

FOREWORD

My colleagues and I on the evaluation team consider it a great honour to have been charged with the responsibility of conducting this important research study.

In order to set the scene for our initial presentation of findings on Thursday 25th March 2010, I should like to highlight three characteristics of the evaluation:

The first is its independence. The findings and conclusions of our study are entirely our own, and are firmly based on the research evidence which we have collected. I should like to acknowledge the complete acceptance of this independence by the Ministry of Education and the British Council, and at the same time my colleagues and I wish to record our grateful thanks to them for always being helpful and considerate.

The second is its focus. Our task was to gather high-quality evidence on this one project, in order to learn whether or not it was achieving its aims. Our task was not to compare it with other bilingual education projects in Spain or elsewhere. Spain has made an impressive commitment to early bilingual education in several different ways, through a variety of different projects and involving a number of languages. We wish all of them well, but we seek to make no comparisons and our text will limit itself to the one project which we were charged to evaluate.

The third is its indebtedness to a large number of people across several different groups, such as school managers, class teachers, pupils & students, parents, regional authorities, staff involved in research and teacher education, and one prestigious external examination board (Cambridge IGCSE). Conducting an evaluation in schools inevitably causes some degree of inconvenience, and so we would like to thank all of those with whom we have been in contact for the welcome they have afforded us and the interest in our research which they have shown.

My final word of thanks must go to my two research colleagues in the evaluation team, Dr Alan Dobson and Dr Maria Dolores Pérez Murillo, for the excellent work they have done in collecting and analysing data, preparing draft reports and contributing to our study in many different ways; and I should also like to express my grateful thanks to Margaret Locke for her skill, tact and patience in facilitating many of our arrangements with schools.

It is our sincere hope that our evaluation report will be of interest and use not only to those directly involved in the project which we have been evaluating but also to anyone who has an interest in children's education through language at school.

Professor Emeritus Richard Johnstone OBE

Director, Independent Evaluation of National Bilingual Education Project (Spain)

In 1996 the Spanish Ministry of Education and the British Council signed an agreement the objective of which was to develop an innovative Bilingual Project in state schools in Spain.

The initiative, established in 43 schools with 1,200 three and four year-olds was initially received with some apprehension. However, the project soon developed a confident momentum of its own and is now firmly consolidated in the three different stages of education from Early Years through to the end of secondary compulsory education.

The achievements of the pupils and the interest generated by the project, both on the national and international stage led the Ministry of Education and British Council in 2006 to commission an independent long-term evaluation study to collect and analyse data on the project objectives. The evaluation team, headed by Professor Richard Johnstone OBE (Emeritus Professor, University of Stirling) and with team members, Dr Alan Dobson and Dra. Maria Dolores Pérez Murillo, have collected data from schools and stakeholders involved in the project. For three years, the team have been involved in a detailed analysis of the various features arising from the data collected.

The results published in this document provide the Ministry of Education and the British Council with evidence which will help us to move forward to further improve the project. At the same time, we hope the report will help disseminate the examples of good practice collected during the evaluation to other professionals in the field of bilingual education.

We trust that this document will be of interest and prove useful not only to all professionals interested in the teaching of languages, but also to a general public increasingly interested in the developments in the field of bilingual education.

Eduardo Cobas Arango

Director, Instituto de Formación del Profesorado, Investigación e Innovación Educativa,
Spanish Ministry of Education

It gives me great pleasure to present to you this report on the findings of an independent three-year investigation into the Ministry of Education / British Council Bilingual Schools project. Bilingual English/Spanish education is one of the most talked about innovations in the current education scene, with over 200,000 young students studying a bilingual curriculum from the age of 3, either in project schools or in regional government versions of the project based on this original model.

The evaluation has been headed up by a leading world expert in bilingual education, Professor Emeritus Richard Johnstone OBE of the University Of Stirling, Scotland. He worked with a close-knit team of two main researchers – Dr. María Dolores Pérez Murillo from the Madrid Complutense and Dr. Alan Dobson, formerly of government education standards office, OFSTED, in the UK. I would like to congratulate Richard on this work and I am confident that with the quality of this team we have a body of research that will become a focal point of reference to everybody in Spain and indeed globally, who has an interest in bilingual education.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere personal thanks to Pilar Medrano (Ministry of Education and Teresa Reilly (British Council) for their energy and commitment to bilingual education, growing it from 43 schools in 1996 to the enormous network we have today. It is with a high level of expectancy that I look forward to continue sharing the vision with our partners in the Ministry of Education, a vision that is designed to give young Spanish people the very best opportunity to help equip them to be successful in a modern, globalised, 21st century Spain.

