

University Of Leeds

**An Investigation into Language and Cultural Planning  
in the Basque Country**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This dissertation explores the efficacy of language and cultural policy in the Basque Country. It explores how Catalonia succeeded in reviving the Catalan language and culture after decades of oppression under General Franco's dictatorship and whether a similar framework would be suitable for the Basque Country. The weaknesses in the administrative departments of the Basque government are exposed in addition to the inconsistencies of legislation in different Basque Provinces. The central issue concerns a lack of ideological agreement among political parties and members of the community which has hindered progress in increasing the number of speakers of the Basque language and encouraging interest in the Basque culture. The models of language and cultural policy used in Quebec and Wales are used as further comparisons to the Basque Country in order to establish whether it would be appropriate to explore policy outside of the Spanish context. Finally, the conclusion discusses how several separate problems have slowed the development of adequate policy in the Basque Country.

Contents	
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Methodology</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>1. The Catalan Model</b> .....	<b>8</b>
1.1 A Brief History.....	8
1.2 A New Challenge.....	10
1.3 Catalonia Fights Back.....	11
1.4 The Evidence.....	14
1.5 In Summary.....	16
<b>2. The Basque Country</b> .....	<b>26</b>
2.1 Betrayal, Oppression and Violence.....	27
2.2 Linguistic Consequences and Basque Policy.....	30
2.3 Catalan Comparison.....	34
2.4 Summary.....	37
<b>3. Models of Language and Cultural Policy</b> .....	<b>39</b>
3.1 Québec.....	39
3.2 Wales.....	42
3.3 Euskera : An Endangered Language ?.....	44
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>46</b>
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	<b>49</b>

# Introduction

From 1939 until his death in 1975, General Francisco Franco came dangerously close to culturally and linguistically silencing one of the most enigmatic and mysterious historic regions of Spain. The Basque Country was subjected to horrifically oppressive measures designed solely to homogenize Spain and quell regional fealty. Franco's exertion of absolute control through the relentless persecution of political opponents, the oppression of culture and language and the censorship of the media had far reaching consequences that are still evident in Basque society today. In 2011 only 32% of the population were able to speak *Euskera* (the Basque language) fluently (Mercator, 2005). Furthermore, the dictatorship fueled the creation of ETA, the infamous terrorist organization fighting for Basque independence. The dictatorship left the Basque Country politically and culturally fragmented thus the provinces within *Euskadi* (Euskera term for the Basque Country) cannot agree upon the best way to unite and regain its sense of collective identity as a community.

The Basque Country was not the only region in Spain to be devastated by the dictatorship. Catalonia suffered under Franco's repressive tactics which led to a great loss in the number of Catalan speakers. Cultural institutions and universities were forcibly disbanded to make way for Castilian cultural establishments and a new education system. Catalan language, culture and history would no longer be taught in schools and it could no longer be used in public. It was thought that Catalan would disappear into obscurity evolving into a family language to be spoken privately and discreetly. Despite Franco's will for a unified, traditional Spanish state, the people of Catalonia resolved to reclaim their heritage through clandestine study and celebration which would eventually save Catalan from extinction. Today, Catalonia is a success story. 99% of its population speak Catalan and cultural products continue to add to Catalonia's already flourishing economy (Intercat, 2015). Yet how has this achievement been made possible? And why hasn't the Basque Country experienced the same success in reestablishing *Euskera* as a prominent language? This dissertation will explore the factors that have contributed to a revival in Catalonia with an aim to evaluate whether similar

methods could have a positive impact in the Basque context. Moreover, I will examine models of language and cultural planning used in the Canadian province of Quebec and Wales to explore whether it would be beneficial to examine policy from outside of the Spain.

The first chapter of this dissertation will explore the situation in Catalonia and the legislation involved in reviving its language and culture. In chapter two I will continue by discussing the events that have shaped modern life in the Basque Country and whether the region could benefit from adopting a model of language and cultural planning similar to that of Catalonia. The third chapter will examine existing legislation in Wales and Quebec with a view to considering whether exploring methods used outside of Spanish context would be advantageous for the Basque Country. Before continuing however, it would be prudent to first of all define the key concepts that will be used in this dissertation and discuss the relevance of language planning and cultural policy in the Basque context.

### **What is Culture?**

The concept of culture can be extremely difficult to define due to the vast range of theoretical research available on the subject. As the term is ambiguous, it is important to define culture for the purpose of this dissertation. Matthew Arnolds (1867) argued that often one associates culture with intellectual and artistic products that may be described as 'high culture' in contrast to 'popular culture' or "folklore". However, this definition would mean that only specific people within a social group has or creates culture. Another definition refers to a particular quality or attribute shared by all people within a social group or "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (Tylor, 1870, pp.1). This definition therefore suggests that a person acquires a culture through membership to a particular social group in which their culture consists of knowledge, habits and capabilities. By encompassing all people within a social group as sharing a collective culture, this definition is therefore essentialist in the sense that it simplifies the social structure of a group significantly. It is

thus necessary to consider the idea of culture as an individual and collective notion. Spencer-Oatey (2008, pp.2) defines culture as a “set of basic assumptions and values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures and behavioural conventions that are shared by a group of people, and that influence (but do not determine) each member’s behaviour and his/her interpretations of the ‘meaning’ of other people’s behaviour”. In this regard, culture is a system of communication and representation for both the individual and the group. It is this definition of culture that should be applied whenever the term is used. Furthermore, the term ‘cultural policy’ will define the legislation and laws through which a government wishes to protect the right to freedom of cultural expression and the infrastructure in which it is created and shared.

### **What is Collective Identity?**

The idea of a collective identity is often ambiguously defined and can have several different meanings. Alberto Melucci (1989) defined collective identity as ‘an interactive and shared definition produced by several interacting individuals who are concerned with the orientation of their action as well as the field of opportunities and constraints in which their action takes place’. In this sense, the concept of a collective identity is a process in which individuals recognise that they share specific ideas or orientations and thus decide to act together. Melucci (1989) established that there were three parts to the process of collective identity: cognitive definition, active relationship and emotional investments. The first, cognitive definitions, pertains to the formulation of a cognitive framework concerning goals, means and environment of action. In other words, what it is that bonds the individuals together, how they establish themselves as a group and where this takes place in society. The active relationship refers to how individuals within the group form relationships and the emotional investments defines the emotional connection and recognition between members. Jacquelin Van Stekelenburg (2015) discusses how collective identity can be based upon the shared interests, experiences and solidarity. That is not to say that collective identities require personal relationships among group members. Group identities are based on common bonds which unify a

social group without the direct interpersonal communication necessary for a group of friends or colleagues for instance (Brewer and Gardner, 1996). Collective identity is therefore defined for the purposes of this dissertation as the shared sense of belonging an individual feels towards a specific social group based upon Melucci's process.

### **What is language planning and cultural policy?**

Language policy and planning is a term used to label methods of research in which aspects of human behaviour towards language are studied. This behaviour is defined simply as that which can change the structure and use of a language. These changes can be exacted through government legislation or expert advice designed to solve language problems. It is not impossible for ordinary speakers to influence change through every day use of the language however this thesis will focus on a top-down approach to language planning as explained by Nekvapil and Sherman (2015). Language planning is thus defined as 'any specific effort to modify or influence language practice' (Spolsky, 2004, pp.5). Moreover, language planning starts as a theoretical concept intended for eventual implementation into a particular domain which consequently aims to promote the idea of social progress and individual freedom (Nekvapil and Sherman, 2015).

Direct or explicit cultural policy, as discussed by Vestheim (2012), refer to policy devised by political and administrative institutions to be implemented by councils and committees in charge of regulating work done by cultural bodies, for example museums, libraries, theatres and galleries. Cultural policy can provide the resources and support required to fund community projects, festivals and independent companies. Cultural policy researchers also explore implicit and latent cultural policies. These are policies that are created by non-political groups and Non-Government Organisations such as record companies and publishing houses. This type of policy is often integrated within projects that promote social and economic development. Implicit policy is an intriguing area of research however this dissertation will refer solely to explicit forms of cultural policy.

## **Why is it important to research this in the context of the Basque Country?**

Whilst the Basque Country is said to be thriving in its economic and social endeavours, there are many citizens who feel that independence from the Spanish State is the only way to free themselves from Castilian influence. In 1998, although 37% of Basques preferred the current state of regional autonomy, 25% said they would prefer a federal state and another 25% would prefer to be completely independent (Llera, 2007). The current rhetoric in Basque politics is still dominated by the prospect of independence whilst the Spanish state continues to block calls for a referendum. The Basque Nationalist Party states in its manifesto that 'the Spanish state have become a brake on the development of the Basque country' (The Guardian, 2012) and 'opting to move toward sovereignty step by step, in a process that it is describing as "dialogue, negotiation, agreement and ratification" regarding a new relationship status with Spain, which could be understood as a "confederate model" based on the respect of historical rights' (El Pais, 2014). A linguistic and cultural revival could therefore help to unify the Basque Country after decades of political fragmentation and support any future call for independence. The linguistic and cultural strength of a nation combined with its economic prosperity can only serve to reinforce the idea that it does not need input from a centralised state. Moreover, it is possible that the state is concerned that without the Basque Country and Catalonia for instance, its own value will decrease. As will be discussed, Catalonia is linguistically and culturally secure which promotes national solidarity and a shared sense of fealty for the nation. It is crucial that the Basque Country develops its language and cultural policy if it hopes to achieve a state of independence in the future.



## Methodology

The main objective of this research is to examine the current model of language and cultural policy in the Basque Country and to examine whether a different model would be more effective in reviving *Euskera* and its culture. I will be using the region of Catalonia as a primary example of effective language and cultural planning. It is imperative that I understand the reasons for its success in revitalizing the Catalan language and culture before exploring the issues in the Basque Country. As these two historic regions of Spain both suffered under Franco's oppressive regime, Catalonia represents what can be accomplished within Spanish territory after such tremendous upheaval. Furthermore, I will investigate the policies implemented by Quebec and Wales to evaluate whether the Basque Country could benefit from considering different methods of language and cultural planning outside of the Spanish context. The primary research will be qualitative as I will be using literary sources to evaluate the current social and political context. Additionally I will be researching Basque nationalist ideology, endangered language theory and the construction of identity which will come from literary sources such as books, journal articles and online government publications. I will also be gathering statistics from census reports, opinion polls and government surveys thus employing quantitative methods of research as evidence to support the success of specific policy.

