

# Profiling plurilingual education

A pilot study of four Spanish autonomous communities

Editor  
Josep M. Cots



**PLURILINGUAL**



**Profiling plurilingual education**  
**A pilot study of four Spanish**  
**autonomous communities**

Josep M. Cots  
(Editor)

Edicions de la Universitat de Lleida  
Lleida, 2023

ISBN 978-84-9144-436-7

Fotografia de coberta: Shutterstock

Maquetació: Edicions i Publicacions de la UdL

© Edicions de la Universitat de Lleida, 2023

© dels textos: els autors

## **Acknowledgements**

This volume is the product of the 2020-2022 research network Educación Plurilingüe (EDUPLUS), funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities (Ref. RED2018-102774-T). The network included the following researchers representing their respective research teams: Jazone Cenoz, Josep M. Cots, Melinda Dooly, Maria González-Davies, Rosa M. Jiménez Catalán and Pilar Safont. Special thanks to Raphael Berthele and Gessica De Angelis for their contributions to the volume. The data corresponding to the different autonomous communities were diligently collected and systematised by Ana Campos Bayón (Basque Autonomous Community), Andrea Chánez Carbajo (Catalonia) and Gema Gayete Domínguez (Valencian Community). A sincere thank you to William Bromberg for his proofreading of the different chapters.



## Table of contents

### **Prologue. Promises, ambitions, and scholarly rigor in research on plurilingual education**

*Raphael Berthele*..... 11

### **A framework for analysing plurilingual education**

<i>Jasone Cenoz, Josep M. Cots, Maria González-Davies</i> .....	15
EDUPLUS: Networking research in plurilingual education.....	15
The framework.....	18
Autonomous community and school: The Continua of Multilingual Education....	18
The classroom: Integrated Plurilingual Approach (IPA) .....	24
References .....	27
Appendix.....	30

### **Plurilingual education in the Basque. Autonomous Community**

<i>Jasone Cenoz</i> .....	33
1. The Basque Autonomous Community .....	33
1.1. Profile of the Basque Autonomous Community .....	33
1.2. School subjects and languages of instruction .....	34
1.3. Plurilingual education in the Basque Autonomous Community .....	39
2. The schools.....	40
2.1. Primary education.....	40
2.1.1. Languages and subjects .....	41
2.1.2. Teachers .....	41
2.1.3. School context .....	41
2.1.4. Home context.....	42
2.2. Secondary education .....	42
2.2.1. Languages and subjects .....	42
2.2.2. Teachers .....	43

2.2.3. School context .....	43
2.2.4. Home context .....	44
3. The classrooms .....	44
3.1. Primary education .....	44
3.1.1. Languages and subjects .....	44
3.1.2. Teachers .....	45
3.1.3. School context .....	45
3.1.4. Home context .....	46
3.1.5. Plurilingual practices in the classroom.....	46
3.2. Secondary education .....	48
3.2.1. Languages and subjects .....	48
3.2.2. Teachers .....	48
3.2.3. School context .....	49
3.2.4. Home context .....	50
3.2.5. Plurilingual practices in the classroom.....	50
References .....	52

**Plurilingual Education in Catalonia**

<i>Josep M. Cots, Melinda Dooly, Maria González-Davies.....</i>	55
1. The Autonomous Community of Catalonia .....	55
1.1. Profile of Catalonia .....	55
1.2. School subjects and languages of instruction .....	59
1.3. The Catalan Linguistic Model and plurilingual projects .....	62
2. The schools.....	63
2.1. Primary education .....	63
2.1.1. Languages and subjects .....	63
2.1.2. Teachers .....	64
2.1.3. School context .....	64
2.1.4. Home context.....	65
2.2. Compulsory secondary education.....	65
2.2.1. Languages and subjects .....	65
2.2.2. Teachers .....	65
2.2.3. School context .....	66
2.2.4. Home context.....	66
3. The classrooms .....	66
3.1. Primary education.....	66
3.1.1. Languages and subjects .....	67
3.1.2. Teachers .....	67
3.1.3. School context .....	67
3.1.4. Home context.....	68
3.1.5. Plurilingual practices observed in the classroom .....	69



3.2. Compulsory Secondary education .....	70
3.2.1. Languages and subjects .....	70
3.2.2. Teachers .....	71
3.2.3. School context .....	71
3.2.4. Home context .....	72
3.2.5. Plurilingual practices observed in the classroom .....	72
References .....	74

### **Plurilingual Education in La Rioja**

<i>Rosa M. Jiménez Catalán, Leah Geoghegan</i> .....	75
1. The Autonomous Community of La Rioja .....	75
1.1. Profile of La Rioja .....	75
1.2. School subjects and language of instruction.....	78
1.3. Bilingual/plurilingual projects in La Rioja .....	80
1.3.1. The School Language Innovation Projects .....	80
1.3.2. Bilingual Sections.....	81
2. The schools.....	83
2.1. Primary education .....	83
2.1.1. Languages and subjects .....	83
2.1.2. Teachers .....	84
2.1.3. School context .....	84
2.1.4. Home context .....	85
2.2. Secondary education .....	85
2.2.1. Languages and subjects .....	86
2.2.2. Teachers .....	87
2.2.3. School context .....	87
2.2.4. Home context .....	89
3. The classrooms .....	90
3.1. Primary education.....	90
3.1.1. Languages and subjects .....	90
3.1.2. Teachers .....	91
3.1.3. School context .....	92
3.1.4. Home context .....	92
3.1.5. Plurilingual practices in the classroom .....	92
3.2. Secondary education .....	94
3.2.1. Teachers .....	94
3.2.2. Languages and subjects .....	95
3.2.3. School context .....	96
3.2.4. Home context.....	96
3.2.5. Plurilingual practices in the classroom.....	96
References .....	99

**Plurilingual Education in the Valencian Community**

<i>Pilar Safont</i> .....	101
1. The Valencian Community .....	102
1.1. Profile of the Valencian Community .....	102
1.2. Bilingual/Plurilingual projects in the Valencian Community .....	103
1.2.1. Bilingual programs (PIP, PEV and PIL).....	103
1.2.2. The Plurilingual Program (PEPLI) .....	104
1.3. Language competence and use in educational settings .....	106
2. The schools.....	109
2.1. Primary education.....	110
2.1.1. Languages and subjects .....	111
2.1.2. Teachers .....	113
2.1.3. School context .....	115
2.1.4. Home context .....	116
2.2. Compulsory secondary education.....	118
2.2.1. Languages and subjects .....	119
2.2.2. Teachers .....	121
2.2.3. School context .....	124
2.2.4. Home context.....	125
3. The classrooms .....	127
3.1. Primary education.....	127
3.1.1. Languages and subjects .....	127
3.1.2. Teachers .....	128
3.1.3. School context .....	128
3.1.4. Home context.....	128
3.1.5. Plurilingual practices.....	129
3.2. Compulsory secondary education.....	130
3.2.1. Languages and subjects .....	130
3.2.2. Teachers .....	131
3.2.3. School context .....	131
3.2.4. Home context.....	132
3.2.5. Plurilingual practices in the classroom.....	132
References .....	133
<b>Epilogue. A common framework for data collection and analysis</b>	
<i>Gessica De Angelis</i> .....	135

# Plurilingual Education in La Rioja

**Rosa M. Jiménez Catalán and Leah Geoghegan**

Universidad de La Rioja

## Executive summary

This report offers an overview of the plurilingual profile of La Rioja. It opens with a brief description of the autonomous community, and it provides details of the languages used in the education system and outlines the bilingual programmes which are currently in place. It then presents an overview of two schools in the region, one primary and one secondary school, providing insight into plurilingual education in La Rioja. This is followed by a more detailed report on the plurilingual practices of one group from each school (sixth and tenth grades), with the aim of offering a profile of plurilingual studies in the region.