Rod Pryde

Director British Council

BEP (Spain) EVALUATION
Madrid, 25th March, 2010

THE PRESENT DOCUMENT

This has been prepared by the evaluation team for the benefit of those attending the presentation on 25.03.2010

It consists mainly of:

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| 1. A brief note on the BEP (Spain) | PAGES 3-4 |
| 2. Summary of evaluation research findings | PAGES 5-10 |
| 3. Draft conclusions of the evaluation research | PAGES 11-30 |

There will also be a handout showing the slides that are presented on screen.

EVALUATION TEAM

The two main researchers were:

- **Dr Alan Dobson**, formerly HMI, Staff Inspector, Department for Education, and Specialist Adviser, OFSTED, England, UK
- **Dr María Dolores Pérez Murillo** (Facultad de Educación, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain)

The Director of the evaluation study, and also contributing to the research, was:

- **Professor Emeritus Richard Johnstone OBE** (University of Stirling, Scotland UK), Lead Adviser British Council Bilingual Schools project.

KEY TERMS

In this handout, we use the following terms as indicated:

BEP: The national Bilingual Education Project (Spain), the object of the present evaluation.

EBE: Early Bilingual Education, beginning in the case of the BEP from the age of three, though with later entrants also accepted.

INTENDED PUBLICATIONS

It is intended that the evaluation report should be published as follows:

1. **A bilingual report** in book form (75 sides Spanish and 75 sides English), published in spring 2010 on a date which the Ministry of Education and the British Council will announce. The book will be written for a wide-ranging rather than a specialist readership and will set out the background to the BEP (Spain) initiative, the aims, design and key findings of the evaluation research, and the evaluation's conclusions.
2. **A Technical Report** which will provide information on the methodology of the research and which will also provide some additional analysis of socio-economic and other factors. This will be made available by spring 2010 through the websites of the Ministry of Education and the British Council.

PAPER ONE

A NOTE ON THE BEP (SPAIN)

1. The Bilingual Education Programme (henceforth, BEP) in Spain began in 1996, following an agreement between the Ministry and the British Council. It derived its inspiration from the British Council School in Madrid but very soon assumed its own distinctive identity as a programme explicitly intended for pupils in the Spanish state school system.

2. The published aims of the BEP in Spain are:
 - To promote the acquisition and learning of both languages through an integrated content-based curriculum
 - To encourage awareness of the diversity of both cultures
 - To facilitate the exchange of teachers and children
 - To encourage the use of modern technologies in learning other languages
 - Where appropriate, to promote the certification of studies under both educational systems.

3. The BEP possesses the following key characteristics:
 - It operates in state schools and not in schools that are private or fee-paying
 - It begins at an early age, normally when pupils are three or four years old
 - It is based on a whole-school¹ approach, in order to ensure that all children at the school have the same opportunity, regardless of socio-economic or other circumstances
 - It is supported by a set of *Guidelines*² which were shaped not only by staff of the Ministry and British Council but also by participating teachers
 - Before a school was allowed to join the BEP, there was a visit by staff from the British Council and/or Ministry, in order to discuss with staff and parents what the programme meant and to check that they were in favour of the school's participation
 - A significant amount of time is allocated to the additional language (in this case, English), roughly equivalent to 40% of each week at school, allowing pupils to learn a number of challenging subjects through English such as in many cases science, history and geography
 - The skills of reading and writing in English are introduced from an early point, in order to complement the skills of listening and speaking and to promote an underlying general competence in language

¹This means that when a primary school embarks on the BEP, all classes in the first year receive the same bilingual education, thereby avoiding a two-track approach (in which one track has EBE and the other a mainly monolingual education in the national language). When classes in the first year move up to the second year, their EBE continues, so that when the first cohort have reached the final year of primary school education, the whole school is being educated bilingually.