## Chapter 1- The Catalan Model

*"Todos los catalanes son una mierda"*

*"All Catalans are shit"*

***Luis de Galinsoga, 21st June 1959 (Levante, 2015)***

Catalonia is an autonomous community in the north east of Spain that is comprised of four provinces; Barcelona, Tarragona, Lleida and Girona. As explored by Crameri (2005), the community has flourished into the most economically successful region in Spain despite a long history of linguistic and cultural oppression. The transition from a politically persecuted Spanish region to the culturally dynamic and powerful community it is today has not been without struggle. General Francisco Franco led an all-encompassing attack on Catalan identity throughout his dictatorship which marginally eased as Spain began to develop into a significantly more liberal, modern country in the 1960s. However Catalonia would not be truly free to reclaim its cultural identity until Franco's death in 1975. Since Spain's transition into democracy and indeed to some extent before this period, the linguistic and cultural recovery that has taken place in Catalonia has been remarkable. Catalan suffered through years of state repression designed to eradicate the language and push it into the annals of obscurity, yet in 2013 a survey published by the *Institut d'Estudis Catalans* (the Institute of Catalan Studies) reported that there were currently more than 10 million Catalan speakers. This impressive journey has been well documented by academics alongside the strategies implemented by Catalan authorities to strengthen the linguistic and cultural identity of the community. This chapter will briefly detail the historical, cultural and political context of Catalonia from the Spanish Civil War to its current status. I will continue by exploring how the community fought back against oppression to become a major cultural and economic power in Spain. More specifically, how did Catalonia recover from such severe fascist interference? What was the key focus in rebuilding the concept of Catalan unity and solidarity? Furthermore, what were the key contributing factors to the success of the cultural and linguistic revival in Catalonia? Through this analysis, I hope to better

understand why the Catalan nationalist movement has been so successful and how other nations seeking to take back control of their cultural, linguistic and political activities can learn from Catalonia. In particular, this examination will form the basis for comparison in chapter two of this dissertation, wherein the state of language and culture in the Basque Country will be evaluated.

### **1.1 Catalonia: A brief history. From Civil War to Democracy**

Catalonia had always been an ardent supporter of the Republican Government long before the Spanish Civil War began in 1936. Graham (2005) explains that its support for the Republican government stemmed in part by their willingness to devolve certain powers to the historic nationalities of the Basque Country and Catalonia in an exercise of regime-building and good faith. However during the war, the Republican government faced a great deal of criticism from the opposition as a result of the lack of ideological continuity between the various left-wing parties. Boyd (1999) states that the struggle for power during the autumn and winter of 1936-1937 eroded Republican unity and prevented the government from articulating a coherent political message. The realisation that the Republican government needed to consolidate itself as a unified party came too late. According to Graham (2005), the right-wing parties had already pledged allegiance to military intervention led by General Francisco Franco that intended to block a constitutional and legislative reform that had not been prevented legally. The large number of Catalans who supported the Republican movement knew that if the coup succeeded a fascist nationalist government would end their hopes for an independent Catalonia. The region would remain loyal to the Republican movement throughout the war. Many families who had always supported the Republican government now felt it impossible to remain loyal if they wanted to survive. The pressure to give up one's political beliefs became synonymous with survival as the fascist military attempted to 'cleanse' Spain of the 'pollution' that had spread throughout the country. Graham (2005) states that people of all ages and conditions fell victim to 'cleansing'. Those deemed to be a danger to the new regime were killed or exiled. Politically active Spaniards were not the only people at risk as the rebel forces

targeted those who symbolized cultural change and modernity: teachers, intellectuals, liberal women and homosexuals.

Catalonia fell to military forces in February 1939 and despite Republican efforts, the war was won by General Franco in April 1939. Soon afterwards, as explored by Conversi (1997), Franco adopted the most radical politics of assimilation against non-Castilian cultures in modern Spanish history. Cultural homogeneity was not a new concept to Spanish nationalists. Former Finance Minister Jose Calvo Sotelo declared before his assassination '*Mejor una Espana roja que rota*', (I'd prefer a Red Spain to a broken Spain). This sentence encompasses Francoist ideology succinctly and precisely; their hatred for communism and the left could not exceed their contempt for separatism within Spain. Autonomy statutes granted by the Republic to Catalonia before the war were rescinded and public use of Catalan was prohibited (Boyd, 1999). As a consequence, Franco immediately adopted a violent, zero-tolerant attitude to any person or body deemed to be propagating separatist and democratic ideology as it was felt this would threaten the unity of traditional Spanish culture. Conversi (1997) explains that the regime thus imposed a single language which was imposed by police repression and a centralised education system. As *el idioma del imperio* (the language of the empire), every Spaniard had a 'duty' to speak Castilian Spanish and promote the idea of a common culture, race and history. After Barcelona had fallen to the might of Francoist militia, Catalonia was occupied for six months in an attempt to rid Spain of all traces of Catalan cultural references and institutions. Catalan books were burned while street names were given Castilian names and monuments desecrated. Catalan was forbidden to be spoken in workplaces and teachers loyal to the dictatorship were brought in to replace those sympathetic to the Catalan cause. The *Institut d'Estudis Catalans* (The Institute of Catalan Studies) was renamed the *Instituto de Estudios Mediterraneos* (The Institute of Mediterranean Studies) and all university courses that taught Catalan culture were abolished (Harrison, 2009). Any displays of Catalan identity were made illegal and people were accused of separatism for speaking Catalan. Many Catalan writers, philosophers and artists had fled Spain

during the war, seeking refuge in France, Holland and Great Britain. Those left behind were exiled or killed by firing squad. Catalan citizens who supported the Republican side had to openly declare fealty to the new regime or risk being captured by fascist soldiers often informed by fearful residents frightened for their own lives. This entire operation was designed to rid the country of regional dialects and minority languages in order to ensure a unified, homogenised Spain loyal to the Franco dictatorship. Such large-scale oppression had a devastating impact on Catalonia and many believed the region would never truly recover (Conversi, 1997).

Conversi (1997, pp.115) explains how the victory of allied forces over European fascism pressured Franco into adopting 'a feeble façade of liberalisation' that involved granting minor cultural concessions to regions such as Catalonia. The events of World War 2 did not go unnoticed by the Catalan people who saw the outcome as a symbol for change and hope for the future. Underground activity began to take place in the form of language, literature and history classes attended by small groups of people. In 1944 the *Institut d'Estudis Catalans* took steps to continue its work despite constant interference from the regime. The printing of books in Catalan steadily increased and by the 1950s, intellectuals had begun to discuss the future of the Catalan identity in more positive terms. They felt a slight optimism as it seemed Catalan culture was no longer on the verge of extinction as it once was. In spite of this, there was also a real danger that the Catalan language would become a *family language*, never again to be used in the public sphere. Additionally, as the allied forces had decided against encouraging Spain to become a democratic country, declaring instead only Spaniards themselves could effect a change of regime (Boyd, 1999), there were those who felt disillusioned by the positivity that came from small clandestine successes. Catalonia would need a massive cultural and linguistic revival if its identity were to survive.

## 1.2 A New Challenge

Throughout the dictatorship, Catalonia and other historical regions of Spain suffered tremendous cultural and political oppression to the extent that many had given up on any form of recovery. Although the Catalans did gain some ground through furtive activity during the dictatorship, the death of Franco in 1975 signalled a new era of change and modernity in which Catalonia could flourish. Kathryn Crameri (2008) suggests that the Franco government concerned itself primarily with perpetuating the notion that Spain was a single nation with one culture and one language. Nonetheless, this idea had the opposite effect. Many citizens chose to resist this ideology which allowed the Catalan culture to survive modestly until the time came for a mass insurgence. When the *Generalitat de Catalunya* (Catalan Government) was fully re-established in 1980, high on the agenda for reform were culture and language policies. After decades of oppressive rule from the fascist regime, it seemed the task ahead was insurmountable. Therefore I will continue by examining first of all the problems faced by the new government and then the strategy implemented by the *Generalitat* to rebuild the Catalan identity.

Crameri (2008) explains how the Catalan language had been put under intolerable strain during the dictatorship to the extent that by 1981 only half of all Catalans could speak it and only 15% could write it. After 1936 few Catalans had any formal language training as it had been forbidden by the dictatorship. Those who could write in Catalan were either self-taught or had learnt from older family members. The idea that the Catalan language was merely a 'dialect' and to use it was 'unchristian' was promoted by the supporters of the regime which led to many abandoning it in fear that their social prospects and careers could be damaged. Linguistically, the region was full of contrast; rural areas of Catalonia suffered as their command of Castilian Spanish was poor whilst the middle classes could afford to learn Catalan in secret as a form of resistance. Mass migration from the rest of Spain and then later from other European countries meant that it became more and more difficult to increase the numbers of Catalan speakers. Migrants coming from other areas of

Spain did not feel it necessary to learn the language as their loyalty was to their native Castilian tongue. Besides this, they did not feel any emotional attachment to the heritage and culture of Catalonia. Migrants coming from other countries would assume it beneficial to learn Castilian as Catalan was only spoken by half of the population. It would be essential to change how Catalan citizens and the rest of Spain perceived the Catalan language in order to facilitate a successful linguistic revival.

A major aspect of Catalan culture in desperate need of restoration were the literary arts. Since the regime had forbidden any publication of books in Catalan (excluding religious texts), very few people still had access to Catalan literature. Printing had continued on a small level however interest was very much confined to the elite classes. The lack of literature available would have been a contributing factor in the low rates of literacy in Catalan as new generations of young people were unable to connect with the few available works. Crameri (2008) explains that the challenge was to broaden both supply and demand within the market. Education reforms would serve to increase the numbers of those who could read and write in Catalan which would in turn lead to a surge in demand.

In addition to education and literary reform, Crameri (2008) states that elements of traditional and popular culture would play a significant role in the Catalan cultural revival. During the regime, *festes* (festivals) were only permitted if they were deemed to be religious in context as they could be explained under the auspice of Catholic tradition. Unfortunately, those who had turned away from the church due to its relationship with the dictatorship thus turned away from Catalan as it became associated with religion. As Spain began to embrace the technological advances of the Western World, Catalans experienced football, television and film all within the nationalist framework. Outwardly, Spain was the image of progress and development yet for many of its citizens, censorship and propaganda was still the norm. Despite this, a new form of popular music grew out of the feelings of protest and disillusionment in the 1960s. *Nova Canco* (New song) inspired a new generation to look at the Catalan language from a different perspective. It could be the language of

resistance and resilience under which the Catalan community could unite. Yet as with most cultural endeavours of the time, some of the language used by the musicians was not easily understood by working-class audiences due to the tendency to include literary and political references. It would appear that Catalonia had to strategize reforms that would not only suit the elite and middle classes but would unify the entire nation.