## 1. The Autonomous Community of La Rioja

### *1.1. Profile of La Rioja*

La Rioja is an autonomous community located in the north of Spain. It borders the Basque Country to the north, Navarre to the northeast, Aragon to the southeast and Castile and León to the west and south. In 2020, the region had a population of 319,914 inhabitants, 152,485 of whom resided in its capital, Logroño (*Instituto Nacional de Estadística*, 2021a). According to these data from the National Statistics Institute, around 12.5% of these inhabitants are not of Spanish nationality. As shown in the following graph, these citizens come from all over the world, most commonly from other countries in Europe, and from Africa and South America:

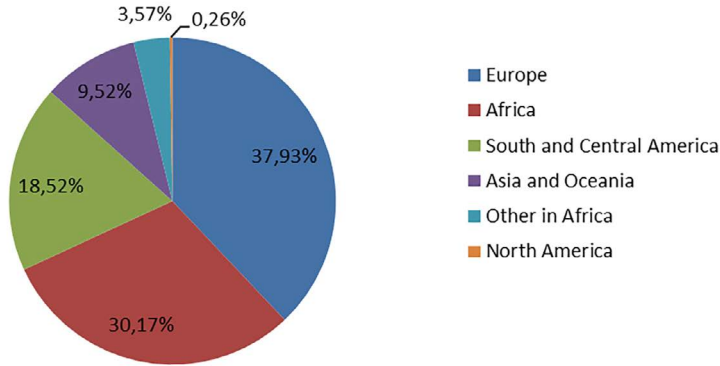


Figure 1. Foreign Population in La Rioja by geographical origin in 2020.  
Source: Compiled by the authors based on data from *Instituto Nacional de Estadística* (2021b).

Of particular note is the fact that immigrants from some continents come overwhelmingly from a single country: 11,575 of the total 18,073 from Europe are Romanian (64%); 8,150 of the total 10,325 from Africa are Moroccan (78%); and 2,480 of the total 3,354 from Asia are Pakistani (73%). Thus, while the region’s official language is Spanish, it evidently also boasts rich linguistic diversity, with many immigrants speaking their own mother tongues, such as Romanian, Arabic or Urdu. This linguistic and cultural diversity is also clear in the education system. In the 2019/2020 academic year, there were a total of 863,952 foreign students enrolled in the Spanish school system, accounting for 9.9% of the total number of students (Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional, 2020a). In comparison, in La Rioja, the presence of foreign students, at 14.2%, was markedly above the average for the country as a whole (Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional, 2020a). Table 1 below shows the distribution of the overall student population and of the migrant student population according to type of school they attend.

TABLE I. TOTAL STUDENTS AND FOREIGN STUDENTS IN LA RIOJA IN 2019/2020

Public		Private	
Total Students	Foreign Students	Total Students	Foreign Students
65.4%	80.2%	34.6%	19.8%

Source: Compiled by the authors based on data from *Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional* (2020a)

As can be seen, the vast majority of foreign students are enrolled in public education, while in private education there are considerably fewer foreign students as a percentage of the overall student body. As in the case of the overall foreign population of La Rioja, these students come from diverse backgrounds, as shown by more recent data from the 2020-2021 academic year (8,009 students) (Figures 2 and 3).

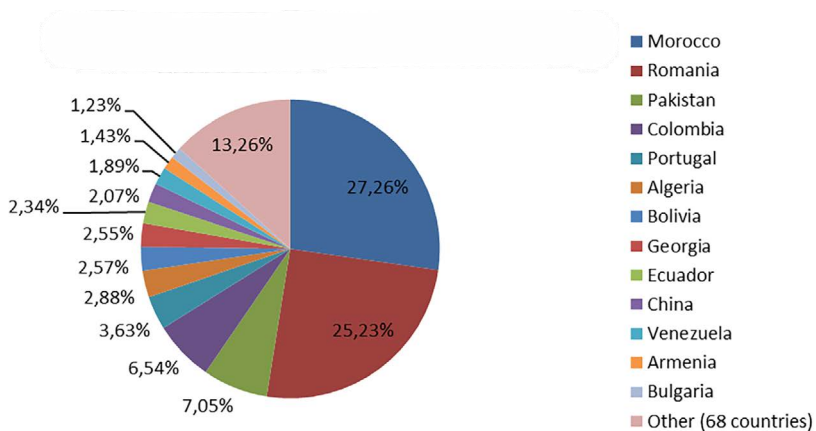


Figure 2. Distribution of foreign students in La Rioja in 2020/2021 by continent of Origin. Source: Compiled by the authors based on data from *Gobierno de La Rioja* (2021).

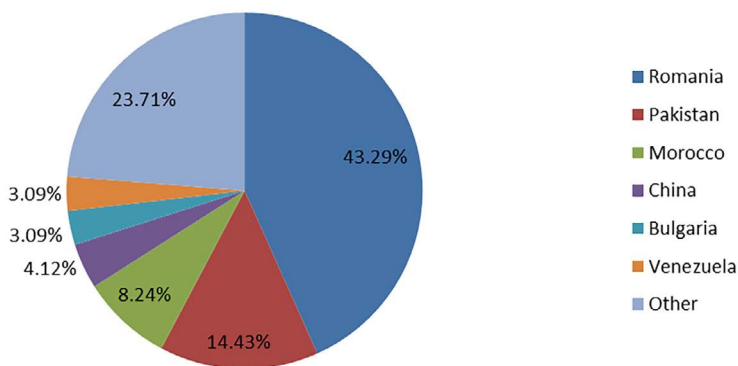


Figure 3. Distribution of foreign students in La Rioja in 2020/2021 by country of origin. Source: Own elaboration based on data from *Gobierno de La Rioja* (2021).

As with the general population of La Rioja, foreign students from Europe, Africa and Asia come primarily from Romania (66%), Morocco (80%) and Pakistan (74%). While the age at which migrant students first enroll in Spanish schools varies, in some cases a later start entails a limited command of the Spanish language. In La Rioja in 2018/2019 there were 159 students in this situation: 65 in primary schools and in 94 compulsory secondary education (*Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte*, 2020b). In order to aid these foreign students, the of *Aulas de Inmersión Lingüística* (Linguistic Immersion Classrooms) program was put into place. According to the Federation of Education Workers (Gobierno de la Rioja, 2017), the aim of this program is to guarantee the right to education of foreign students who present specific educational support needs and who lack the necessary knowledge of the Spanish language as a result of their late incorporation into the Spanish education system. When schools detect linguistic or curricular issues, foreign students can attend one of the three language immersion classes in Logroño (two at public schools and one as a state-subsidized private school), where they are taught by a specialist. Following a period of three to six months, depending on the students' command of Spanish and curricular competence, they can then return to their assigned school.

### ***1.2. School subjects and language of instruction***

Regardless of their nationality, all students in primary and compulsory secondary education (ESO) are required to study Spanish language and literature (BOE, 2007). In addition to their first language, be it Spanish and/or another mother tongue, all students in La Rioja must also start learning a first foreign language as a compulsory subject from the age of six (Eurydice, 2017, p. 154), though the vast majority begin at age 3 to 6 in preschool. In both primary and secondary education, this first foreign language is English for the entirety of the student population (*Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional*, 2020c). Primary schools may then choose to introduce a second foreign language in fifth or sixth grade, while all secondary schools are required to offer at least one additional foreign language across all levels (BOE, 2007). According to data from the 2018/2019 academic year, while at the primary level only a small percentage of students in La Rioja take a second foreign language (0.6% of the total, all of whom take French), in secondary school the number is relatively high (39.9% of the total, 38.8% French and 1.1% German) (*Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional*, 2020c). Table 2 provides an overview of the foreign languages studied by students in La Rioja at the various educational levels.