²These *Guidelines* were subsequently endorsed by the Spanish Ministry as reflecting a curriculum which was considered to be appropriate for EBE and also was acceptable as a valid curriculum for children at school in Spain.

- From the beginning there was agreement with the associated secondary schools that when the BEP pupils entered secondary school, they would continue to receive a bilingual education.
 - The schools applying to join the scheme were approved for participation by the Ministry and were drawn from several different regions of Spain, covering a range of socio-economic, ethnic, linguistic and other contexts; they were not selected on the basis of social or other privilege
 - Supernumerary teachers were made available to each participating school in order to support the everyday classroom teachers in implementing the EBE programme.
 - Further support at national level was made available through the appointment of a key person in each of the Ministry and the British Council who would devote a portion of their time each week to overseeing the programme, visiting schools, arranging for initial training and for CPD,; and also through the appointment of staff in the British Council whose tasks included liaison with schools, development of a BEP website, and production of a magazine (entitled *Hand in Hand*).
4. The BEP in Spain has attracted considerable interest from several other countries across the world. With the collaboration of the British Council in Spain, a number of Feasibility Studies or Exploratory Studies have been initiated, involving the British Council and the Ministry of Education in each particular country.

PAPER TWO

SUMMARY OF EVALUATION RESEARCH FINDINGS

The evaluation had three agreed aims - **Aim 1**: To provide research-based evidence on pupils' English language proficiency as developed and demonstrated through the study of subject matter in a bilingual context; and on their achievements in Spanish. **Aim 2**: To identify and disseminate good practice as occurring in the project schools. **Aim 3**: To provide research-based evidence on awareness, attitudes and motivation

These three aims were reflected in four main research questions (RQs) - **RQ1**: How may the performance and attainments of BEP students be described? **RQ2**: What evidence is there of 'good practice' and how may this be defined and exemplified? **RQ3**: How is the BEP perceived by key groups which have a stake in it? **RQ4**: Is the BEP achieving the aims which it has set out for itself?

It would have been impossible to collect regular and systematic data from all BEP schools, so two samples were carefully chosen. **Sample A** consisted of eleven primary schools and their associated secondary schools, and these schools would be visited for observation and would also receive questionnaire surveys. **Sample B** consisted of thirteen primary schools and their associated secondary schools. These Sample B schools would not be visited, but data would be collected by questionnaire survey. All schools in Sample A and B were state schools and each sample reflected a range of socio-economic, geographical and other conditions.

Rather than conduct one single very large study, it was decided to conduct a large number of smaller studies, each designed to probe a different aspect of the highly complex phenomenon that is the BEP. Sixteen studies were conducted.

STUDIES 1, 3, 6, 7, 8 AND 9 WERE FOCUSED ON DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE AND ATTAINMENTS (AIM 1 RQ1).

Study 1: Primary 5 & 6 pupils'³ performance and attainments in classrooms

Pupils generally showed a fluent and confident command of English, including technical vocabulary and the production of extended utterances. There was general ease of comprehension and of interaction with the teacher. Use was made of a wide range of language functions to express the discourse of science and English language & literacy lessons. Some errors occurred but these seemed developmental and not really to detract from pupils' generally promising performance.

Study 3: Secondary 2 students' performance and attainments in class

There was fluent and confident use of language at a level commensurate with students' maturing cognitive capacities. There was development of specialized vocabulary to cope with particular content areas: e.g. 'fertilisation', 'characteristics of predators', 'acids & alkalis'. A wide range of language functions was observed, related to the discourse of English language & literacy and Science: e.g. providing explanations; coping in an interview; improvising; making a presentation; elaborating the consequences of particular processes; constructing their own arguments. English was used for a range of social and task-related purposes: e.g. banter; peer-support; conducting experiments.

³Pupils in Primary 5 and 6 in Spanish schools are 10-12 years old.

Study 6: Primary 6 pupils' spoken English.