The death of Franco had to some extent freed Catalonia from more than 30 years of oppressive assimilatory restrictions. The newly established *Generalitat* could not simply reinstate the public use of Catalan and hope the language would thrive. Nor could they expect cultural activity to flourish and re-establish the Catalan identity. What did it mean to be Catalan anyway? Catalonia had to assert its own sense of individuality and diversity to triumph in the modern world. Moreover, the ethnic demographics of Catalonia had been transformed by migration therefore any political authorities would have to consider the new social landscape before implementing any progressive measures. The *Generalitat* knew that the Catalan language and culture could provide the sense of identity and community Catalonia needed to stabilise and excel.

### **1.3 Catalonia fights back: Language and Cultural Policy**

The Constitution of 1978 granted non-Castilian languages official status in their respective geographical areas. This status was guaranteed under the Statute of Autonomy established in 1979 which described Catalan as *la llengua pròpia* (its own language). Furthermore, it stated that the normal and official use of both Castilian and Catalan was guaranteed. Measures necessary to ensure both languages are used would be adopted and suitable conditions would be created so that full equality between both languages could be achieved (Miller and Miller, 1996). Language is a primary marker that distinguishes Catalans from Castilian-speaking Spaniards to the extent that it forms the basis for the strong sense of community and national identity that is felt in Catalonia (Hargreaves, 2000). From 1975 to 1977 the *Congres de Cultura Catalan* (Congress of Catalan Culture) was held to discuss the importance of language standardisation and normalisation. The Catalan language had the



advantage of utilising work done by Pompeu Fabra, engineer and grammarian, who had compiled dictionaries and grammar books that became the obligatory point of reference. Moreover, as a Romance language deriving from Latin, similarities with Castilian and French would ease the standardisation process as well as encouraging non-Catalan speakers to learn the language (Crameri, 2008).

It was critical that the *Generalitat* and other governing bodies in Catalonia capitalised on the new-found freedom afforded to them by the state. Political parties from every side were in agreement that residents should acquire the ability to speak, read and write in Catalan whilst those already fluent should be persuaded to use it in all aspects of daily life. According to Henry and Kate Miller (1996), public administration, media, education, commerce and industry, cultural and social sectors were all of equal importance to target. Yet as Crameri (2008) also suggests, status planning was vital to ensure that Catalan regained its prestige as a language worthy for use in every setting. If people in positions of power or influence were to start using Catalan more regularly, there would be a greater advantage in learning the language. The *Congres* defined linguistic normalisation as "a process during which a language gradually recovers the formal functions it had lost and at the same time works its way into those social sectors, within its own territory, where it was not spoken before" (Torres, 1984, pp. 59). To achieve these goals, language planning and policy would be crucial in providing the framework and legislation necessary to coordinate a linguistic revival. *La Llei Lingüística de Normalizació* (Language Normalisation Act) of 1983, in addition to the updated version of 1998, state that pupils must be able to use both Catalan and Castilian normally and correctly at the end of their compulsory education. Families are permitted to choose which type of education they want their children to follow: Catalan curriculum and Castilian as the second language, or the reverse (Huguet, 2006). In addition, all education centres are charged with ensuring that Catalan is the principal language of expression, both within the classroom and for administrative purposes. Prior to the implementation of the act, Catalan was in danger of being substituted by Castilian thus

these measures encouraged fundamental change. Education was the key to increasing the number of Catalan speakers and consolidating its status in the national consciousness (Miller and Miller, 1996).

Soon after the *Llei de Normalizacio Lingüística* was created, Catalan education authorities introduced widely successful immersion programmes to ensure that full Catalan schooling could be achieved by those who had little or no exposure to the language. Initially the programmes were designed to help children living in the industrial areas of Barcelona and other areas wherein the majority of families were non-Catalan speaking. The programmes meant that nursery school teaching and the first stages of primary education could be conducted entirely in Catalan (Huguet, 2006). The idea that children in this age group are said to be at the optimum stage in their development to learn another language without affecting their grasp of Castilian would reassure parents from various linguistic backgrounds (Miller and Miller, 1996,). More recently, in an attempt to cope with the increasing number of immigrant families arriving in Catalonia, *tallers d'adaptacio escolars* (school adaptation workshops) were set up to give linguistic support to non-Catalan speaking children. Likewise, when in 2003 the *Pla per la llengua i la cohesio social* (Plan for Language and Social Cohesion) was launched, *ales d'acollida* (welcoming classes) were integrated into mainstream classes for new arrivals who were also given extra hours in Catalan tuition. The plan emphasized the connection between learning Catalan, integrating within the school and making friends. Initiatives that incorporate local authorities, cultural and social organisations and the community to engage pupils with language learning, *Plans Educatius d'entorn* (Community Education Plans), have also been extremely advantageous to those in need of additional help. Some cities have even created classes where children can learn about Catalonia, its language and school life before they enrol (Vila I Moreno, 2008).

Language restoration had received a great deal of support from both native speakers and migrants who began to see Catalan proficiency as an asset. Nonetheless, Catalonia could not rely solely on education reform to reach the desired state of linguistic and cultural normalisation. The authorities faced challenges in recovering suppressed aspects of Catalan culture and consolidating its infrastructure. Similarly, they wanted to enhance Catalonia's visibility and competitiveness within the Spanish and global markets as a cultural destination that could in turn boost economic growth. Throughout the dictatorship, Catalonia saw France as the ideal model of democracy thus elements of French cultural legislation can be found in many of the region's most significant institutions and cultural products. The concept of cultural exceptionalism also has its origins in French cultural discourse; it is the idea that every culture has a certain uniqueness that must be preserved and defended (Cramer, 2008). It will become evident that Catalonia was heavily influenced by this notion as I continue by exploring the policy that shifted the cultural trajectory of a nation presumed unable to recover.

To achieve cultural normalisation in Catalonia, in other words to give Catalan culture back its place as the predominant culture of the community and the one in which citizens would normally choose to participate, correcting problems with infrastructure would prove to be integral. Catalan citizens had spent decades without access to libraries, museums and other cultural facilities thus large sums of money were spent on providing these services or modernizing what was already in place. This was done by both the *Generalitat* and the *Ajuntament* (local town hall). Initially the culture budget was very small however in the 1990s cultural resurgence reached new heights as millions of euros were invested into projects like the *Teatre Nacional de Catalunya* (National Theatre of Catalonia) and the *Museu d'Historia de Catalunya* (Museum of Catalan History). Legislation was passed to ensure the success of these facilities by protecting Catalan heritage, archives, museums and popular traditions. Unfortunately these laws were often slowly or only partially implemented which hindered their

effectiveness (Crameri, 2008). Despite this, the Catalan community was determined to continue to embrace their cultural diversity and to facilitate cultural normalisation.

Villarroya (2012) argues that changes made to legislation within the audio-visual sector in Catalonia paved the way for Catalan to be accepted as the cultural and linguistic norm. He explains that in 1998 the Language Policy Act stated that 50% of broadcasting time must be in Catalan in addition to 25% of all songs played on the radio. Furthermore, all written media published by the *Generalitat* must be in Catalan. In 2005 the Audiovisuals Act was introduced to protect national production of film and television from Hollywood interference. Providers of public audiovisual communication services should use Catalan and distributors shall also guarantee that most of their channels are in Catalan. The Act states that 51% of annual broadcasting time should be in Catalan and 10% is reserved for independent producers who have created their product within the last 5 years. Television and radio corporations have played an integral role in the standardisation of Catalan language and culture thus the Catalan Broadcasting Corporation now allocates 6% of its total annual revenue to fund future independent projects in Catalonia. To encourage the use of the Catalan language in filmmaking, the government now awards grants to increase the showing of films that are dubbed or subtitled in Catalan. Villarroya (2012) explains that the aim is to give preferential treatment to cultural products in Catalan which as a rule are faced with a great number of difficulties when trying to reach the market.

In 1977 the *Generalitat* began to develop foreign policy that would aid in gaining international recognition for the Catalan language and culture (Villarroya, 2012). This presented its own challenges for a stateless nation like Catalonia however the government persisted in strategizing how an awareness of Catalan culture could be achieved within the European framework. In 1992 the Catalan Consortium for the Promotion of Culture Abroad was established but was recently taken over by the Catalan Institute of Cultural Industries. Villarroya (2012, pp.41) states that the Institute

‘fosters the export of Catalan cultural products abroad, providing information, advice and contacts for Catalan and foreign cultural companies and professionals, supporting Catalan cultural companies interested in doing international business, coordinating the presence of Catalan culture companies in international fairs and markets, publishing catalogues, directories, bulletins and other merchandise related to Catalan cultural industries in order to increase their international visibility, and developing general policies to support the cultural industries in coordination with associations and entities in this sector. It relies on a network of foreign offices that facilitate relations between Catalan companies and their target markets, and offer valuable experience and *in situ* knowledge’. Moreover, the Department of Culture and the Media promotes internationalisation programmes in various areas, including film production. The Catalan Film brand promotes Catalan audio-visual materials on a global scale which in conjunction with the Catalan Films and TV consortium is establishing local, national and international links as well as promoting Catalan companies and products.

The Institut Ramon Llull was founded in 2002 ‘with the purpose of promoting Catalan language studies at universities abroad, the translation of literature and thought written in Catalan, and Catalan cultural production in other areas like theatre, film, circus, dance, music, the visual arts, design and architecture’. The Institut signs agreements with universities across the world to promote the teaching of Catalan in them and then supports these centres by providing teachers, resources and advice. The Institut currently has over 140 centres all over the world. In addition to promoting Catalan language learning, the Institut also supports the translation of works of literature and essayists in need of help disseminating their work to a larger audience. The Institut Ramon Llull has a significant role in the creation and promotion of Catalan literature by means of book fairs and festivals, grants and prizes for excellence as well as building and maintaining strong links with publishers and agents. Conferences on a vast range of subjects relating to Catalan language and culture are also held by the Institut in addition to art exhibitions, concerts and shows. Furthermore,

it is the official certifying body for Catalan language competence and organizes the examination of students across its varied network of education organisations (Institut Ramon Llull). The success of similar foreign institutes like the British Council, the Confucius Institute and el Instituto de Cervantes inspire smaller, minority languages like Catalan to create such organisations due to the profound effect they have on international awareness. The work done by the Institut Ramon Llull means that a great many more people have access to language learning and cultural education that helps not only the culture itself, but those who participate. As the Catalan language receives little support from within Spain, Catalonia turned the situation on its head by looking to the European and global cultural market for recognition as a diverse, distinct nation.

