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Reviewed by ITXASO RODRIGUEZ

The Basque language, known for its long existence and for its mysterious origins, has been claimed to be one of the most successfully revitalized minority languages in Europe, and this is precisely the subject of *The Challenges of a Bilingual Society in the Basque Country*. The book not only discusses the victories of the prolonged survival of a minority territory, language, and population such as the Basque; it also focuses on the historical process that made this success possible. The vast array of

disciplines in which Basque language has been used and to which it has contributed – history, sociology, linguistics, language policies, historical studies, sociolinguistics, literature and so on – suggests rather strongly that Basque is in a better shape than it was 50 years ago. However, despite the celebratory tone that many of the contributing essays to this book show, a closer look at Basque language would reveal that the current situation still presents many challenges. Although the readership to which this book is directed is not specified, both experts and novice scholars with little previous knowledge in Basque studies would benefit from this interdisciplinary book that exemplifies the important social aspects that need to be considered when doing research on Basque in particular or bilingualism in general.

The authors of the essays collected in *The Challenges of a Bilingual Society in the Basque Country* are current professors at the University of the Basque Country who have worked extensively in the fields that they have written about. The book is divided into nine chapters, each covering a different aspect of the revitalization process of Basque language, but the essays revolve primarily around three major themes: standardization, implementation, and acceptance. Chapters 1 through 8 encompass macro approaches to language such as the standardization of Basque, language policies, language planning, attitudes and type of bilingualism. Chapters 1, 2, 5, 6 and 7 offer a linguistic approach to the question whereas chapters 3, 4, and 8 serve as typological, dialectological and neurological accounts of the language, respectively. Chapter 3 in particular is a remarkable introduction to typological differences as well as similarities between Basque and its neighboring languages, Spanish and French. The authors of this chapter, Igone Zabala and Itziar San Martin, present the most recent work on the linguistic parameters of the three languages at the morpho-syntactic and lexico-morphological levels. However, these authors assume that the syntax and morphology of the bilingual speakers is uniform, a fact that is ultimately impossible in the current situation of the Basque Country. Interestingly, more research is emerging that deals with the issue of convergence. Chapter 4 is probably the first introductory account with examples of the dialectal diversification of Basque language ever written in English. Chapter 8, on the other hand, is the first neurological study applied to adult speakers of Basque, which aims to understand the bilingual mind using empirical data, while also exploring implications for theories of psycholinguistics. Finally, chapter 9 offers an analytical view of Basque literature's impact on education, thanks to the boom of publishing companies. In this review, I will be focusing mainly on the chapters discussing macro-linguistic aspects of Basque language.

The central issue in chapters 1, 2, 5, 6 and 7 is a recurrent challenge in the standardization process of any given language: lack of unification. This issue is discussed from four different perspectives that are co-dependent: lack of,

1. a common territorial name;
2. a common legal status;
3. a common educational system; and
4. social consensus.

Ludger Mees in chapter 1 begins by asking a challenging question: *what is the Basque Country?* The chapter provides different terms that have been ascribed to the different territories of the Basque Country, and it also discusses the ideological connotations of those names (i.e. *Euskadi*, *Euzkadi* vs. *Euskal Herria*). These names reflect the linguistic diversification of the Basque population, a subject that is thoroughly analyzed in chapter 2. Alberto López Basaguren addresses the problematic wording (an example of bilingual practice) of the co-official status of the Basque language along with Spanish represented in article 2 of the 1978 Spanish Constitution ('Spanish is the official state language and every inhabitant has the right to use it and the duty to know it'). More specifically, this article establishes the legal advancement of the Basque language in the administrative domain but still subject to power relations towards a majority language in Spain. Before establishing a co-official status of Basque with Spanish, a standardization process occurred, which did not come to any peaceful agreement. Pello Salaburu and Xabier Alberdi in chapter 5 provide a historical account of the process of the standardization of Basque. Although they offer multiple examples at the syntactic, morphological, lexical and orthographical level for the process of *Euskara Batua* (Standard Basque, literally, 'Unified Basque'), they do not make reference to Haugen's (1972) seminal work on the processes of standardization nor to the analytical view of this model in the Basque language itself (Hualde and Zuazo 2007). Haugen's third and fourth processes of the standardization refer to the acceptance and elaboration of the newly standardized language, the processes that both chapters 6 and 7 develop in more detail, analyzing the linguistic models implemented in the 1980s that have shaped the current sociolinguistic situation. The way in which chapters 1, 2, 5, 6, and 7 become inter-twined with each other will be further developed below.