Pupils were in groups of three interacting in spoken English with a member of the evaluation team in respect of four different tasks in interviews lasting 30 minutes. Key findings were: the performance of pupils in the top and middle ranges was considered as meeting the aims of the BEP, in their ability to cope well with four different tasks and in the quality of spoken English they produced. The small number of weak pupils were generally not inarticulate and some showed an ability to understand and communicate basic messages. Thought should be given, however, to helping such pupils increase their range, fluency and accuracy of spoken English so as to benefit more fully from their BEP. The groups of three showed social, interpersonal skills, e.g. offering support to each other when needed, and showed confidence and interest in undertaking their tasks. Pupils were very positive about the BEP they were experiencing.

Study 7: Primary 6 pupils' written English.

This study aimed to establish what Primary 6 pupils at the top, middle and lower ranges of performance could achieve in a written narrative-descriptive task in English. Key points to emerge were: performance at the top of the range showed high quality in accuracy, range, coherence, interest and relevance to the task. Performance in the middle range was such that it suggested students were on course for a respectable performance at IGCSE in four years' time. Performance at the lower end of the range showed reasonable vocabulary but texts tended to be shorter in length, with errors of morphology, orthography and syntax.

Study 8: Secondary 2 students' written Spanish.

Study 8 was designed to compare the performance in written Spanish of two groups of students in the same school at Secondary Year 2⁴: one group taking the BEP and the other taking the mainstream form of education. Four schools were selected, showing a range of socio-economic background. The marking was done by native speaker experienced teachers of Spanish language and not by the evaluation team itself. They had no way of knowing whether a script was by a BEP student or by a student from the comparison group. Key findings were: overall, the performance in written Spanish of the BEP students was clearly superior to that of the non-BEP students. The BEP students had a strong advantage in three of the schools, and in the other school the performance levels were more or less the same, with a slight advantage to the non-BEP. The findings do not suggest that BEP students, though receiving 40% of their education through the medium of English, are disadvantaged in written Spanish.

Study 9: Performance of Secondary 4 BEP students in an international external examination, the IGCSE⁵

Compared with the 2008 cohort (the first BEP cohort to take the IGCSE), the 2009 cohort showed increases in the number of schools, the number of students and the levels of performance. Some BEP students (with mother tongue Spanish) ventured to take English 1 (intended for students with mother tongue English) and performed with success. The performance in Spanish 1 (for students with mother tongue Spanish) was generally high. The performance in content subjects, especially Biology, History and Geography (all examined in English), showed that BEP students were able to tackle successfully subject matter in their additional language that was cognitively demanding.

⁴Secondary Year 2 pupils are aged 13-14.

⁵The evaluation team wish to record their appreciation of CIE (Cambridge International Examinations) for their invaluable support in providing us with relevant figures for BEP students' performance and also for generously granting permission to quote from passages of their report.

STUDIES 2, 4 AND 15 WERE FOCUSED ON DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF GOOD PRACTICE (AIM 2 RQ2)**Study 2: Good Practice in classroom lessons Primary 5 & 6.**

There was evidence of a wide range of teaching strategies associated with the learners' performance as described in Study 1. These covered areas such as 'group work', 'hands-on experience', 'prompting and correcting', 'linking language and content', 'use of Spanish'. Some strategies seemed to reflect good teaching generally: e.g. 'Keeps all pupils involved in the lesson.' 'Helps pupils work out their own solutions.' Other strategies were more language-related: e.g. 'Helps pupils focus on linguistic form as well as meaning.' 'Colour-codes in order to highlight different types of word, e.g. verbs.' Other strategies yet again reflected the cognitive demands of particular subjects: e.g. in respect of science 'Helps pupils develop robust classifications.' 'Helps them develop use of the passive voice, essential for science.'

Study 4: Good Practice in classroom lessons for Secondary 1 & 2.

There was much similarity to the good practice strategies identified in Study 2 (Primary 5 & 6), e.g. 'creates relaxed, focused and respectful atmosphere', but attuned to the growing cognitive capacities of students at Secondary 1 and 2. Use was made of general teaching strategies: e.g. 'prompts students to draw on their own latent knowledge'; use was made of language-related strategies: e.g. 'elicits precise use of language'; 'expects high standards of pronunciation and spelling'. Use was also made of strategies related to the accomplishment of tasks within specific subject areas: e.g. encourages students to 'articulate underlying principles'; to 'express particular types of relationship'; and to 'clarify the consequences of particular processes'

Study 15: Good Practice in BEP management in schools.