TABLE 2. TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS STUDYING FOREIGN LANGUAGES  
IN LA RIOJA IN 2018/2019<sup>1</sup>

	<b>English (first foreign language)</b>	<b>French (second foreign language)</b>	<b>German (second foreign language)</b>
Pre-school	8,519 (99.2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Primary	19,733 (100%)	118 (0.6%)	0 (0%)
Compulsory Secondary Education (ESO)	12,845 (100%)	4,984 (38.8%)	136 (1.1%)
Upper secondary	3,383 (95%)	738 (20.7%)	18 (0.5%)
Total	44,480 (98.55%)	5,840 (15.02%)	154 (0.4%)

Source: Compiled by the authors based on data from *Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional* (2020c).

In addition to language classes, CLIL has become increasingly popular throughout La Rioja, as in the rest of Spain. For example, in the 2018/2019 academic year, 13.8% of primary students and 8.9% of compulsory secondary education students were taking part in CLIL programs, and 30.5% of primary students and 22.2% of compulsory education secondary students were participating in other types of instruction in which a foreign language was used (*Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional*, 2020c). For the purposes of these data, CLIL programs are understood as those which guarantee their delivery across all levels of either primary school or ESO, while other experiences include those in which the foreign language is used to teach one or more content areas or subjects, but which do not usually continue across all levels and may be dependent on teacher availability at the school. While La Rioja falls quite below the national average in the first category, it has a significantly higher average in the second, resulting in overall averages which are slightly lower in primary and slightly higher in secondary (see Table 3).

---

1. Note: Figures in parentheses indicate the percentage of students studying this language out of the total number of students enrolled in that educational stage. In upper secondary, where it is obligatory to study English, the percentage is 95% rather than 100% due to the part-time student registration.

TABLE 3. STUDENTS TAKING CLIL PROGRAMS IN 2018/2019

	Primary		Secondary	
	La Rioja	Spain	La Rioja	Spain
CLIL programs	13.8%	35.1%	8.9%	24.4%
Other experiences	30.5%	4.4%	21.9%	3.1%
Total	44.3%	48.7%	30.8%	27.5%

Source: Compiled by the authors on data from *Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional* (2020c).

Finally, in order to make this language immersion possible, teachers in La Rioja have needed to become proficient in the language in which they are teaching content. This improvement has been clear over the past decade, with more and more teachers receiving certificates to prove their language competence, a necessary requirement for participation in bilingual teaching programs. For example, the region went from having just 42 teachers with a CEFR B1 or B2 in 2012 to 540 within two years (La Rioja, 2015). By 2017, these figures had risen even more: 427 teachers had a B2, 158 had a C1, and an increasing number of teachers had obtained a C2 (*Los Profesores de Los Centros Bilingües*, 2017).

### ***1.3. Bilingual/plurilingual projects in La Rioja***

There are currently two main initiatives in La Rioja for the implementation of primary and secondary content classes through the medium of a foreign language: the School Language Innovation Projects (*Proyectos de Innovación Lingüística en Centros*, or *PILC*), which is a program unique to La Rioja, and the Bilingual Sections program, which is being implemented on a national level.

#### ***1.3.1. The School Language Innovation Projects***

Firstly, the *Proyectos de Innovación Lingüística en Centros* (School Language Innovation Projects), henceforth *PILC*, was first implemented in the 2014/2015 academic year (*Consejería de Educación al Consejo Escolar*, 2010). It was available in three different modalities (Manzano Vásquez, 2015): Model A, which used the foreign language for basic functions such as routines, greetings and instructions; Model B, in which the language was used to teach the contents of at least one unit or part of the curriculum in each semester; and Model C, in which the language was used to teach the contents of



one complete subject in the curriculum. Notably, the quantity of foreign language use varied remarkably across each of the three modalities. In response to this observation, and following advice of researchers who questioned the benefits of the Model A approach and who advocated the use of a foreign language as the language of instruction rather than an occasional tool, Model A ceased to be included in the initiative as of the 2019/2020 academic year. More recently, in the 2020/2021 academic year, with the aim of responding to the ongoing global pandemic, the project was reduced to a single modality (PILC A), in which the contents of two units or didactic sequences of the curriculum are taught in the target language (*Consejería de Educación, Cultura, Deporte y Juventud*, 2020). In addition, these units must be different to those implemented in previous years. Any subjects can be chosen for the program, with the exception of languages (e.g. Spanish Language and Literature) (*Consejería de Educación, Cultura, Deporte y Juventud*, 2021).

In order to take part in the program, teachers must have a CEFR level of B2 or higher (Manzano Vásquez, 2015). As Fernández Fontecha (2009) has outlined, teachers are supported in meeting this requirement by means of two-week summer courses in a foreign country, two-week part-time courses at the Official Language School, and courses offered at a teacher-training center.

In 2020/2021, PILC A had a total of 208 coordinators and participants across 42 different educational centers. Among the participants 59 were in primary education and 59 were in secondary schools. The language chosen for the program is almost always English (98%), with some participants opting for French (1%) or Italian (1%). At the primary level, the subjects chosen included Art (by far the most common), Physical Education, Nature, Social Science, Music, Values/Religions and, in just one case, Mathematics. At the secondary level, the variety of subjects was much greater, including Art, Music, Geography and History, Economics, Introduction to Entrepreneurial and Business Activity, Biology and Geology, Mathematics, Information and Communication Technology, Physical Education, Physics and Chemistry, Technology, Ethics and Values, Religion, Social Studies, Marketing, and Applied Science.

### ***1.3.2. Bilingual Sections***

The Bilingual Sections program, first implemented in La Rioja in 2008/2009 (Manzano Vásquez, 2015), is a bilingual and plurilingual teaching initiative. In this context, bilingual teaching is understood to refer to classes in which at least one third of teaching time each week is carried out in the target language, and plurilingual teaching is defined by the addition of a second foreign language. The program has become increasingly popular since its implementation, with 13 public schools taking part in the 2020/2021 academic year, 5 of them primary and 8 secondary schools (*Consejería de Educación, Cultura, Deporte y Juventud*, 2021). The project must be introduced to a given school in the first year of primary education and then continue

throughout subsequent years, so that within six years bilingual education will have been offered across all levels (BOR, 2017, p. 6710). Regarding the organization of the program, English must make up at least a third of the weekly teaching time, with students receiving some instruction in the target language every day. Schools may offer any areas of the Primary Education curriculum in English, with the exception of Mathematics and Spanish Language and Literature. Social Science and Nature must be taught in English, as well as either Art or Physical Education. Similar criteria are set out for secondary schools (BOR, 2018, p. 7896). The project must begin in the first two years of secondary education and continue throughout subsequent years and into upper secondary education or vocational education, with centers gradually adapting their teaching until they have become bilingual or plurilingual at all levels. At least 30% of non-language subjects in the curriculum are offered entirely in the foreign language, including at least one core subject (bilingual projects) or two core subjects (plurilingual projects), and students must receive instruction in English every day and, in the case of plurilingual projects, in the other foreign language at least three days a week. As can be seen, while primary schools are required to teach certain specific subjects in English (Science, Social Science and either Art or Physical Education) and are prohibited from carrying out Mathematics in the foreign language, secondary schools may choose the subjects, as long as 30% of non-language subjects in the curriculum are taught in the foreign language. This entails a great deal of variation across secondary institutions, though subjects chosen by schools in the region commonly include Geography and History, Biology and Geology, Physics and Chemistry, Mathematics, Physical Education, Music, Technology, ICT, Citizen Education, and Visual and Audiovisual Arts Education.

