



FOREIGN LANGUAGES PROGRAMME

Report December 2008

Following the guidelines and recommendations provided by the European Union for the learning of foreign languages in education centres of compulsory education, the Department of Education, Universities and Research of the Basque Government, through the direction of the Education Innovation Department, keeps on giving strong support to the Multilingual Education. In order to do so, the following actions and projects are being developed:

- **Early Start to English** (2nd cycle of Pre-primary Education)
- **INEBI** (English through Content in Primary)
- **BHINEBI** (INEBI in ESO)
- **Plurilingual Experience** (ESO and Baccalaureate)

The first three modules (ESE, INEBI and BHINEBI) refer to the English language. Within the subject of English, curricular contents of other areas are studied (Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Mathematics and so on) and both the curricular contents and English as a subject are learned at the same time.

In the last module (Plurilingual Experience), subjects of the curriculum are offered in English or French, besides the subject Foreign Language.

In Secondary Compulsory Education a minimum of 7 hours per week must be offered in Basque, and another minimum of 7 hours in a foreign language. In Baccalaureate, it is compulsory that at least a minimum of a %25 per cent is offered in Basque and another %20 in a foreign language.

The objective of the Plurilingual Programme is to reach an optimum development of the communicative competence of the students in both Basque and Spanish and a good competence in one or more foreign languages. In order to achieve this aim, the basis are a communicative approach and a functional use of the language, that is, it is understood that the language, besides being an object of learning itself (grammatical rules, orthography, syntax and so on), it is a basic instrument of communication (both oral and written) as well as the tool to organize, work on and gather our knowledge (a learning tool),

In the following lines we specify each of the actions:

■ **Module ESE:**

- %100 of the schools introduce the English language from the 4 year-olds classroom.
- GARATU courses are offered periodically to the new teachers that did not have the opportunity to attend a course during the years 99-00

02-03, when the training Project was initiated and extended to most of the centres of the Basque Autonomous Community.

- Objective: Offer training and consultancy service to the new teachers working in these cycles. During the school years 99-00 to 02-03 training was offered to more than 150 centres of the Basque Autonomous Community (mostly State schools) in order to carry out the early start to English in optimum conditions. The teachers took part in seminars organized every two weeks within the school timetable (the layout of their timetable was such that they had a free afternoon to attend the course at the Berritzegune). In those seminars didactic materials were offered, materials that were developed by the assessing team to be used in the classrooms (these were didactic units about a curricular content in which English was the vehicular tool). Once this period was over, the teachers went on applying the same methodological approach in the immediately following courses of Primary (INEBI programme) and the intention is to maintain the training offer for the new teachers by means of the GARATU courses.
- The didactic units that were designed for these ages (4 and 5 year-olds classrooms) were published under the name of “Dip, Dip, Dip” and obtained the prize of the “European Seal to the innovation in language teaching and learning 2005”

■ INEBI:

- Objective: to give continuity to the centres that have finished the previous module, developing curricular material for 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th Primary. Most of the participating centres have already finished the training process. During this school year some of the projects keep on developing by means of the official call for Innovation Projects.
- The conditions are the same that those of the previous module. The seminars are offered within the school timetable. The centres receive an amount of money to buy materials. We do not use textbooks. We try to train the students so that they get used to use authentic materials (books, encyclopaedias, story tails, CDROMs, web pages...) and we encourage them to use learning strategies to manage and obtain the needed information (look for key words, differences between types of texts, text structure, image support and so on). We promote activities that imply oral and written production: oral expositions of previously done class-works or text production related to topics that have been studied. There are also a number of activities that are systematically repeated (routines) which help use the language in an easy and contextualized way: greetings, task distribution, materials' gathering, class work presentations, rules of games and so on.

■ BHINEBI:

- Objective: As a starting point, inform the teachers of English of Compulsory Secondary Education about what it has been done in Primary, explain the methodological approach that is going to be used in Secondary, give theoretical training and practical training by means of curricular materials specifically designed for Compulsory Secondary Education and, finally, respond to the needs and difficulties of the teachers in their everyday work.
- The methodology is the same that the one used in Primary. The objective is to give continuity to the approach towards language in Secondary Education. Very often the transition from Primary to Secondary implies a gap concerning methodological approaches which has negative consequences in the learning process of the students.

■ PLURILINGUAL EXPERIENCE:

- 26 centres offer curricular subjects in English and 10 centres in French. The subjects differ from centre to centre: History, Biology, Technology, and so on. It is voluntary for the students and each centre decides the selection criteria of the students participating in the experience.
- Objective: offer theoretical and practical training and assessment to the teachers participating in this pilot experience. Help them with the development of the curricular material in order to offer the selected subjects in English and also to facilitate the coordination between the teachers mentioned.
- ISEI-IVEI did a longitudinal research during the school years (2004-2006) in which six centres out of the admitted twelve were analysed. The report was finished in the first semester of 2007. In order to measure the level of linguistic competence of English, some tests were handed to the students of 1st and 2nd cycle of ESO and also to those of Baccalaureate. The tests are based on the A2, B1, and B2 levels described by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. You can find more information about the objectives and the research methodology in the following ISEI-IVEI page: (<http://www.isei-ivei.net/cast/inves/invindex.htm>).

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