There were several complex issues that headteachers had to confront. In primary schools these included: 'finding the most suitable ways of deploying staff who were native speakers or highly fluent in English'; 'deployment of staff to suit learners with special needs'; 'coping with a reduced allocation of supernumerary teachers'; 'ensuring continuity of planning, if teachers on certain kinds of contract move to another school'; 'maintaining the goodwill and motivation of non-BEP teaching staff'. In secondary schools, similar issues arose, including: 'deciding whether or not to integrate BEP and non-BEP students for subjects which were taught in Spanish'; 'Integrating students into the BEP at the start of their secondary school education'; 'coping with differences between national and IGCSE syllabuses'; and 'considering how to provide continuity of bilingual education and examinations after Secondary Year 4'.

Among the 'good practice' strategies noted were: 'promotion of flexible forms of team-teaching'; 'regular meetings of staff, with staff having an important say in decision-making'; 'adapting the *Guidelines* in order to suit the needs of learners with particular needs'; 'use of the school website to showcase the BEP for students, staff, parents, local community and partner schools'; 'encouragement of regular and meaningful links with schools abroad'; 'ensuring good links with staff teaching very young children and also with staff in secondary schools'; 'Promoting effective cross-curricular links, e.g. between art and science; 'use of formative assessment to support learning' (a significant increase in in-service training for this was noted in the past 18 months); 'attending to the visual profile of the school so that through public signs, symbols, notices, photographs and other means the school projected itself as a school which takes pride in its bilingual education'.

A NOTE ON YOUNGER BEP CHILDREN

Study 5: Infants and early primary

The main focus in primary schools was on Years 5&6, in order to ascertain what the outcomes of the BEP would be by the end of primary school education. However, for Study 5 it was possible to make some visits to classes with children in the age-range 3-7. Study 5 embraces both Aim 1 and Aim 2. The lessons observed show substantial progression from age 3 to age 7 in pupils' learning and language development. Initially, their activity was based on actions, songs, chants, games, objects and visuals, but by Year 2 of primary school they had moved into the use of English for doing science in the form of studying the environment. They generated longer utterances in response to technical questions and showed some degree of verbal reasoning. Their pronunciation was generally very good and they showed ease of comprehension and an ability to demonstrate this quickly through actions and mimes. The teachers were generally calm, organized and encouraging. Their English was good, as was their planning and organization. They had high expectations of their pupils.

STUDIES 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 AND 16 WERE FOCUSED ON PERCEPTIONS OF DIFFERENT INTERESTED PARTIES (AIM 3 RQ3)

Study 10: Perceptions of students in Primary 6 and Secondary 2.

The great majority of students in Primary 6 and Secondary 2 had developed clearly positive attitudes to their BEP. They felt the BEP had helped them broaden their understanding of other subjects, and a motivating factor was the sense of success in learning other subjects through the medium of their additional language. They did not feel that their Spanish language skills had been compromised by their participation in the BEP. They felt rather more confident in the receptive skills (listening and reading) in English than in the productive skills (speaking and writing). They believed that English would bring benefit to their future studies and their eventual career. They were well aware of the considerable effort needed in becoming bilingual in an essentially monolingual environment (they had little opportunity to use their English outside school and most had never visited an English-speaking country).

Study 11: Perceptions of primary school classteachers

Overwhelmingly positive perceptions were shown towards the BEP in respect of its impact on pupils, teachers and schools. Among the perceived benefits of the BEP for pupils were: increased proficiency in English; stimulus to cognitive development (e.g. flexibility, open-mindedness, learning to think before doing, development of strategies, acquiring a disciplined approach to learning). Of the provisions made at national level, the most appreciated was the documentation which sets out the *Guidelines* for the integrated curriculum, followed by the courses and conferences. There were clear signs of a wish to have more contact with BEP colleagues in other schools in order to share ideas and materials. A small minority expressed some reservations about the suitability of EBE for low-attaining children, and there were some perceptions of a tension between the BEP and regional bilingual education initiatives.