At all levels, participating teachers are required to have at least a CEFR B2 level and to demonstrate competence in the basics of CLIL, the latter of which may be certified over the course of the academic year. To this end, the Riojan Department of Education provides training to enable teachers to attain both the linguistic and methodological competencies required. Teachers must participate in at least one of the training activities on offer during each school year, with a minimum duration of 15 hours, so as to stay up to date both linguistically and methodologically. In addition to CLIL-specific methodology, training is also provided in the Jolly Phonics method (*Consejería de Educación, Cultura, Deporte y Juventud*, 2021), which is an approach to teaching English literacy to younger students by means of synthetic phonics. These teachers are also given the priority when it comes to accessing other training activities and to participating in projects aimed at innovative teaching methods and teacher training. These teachers also have preferential access to activities related to the improvement of linguistic and methodological competence, to activities whose objective is to achieve or maintain a CEFR C1 or C2 level, and to financial aid for linguistic immersion programs or international educational projects (BOR, 2017, p. 6702; BOR, 2018, p. 7898).

## 2. The Schools

According to data provided by the Riojan Government, in the 2020/2021 academic year there were 115 pre-school, primary, special education and secondary schools in La Rioja, with a total enrolment of 44,765 students at these levels (*Gobierno de la Rioja*, 2021). The following two sections will offer an overview of two public schools in Logroño, one primary school and one compulsory secondary education school, so as to provide some insight into plurilingual education in the autonomous community of La Rioja.

### 2.1. Primary education

The primary school chosen for this report, henceforth RiojaCP, is a public pre-school and primary school located in Logroño, with a total of 225 students in the 2020/2021 academic year (*Gobierno de La Rioja*, 2021). The following section includes a profile of the school, featuring an overview of the languages and subjects studied, a profile of its teachers, and a discussion of the languages used in the school context and those used by students at home. The information is drawn from local government data, the school's website and, most importantly, an interview with three members of the school's management team (RiojaCP1).

#### 2.1.1. Languages and subjects

The school offers language classes to all levels in English and Spanish, both of which are also used to teach content classes. At the pre-school level, students receive instruction in both English and Spanish across all three core areas: self-knowledge and personal autonomy, knowledge of the environment, and languages (communication and representation). Instruction in English makes up around 20% of the teaching time each week and is organized into the following subject areas: English as a Foreign Language (1h) Psychomotricity (1h), Self-knowledge (1.5h), Knowledge of the Environment (1h) and Language (0.5h). At the primary level, exposure to English is increased, making up around 35% of teaching time each week. Subjects taught in Spanish include Spanish Language and Literature (4-5h), Mathematics (4h), Reading Comprehension and Mathematical Reasoning (1-1.5h), Religion / Social and Civic Values (1.5h), Music (1-1.5h) and Physical Education (2-2.5h). Subjects taught in English include English as a Foreign Language (3h), Social Sciences (1.5-2h), Nature (1.5h) and Art (1.5-2h).

Notably, the school adopts a “one person, one language” approach. In other words, students have two main teachers, one for subjects taught in Spanish and another for those taught in English. At each level there are two groups, so that while one group is with the Spanish teacher, the other will be with the English teacher. In addition,

students have different specialist teachers for music and physical education. All levels also have contact with a native English conversation assistant for two hours each week. The school also runs a project called Reading World, whose aim is to help develop students' literary skills. Spanish teachers also take part in this reading project in order to better integrate the two languages used in the school.

RiojaCP's bilingual program was introduced in 2012, making it the first bilingual school in Logroño ("El Colegio San Pío", 2012), and it has participated in the above-mentioned Bilingual Sections program since 2017 (RiojaCP1). This participation determines both the content subjects taught in English, discussed above, and the protocols in place for language and content teachers. According to RiojaCP1, this includes assigning a specific hour each week to the organization and coordination of the bilingual program. In addition, given that the students' two classroom teachers share responsibility for a class, they are assigned an additional hour each week to coordinate their work in guiding their shared groups. This allows teachers to discuss students' progress in both of the working languages of the school, as well as to deal with other relevant aspects that arise.

### ***2.1.2. Teachers***

According to RiojaCP1, the main languages known by the teaching staff are Spanish (100%), English (40%), French (10%) and Italian (5%). Regarding bilingual training, staff involved in the bilingual program must participate in the courses offered by the Riojan Department of Education. As mentioned above, these courses focus on teaching content through the medium of a foreign language, as well as on the Jolly Phonics system. Students at this school do not have different teachers for language and content subjects, but instead their English language teachers also serve as content teachers. Therefore, these teachers have the greatest need to undertake bilingual training. Other language teachers (in this case, the Spanish teachers) and specialist teachers (Music and Physical Education) are not required to participate in these courses.

### ***2.1.3. School context***

As shown in Table 4 below, the language used for interaction between staff in RiojaCP is generally Spanish. According to the teachers who were interviewed, one exception to this is when English language assistants do not have a working knowledge of Spanish and communicate with the English teachers in English (see Section 3.1.3). Notably, communication and meetings with parents also sometimes take place in English. This occurs with non-Spanish parents who lack the necessary command of the Spanish language. In these cases, as they are often familiar with English, they rely on this language to communicate. When students are involved,

English is often also used when communicating with their English teacher, and also on posters and texts around the school.

TABLE 4. LANGUAGES USED IN RIOJACP IN DIFFERENT SETTINGS

<b>Communication between the teachers</b>	<b>Spanish/English</b>
Teacher meetings	Spanish/English
Communication with the students outside of class	Spanish/English
Communication with other staff members	Spanish
Communication with parents	Spanish/English
Meetings with parents	Spanish/English
Information on bulletin boards	Spanish/English
Texts in common areas	Spanish/English
Texts on classroom walls	Spanish/English

Source: Compiled by the authors based on data from RiojaCP2, RiojaCP3 and RiojaCP4.

#### ***2.1.4. Home context***

While the majority of students (around 75%) are Spanish, and thus use this language at home, the school boasts a wide range of foreign nationalities, as well as some Spanish students who speak English with their parents outside of school. While there are students of almost 20 different nationalities, the most common ones include Moroccan, Pakistani and Romanian (around 20%), and thus Arabic, Urdu and Romanian are likely the most commonly spoken languages other than Spanish in the home context.

#### ***2.2. Secondary education***

The secondary school chosen for this report, henceforth RiojaIES, is a public school in Logroño, which had a total enrolment of 802 students in the 2020/2021 academic year (*Gobierno de La Rioja*, 2021). In addition to obligatory secondary education (first- to

fourth-year of ESO / seventh to tenth grade) ( $n$  students = 433), the school also offers upper secondary education (first- and second-year of Bachillerato / eleventh to twelfth grade), both in the traditional format and the international baccalaureate ( $n$  students = 194), and also via distance learning ( $n$  students = 144) and evening classes for adults ( $n$  students = 31) (*Gobierno de La Rioja*, 2021). The following profile of RiojaIES provides an overview of the languages and subjects studied at the school, offers a profile of its teachers, and discusses the languages used in the school context and those the students speak at home. The information has been provided by the local government and gathered from the school's website and via an interview with the head of studies (RiojaIES1, 2021).

