulness leads to shift to the useful language”* (p. 30).

In hindsight, it is interesting to note how Ofelia García emphasized in her third principle the importance of compartmentalization of languages. As examples, she mentioned the Hebrew Day schools and Canadian immersion programs where languages receive a different functional allocation that is similar to societal diglossia. She observed that in transitional bilingual programs the teachers do not give much thought to the distribution of languages in the classroom. It is worth repeating her words here at length when she states that a teacher uses *“her two languages in the way in which it is most frequently used in the bilingual community, frequently alternating or code-switching between one and the other”* (p. 31). Moreover, *“code-switching is certainly not always helpful in classrooms where bilingualism and biliteracy are the goal”* (p. 31) and *“code switching may facilitate English language acquisition ... it certainly works against the minority language, once again eroding the compartmentalization or diglossic arrangement that must exist between the two languages if bilingualism and biliteracy were the goal.”* (p. 32). Further *“A teacher who code-switches will naturally use more English than Spanish, since non-conscious language use in a bilingual context of unequal power leans toward the dominant language. And by eroding borders between the two languages, code-switching brings in English, while destroying Spanish.”* (p. 33)

She also discussed the metaphor of the linguistic heterogeneity in the world seen as a colorful flower garden, adding beauty, but also complexity, and needing a plan and work in order to conserve its beauty. In her conclusions she emphasized that *“because language is such an important part of education, all teachers, but especially bilingual teachers, should understand the role of language in their particular social context, and how their classroom practices reflect that goal”* (p. 36).

The ideas Ofelia García put forward about teachers fit well with the trilingual schools project that would start a few years later in Friesland. Ofelia García’s ideas about language compartmentalization and the flower garden and diversity did evolve and she later abandoned them in favor of a translanguaging approach.

In García (2011) she explains the reasons to replace the image of the language garden by the image of sustainable languaging. In a globalized world a more dynamic understanding of language is needed. The language garden represented separate plots of flowers in planned spaces in patterns to display colors. In the same way, languages in schools were compartmentalized to maintain language diversity. In the 21st century the focus has shifted to ‘languaging’, *“that is, the social features that are called upon by speakers in a seamless and complex network of multiple semiotic signs”* (p. 7). Our understandings of bilingualism and bilingual education are also affected by this shift. As she argues, *“additive bilingualism, or even trilingualism is no longer relevant. Bilingual use is not linear, not compartmentalized, not balanced. Rather, bilingualism is*

dynamic, and perhaps better understood as translingual (p. 7).” The assumption of translinguaging is that speakers engage in fluid language practices selecting certain features and soft assembling those in order to fulfill their communicative needs (see also García, 2009; García & Wei, 2014).

A language garden with separate spaces and language colors was adequate in the past but is no longer appropriate, because in a globalized world, it has as an effect to keep English dominant and it marginalizes other languages as “heritage”, pointing to the past. Today the sustainability of languaging must be encouraged, which refers to “*renewing past language practices to meet the needs of the present while not compromising those of future generations*” (García, 2011, p. 7).

Her more recent ideas about translinguaging have influenced research and practice in education in Friesland. For example, Duarte and Riemersma (2017) report upon a project in five trilingual schools where a translinguaging approach was implemented. Recognizing the changes in a globalizing world, the aim of the project is on the one hand, “*reducing the language separation pedagogies practiced in the schools*” and on the other hand, “*giving immigrant languages a place in the schools’ trilingual model*”. The three languages were given a joint role in certain activities and language awareness was stimulated to give value to home languages of children with a migrant background. The example offers a clear demonstration of Ofelia García’s influence on education research in Friesland. Today ‘translinguaging’ has become a household term in education in Friesland and that is in no small part thanks to Ofelia García.

Translinguaging has also had a huge influence in the Basque Country. Nowadays, research studies conducted in the Basque Country usually quote her work and teachers are accepting new ideas that go against the compartmentalization of languages. This concept has also stimulated discussions about the survival of Basque (Cenoz & Gorter, 2017). Ofelia García’s work is dynamic and her ideas have evolved over the years to keep up with the characteristics of bilingualism and bilingual education in the 21st century (García, 2009). Her scholarship has been inspiring and invigorating for many scholars working on bilingual and multilingual education all over the world.

Ofelia García is one of the most distinguished members of the international academic community. Her ground breaking ideas, her extensive scholarship, and her exceptional communicative skills make her a true leader in our field.

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