Study 12: Perceptions of Secondary school classteachers

Overwhelmingly, the classteachers considered the BEP brought benefit to their students, to teachers and to schools. The most obvious benefit to students was in their command of English. A large majority felt the BEP brought benefit to themselves as teachers, e.g. opportunity to try new approaches and to develop their own English. Of the main national factors, most appreciated were the *Guidelines* and the courses/conferences. Some reservations were expressed about the suitability of the magazine and the

website for secondary school education (it was felt these were more suited to primary schools). Some expressed reservations about the attitudes of colleagues who were not involved in the BEP.

Study 13: Perceptions of primary school headteachers

Their general perceptions of the BEP were overwhelmingly positive. Their perceptions of specific aspects of the BEP were also clearly positive, e.g. BEP helps broaden pupils' social and interpersonal skills and is good preparation for future studies, brings benefit to pupils from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds. There was some uncertainty in respect of the impact of the BEP for pupils' Spanish⁶ and knowledge of Spain. Of the national factors, most appreciated were the *Guidelines* and the courses/conferences, though the website merited a review. There was some concern that the provision of supernumerary teachers (native speakers or highly fluent speakers of English) might be reducing.

Study 14: Perceptions of secondary school headteachers

As was the case with the primary school headteachers, the secondary school headteachers' view of the BEP overall in the first four years of their school was clearly positive. The aspects considered most beneficial to students were: 'command of English', 'preparation for future studies', and 'develops knowledge and skills for future employment'. As was the case with the primary school headteachers, the two areas of some uncertainty were in respect of the impact of the BEP on students' Spanish and on their understanding of life in Spain. Of the national factors, most appreciated were the *Guidelines* and the courses/conferences. The magazine and the website were considered to need up-dating. There were some expressions of concern that the regional education authority might not be fully supportive of the BEP. Transition from primary to secondary education was generally perceived as being successful, despite the difficulties which could arise, e.g. time-tabling, or BEP students having to fit into a culture that contained non-BEP groups. 'Late starters' in the BEP, e.g. students joining the BEP in first year of secondary education who had not had BEP at primary school, were generally not perceived as presenting a major problem

Study 16: Perceptions of parents of students in Primary 6 and Secondary 2.

The great majority of parents of students in Primary 6 and also parents of students in Secondary 2 perceived their child's BEP education in clearly positive terms. The most obviously positive aspect was their child's proficiency in English, and in addition there were positive perceptions of their child's better understanding of other countries, personal development and career prospects. Both sets of parents had concerns which they wished to express. Concerns common to both groups were related to their child's command of grammar (though whether this applied to English or Spanish or both was not clear), to a perceived reduction in the availability of supernumerary teachers of English and of resources for the BEP more generally, and of the impact of the BEP on their child's learning of important content areas (though it should be noted that these views were expressed before the results of the 2009 IGCSE were known – see Study 9).

⁶The evaluation team has reported this uncertainty, since it is reflected in the questionnaire returns. That was why, with the agreement of the Ministry of Education and the British Council, Study 8 was undertaken in order to find out whether or not BEP students' Spanish was in fact being disadvantaged. The findings of Study 8 show that the BEP students were not disadvantaged in their written Spanish in comparison with non-BEP students in the same schools.

THE EVALUATION REPORT'S CONCLUSIONS: RQ4

The conclusions testify to the radical and innovative nature of the BEP and confirm it has been well supported at national level, especially through the *Guidelines* and courses/conferences. The great majority of BEP students were performing well in class and reaching commendable levels of performance and internationally-validated attainment. There was no evidence of them having suffered any clear disadvantage to their proficiency in Spanish as a result of being educated 40% through the medium of English. The students themselves and all the parties consulted (classteachers, headteachers and parents) showed clearly positive attitudes to the BEP education that had taken place. A large body of 'good practice' in BEP-teaching has been identified and exemplified in considerable detail in the evaluation report which should be of benefit to future CPD courses and seminars for teachers.

Some issues for reflection and further development have been signalled. These are: First, the 'sustainability' of the BEP in its present form in economically difficult times, given the substantial number of supernumerary teachers. Second, the 'bottom 10%' of students who require further support if they are to gain the real benefits of a bilingual education. Third, the perceived lack of 'relevance to secondary schools' of the BEP's magazine and website which are considered as being geared more to primary than to secondary education. Fourth, the provision and use of ICT (though an increase has been noted in the past 18 months). Good ICT use is stated as an aim of the BEP and has the potential to enable BEP students to gain much wider exposure to and interaction with English-speakers (at present, the evidence is that students are usually highly dependent on their classteacher for these things). Consideration might be given to the development of international networks under the auspices of the British Council and Ministries, which would put BEP students from different countries more in touch with each other and benefit from the use of shared materials and common projects, thereby enriching their intercultural experience and global awareness.