### ***2.2.1. Languages and subjects***

Language classes are offered in six different languages: Spanish, English, French, German, Latin and Greek. Spanish and English are both obligatory subjects at all levels, with the former covering language and literature as a native language and the latter being taught as a first foreign language. French and German as second foreign languages are elective subjects, which may again be taken at any level. As noted on the school's website, German is offered from a beginner's level starting in the first year of secondary education (seventh grade), and although students may take up the subject in subsequent years, they must first complete a level test given by the school's German department. The school participates in a joint project with the local Official Language School (EOI), with the aim of allowing students to obtain a B1 or B2 level in English or French. This program is offered starting in the third year of secondary education (ninth grade). Latin is also studied starting in the fourth year of secondary (tenth grade) and continuing through the upper-secondary years, either as an obligatory or elective class, depending on the students' track. Greek is offered in both years of upper-secondary school, and again may be obligatory or optional depending on the track chosen. Of these languages, content classes are currently offered in Spanish and English, and have at times also been taught in German. Current content classes in English include Visual Arts (seventh grade), Biology and Geology (seventh grade), Mathematics (eighth and ninth grades), Physical Education (eighth, ninth and tenth grades) and Geography and History (tenth grade). History has also been partially taught in previous years through German.

The Bilingual Sections in English program was implemented in 2017/2018 and is offered as an optional track for students who wish to take content classes in a foreign language. In principle, the program is offered to all students, but when there is high demand and limited spaces a selection process is carried out. The English department assesses students' linguistic ability by means of language tests. In keeping with the gradual rolling out procedure of the program, as of the 2020/2021

academic year, the program is now in place across all levels of ESO. Prior to this, the school participated in the PILC program from its inception in 2013, offering a range of subjects, including some of those now offered within the bilingual program, such as Biology and Geology and Mathematics. Since the 2018/2019 academic year, the school has also participated in the PILC program, introducing German as the language of instruction for History. This was done first using a Model A approach, then a Model B approach. Due to the restrictions in place in the 2020/2021 academic year, the initiative did not continue, but the intention is to resume the program in the future (RiojaIES4). Furthermore, the school has started a program for sixth-grade students to do extra-curricular activities in German. The idea behind this is to give students an introduction to the language and develop their interest, so that when they start secondary school they have some foundation in German and are more likely to choose to study the language.

While no specific protocols are in place for the coordination between different language teachers, teachers participating in the Bilingual Sections are allotted a specific hour each week for an organizational meeting. This allows language and content teachers to coordinate their teaching and ensure the smooth running of the program.

### ***2.2.2. Teachers***

While all teachers are native Spanish speakers, the majority speak at least one other language. As noted by RiojaIES1, of particular note were English and German, two of the working languages of the school, which were spoken by many of the teaching staff at various levels. Also highlighted were other European languages such as French (also taught at the school), and Italian. Interviews with the teachers themselves also indicated good levels of other regional languages, such as Galician.

The language and content teachers involved in the bilingual program receive specific training from the Riojan Department of Education. This training, as discussed above, focuses on CLIL methodology and on ways to deliver content classes through a foreign language, and it is the same for both language and content teachers. It also covers areas relating to the CEFR and ICT skills in the classroom. Other teachers who are not involved in the Bilingual Sections program attend numerous other courses related to their disciplines. For example, language teachers involved in the collaboration with the EOI attend various courses on the exams the language school offers and how to assess students preparing for them.

### ***2.2.3. School context***

Within the school context, the main languages that are used outside of class and in various forms of written text are Spanish and English, and, to a lesser extent, French and German (Table 5).

TABLE 5. LANGUAGES USED IN RIOJAIES IN DIFFERENT SCENARIOS

Communication between the teachers	Spanish
Teacher meetings	Spanish
Communication with conversation assistants	Spanish/English/French/German
Communication with the students outside of class	Spanish/English/French/German
Communication with other staff members	Spanish
Communication with parents	Spanish
Meetings with parents	Spanish
Information on bulletin boards	Spanish/English/French/German
Texts in common areas	Spanish/English/French/German
Texts on classroom walls	Spanish/English/French/German

Source: Compiled by the authors based on data from RiojaIES1, RiojaIES2, RiojaIES3, RiojaIES4, RiojaIES5, RiojaIES6.

As shown, interaction between staff takes place almost entirely in Spanish, while the various foreign languages are used to one degree or another only when students are involved, e.g., teacher-student communication or in texts or posters for or created by the students throughout the school. Interviews with teachers also revealed that the schools' foreign languages are also used in meetings between language teachers and with conversation assistants. In addition, while parent-teacher meetings are supposed to take place in Spanish, in some cases, when parents lack the necessary level of Spanish, their children act as translators on their behalf.

In addition to the above information provided by the school administrators and teachers during the interviews, the school has a language policy, whose provisions include the following:

1. The usual language used in class is Spanish (except for specific classes offered in a foreign language as part of a CLIL program).
2. The language used by the administrative staff with the educational community is Spanish.
3. The school website is in Spanish, although some content will appear in the other languages used in the school, such as English and French.



4. In cases where interlocutors who use another language and who lack the sufficient knowledge to express themselves in Spanish, the documentation from the school will be in Spanish, with translation expenses to be borne by the user.

The school also has a policy for students whose lack of the necessary command of Spanish may affect their studies. Depending on the situation, which can vary from a serious lack of linguistic knowledge to a more partial issue, one of three different actions may be taken:

1. If the Riojan Department of Education deems it necessary, the student will attend the Linguistic Immersion Classroom program, outlined above.
2. If the level of knowledge of Spanish is sufficient to allow the student to continue with certain classes (determined by the school's guidance department), they will attend extra Spanish lessons classes while their classmates do activities that require a higher level of Spanish.
3. As part of the school's Orientation and Accompaniment program, students may attend activities aimed at improving the Spanish abilities of students who are not native speakers of the languages. This may also involve participation in the Cervantes Institute's online classrooms.

#### **2.2.4. Home context**

In the 2020/2021 academic year, there were a total of 99 foreign students from 23 different countries (see Figure 4) enrolled in the school, representing 12.3% of the total (RiojaIES1).

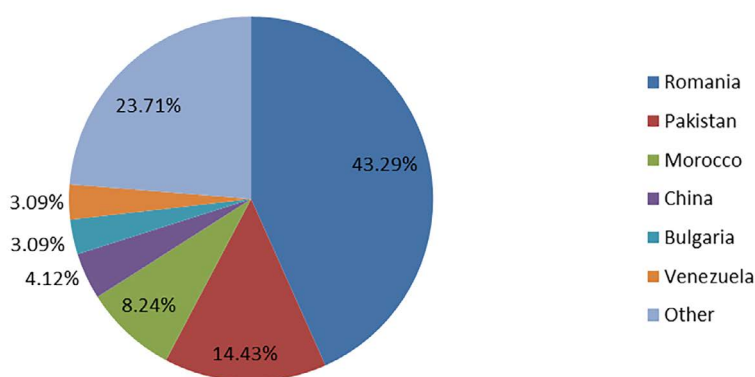


Figure 4. Foreign students in Rioja IES by nationality (2020/2021). Source: Compiled by the authors based on data from RiojaIES1.

As shown, and as expected given the data discussed above on the foreign community in La Rioja, the majority of foreign students come from Romania (42.4%), Pakistan (14.4%) and Morocco (8.2%). While there were three to four students each from China, Bulgaria and Venezuela, the rest of the foreign student population showed great variation, and was made up of just one or two students from each of the following countries: Albania, Germany, Algeria, the U.K., Georgia, Italy, Moldova, Portugal, Ukraine, Uruguay, Salvador, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Argentina and Guinea. In addition to this cultural diversity, it is worth noting that 87.6% of these students come from non-Spanish speaking countries and are therefore likely to speak a wide range of other languages such as Romanian, Urdu and Arabic, in addition to those which are part of the school curriculum, discussed above.

### **3. The classrooms**

This section will focus in on the two schools discussed above, providing a more detailed account of two groups of students, one sixth-grade class and another tenth-grade class.

#### ***3.1. Primary education***

RiojaCP had a total of 32 sixth-grade students in the 2020/2021 academic year (*Gobierno de La Rioja*, 2021), all of whom participated in the Bilingual Sections program and who were divided into two groups of 15 and 17 students, respectively (RiojaCP2, RiojaCP3). The following sections provide an overview of the groups' teachers, languages and subjects, school context, and home context. This will be followed by a discussion of the plurilingual practices observed among the groups and their teachers.