## 1.4 The Evidence

As previously mentioned, the dictatorship left the Catalan language in a precarious situation. In 1981 only half of all citizens of Catalonia could speak the language and only 15% could write it (Crameri, 2008). Nevertheless, due to the measures put in place by the *Generalitat* and local authorities, the number of speakers quickly increased. Statistics published by the *Institut d'Estadística de Catalunya* (Institute of Statistics of Catalonia) and the *Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas* (Centre of Sociological Investigation) show the increase in the number of those who can understand, speak, write and read in Catalan in percentages over a 12 year period (Mercator-Education, 2000). In 1986, 90.6% of citizens could understand Catalan and by 1998, this figure reached 97.3%. The percentage of those who could speak Catalan in 1986 was at 64% and 12 years later in 1998, this had increased to 79%. In 1986 only 31.5% could write in Catalan although a census in 1996 showed that this figure had increased to 45.8% (Mercator-Education, 2000).

In recent years, the number of Catalan users has continued to increase. According to Intercat, a Catalan language learning website, from 2003 to 2013 there has been a dramatic surge in the

percentage of the population of Catalonia who can write in Catalan. In 2003, 79% could write in Catalan and in 2013, this number reached 83.8%. It is clear that language policy within schools has contributed immeasurably to the increase in those able to write in Catalan. Concerning the spoken language, it would appear that from the 1980s to the new millennium the greatest changes took place. Within the past 10 years, the percentage of those who can understand and speak Catalan have remained steady at approximately 96-99%. Any recent changes in percentages could perhaps be a result of immigration however this would need further investigation. Although there are certain figures, for example the percentage of those born in Catalonia who can read Catalan, that have decreased, the overall figures suggest that the language is flourishing and will continue to do so. This further consolidates the notion that language policy has been effective in reviving the Catalan language.

Legislation designed to improve language learning in Catalonia has been a fundamental element in the linguistic recovery of Catalan. The dictatorship forbade the teaching of Catalan in schools and at home. A great deal of progress has been made in this area since the implementation of the *Llei de Normalizacio Linguistica* in 1983; the numbers of pupils receiving education in Catalan increased dramatically. From 1986 to 1996 the number of children receiving Catalan instruction almost doubled. In the school year of 1986 to 1987, 42.5% of pupils were taught in Catalan and in 1995 to 1996 this figure was 81.5%. Furthermore, there has been a considerable decrease in the percentage of those taught in both Catalan and Spanish. In 1986, 33% of pupils received bilingual instruction whereas in 1995 the percentage had dropped significantly to 18%. Pupils receiving instruction in Spanish in 1986 was 24.5% however in 1995 this figure was at 0.5%. The decrease in pupils receiving bilingual and Spanish instruction is a result of the increase in the variety of subjects taught in Catalan in addition to the extensive language education policy implemented by Catalan authorities. (Mercator-Education, 2000).

The success of Catalan instruction in the education system is reflected in the percentages of young people who are fluent in the language. 75% of the total population speak Catalan however this figure reaches 90% among young people aged between 15 and 29. This is an incredibly significant point in the recovery of the Catalan language as there was once a fear that the language would be lost to older generations. The fact that a huge number of young people speak and use the language demonstrates the determination of the Catalan people to restore their language to its former strength.

This success is emanated in cultural statistics. Intercat explains that every year 6,000 books are published in Catalan which equates to 12% of the total number published in Spain. The highest rated TV channel in Catalonia is TV3 which broadcasts all of its programmes in Catalan. Likewise the leader in radio broadcasting is Catalunya Radio which also broadcasts solely in Catalan. 30% of all newspapers sold in Catalonia are in Catalan and in Barcelona, the majority of plays are too performed in Catalan. The only cultural area in which the Catalan language is lacking in presence is within the film industry although this could be explained by the heavy influence of American filmmakers throughout Europe.

The Catalan language and culture has experienced a phenomenal revival in the short time since the death of General Franco. However its accomplishments spread further afield into trade and business areas. Banks and shops tend to serve their customers primarily in Catalan and legal documentation must also be provided in the language. Banks are obliged to have cheque books available in Catalan in addition to travel agency documents, hotel bills and even household expenditure. The majority of households receive their electricity, phone, water and gas bill in Catalan and in many cases so too are pay slips. This progress has come up against some resistance yet the Generalitat and local authorities have managed to overcome these obstacles to achieve a real sense of change in Catalonia (Intercat).



The Institut Ramon Llull coordinates with more than 150 universities all over the world and are currently teaching Catalan to 6,000 students around the world. As the Institut promotes advanced studies and research on the Catalan language and culture through schools and professorships of visiting lecturers at prestigious universities, the interest in learning Catalan outside of Spain continues to increase (IRL). It is vital that alongside the University Network of Catalan Studies Abroad, the Institut Ramon Llull expands its influence in order to establish Catalan as an international language. Nonetheless, the Institut has accomplished a great deal in the short period that it has been in operation.

## **1.5 In Summary**

The journey from near cultural and linguistic extinction to becoming a thriving nation under a democratic autonomous government was not easy for Catalonia. The death of Franco had freed Catalonia from its repressive shackles yet it would take several decades until the culture and language experienced a true sense of recovery. The increase in speakers now fluent in Catalan definitively demonstrates the success of education and language policy whilst the cultural revival is visible in literature, music, theatre and film. Media leads the way in Catalan language dissemination promoting a bilingual environment in which young people can experience both Catalan and Castilian culture without fear of institutional oppression. The Catalan model for cultural and linguistic recovery has become an inspiration to other minority languages seeking the similar results. However there are specific reasons as to why Catalonia has succeeded in achieving the impossible. Furthermore, the conditions in which Catalonia found itself post-Franco were very particular to the Spanish state as a whole. Catalonia cultivated the idea that their cultural heritage was in fact worthy of revival and could flourish in the modern world. As such, the policies and laws that have yielded such positive results may not work as well in other nationless states. On the other hand, could the success of Catalonia be emanated in the Basque Country and what can be learnt from the Catalan model of recovery?

## Chapter 2- The Basque Country

*“El verdadero misterio del euskera es su supervivencia, no su origen”*

*“The true mystery of the Basque language is its survival, not its origin”*

### **Koldo Mitxelena**

The autonomous community of the Basque Country in northern Spain consists of three provinces: Alava, Biscay and Gipuzkoa. This region shares a difficult and tumultuous past with the north eastern community of Catalonia due to its enigmatic language and culture. As in Catalonia, the Basque Country experienced extreme hardship and adversity throughout General Franco’s dictatorship and longed for the freedom to exercise its cultural and linguistic individuality. From this oppression grew strong nationalist sentiments which would spread quickly under the shroud of uneasiness and discontent that stifled the region. However, as the Catalans could advance culturally and linguistically as a result of an already strong sense of collective identity, the Basques struggled to unite in the same manner. This led to the creation of ETA and the concept of the Basques as a race of people that shared a historic heritage that needed to be protected. Unfortunately, this rhetoric turned into terrorist violence that ultimately damaged the road to cultural recovery in the Basque Country. To this day the region has not been able to emanate the success in Catalonia. This chapter will therefore briefly outline the historical journey of the Basque Country from the Franco era to modern day Spain in order to gain further insight into the current context. This will be followed by an examination of the strategy already implemented by local authorities. Furthermore, it is imperative to analyse how the community can grow and prosper in a modern European context thus an exploration of whether certain strategies implemented by the Catalans would have the same success in the Basque Country will follow. The aim of this chapter is to discover how the Basque Country can move forward effectively and fortuitously in relation to recovering a proud sense of national identity based upon its cultural and linguistic heritage.

### **2.1 Betrayal, Oppression and Violence**

Long before the beginning of the Spanish Civil War, the Basque Country had struggled to remain in control of its own social and political affairs. Conversi (1997) explains that Catalan autonomy had been abolished in 1716 yet the Basques were able to keep their local laws and customary privileges

intact. They were one of the last regions to maintain their *fueros* (local statutes and charters) however after two long and violent civil wars, they were abolished in 1876. Following this, industrialisation and modernisation very quickly uprooted the traditionally quiet, rural lifestyle of the Basques in exchange for mills, mines and shipping yards. Mass migration from Castile swiftly transformed the social demographics of the region and inner cities were overwhelmed by the number of Basque youths who had left the countryside in search of work. There were conflicts of employment in companies that favoured Castilian born workers over Basques which consequently had a negative impact on the use of Euskera. Those who had moved from their rural towns quickly forgot their native tongue in order to share in the language of the immigrants and those in power. It was from this period of Basque history that nationalism was born in response to the growing need for a new political ideology that would protect the region from centralist politics. In spite of the widespread social and political frustration felt at this time, Medrano (1995) argues that in the period leading up to the start of the civil war the Basque Country had established itself as one of the leaders of Spanish industrialisation. Decades later, the Basque Country would still be regarded as one of Spain's most economically prosperous regions.

During the Civil War of 1936 to 1939 the Basque Country was firmly Republican. Shortly before the war began the Republicans had granted the region autonomy and after the government was installed, the local administration was fully reorganised. The Basque Country was known to be the most politically harmonious region throughout the entire Republican zone. Legislation was established to promote the Basque language, to ensure law and order was maintained and to provide food to impoverished areas. Unfortunately the political freedom given to the Basque Country would last just 9 months when in June 1937 Bilbao was captured by Spanish troops and the Basque government was exiled to French territory (Conversi, 1997).

Once Franco's troops had occupied the Basque Provinces, a vicious hate campaign against any sign of Basque identity was abruptly implemented. A message written by Jose Antonio Aguirre (the then president of the Basque government-in-exile) to UNESCO denounces the following action taken by the regime: 'closure of the Basque University; occupation by armed force of social and cultural associations; mass burning of books in Euskera; elimination of all use of Euskera in schools, on radio broadcasts, in public gatherings and in publications; suppression of Basque cultural societies and of all magazines, periodicals, and reviews in Euskera; prohibition of the use of Euskera during the celebration of Mass and other religious ceremonies; a decree requiring the translation into Spanish of all Basque names in civil registries and official documents; and an official directive mandating the removal of inscriptions in Euskera from all tombstones and funeral markers' (Conversi, 1997, pp.81). Many people were imprisoned or executed for opposing Franco's terms under the pretence of

promoting separatist ideology along with the 100,000-150,000 people who were exiled. Likewise in Catalonia, the Basque Country had hoped the Allied forces would intervene. The President of the Basque Country had even begun to train an army in the hope that it would soon invade Spain. The plan was quashed when it was discovered that Britain and the United States had no interest in pressuring the regime to install a democratic government as they were more concerned by the threat of the Soviet Union. Good relations with the Spanish government would prove necessary as the Cold War became imminent. This realisation was a catalyst for a resurgence in Basque nationalism which would eventually lead to creation of ETA ten years later (Conversi, 1997).