Finally, there are brief thoughts on four other matters. First of these is the distinctive nature of EBE (Early Bilingual Education), given its time allocation of 40% and its early start. It should not be confused with other forms of education in or through an additional language. Second, it is important to signal a caveat about the interpretation of the evaluation report's findings: the evaluation was commissioned to focus on the BEP phenomenon itself and not to compare its possible merits or demerits with mainstream non-BEP education in Spain, nor with other bilingual education programmes, whether in Spain or elsewhere. Third, since the BEP is a highly complex phenomenon and (for many) a new field of development, there is still much to learn both about it and about early bilingual education more generally, and so this constitutes a rich area for further research investigation, e.g. identifying ways of providing appropriate and meaningful support for the bottom 10%; exploring possibilities for intercultural learning through ICT networks. Fourth and finally, the present Summary provides only a highly condensed account of the BEP evaluation. Readers of the present text are referred to the full Evaluation Report when it is published in book form (see page 2 of present Document) in order to learn more about each of the sixteen Studies, and also to the Technical Report (see also page 2) in order to learn more about the research methodology that was adopted.

PAPER THREE

DRAFT CONCLUSIONS

1. Chapter 2 of the report states the agreed aims of the evaluation as being:

Aim 1:

- To provide research-based evidence on pupils' English language proficiency as developed and demonstrated through the study of subject matter in a bilingual context; and on their achievements in Spanish

Aim 2

- To identify and disseminate good practice as occurring in the project schools

Aim 3:

- To provide research-based evidence on awareness, attitudes and motivation.⁷

2. It also states four research questions (RQs) which relate to these aims:

RQ1

- How may the performance and attainments of BEP students be described?

RQ2

- What evidence is there of 'good practice' and how may this be defined and exemplified?

RQ3

- How is the BEP perceived by key groups which have a stake in it?

RQ4

- Is the BEP achieving the aims which it has set out for itself?

3. It is now time to ask what conclusions are justified in relation to these Aims and RQs, based on the evidence which has been collected and presented.
4. First, there will be a discussion of the evidence relating to **Aim 1** and **RQ1** which are focused on students' performance and attainments, drawing on Studies 1 and 3 in respect of students in Primary 5&6 and in Secondary 1&2; and then on Studies 6-9. Then, relevant to both **Aim 1** and **Aim 2**, there is discussion of younger learners in infants and early primary, in respect both of their performance and attainments in class, and also of good practice in teaching them. This takes us to **Aim 2** and **RQ2** which is focused on good practice, drawing on Studies 2, 4 and 15. Then conclusions are presented in respect of **Aim 3** and **RQ3** (the perceptions of key participants (students, classteachers, headteachers and parents), drawing on Studies 10-14, and 16. Finally, some more general thoughts are offered on **RQ4**.

⁷In fact, in the agreement between the funding bodies and the director of the evaluation, Aim 1 and Aim 3 were conflated as one Aim, but in order to avoid possible confusion they are treated separately throughout the present report as two separate Aims (Aim 1 and Aim 3).

AIM 1 RQ1

HOW MAY THE PERFORMANCE AND ATTAINMENTS OF BEP STUDENTS BE DESCRIBED?