##### ***3.1.1. Languages and subjects***

The languages and subjects taken by the sixth-grade group are the same as those outlined for the rest of RiojaCP in Section 2.1.1, and they are summarized below in Table 6. The main difference from one year to the next is the number of hours of instruction in each subject. For example, while from first to fifth grade students receive 1.5 hours a week of instruction in Social Science, this is increased to two hours in sixth grade. In addition, while in first and second grade a total of two hours a week is dedicated to Art, in subsequent years this is reduced to 1.5 hours.

TABLE 6. SIXTH-GRADE SUBJECTS AT RIOJACP

<b>Spanish</b>	Spanish Language and Literature (4h) Mathematics (4h) Reading Comprehension and Mathematical Reasoning (1.5h) Religion / Social and Civic Values (1.5h) Music (1h) Physical Education (2.5h)
<b>English</b>	English as a Foreign Language (3h) Social Science (2h) Nature (1.5h) Art (1.5h)

Source: Compiled by the authors based on data from RiojaCP1.

### ***3.1.2. Teachers***

Three sixth-grade teachers from RiojaCP were interviewed for this report. They included the students' English teacher (who teaches English as a Foreign Language, Social Science, Nature and Art) (RiojaCP2), their Spanish teacher (who teaches Spanish Language and Literature, Mathematics, Reading Comprehension and Mathematical Reasoning, and Social and Civic Values) (RiojaCP3), and their Music teacher (RiojaCP4). The teachers, two female and one male, were of between 40 and 60 years of age and had between 15 and 30 years of teaching experience. RiojaCP2 also had five years of experience teaching using a CLIL methodology. While all three were native speakers of Spanish, RiojaCP2 also had a C2 level in English. According to the participants, all the other sixth-grade teachers were native speakers of Spanish, while about half had some knowledge of English. They also noted that one teacher was also a native speaker of Georgian. As noted above, the two main classroom teachers assigned to each group at RiojaCP, who are also the main language teachers, are given an hour a week for coordination. According to RiojaCP2 and RiojaCP3, this time is used to monitor progress in both languages, thus identifying areas in need of improvement in Spanish and English. Thus, the language teachers can determine whether deficiencies in one language also exist in the other and can actively work together to overcome these difficulties. In addition, the two teachers use similar systems to teach the two languages. For example, both teachers use the same color-coded grammar system, thus allowing students to draw comparisons between the two languages even though they are studied separately, at

different times and with different teachers. The weekly coordination time is also used to ensure continuity across the students' different classes. For example, the teachers noted that they had recently worked on a project about International Women's Day, which cut across classes in the different language, such as Social and Civic Values in Spanish and Art in English.

In addition to this time, RiojaCP2 is also assigned one hour a week for the coordination of the bilingual program. Weekly meetings are attended by all those who participate in the program and aim to facilitate the organization of the program across all levels. As part of the program, RiojaCP2 also receives yearly training in bilingual teaching. This training touches on a wide range of topics, including methodological approaches to teaching Social Science and Nature through English, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths) Education, and CLIL.

### ***3.1.3. School context***

As noted in Section 2.1.3., the language used among teaching staff is almost always Spanish, while English is used between the English teacher and students and for English-language projects throughout the school. However, as noted by RiojaCP2, English is also used in teacher meetings with language assistants who lack the necessary command of Spanish. In addition, while parent-teacher meetings generally take place in Spanish, some foreign parents' level of English is higher than their Spanish, so this language is used to facilitate communication.

### ***3.1.4. Home context***

Out of the 32 sixth-grade students, just over 80% were of Spanish nationality and so spoke this language at home. Six students, two in one group and four in another, had parents of other nationalities, and spoke Romanian (two students), Urdu (two students) and Arabic (two students) at home.

### ***3.1.5. Plurilingual practices in the classroom***

Although none of the three participants was familiar with any specific pedagogic approaches which promoted the development of plurilingual competence in the classroom, they all agreed that this kind of integration of all the students' languages and cultures is positive for their education. However, they noted that such integration is clearly conditioned by the time teachers have available to them, and that, given the demands of the current curriculum, they would be hard pressed to introduce additional activities which focused on such integration. For example, RiojaCP4 spoke of a new initiative being prepared by the local Department of Education which seeks to have speakers from different nationalities visit classes in order to share their culture. While they agreed this kind of intervention was wholly positive, they admitted that the

demanding curriculum currently in place would make it very difficult to make time for these kinds of activities. Regarding the acquisition of multiple languages, RiojaCP4, as a non-language subject teacher, also expressed concerns over students' difficulties in their mother tongue as a result of the bilingual program, suggesting that these students had writing difficulties in Spanish due to their increased exposure to English. RiojaCP2, on the other hand, completely disagreed with this stance, noting that the types of writing difficulties which students' have in Spanish were not unique to those in a bilingual school, but could be found in other monolingual schools as well.

Regarding the plurilingual practices in the classroom (use of L1, code-switching, translation and other practices), there were two main scenarios: for RiojaCP2 this involved students using Spanish during the course of studying English, while for RiojaCP3 and RiojaCP4 it involved students using Romanian, Urdu or Arabic alongside Spanish, the language of instruction. While the former scenario exhibited more plurilingual practices, the latter did so to a much lesser degree.

Firstly, RiojaCP2 noted that Spanish, the students' L1, was used in the classroom in three main situations: to deal with behavior issues or important topics, to assist those with comprehension difficulties, and to draw parallels between the two languages. In the first case, the students' native language was used instead of English in order to ensure the students fully understood what was being said to them. In addition, RiojaCP2 noted that using Spanish for scolding was preferable, as it prevented the use of English in negative situations and fostered the children's enjoyment of learning the foreign language. Spanish was also used during English class to attend to children with learning difficulties who could not follow the content in English. A final case was the use of Spanish to draw parallels between the two languages in order to facilitate connections between grammatical structures, for example, to note similarities between the present perfect in Spanish and English. In the case of the Spanish language classrooms, RiojaCP3 noted that use of other foreign languages was somewhat rare. In cases of students with problems speaking Spanish, she noted that photographs or other pictures were often used in order to facilitate comprehension, as the teacher is of course not able to speak all of the languages which foreign students speak. In other more serious cases, she noted that when there were severe language difficulties, children would attend the Linguistic Immersion Classrooms until their Spanish reached the necessary level. As a result, most use of Urdu, Romanian or Arabic was limited to cases where more than one speaker of these languages was in the same group, and when they communicated in these languages amongst themselves. Secondly, code-switching was less present and only found in the English classroom between Spanish and English. This was above all to help address cognitive difficulties which arose when the students were dealing with complex concepts. In these cases, the teacher and students moved between their mother tongue and English. Thirdly, translation was sometimes used

as a strategy for mediation and communication, again between Spanish and English, in order to help children who weren't following the content classes in English. For example, translation of content materials and the creation of summaries helped the students grasp the key ideas connected to more complex topics. Translation of vocabulary was another common strategy to help students acquire the target lexis. As noted above, translation was also used to explain grammatical parallels between the two languages in the English as a Foreign Language class.

Finally, other plurilingual and/or intercultural practices were not particularly common in the different classrooms. While the three participants note that students from different cultural backgrounds may share their experiences in certain classes such as Social and Civic Values, this would merely be on an informal basis, without specific activities to promote it.

To conclude, the participants again highlighted the benefit of a plurilingual classroom but stressed the need to deal first with curricular issues so as to be able to have time to incorporate these kinds of beneficial activities. RiojaCP2 additionally expressed her admiration for these students who, despite the demands placed on them, managed to excel in their studies in their first foreign language.