There began a period of unrest among the Basque youth caused in part by the lack of employment opportunities in the midst of an economic standstill. Clandestine activity in reaction to the regime began with non-violent gestures like graffiti, the destruction of pro-Franco architecture and the celebration of Basque national holidays. Heiberg (1989) states that in 1952 a small group of university students in Bilbao started to hold weekly meetings to study and discuss Basque history and culture. In their studies, they were inspired by Basque nationalist literature and anti-Francoist propaganda from which they developed a bulletin. *Ekin* (to do in Euskera) worked in secret for 4 years dedicated to intellectual pursuits. The students took an interest in learning the Basque language and soon the group formed an 'ethnic vision of Euskadi' (Conversi, 1997, pp.84). Heiberg (1989) discusses how *Ekin* reached out to the *Partido Nacionalista Vasco* (The Basque Nationalist Party) during the 1950s and began work with its youth sector. Nonetheless, *Ekin* and members of the youth sector broke away from the PNV when the party sought to control their activity due to in-party accusations of treachery and espionage.

Conversi (1997) affirms that *Euskadi 'ta Askatasuna* (Basque Land and Freedom), founded in 1959, was comprised of those individuals from *Ekin* who had broken away from the PNV after joining the youth sector. After the first few months, the movement's principal activity evolved from study of the Basque culture into minor acts of vandalism. Heiberg (1989) (see also Conversi, 1997) states that the first stirrings of political violence took place in 1961 when a plot to derail a number of trains carrying Francoist Civil War veterans was discovered. The group was not deterred by this incident and continued to establish themselves as a legitimate force for change in the Basque Country. A Declaration of Principles was drafted at ETA's First Assembly in 1962 wherein the previous activities and future plans for the organisation were outlined. Notably lacking from the declaration was a clear political outline or new theory. Nonetheless, a provocative book written by a German ex-secretary of the Basque Language Academy came to be the first ideological and political manual used by ETA (Conversi, 1997). In spite of numerous exaggerations and falsities within the book, *Vasconia* is still a key text in contemporary Basque nationalism. Conversi (1997) explains the success of the book to be

a result of the use of direct language and the way falsehoods are masked as legitimate truths. Due to the many contradictions and irregularities within the work, several various political ideologies and groups felt attached to the plethora of ideas presented which enabled them to unite. *Vasconia* inspired an expectation that 'acts of violence against carefully chosen military or political targets would be counteracted by indiscriminate state repression, and that the constant repetition of the action-repression cycle would progressively intensify feelings of oppression among the Basque population' (Medrano, 1995, pp.141).

Medrano (1995) states that violent attacks began with armed bank robberies in 1968. It was at one of these robberies that a member of the Civil Guard was killed followed by two members of ETA. Mass demonstrations broke out throughout the Basque Country as it was said the two members killed were shot in cold blood. They were named as heroes and ETA grew evermore popular as the cycle of violence continued. In retaliation, Meliton Manzanás, a notorious torturer and the police commissioner in 1968, was assassinated by ETA. Franco's government arrested, illegally detained and intimidated hundreds of ETA supporters yet the organisation was not deterred from its mission. The trial that took place in 1970 was a historic moment in Basque political history. The support given to those charged with Manzanás' murder was beyond anything that the judicial system had seen before. Having anticipated such a response, ETA were rewarded by uncovering the vulnerability of the regime to a growing opposition. In 1973, the expected successor of Franco, Admiral Carrero Blanco, was murdered by ETA. Then in 1974 a bomb was planted in Café Rolando in Madrid which killed 9 people and injured several more. ETA attempted to pass the blame to the security services who did not evacuate the building after the bomb alert (Conversi, 1997).

General Franco's death in 1975 meant that Juan Carlos de Borbon was named King of Spain. One of his first acts as King was to hold a general amnesty in addition to freeing 15,000 political prisoners and exiles. Nevertheless, the Basque Country remained in a state of political unrest until the late 1980s and the volatility within ETA reached crisis point. Attempts at cultural mobilisation during the *transición* took the form of festivals and peaceful marches however they would often be disrupted by violence (Conversi, 1997). The first general elections in the Basque Country were held in 1977 and established the PNV as the principal Basque party. Medrano (1995) explains that the party had made some significant ideological changes and its renewed vitality impressed middle class supporters. The party became more secular and emphasized the importance of culture and language. The new leaders were in support of social and economic progress which grew stronger during the 1970s as local capitalists began to support the party and its planned initiatives. In spite of a resurgence in popularity, the PNV struggled to negotiate changes with the Spanish state due to the threat of ETA and its power within the Basque Country. According to Medrano (1997), the relationship between

the PNV and the State was further damaged as both were unsure how to handle ETA. In the 1980s, the PNV were criticised for not condemning their actions. It was not until general public condemnation, more efficient police action and collaboration with French forces had become widespread that Spain saw a reduction in ETA's activity. In 2010, ETA announced a ceasefire and pledged to cease all violent activity (BBC News, 2010).

## 2.2 Linguistic Consequences and Basque Policy

Civil war, violent repression and terrorist retaliation had ripped the traditional region of the Basque Country apart. After decades of political fragmentation, the PNV had the tremendous task of rebuilding a nation. Several efforts to continue to promote the Basque language and culture during the regime had been tarnished by the transformation of ETA however some early members of Ekin had stepped away and returned to cultural and linguistic study. In the 1970s, the Basque Country increased the number of *Gau-eskolas* (Basque Language schools) and *Ikastolas* (Primary and Secondary Schools with teaching done predominantly in Basque) (Plan for the Promotion of Euskera, 2012). This was one of the first solid attempts at reviving the language after years of active discrimination. Comparing the number of speakers before the Civil War to those in 1970 demonstrates the damage done by the dictatorship. Clark (1979) states that in 1934, out of 1.2 million people living the Basque Country, 570,000 were judged able to speak *Euskera*. In 1970 the population had doubled to 2.3 million yet the number of Basque speakers had fallen to 450,000. Clark (1979) explains that although the Basque Country had experienced an influx in migration from other areas of Spain, this cannot fully account for the low number of speakers. It is evident that Francoist oppressive tactics had come dangerously close to wiping out *Euskera* completely.

Following the death of Franco, the main concern was a lack of understanding between the several dialects of *Euskera*. Henceforth, as it was in Catalonia, standardisation and normalisation of the Basque language was vitally important to its revival. In 1982, *la Ley basica de normalizacion del uso del euskera* (Law for the Normalisation of the Basque Language) was added to *El Estatuto de Gernika/ El Estatuto de Autonomia del Pais Vasco* (Statute of Autonomy). The Law established the functions and obligations of authorities in several sectors including education, general public administration, methods of communication and social use which were considered essential to the normalisation of *Euskera*. According to the *Plan de Acción para la Promoción del Euskera* (Plan for the Promotion of Euskera, 2012), the law has given the people the freedom to use Basque in different areas of life which in turn helps to promote the use of the language. Furthermore, it increased the feeling of solidarity between speakers of Basque and helped them to feel pride in the language and their heritage.

The Plan for the Promotion of Euskera (2012) focussed its efforts on increasing the numbers of school children that at the end of their compulsory schooling would possess sufficient practical knowledge of Basque. The Education Department designed three models of bilingual teaching from which the parents could choose; Spanish-medium teaching with Basque as a subject, Basque-and Spanish-medium teaching with both Basque and Spanish as subjects, Basque-medium teaching with Spanish as a subject. The bilingual education model has become the most popular with 90% of students in the Basque Country choosing this option. In addition to progress seen in the education sector, the Basque government have seen further growth in editorial writing and information technology. In the last 10 years the number of publications published in Euskera has doubled and the variety available has become more diverse. Currently there are 2 million Basque speakers using online search engines in Euskera and there has been an increase in online services available in the language (Plan for the Promotion of Euskera, 2012)

Despite the advances made by Basque authorities, in 2011 only 32% of the population aged 16 and over in the Basque Autonomous Community is bilingual (Fifth Sociolinguistic Survey, 2013). Information published in the *Plan de Acción para la Promoción del Euskera* (2012) states that although this is 8 points higher than in 1991, the percentage of people who use *Euskera* more than or as much as Castilian is at 20%. Thus the main issue facing *Euskera* is an inequality between the use and knowledge of the language. The use of the language is very weak in the public sector and is typically used as an intergenerational means of communication. In 2008, Basque authorities revised the original *Plan de Normalización del Uso del Euskera* in order to deal with modern European society. The debate incorporated public and expert opinion to develop new linguistic policy. *Euskera 2.1* seeks to respond to the advances of the modern age that had previously been unacknowledged by government policy. The key ideas within the updated plan include encouraging intergenerational teaching of *Euskera* alongside classroom education. The language should become familiar and regularly used by the under 25s by increasing the opportunities to speak and learn *Euskera*. Links between Basque-communities should be strengthened and enriched whilst support should be given so that every adult can reach a level of at least a passive bilingual. The immigrant community should be given greater opportunity to integrate with Basque culture and language by slowly changing the image of Basque to that of an open, modern society. Flexible and enriching methods of communication are required to help new speakers as well as more online content that can be easily accessed. Furthermore, there should be greater support for cultural creation and consumption in *Euskera* which could in turn help to raise the prestige of the language.

Basque authorities have stated that for a linguistic revival to succeed, the following three areas will be the focus of the movement; using the family as a learning tool, education in *Euskera* and adult

education. The method of teaching will be based upon a 'use while you learn' system. It is thought that stronger initiatives are currently essential due to Castilian influence and more recently, the desire to learn English. Moreover, the immigrant population will play a huge role in the future health of *Euskera* hence the importance on having more opportunities to learn (Plan de Acción para la Promoción del Euskera, 2012).

Intrinsically linked to the preservation of the Basque language is its culture. Seemingly trapped between the cultural giants of France and Spain, the Basque Country has struggled to maintain a sense of cultural identity since the Civil War. As the language slipped back into the rural domain, Basque culture dwindled under the weight of Castile and Franco's oppressive force (Conversi, 1997). After his death and in fact throughout the dictatorship, nationalist ideology heralded the significance of the Basque Country's individuality and placed emphasis on the study of culture and language. However determined certain groups were to revive Basque culture, local authorities within the various provinces of the Basque Autonomous Community could not agree on the best step forward. Furthermore, citizens themselves held different viewpoints which would often depend on their knowledge of *Euskera*, their geography and their background. According to Urla (1993), some felt it was sufficient to know only a few words of *Euskera* and perhaps to learn it at school, whereas on the other end of spectrum there were those who felt that Basque should become the dominant language of all citizens. As the Basque Country has struggled to agree on a strategy for cultural promotion, progress has been considerably slow.