As mentioned earlier, Ludger Mees in chapter 1 poses an interesting question about a nation without a common name. He argues, 'the dispute over a name is a good reflection of the struggle for power in the Basque Country; a struggle of emerging nationalism' (p. 12). That a nation has a wide array of names to call its territory is a reflection of a much-diversified community, which in turn loads each term with ideological connotations. Through the process of labeling territories with different terms, language becomes a powerful tool of symbolic domination and value. Drawing on Smith's concept of *ethnogenesis*, the author presents an exhaustive analysis of the names such as *Euzkadi* vs. *Euskadi* vs. *Euskal Herria* (all referring to different stratifications of the Basque Country). The political and ideological baggage that each term carries is dependent on the historical accounts of the time. For instance, Sabino Arana coined the term *Euzkadi* to refer to an independent Basque Country, a term that was later adopted by the separatist armed group, ETA, and is now used to refer to the three provinces of the Basque Autonomous Community (Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa, and Araba). As Irvine and Gal have noted, the significance of linguistic differentiation is embedded in the politics of a region and its observers, and it goes hand in hand with different linguistic ideologies, a symbolic value that will be difficult to detach from its people (Bourdieu 1991). It is therefore a process of *ethnogenesis* that will lead to a sense of distinctive identity, establishing a strong language ideology. *Language ideology* is defined as 'the

cultural system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships, together with their loading of moral and political interests' by Irvine and Gal (2000). Chapter 1 draws on theories about ideology and politics and establishing these terms imbued with a powerful language ideology, which, consequently, are shaping the linguistic landscape of the Basque Country; issues that are only superficially touched upon in the following chapters.

As exemplified in chapters 6 and 7, the establishment of political boundaries, or lack of political unity, contributes to the established structure of the educational system and, importantly, to the absence of social consensus. The lack of consensus is evident in the different approaches that these two inter-related essays take. A common issue that both articles tackle is the importance of education in promoting a minority language. While Miren Azkarate presents the promotion of Basque through educational channels in terms of 'success', Julian Maia adopts a more pessimistic stance. According to Maia, enrollment in bilingual models of education is really high and '[bilingual] models B and D obtain better results, but their students still do not achieve a level of communicative proficiency in Euskara [...] posing the need to consider possible ways to improve the system' (p. 153). Miren Azkarate believes that it is not the bilingual education that needs to be improved but the bilingual situation, which should be accomplished through the promotion of Basque in the informal domains. Julian Maia, on the other hand, advocates for a different linguistic model that will accommodate to the current sociolinguistic arena, so immigrants will be attracted to the world of Euskara. More importantly, for him, the real challenge is the lack of social consensus; thus, he argues that 'Euskara must serve as an element of cohesion and not of rejection or discrimination' (p. 155). Although both Azkarate and Maia base their arguments on the same statistical data, they arrive at very different conclusions, which in a way reflects the lack of consensus existing in the Basque Country today.

None of the chapters, however, discuss discrimination explicitly; they are more interested in the legal possibilities of living in Euskara. Yet, interestingly, Julian Maia's argument poses a challenge that, in my opinion, is connected to the much discussed idea of language *use* by Miren Azkarate and language adherence or *language loyalty* in Fishman's terms (1991). Loyalty or adherence to a particular language can be studied in terms of *identity*, which can affect not only the will to learn the language but also its use. Jon Kortazar does bring up the concept of identity in chapter 9 when describing the challenges of Basque literature. However, nothing is said about the role identity plays in the socio-political domain or in the educational or social spheres. The study of language and identity, under-theorized in this chapter, could potentially inform us about the cultural subjectivities or the social construct of a place. That said, Kortazar does argue that Basque writers have developed a literature that focuses on the blurry concept of *identity*. If *identity* has been recreated and studied from a fictional point of view, then it is quite plausible to apply theories of language ideologies and identity to explain the consequences of those political ideologies. Future studies could pursue this issue by connecting the use of Basque language (or lack thereof) with sociolinguistic expressions of linguistic identity and language ideologies.

In conclusion, the present volume not only provides some interesting empirical facts about bilingual societies but also moves beyond the assumption that bilingualism is the co-existence of two languages. Bilingualism can be a complex arena in which different languages, ideologies, and identities play an important role in the survival and existence of those languages. The entire volume is a unique resource in the sense that it tackles issues from different angles, which makes it of interest to numerous disciplines. Finally, this volume can also initiate comparative-theoretical accounts of bilingualism, by applying the findings on Basque language to other bilingual situations in Europe and the rest of the world.

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