### ***3.2. Secondary education***

While there were a total of 111 tenth-grade students in the 2020/2021 academic year (*Gobierno de La Rioja, 2021* this text focuses on one group of just 13 students who chose to participate in the school's Bilingual Sections program, as well as students from this and other groups who have chosen to study French (23, 3 of whom participate in the Bilingual Sections) and German (15, 6 of whom participate in the Bilingual Sections) (RiojaIES2). The following sections provide an overview of the students' teachers, languages and subjects, and school and home context. This will be followed by a discussion of the plurilingual practices recorded among the students and their teachers.

#### ***3.2.1. Teachers***

A total of five teachers (RiojaIES2-6) participated in the interviews for this report, each of whom taught the tenth-grade group a different subject. Three of these were language subjects (English, French and German), one was a content subject taught through English (Physical Education) and one was non-linguistic (Mathematics). In addition to their teaching role, three of the participants were also the heads of their respective departments (RiojaIES3, RiojaIES4 and RiojaIES6), and one was the coordinator of the school's bilingual program (RiojaIES2). All five were female and ranged in age from 40 to 60. They had between 10 and 35 years of classroom experience,

and those who had taught using a CLIL methodology had 10 to 12 years of experience doing so. In addition to Spanish, which was the native language of all participants, all the teachers spoke at least one other language, and in many cases more than one. These languages included English (3 teachers, B1-C1), French (3 teachers, A2-native), German (1 teacher, C2) and Galician (2 teachers, C1-N). According to the participants, while all other teachers of the group were native speakers of Spanish, a number of them also spoke a foreign language. This was most commonly English, and in some cases French, German or Italian.

While no specific protocols are in place for coordination between language teachers, a number of the participants (RiojaIES3, RiojaIES4, RiojaIES6) noted that such coordination does indeed occur in an informal way. For example, the German and French teachers, although they do not share students, as the two languages are incompatible electives, still collaborate and share ideas. As for coordination between language and content teachers, this is a specific requirement for the teachers involved in the bilingual program (RiojaIES2, RiojaIES5). According to RiojaIES2, weekly meetings focus on organizing and collaborating across different classes, primarily with regard to disseminating culture and working on interdepartmental projects. For example, the seventh-grade class carried out a project on animals this year, which called for language and content teachers, for example, English and Art teachers, to work together. While many teachers do not participate in the program, the participants again highlighted the collaborative atmosphere at the school, noting that whenever issues arose or they wished to discuss ongoing projects with other teachers, this was done on an informal basis (RiojaIES3, RiojaIES4). In other cases, this was done in order to monitor students' progress (RiojaIES6).

Regarding specific bilingual training, only those involved in the bilingual program were required to participate in the courses offered by the Department of Education. This training was the same for both language and content teachers, and included training on the flipped classroom, project-based work, the CEFR for languages, the use of ICT, reading resources, AICLE/CLIL, immersion and how to teach content through another language (RiojaIES2, RiojaIES5). Other language teachers, such as RiojaIES3, spoke about other language-based training given by or related to the Official School of Languages. This involved courses on testing, grading, and the different skills that are assessed, and also courses related to the DELF exam.

### ***3.2.2. Languages and subjects***

Tenth-grade students must study Spanish Language and Literature and English as a Foreign Language, and those in the Humanities and Social Science tracks must also study Latin. Thirty-eight students also chose to study either French or German. While for the majority of students all content subjects were delivered in Spanish, students in the

Bilingual Sections received instruction through the medium of English in Geography and History and in Physical Education.

### ***3.2.3. School context***

In addition to the information provided in Section 2.2.3 regarding the languages used in the school context, the teachers who were interviewed provided further information about the languages used outside the classroom. For example, RiojaIES2 noted that the school has an English corner where all information related to this language is displayed. This includes general information, as well as information about contests that students can participate in and projects that they are working on (discussed further in the section on plurilingual practices below). RiojaIES6 also revealed that in previous years specific classrooms were used just for English, much like the physics and chemistry labs were reserved for these classes. This allowed for spaces where all the signs and information could be in English. RiojaIES3 also noted that up until this year there was a specific classroom just for French, and so maps and other posters would naturally all be in this language. However, due to restrictions this year this is not the case. She also noted that in the online forum the students use, communication takes place primarily in French. Finally, RiojaIES4 noted that while Spanish is the main language used in teacher meetings, she also uses German when speaking to the conversation assistant.

### ***3.2.4. Home context***

According to the teachers who were interviewed, despite the diverse foreign students attending the school, there were no foreign students in Bilingual Sections group. Consequently, the language spoken by the students at home was Spanish, though one teacher remarked that one student has a parent who works as an English teacher, and so may well also use this language at home (RiojaIES5). Participants also mentioned students from Morocco, Pakistan and Romania, as well as one student whose parents were French and Scottish, and another whose mother was French (RiojaIES4). Some teachers also noted that many children whose families were of foreign origin had been born in Spain and thus had good command of the Spanish language.

### ***3.2.5. Plurilingual practices in the classroom***

In general, the participants were unfamiliar with any specific pedagogical approach which promoted the development of plurilingual competence in the classroom. RiojaIES2 noted that her main focus as an English teacher is to ensure the students are in contact with a language that they aren't usually in contact with, in other words, one that they wouldn't normally speak on an everyday basis. She highlighted the importance of trying to give students up-to-date, relevant and authentic information in the language so as to bring them closer to the culture of the target language. RiojaIES4 also mentioned that the tendency is to speak in



one language (the target one) except for in lower levels such as seventh-grade when Spanish is used more in order to ensure clarity and comprehension. All teachers, however, agreed that this kind of linguistic and cultural integration is incredibly positive. RiojaIES2 stated that it helps motivate students and awakens their desire to discover knowledge. It also promotes awareness about diversity and human rights, showing them that we are not all the same, which opens their minds and improves their social skills. RiojaiES3 also highlighted how much can be learned from this integration, in particular with regard to promoting diversity. She observed that the more you learn about a language, the more you learn about the culture, and this makes you more tolerant and understanding. RiojaIES4 noted that this was particularly so in the case of foreign families, as this cultural and linguistic integration, by allowing students to share their own cultural experiences, gives value to the students' first languages and plays an important role in identity construction. RiojaIES6 also highlighted the desirability of a plurilingual environment in the case of international languages such as English and German, as they can help bring people together. RiojaIES5 acknowledged, however, that the onus in the classroom is often on speaking only the foreign target language, with older students with a better command of English no longer needing to switch between languages. Plurilingual practices by the tenth-grade students (use of L1, code-switching, translation and other practices) generally involved the use of Spanish alongside their foreign language(s). However, in some cases, interviewees also made references to the plurilingual practices of foreign students at other levels, in order to demonstrate the types of behavior and activities that are present. Firstly, use of students' L1 was common in all foreign language classes. RiojaIES2 noted that the L1 is often used to save time or to quickly help with vocabulary issues, while RiojaIES3 and RiojaIES4 highlighted the use of contrastive analysis to point out similarities between Spanish and French/German and draw parallels between languages. One example provided by RiojaIES3 was that students would often complain that tenses in French are difficult, and so showing them the similarities with Spanish helps them connect the two languages and facilitates comprehension. Regarding the use of other L1s, RiojaIES5 noted that some younger foreign students may lack the necessary vocabulary required for the content class. In these cases, they often communicate with other students in their L1 in order to connect the vocabulary in the different languages. Secondly, code-switching between Spanish and English was frequent in all language and CLIL classes (RiojaIES2, RiojaIES3, RiojaIES4, RiojaIES5). RiojaIES2 uses this technique most often to save time, for example during reading comprehension activities. She also pointed out that for students, code-switching is very natural. When students have received instruction in English on a given topic, related vocabulary comes to them more quickly in English than in Spanish and so, in these cases, it is not because of a lack of vocabulary in the target language that they

make the switch, but rather that the words are more readily available. RiojaIES3, as a native speaker of Spanish and French, reported comfortably switching between the two languages. Her students, however, generally switch between the languages due to a lack of vocabulary rather than personal choice or style. RiojaIES5 also noted how, though the content class takes place in English, students freely switch between whichever languages they have available to them, including French and German.