In 2005, the Basque Government published the Basque Plan for Culture. The document details the state of Basque culture at the time of publication on a national and international scale, the opportunities provided by cultural policy and what authorities can do to ensure cultural survival. More significantly, the publication includes acknowledgement of weakness within Basque cultural policy. It states that there is still no clear, coherent framework regarding what Basque culture is and how it can be developed. Communication between the Basque government and local authorities is insufficient and unstable, whilst a lack of solidarity among provinces means that the presence of cultural activity is sparse and sporadic in nature. Additionally, huge deficiencies in training for cultural professionals affects the quality of artistic production available in a range of sectors including museums and heritage, theatre and dance, art and fashion. The Basque Plan for Culture recognises that as an employment sector, there is little or no stability for staff and a great deal of limitations on what can be achieved as a result of restricted resources, insufficient administrative services and inappropriate working schedules. It would appear that cultural policy is suffering unnecessarily due to fundamental bureaucratic and managerial deficiency. The effect on cultural production and consumption is devastating as foreign equivalents of literature and music are



favoured, further limiting the market for *Euskera*. Policies designed to support cultural production are unbalanced and disparate as there is little co-ordination between administrative bodies. Cultural institutions are left without governmental support which restricts opportunities for community work and inter-provincial relations.

More specifically, heritage sites and museums are struggling due to a lack of knowledge in the classification, cataloguing and care of cultural artefacts. The Plan states that 'A rapid destruction is occurring of our ethnographic heritage (unique buildings, sites, the traditional country houses) and industrial heritage, due to industrial activity, urban planning and property development'. A distinct gap in funding is recognised by the plan which is striking considering the emphasis it places on the money spent each year on culture. It is noted that the Basque Country spends more per person on culture per year than Catalonia and Quebec yet basic structural systems continue to fail. In the case of dance, theatre and music, the plan indicates that no adequate provision for the dissemination of the work of new composers, choreographers and directors is given thus diluting any possible youth interest. The production of books and music is limited as many companies in the Basque Country cannot publish material on a large scale. It is impossible to produce a film in *Euskera* as the production costs are too high and companies are forced to compete with huge foreign film makers. Preference is always given to either Spanish or English culture, particularly within television and radio. No legislation dictates that a proportion of music or programming should be in *Euskera*.

The state of cultural policy in the Basque Country appears bleak when we examine such a number of failings and weaknesses in legislation. The strengths listed by the Plan are abstract in nature and thus exemplify the lack of actual work done by the government to revive Basque culture. A great deal is mentioned of 'growing social awareness', 'improvements made in new technologies' and other less tangible 'strengths'. The plan is abundant in suggestions for opportunities for cultural production and consumption but deficient in any real evidence of exacting secure policy.

Since the plan was published, the Basque government has created a website specifically to inform citizens on the work it has done and the progress it has made. In 2012, the Administracion de la Comunidad Autonoma del Pais Vasco was reorganised to improve the efficiency of projects undertaken to ensure legislation is fulfilled. Within the Departamento de Educacion, Politica Linguistica y Cultura, this included the sub-divisions dedicated to the promotion of Basque, the management and protection of museums, libraries and archives as well as community cohesion projects. Moreover, specific aims within the department were updated. These include new measures to identify areas that are in need of rejuvenation in the form of funding, better infrastructure or

more governmental support. Additionally, it details the significance of monitoring statistics, conducting studies and solidifying communication between the private and public cultural agents.

The *Kultura Auzolanean Plana* is the most recent document published by the Basque Government listing the plans for culture in the year 2014-2015. The document is designed to inform citizens concerning work done to consolidate the cultural activity of public and private agents. Nevertheless, it appears that Basque cultural policy is still behind in actively promoting and creating cultural activity. The aims of more recent cultural plans mirror those detailed during the transition and the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Authorities have yet to unite the many organisations, councils and agents under solid, viable legislation and a coherent, strong cultural vision which appears to be seriously hindering development. The fact that there is no clear change to the work needed to be done in order to truly ignite a revival of Basque culture demonstrates that current legislation is not sufficient.

This chapter will continue by analysing which aspects of language and cultural policy implemented by the Catalan government could prove equally successful in the Basque Country.

### **2.3 Catalan Comparison**

The success of the cultural and linguistic revival in Catalonia is an inspirational example to other minority languages within Spain and internationally. However, there are several advantages that allowed Catalonia to increase the number of Catalan speakers with more efficiency and ease than the Basque Country. The contrast in the Catalan and Basque linguistic landscape begins with a difference in language origin. *Euskera* is one of the oldest languages in Western Europe that predates surrounding Indo-European languages like Castilian, French and Italian (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2015). As it does not derive from Latin, it is therefore harder for speakers of Romance languages to learn than Catalan. This could explain why Basque authorities continue to encourage more people to take up *Euskera* without the same success experienced in Catalonia. The challenge for the Basque Country therefore lies in transforming *Euskera* into a common vehicle for communication and community instead of allowing it to be perceived as a relic of old society.

In this sense, status planning to restore the language to its former glory would be essential. It was vital for Catalonia to present Catalan as a language that is viable in every social setting: formal or informal. Thus a variety of methods were implemented in order to pull Catalan into modern 20<sup>th</sup> century Catalonia. As discussed in Chapter 1, those who were in the public eye began to use Catalan on television and radio after laws were made requiring a minimum of 50% of broadcasting time to be in Catalan. Moreover, providers of public audio-visual communication services guaranteed most

of their channels would be in Catalan. By saturating media that is accessed by all members of society, the language can steadily integrate within social consciousness. The Basque Country would be creating opportunities to learn through television and radio in addition to increasing cultural production. This cycle of creation and consumption worked incredibly in Catalonia as it gave citizens the choice to experience Catalan in broader terms. By embracing technology, *Euskera* can become part of the everyday routine of ordinary people who may not have previously felt able to connect with their heritage.

*Euskal Irrati Telebista* (EITB) was the first communication group formed in the Basque Country and currently has five TV channels, five radio stations and a website. The group was founded in 1982 when the Basque government passed a law on its creation. The radio and television stations began broadcasting later that year and has since expanded into children's television and online streaming. Despite this step forward for the transmission of Basque culture, 75% of people within the Basque Autonomous Community are watching and listening to stations that give preference to non-Basque production (Basque Plan for Culture, 2005). Catalonia solved this issue by introducing legislation that ensures Catalan shares at least 50% of broadcasting with the Castilian language. Imma Tubella, Professor of Communication Theory at the Open University of Catalonia, the relationship between identity and the media in the Catalan context. "Now, children in Catalonia play in Catalan because they watch *Chin Chan* in Catalan. In my childhood, I used to play in Spanish when I was acting as a teacher, as a shopper or as a seller. I only used to speak in Catalan when I acted as a mother. Then, Catalan was forbidden, even for Hollywood actors" (2005, pp.3). She explains how in Catalonia "radio and television have been the key institutions through which listeners and viewers have come to imagine themselves as members of the national community". The significance of cultural normalization and the role the media can play becomes apparent when Tubella examines the statistics. In 1975, only 60% of people living in Catalonia could speak Catalan whereas two years after the creation of Catalan television this had increased to 64.2%. In 1995 it was 79.8%. Tubella continues by explaining that a large number of people watching programmes in Catalan in 1984 and 1985 could not speak the language. It is therefore evident that by harnessing the power of the media and its influence on daily life Basque language and culture could experience a similar revival to that in Catalonia. The government does not yet have the support from the entire Basque community to implement legislation ensuring that production in *Euskera* is broadcast sufficiently. Once again the argument is fundamentally flawed by the lack of consistency and shared ideology within the Basque Country.

The success of the Catalan cultural and linguistic revival did not rely on the strength of the media alone. As previously explored, education reform would rapidly help to secure the linguistic future of Catalan. The Basque Country has been successful in providing more opportunities for young people to learn *Euskera* and for schools to use it as the primary language of instruction. Nevertheless, the disparity between the knowledge of the language and its use signifies that although people are learning *Euskera* in the school environment, they are less willing or feel unable to use their skills in everyday life. This is a serious issue within the Basque community as it diminishes the status of *Euskera* in public and private spheres. In Catalonia, education authorities introduced immersion programmes for those children who were not used to using the language at home and for migrants new to the region. These courses were used not only to improve the quality of language spoken by the students but to encourage them to speak it amongst themselves. Furthermore, pupils were given lessons in the history and culture of Catalonia to increase understanding of their shared heritage and to inspire those new to it (Villarroya, 2012). Integration is not a concept reserved solely for migrants but also for those who may have no awareness of their cultural background or identity. Catalan authorities re-integrated an entire community into a culture and a language that many felt had been lost. Basque education policy could thus benefit from providing similar courses to encourage the use of *Euskera* among younger generations.

Economic and foreign policy could also have a major impact on the success of a cultural and linguistic revival for the Basque Country. In 1979, the region signed an Economic Agreement with the Spanish government which granted autonomy in fiscal activities (Colino, 2015). Hence the Basque Country has not been as seriously affected by economic crisis as it can introduce its own policies to reduce risks. In 2014 Basque unemployment was at 14% which was nearly half that of the rest of Spain. The region has the highest per capita output in Spain - 31,288 euros compared with a national average of 23,271 euros and an EU average of 25,134 euros, according to the national statistics office. The success of the Basque economy is rooted in its decision to focus on manufacturing goods rather than invest in property. The region is home to the Mondragon Assembly, one of the world's top producers of solar-panel manufacturing equipment, which is part of the Mondragon Cooperative Corporation. The company is the biggest group in the Basque Country and the seventh largest in the whole of Spain. It currently employs nearly 100,000 people (Reuters, 2012).

With firm footing on the international economic stage, the Basque Country could benefit by utilising its connections with the rest of Europe to promote awareness for the Basque culture and language. The Catalan Institute of Cultural Industries demonstrates the importance of establishing a presence

in neighbouring countries to coordinate the export of cultural products, the promotion of international fairs and markets, as well as building solid relationships with companies that could provide support for the Basque cause (Cramer, 2008). Moreover, the creation of the Institut Ramon Llull in Catalonia has helped the community to establish itself on an international level within prestigious universities. The Institut provides universities with the staff and materials necessary to set up Catalan courses. These classes are popular with students of Spanish and French who get the opportunity to earn a qualification or receive credits for their degree (Institut Ramon Llull, 2015). In turn, this inspires students and staff to research Catalan history and culture which adds to the international prestige of the language. If the Basque Country were to expand into the education sector on an international scale, an increase in interest for Euskera and its culture would have a positive impact on the status of the language. Grants could be provided to encourage those wishing to research the Basque Country thus increasing the number of lecturers and students with knowledge of the region. The academic sector is constantly expanding and strong links with universities could encourage student interest. Furthermore, attracting foreign students to study in the Basque Country could transform the way in which non-Basque European citizens perceive the region and change its image positively.

## **2.4 In Summary**

It is evident from the documents published by the Basque Government that language and cultural policy is severely lacking in a basic, coherent structure that is agreed upon by all provincial authorities. It is pertinent that the Basque Country resolves this fundamental issue as any future attempts at establishing new policy or legislation will be hindered. Catalonia succeeded in revitalising its culture and language as a result of a clear understanding of what it meant to be Catalan. Regardless of political, geographical and social factors, citizens agreed that language and culture would be the route through which Catalonia could reassert itself as an international power. The Catalan model of revival succeeded because the shared sense of identity felt throughout Catalonia was strong enough to act as the foundation for change. Legislation and policy were supported and implemented with vigour whilst the Basque Country seems to plan without following through with any effective change. Moreover, the violence of ETA and the association it still has with the Basque culture and language may have left people reluctant to fully support such a revival. Drawing more attention to the Basque culture and language may feel to be a daunting task; that the people will be judged based on the past and so perhaps it is better to abandon overt support for a cultural and linguistic revival to avoid further persecution. The next chapter will continue to examine this concept before exploring language planning and cultural policy outside of Spain. Are there any

similarities between the Basque Country, Quebec and Wales that could provide a stable model of legislation appropriate to the Basque context? What struggles have Quebec and Wales encountered on their journeys to linguistic and cultural freedom? Could an exploration of the two nations help the Basque government to learn from past mistakes and look to the future?

## Chapter 3- Models of Language and Cultural Policy

*“Every language is a temple in which the souls of those who speak it are enshrined”.*

**Oliver Wendall Holmes, 1860**

Language and cultural policy grow ever more significant in this increasingly globalised world we live in. A fear of influence from dominant languages and cultures becomes more evident as technology advances and concerned nations seek to protect their identity. As an example, organisations in France are trying to combat the influence of English on the French language and culture. The use of Anglicised words like *le computer* are given French equivalents (*l'ordinateur*) by the Academie Francaise, the council in charge of the standards of the French language. Radio stations have to ensure that 40% of songs aired are in French to support musicians and to maintain a sense of cultural identity in an English-American saturated market (Crystal, 2004). Even languages with millions of speakers worldwide feel threatened by the linguistic superpowers of English, Chinese and Spanish. It is therefore easy to find examples of nations who have had to or are currently struggling to revive their cultural and linguistic heritage. This chapter will discuss the cases of Quebec and Wales as examples of language and cultural planning outside of the Spanish context. Additionally, it is important to explore whether there are any other underlying issues in the Basque Country that could explain why language and cultural policy has not been successful.

### 3.1 Quebec

The province of Quebec is situated in the north-east of Canada and is the only province wherein French is the official language (Oakes and Warren, 2007). This area of Canada was originally occupied by Algonquian, Iroquois and Inuits who led simple lives farming and hunting. In 1608, Quebec City was founded by Samuel de Champlain which would become part of the French colonies. Over time, friction between British and French colonies escalated into a war for territorial control. The British won and gained control of the French colonies including Quebec City and tried to assimilate them into a British way of life. This was not successful and soon after a treaty was signed in 1774 acknowledging the French culture, language and their religious freedom (Wallace, 1948).

Since this time, there has been a great deal of lingering resentment between the British and French Canadian provinces. Oakes and Warren (2007) explain that grants were given to English-speaking land owners to settle in other parts of Canada in attempts to strengthen English as the dominant language. However, the 20<sup>th</sup> century saw progression in protecting the French language and culture as more liberal, secular legislation was introduced in order to modernize the province of Quebec. This period also heralded the arrival of nationalist ideology into the political discourse of the time.

The French speaking Quebecers no longer wanted to feel like they were a minority in Canada but rather a majority in their own context (Oakes and Warren, 2007). This concept had a major effect on how people perceived identity in French Canada as the people divided into *Quebecers* and *Francophones hors Quebec* (Francophones outside Quebec). In 1975, the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms was updated to recognize “the right of ethnic minorities to preserve and develop their culture and outlawing discrimination on the grounds of language and ethnic background (Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, c.C-12, s.10). Through the acknowledgement of other ethnic minorities within Quebec, French language and culture therefore becomes the majority with its context.

Quebec’s current political concerns are primarily the question of sovereignty and the protection of the French language and culture in an increasingly multicultural society. Oakes and Warren suggest that the future of French in Quebec depends heavily on encouraging immigrants to adopt French as the language of public communications. Throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Quebec authorities have tried to implement various legislative measures to ensure the protection of French in the province, yet due to opposition from Anglophone citizens, it had been difficult to achieve what was described in 1977 as “an essentially French” Quebec (Oakes and Warren, 2007, pp.86). The first bill put forward by the Parti Quebecois in 1976 was named the Charter of the French Language based upon the ideas of Camille Laurin, the Minister for Cultural Development. The Charter decrees that French is the language of legislature and the courts, however bills and laws are also translated into English. Additionally, French is the language of public administration and the only language that can be used by the government. Professionals such as doctors, lawyers and accountants must make their services available in French as well as public utility enterprises, for example transport authorities, water and gas providers. Written communication within the workplace must be in French and employers are prohibited from requiring knowledge of a language other than French unless it is necessary. Moreover, the Charter states that French must be used in product labelling and where other languages are required, they must not be given prominence over French. Software and operating systems must be provided in French and even toys and games that rely on languages other than French are prohibited unless a French-speaking version is available. Bilingual signage does exist however French has to be the predominant language (Charter of the French Language, 1976).

The Charter states that nursery, primary and secondary education must be in French in both private and public schools. This measure was a source of contention among English-speaking citizens as previously parents were able to choose the language of instruction for their children. Originally, those who were permitted to receive English instruction had to have a historical link with Quebec, meaning that children whose parents had received their own primary education in Quebec in English



were given this choice. However this excluded immigrants, in particular those who were Anglophone, in addition to Francophones and Canadians from other parts of Canada. Due to public disapproval, in 1982 this measure was changed to include children of Canadian citizens who received their primary education in English, but in another province (Charter of the French Language, 1976).

With regards to the integration of the immigrant community into life in Quebec, although learning French was necessary, the government stated that they did not want minority groups to lose ties with their country of origin. It was suggested that it would be beneficial for the immigrant population to maintain their language and culture in order to enrich Quebec society. However, the strict implementation of French in the public sphere meant that language policy was seen to be assimilationist in nature (Oakes and Warren, 2007). Authorities then made their intentions even more explicit by stating that “Quebec respects the right of individuals to adopt the language of their choice in communications of a private nature. Moreover, it considers that the development of heritage languages constitutes an economic, social and cultural asset for the whole Quebec population.” (Gouvernement du Quebec 1991, cited by Oakes and Warren, 2007).

In addition to utilising his ideas regarding language use, the Parti Quebecois founded their cultural Charter on concepts discussed by Camille Laurin. Laurin’s writing sought to encourage a cultural revolution wherein all citizens were involved. The aim was to give citizens the right to define a new era of Quebecois culture on their own terms. It was thought that the multicultural heritage of Quebec would cause difficulty when considering identity and national consciousness. Despite being unable to pinpoint what it meant to be Quebecois, it was recognised that the people needed to take control of their cultural heritage and develop a new identity that would benefit modern society (Oakes and Warren, 2007).

This concept could be suitable for development in the Basque Country. As the Basques are somewhat lost in defining their cultural identity, it would be practical to consider the impact of social change within the region in order to reevaluate who the Basques are. A modern approach to culture who encourage younger generations to connect with the concept of a collective identity as it would take into account how they experience Basque life. Moreover, by redefining a cultural identity based upon contemporary values and ideals, it could become more inclusive as immigrants from the rest of Spain living in the Basque Country help to form this new identity. In turn, it is possible that this would garner greater interest in *Euskera* and Basque culture as it no longer belongs to a selective few.

## 3.2 Wales

The Welsh language derives from British, the Celtic language spoken by ancient Britons. In 1911 it was classed as a minority language as it was spoken by only 43.5% of the population and has continued to decline in number ever since (The Welsh Records, UK Census). Welsh has struggled under the weight of English domination and like other minority languages in the United Kingdom, experienced linguistic repression throughout the height of British imperialism. It was forbidden to speak Welsh in some schools during the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Welsh Not punishment was usually a large piece of wood on which the letters WN were inscribed. Children heard speaking Welsh were given the 'not' to wear around their necks and were told to pass it on to the next child who spoke Welsh. At the end of the day, whoever was wearing the 'not' would be punished, usually by caning (BBC Wales).

In 2011, a census revealed how 19% of the population could speak Welsh (2011 Census). Legislation has been implemented by the Welsh government with the aim to slow any further decline in the number of Welsh speakers. The Welsh Language Act of 1993 and the Government of Wales Act in 1998 decree that Welsh and English must be used equally in the public sector. In 2010, the Welsh Assembly agreed upon new measures in an effort to revive the use of the Welsh language. Inclusive in these measures were the official recognition of the Welsh language and giving it official status, the creation of a Welsh Language Commissioner with the power to protect the rights of Welsh speaking people to access services through the medium of Welsh, the establishment of a Welsh Language Tribunal, the right of individuals and bodies to appeal decisions made in relation to the provision of services through the medium of Welsh, the creation of a Welsh Language Partnership Council to advise Government on its strategy in relation to the Welsh language and the right to investigate of instances where there is an attempt to interfere with the freedom of Welsh-speaking people to use the language with one another (Welsh Government, 2015).

In addition to legislative changes, the Welsh government has made the teaching of Welsh compulsory in all schools up to age 16. This enables children from non-Welsh-speaking families to experience language learning from an early age and encourages the growth of Welsh. As in Catalonia and the Basque Country, parents are able to choose from three different instruction models; Welsh-medium, English-medium or bi-lingual education. The government subsidises language learning material to support staff in schools where Welsh is the instructive language or a taught subject as well as in adult learning environments. Late immersion courses are also available to those who may have moved to Wales or have recently decided to change the medium of instruction. The

government are currently working on creating more opportunities in higher education, for instance encouraging colleges to use Welsh as the main instructive language. Furthermore, authorities provide extra-curricular activities that allow children to socialise in Welsh. A *Menter Iaith* (language initiative) is an organisation designed to support communities to increase and develop their use of Welsh. They provide mother and baby classes, sporting clubs and drama clubs to encourage the community to partake in social activities in Welsh (Welsh Government, 2015).