Thirdly, translation was used as a strategy for mediation and communication in language classes to facilitate comprehension or to draw parallels between the languages. RiojaIES2 said this is done mostly at the vocabulary level. For example, after trying to explain a word several times through the TL there was still uncertainty, the teacher might offer a direct translation. A similar approach is taken by RiojaIES4, but, notably, in some cases translations are between English and German, given the similarities between the languages. RiojaIES3 reported using specific translation exercises every now and then. These activities involve translating around five sentences, with the main aim of reflecting on similarities and differences in the structures of each language.

Finally, other plurilingual and/or intercultural practices focused most commonly on incorporating culture into the classroom while using a foreign language. RiojaIES2 discussed the English corner of the school, where groups are encouraged to participate in activities and contests relating to different cultural events such as Thanksgiving, Martin Luther King Day, Valentine's Day and St. Patrick's Day. For example, for Valentine's Day, students had to write a 12-line poem in English. These poems were posted in the English corner and a winner was chosen. RiojaIES3 gave the example of an eighth-grade group who are currently working on a project on the topic of food. Students have to prepare a typical menu from their country and one from France, so the students from Morocco can make traditional dishes from there. While everything is written and presented in French, this activity offers students an opportunity to share their culture with the rest of the class. RiojaIES4 mentioned that when talking about different festivals it is particularly interesting to compare how they are celebrated in different countries. For example, while some Christmas traditions are different in Spain and Germany, traditions in Germany are similar to those in Romania. As a result, Romanian students studying German can relate to the information and share their own experiences with the Spanish students in the class. Lastly, RiojaIES5 spoke about integrating English/American culture by means of sports and games, for example by teaching the students about baseball and linking language and culture at the same time.

To conclude, participants in general felt that teaching these plurilingual students is a wholly positive experience. In particular, some stressed the usefulness of project work to foster this plurilinguistic environment (RiojaIES2) and noted the benefits of

a plurilinguistic environment in helping students to improve their communication skills (RiojaIES4).

## References

- BOE. (2007). *Orden ECI/2211/2007, de 12 de julio, por la que se establece el currículo y se regula la ordenación de la Educación primaria*. Boletín Oficial del Estado No. 173, 20 Julio.
- BOR. (2017). *Orden 7/2017, de 16 de mayo, de la Consejería de Educación, Formación y Empleo, por la que se regulan los centros sostenidos con fondos públicos de Educación Infantil y Primaria bilingües en la Comunidad Autónoma de La Rioja*. Boletín Oficial de la Rioja No. 58, 22 Mayo.
- BOR. (2018). *Orden EDU/31/2018, de 1 de junio, por la que se regulan los centros de Educación Secundaria, Bachillerato y Formación Profesional bilingües en la Comunidad Autónoma de La Rioja*. Boletín Oficial de la Rioja No. 67, 8 June.
- Consejería de Educación al Consejo Escolar. (2010). *Los programas de enseñanza bilingüe de la Comunidad de Madrid: un estudio comparado*. Retrieved from <http://www.madrid.org/bvirtual/BVCM001973.pdf>
- Consejería de Educación, Cultura, Deporte y Juventud. (2020). *Convocatoria de proyectos de innovación lingüística en centros. Curso 2020/2021*. Retrieved from: <https://www.larioja.org/edu-innovacion-form/es/lenguas-extranjeras/bilinguismo/proyectos-innovacion-linguistica-centros.ficheros/1246114-PILC%20CONVOCATORIA%20%2020-21.pdf>
- El colegio San Pío se convierte en el primer centro logroñés bilingüe. (2012, April, 23). *La Rioja*. Retrieved from [https://www.rioja2.com/n-92286-2-colegio\\_convierte\\_primer\\_centro\\_logrones\\_bilingue](https://www.rioja2.com/n-92286-2-colegio_convierte_primer_centro_logrones_bilingue)
- Fernández Fontecha, A. (2009). Spanish CLIL: Research and official actions. In Y. Ruiz de Zarobe & R. M. Jiménez Catalán (Eds.), *Content and language Integrated Learning: Evidence from research in Europe* (pp. 3-21). Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Gobierno de la Rioja. (2017). *Resolución de 19 de junio de 2017, de la Dirección General de Educación, por la que se establecen las características generales de las Aulas de Inmersión Lingüística en los centros docentes sostenidos con fondos públicos de la Comunidad Autónoma de La Rioja en el curso académico 2017/2018*. Retrieved from [https://www.larioja.org/edu-aten-diversidad/es/normativa\\_2/rrresoluciones-instrucciones.ficheros/991085-Resoluci%C3%B3n%20AIL%202017-18.pdf](https://www.larioja.org/edu-aten-diversidad/es/normativa_2/rrresoluciones-instrucciones.ficheros/991085-Resoluci%C3%B3n%20AIL%202017-18.pdf)
- Gobierno de La Rioja. (2021). Información escolar Comunidad de La Rioja Curso 2020-2021. Retrieved from <https://www.larioja.org/educarioja-centros/es/informacion-escolar>

- Instituto Nacional de Estadística. (2021a). *Cifras oficiales de población resultantes de la revisión del Padrón municipal a 1 de enero. Rioja, La: Población por municipios y sexo*. Retrieved from <https://www.ine.es/index.htm>
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística. (2021b). *Población residente por fecha, sexo, nacionalidad (agrupación de países) y lugar de nacimiento (agrupación de países)*. [Fichero de datos]. Retrieved from <https://www.ine.es/index.htm>
- La Rioja ha pasado de 42 a 540 docentes con títulos de idiomas B2 y B1 en dos años. (2015, January 20). *La Rioja*. Retrieved from <https://www.larioja.com/la-rioja/201501/14/rioja-pasado-docentes-titulos-20150114010741-v.html>
- Los profesores de los centros bilingües deberán tener al menos el nivel B2. (2017, May 24). *La Rioja*. Retrieved from <https://www.larioja.com/la-rioja/201705/24/profesores-centros-bilingues-deberan-20170524125710.html>
- Manzano Vázquez, B. (2015). CLIL in three Spanish monolingual communities: the examples of Extremadura, Madrid and La Rioja. *Elia: Estudios de Lingüística Inglesa Aplicada*, 15, 135-158.
- Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional. (2020a). *Enseñanzas no universitarias. Alumnado matriculado. Curso 2019-2020. Datos avance*. Retrieved from: <http://www.educacionyfp.gob.es/servicios-al-ciudadano/estadisticas/no-universitaria/alumnado/matriculado/2019-2020-da.html>
- Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional. (2020b). *Enseñanzas no universitarias. Necesidades de apoyo educativo. Curso 2018-2019*. Retrieved from: <http://www.educacionyfp.gob.es/eu/servicios-al-ciudadano/estadisticas/no-universitaria/alumnado/necesidades-apoyo/2018-19.html>
- Ministerio de Educación y Formación Profesional. (2020c). *Enseñanzas no universitarias. Lenguas extranjeras. Curso 2018-2019*. Retrieved from: <http://www.educacionyfp.gob.es/servicios-al-ciudadano/estadisticas/no-universitaria/alumnado/lenguas-extranjeras/2018-2019.html>