The National Assembly for Wales issues publicity and literature in Welsh alongside local councils and authorities which is helping to increase the availability of services in Welsh. In 1982 the first bilingual television station began broadcasting in conjunction with English-speaking Channel 4. During peak hours, the station broadcast a majority of Welsh language shows until the digital switchover in 2010. S4C Digidol is currently the main broadcasting channel which televises entirely in Welsh (Price, 2013). In 1977, a dedicated Welsh-language radio station, BBC Radio Cymru, was launched (BBC News, 2014). The Welsh government aims 'to widen access to culture, heritage and sport, and encouraging greater participation' as stated on the *Culture and Heritage of Wales* section of their website (Welsh Government, 2015). The website provides a thorough report on the legislation that has already been implemented with up-to-date statistics demonstrating their progress.

This model of language planning and cultural policy is significant if the similarities between Welsh and Basque are taken into account accordingly. Wales and the Basque Country share a low number of fluent speakers in their respective languages and thus have similar aims for their revival. The use of the language is a key issue in the battle to increase the number of speakers in society and so the normalisation of both languages should take a dominant role in their policies. The Welsh government are providing communities with more opportunities to use Welsh outside of the home through the *Menter Iaith* initiatives and adult courses. This coupled with a greater media presence particularly through *S4C Digidol* are positive steps in the right direction. However, both the Basque Country and Wales need to consider utilizing technological advances as a means to increase accessibility among younger people outside of the classroom setting. Social media and application technology are powerful tools that if used correctly, could inspire new generations to take an interest in their linguistic and cultural heritage. *Euskera* and Welsh are ancient languages that bear little resemblance to the languages they live alongside thus it is imperative to embrace modernity and use this to their advantage.

On the other hand, an exploration of information published by the Welsh government through their website demonstrates that there is a greater level of clarity and coherence on the aims of linguistic

and cultural policy than within the Basque government. It is evident that the Welsh are actively pursuing strategy that will increase cultural awareness and promote a healthy growth in the number of Welsh speakers. Visitors to the website are provided with up-to-date statistics on language use, the number of people visiting museum and libraries, levels of participation in community workshops and sporting activities in addition to the levels of care given to heritage sites and monuments (Welsh Government, 2015). The public is therefore aware of the action taken by their government and in the position to give feedback as to the specific areas in need of additional support. It is evident that both the Welsh people and government have a real sense of shared responsibility for the future of their language and culture. Although progress may be slow, it is by no means unstable which greatly contrasts the inefficiency of the Basque government in taking affirmative action.

### **3.3 Euskera: An Endangered Language?**

David Crystal (2000) defines an endangered language as one that is “spoken by enough people to make survival a possibility, but only in favourable circumstances and with a growth in community support”. This definition describes the situation in the Basque Country almost perfectly. The survival of *Euskera* is a definite possibility: Catalonia has proven that a linguistic and cultural revival can be incredibly successful. However, are the circumstances favourable and does *Euskera* have adequate support from the community? Current political leaders do little to inspire a shared sense of cultural identity and a connection with *Euskera* as authorities tend to disagree on the best way to manage language and cultural policy. The community is equally torn in opinion and seem unable to decide what it means to be Basque. This chapter will continue by exploring possible reasons that could explain why there has been little progress regarding the use of *Euskera* in the Basque Country.

It would be easy to blame the outside influence of the Castilian (and more recently English) language and culture infiltrating traditional Basque life yet as Crystal (2000) explains, no language exists in isolation. Different cultures will vary in their response to influence; some will find it to be a source of lexical enrichment, others will suggest that it is an attack on traditional values. Unfortunately, as seen throughout the course of history, no language or culture can ever stop the process of change. As France attempts to stop the use of borrowed words, it would perhaps be wise to develop creative strategies to encourage their integration in literature, school and society. The Basque language has a history of assimilating Castilian words however it could be that since the repression of the dictatorship that Basque speakers are becoming more reluctant to use such words as they prefer to speak Basque in its purest form. Nevertheless, it is impossible to control a language and to try to do so would only succeed in stifling its use in everyday life. It would become a symbol of the past as speakers lose any sentimental connection with their language or culture. The Basque Country is

already losing touch with its cultural identity as they struggle to unite as the Catalans did. Crystal (2000) maintains that “cultural identity is the expression of a people, however manifested”. If the Basque people no longer feel attached to a Basque identity, how can they possibly hope to revive what has been lost?

Additionally, it could be said that the Basque Country is tarnished by terrorist organisation ETA and the infamy that surrounds them. As the group gained notoriety, the entire region and its people were perceived to be associated with the actions of the extremists. Basque nationalism will continue to be linked with ETA for many years to come but the damage done to the Basque cause is irreversible. The image of the Basque Country is tainted by ETA and its values which centred upon the importance of speaking *Euskera* wherever possible and embracing the individuality of Basque culture. It is therefore valid to suggest that the Basque people may choose to distance themselves from their language and culture as an active choice in order to shed any link to nationalist extremism. Basques may decide to use *Euskera* and participate in cultural activities privately but would prefer not to attract judgement. One could go further and suggest that some are ashamed of the nationalist past and its links to violence. By opting to speak the language of the State they may feel a greater distance between themselves and the essentialist stereotype of the Basque Country.

## Conclusion

The end of the dictatorship in Spain brought forth a new beginning for the historic region of the Basque Country. It achieved its status as an autonomous community and was granted control over its own health care, policing and education systems as well as fiscal and political independence. However, as this investigation has revealed, the Basque language of *Euskera* struggles to remain relevant and useful whilst cultural awareness and activity is without a supportive framework. This investigation has explored language and cultural planning both within and outside of the Spanish context in addition to examining the weaknesses in the Basque government's efforts to revive their heritage. It has become evident that the blame does not simply fall on one single entity but in fact there is a web of interconnecting evidence that can account for the underwhelming statistics proving that language and cultural planning in the Basque Country is fundamentally flawed.

It was crucial to examine a nation that had surpassed all expectation by achieving what the Basque Country could only dream of emulating. Catalonia seized every possible opportunity afforded to them after the death of General Franco and guaranteed themselves a successful revival.

Ideologically, Catalonia was, and continues to be united in its goal of embracing their heritage, language, culture and history as a way of proving their strength as a nation. Today Catalonia boasts a community that is fluent in Catalan, rich in cultural products and institutions and one that performs well on the international stage. Independence is the overall aim of many Catalan nationalists thus it could be argued that as a result of the peaceful methods employed to revive the nation after the dictatorship and its success, they have a better chance of one day achieving this goal. As the shared sense of national consciousness and collective identity is inclusive in nature it therefore allows anyone who lives in Catalonia and speaks Catalan to enjoy the community and what it can offer. It would seem that Catalonia understood the importance of unifying its people in the aftermath of oppression so that a recovery could be achieved as quickly as possible.

Catalonia is an excellent model of successful language and cultural planning that demonstrates how powerful one community can be after such terrible hardship. Having also experienced such tragedy, the Basque Country could benefit from recognising the strengths in the Catalan model of recovery and implementing similar methods themselves. Unfortunately, this investigation has uncovered a serious issue within Basque policy that greatly impacts any further attempts to revive *Euskera* and its culture. Citizens of the Basque Country have become disparate in their views concerning the use of *Euskera* and provincial authorities cannot agree on the best way to increase cultural interest and production. Furthermore, it has been noted by the Basque government that there is a distinct lack of communication between departments, authorities, organisations and provinces. It is likely that these

failings have had a direct impact on the implementation of language and cultural planning thus explaining why the region struggles to recover. Moreover, as discussed in chapter three, an endangered language can only prosper if there is adequate support and the circumstances are favourable. This investigation proposes that due to the disunity felt across the Basque Country, the people are losing a sense of connection with their cultural identity as Basques which does not bode well for the future of *Euskera*.

Outside of Spain, the Canadian province of Quebec aims to maintain and increase the number of French speakers in order to protect it from the influence of English. Wales too hopes to increase the number of people fluent in Welsh by normalizing its use in everyday life and resisting English dominance. The state of language in Quebec is currently more stable than that of Wales yet they have slightly different concerns for their respective languages. Quebec is eager to slow the impact of the English language and culture as people emigrate to the province from other areas of Canada. The anxiety over English dominance comes from the memory of British imperial rule which is similar to how the Basque Country feels dominated by Castilian. In addition, Quebec was unsure as to what it meant to be Quebecois yet understood that the importance of taking control of their cultural identity and developing a new concept that unified the people. In this sense, the Quebec model could be incredibly useful to the Basque government by encouraging the creation of a modern Basque identity. This could incorporate non-Basque speaking immigrants thus enabling a more inclusive and open image of the Basque Country to flourish.

Insomuch as the Quebecois concept of identity is beneficial to the Basque Country, so too is the language policy in Wales. The Welsh government have implemented new strategies in education and the audio visual sector to ensure that Welsh develops into a more accessible language that is suitable for modern life. Additionally, the government have published a website which details the stability of its infrastructure and will to transform the linguistic landscape in Wales. The public are able to see exactly what their government is doing and can feedback with their own opinion. This unites Welsh authorities with the public and promotes a sense of solidarity and shared responsibility. The Basque Country has published its own documentation with regards to language and cultural policy yet it lacks the clarity and direction of that of its Welsh counterpart.

Before starting this research, I made certain assumptions about the information I would find and the conclusions I would make. I believed I would find little evidence of government legislation regarding language and cultural policy and more focus on the nationalist agenda. However, the government have implemented policy designed to increase the number of *Euskera* speakers and to improve cultural facilities. Nonetheless, the evidence suggests that language and cultural planning is

ideologically fragmented and without direction. The statistics prove that although the Basque Country has seen some improvement, there is a great deal more to be achieved. Moreover, it is possible that members of the Basque community have become disenthralled with cultural authorities that are unable to unify the provinces under a single framework of policy. The notion of a Basque identity is slipping away from national consciousness as the people struggle to define themselves as a community. This investigation has demonstrated that the Basque Country is in desperate need of a re-evaluation of what it means to be Basque in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The Basque people have the power to take back control of their identity and be proud of who they are. I feel that this is the only way that the Basque government will ever truly have the support of all the people and be able to unite them towards a common goal. I envisaged a conclusion based on the specifics of language and cultural policy yet it is clear that the Basque Country must first and foremost address how to unify its people by setting an example. It is crucial for the Basque government to resolve its internal inconsistencies and recognise its weaknesses in order to ensure a positive future for the Basque Country.

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