Pupils' classroom performance in Primary 5&6

5. The lesson notes obtained for **Study 1** focusing on the classroom performance of pupils in Primary 6 reveal a good general participation in class and intellectual engagement with subject matter, with no obvious observable evidence of pupils falling behind or becoming alienated. Given that these are 11-year-old children, there is a confident command of technical vocabulary in respect of several different aspects of science, and also of English-language structure, revealing an ability to produce extended utterances and not just single-word responses. Pupils generally show ease of comprehension of their teacher's spoken utterances. The target language (English) indeed seems well-integrated into the learning of both science and English, in keeping with the first aim of the BEP. There does not seem to be any obvious loss of learning of subject-matter as a result of learning science through the medium of English.
6. Pupils were able to express a wide range of language functions which reflect the discourse of science lessons, e.g. giving reasons; giving explanations; defining or exemplifying concepts or terms; expressing if-then relationships; describing sequences of action; describing functions of organs or objects; describing what things are like; expressing necessity; expressing how elements combine. There are some errors in English language but these seem to be largely developmental and are largely over-ridden by the positive things which pupils can already do in English in their science lessons, and when errors are made there is recurrent evidence of helpful and corrective feedback being offered by other members of the peer-group.

Students' classroom performance in Secondary 1&2

7. The learner classroom performance in Secondary 1&2 as set out in **Study 3** continues and extends the development noted in Study 1 for classes in Primary 5 & 6. There is a wider range of specialized vocabulary, greater sureness of distinctions and definitions (e.g. extending basic definitions by adding additional words of their own choosing) and greater length of utterance. The consequences of particular scientific processes are also further developed, (e.g. *'It's toxic and therefore must stay sealed'*). There is evidence of students talking coherently at some length and with little hesitation, with no notes or prompting. They also show themselves as being able to organize their own group-work, to conduct experiments, to construct their own arguments more or less on the spot, to express the implications of particular propositions (e.g. *which means that*), and to explain alternative points of view (e.g. *on the one hand*, *on the other*). There is also a sense of the class as a social community, even when engaged in serious learning, with evidence of spontaneous banter and also of peer-support when a difficulty arises.

Primary 6 pupils' spoken English

8. Whereas Studies 1 and 3 focus on what students were able to do during classroom lessons, Studies 6-9 focus on their attainments under different sorts of more controlled task or assessment or condition.
9. **Study 6** focuses on Primary 6 students' spoken English. It is not an 'assessment' study focusing on individual pupils and giving them a mark or a grade. Instead, it sets out to identify the key characteristics of Primary School Year 6 pupils' spoken language in a specific setting – namely, groups of three pupils being interviewed by a member of the evaluation team for 30 minutes in respect of four tasks which covered a range of discourse types, topics and language functions. As such, it complements the information on pupils' spoken English as evidenced in everyday classroom settings through Studies 1-4.
10. The study reveals that the great majority of pupils have never been to an English-speaking country, have few if any contacts with schools in the English-speaking world, and have few if any opportunities for using English in the home or local community. In other words, their exposure to and interaction with English comes largely through the BEP at school.
11. The generally fluent, wide-ranging, accurate, coherent and 'on-task' performance in spoken English by those in the top and middle ranges must be considered as meeting the aims of the BEP, both in their ability to cope with the four different tasks which were set and in the quality of spoken English language which they were able to produce – all the more so, given that the tasks were undertaken in interaction with an adult person who was either not at all known, or not well known, to them and that only a broad indication of the nature of the task had been given beforehand. Also worthy of note was the pupils' ability to function as a social, collaborative group during the interviews (rather than as isolated individuals) and to show confidence and interest in undertaking what was asked of them.
12. The weakest pupils were by no means inarticulate, and some were capable of communicating and understanding basic messages. At the same time, though, the evaluation team suggests that consideration should be given to finding ways of helping these weaker pupils to increase their range, fluency and accuracy in spoken English production, if they are to gain the richest benefits of a BEP education. It should be added, though, that if some pupils did not have a lot to say, this was not necessarily attributable to limited speaking skills, but possibly to some of the issues not being ones that they had really thought about or experienced in their everyday lives. Their limited responses may be understandable for other reasons. Given the defined nature of catchment areas in Spain, few would be likely to have friends from non-BEP schools with whom to compare experiences, and concepts such as broadening cultural horizons and developing transferable skills are ones which few 11-year-olds anywhere are likely to be used to articulating, even in their mother tongue.

13. The assessment instruments for Study 6 were specifically designed to reflect the curriculum which the pupils had followed up to and including Year 6 at primary school which is intended to integrate language and the content of different subjects. They have enabled an understanding to be developed of how pupils performed at high, middle and lower levels on tasks derived from that curriculum and in interaction with an unknown adult native-speaker of English. The instruments were not designed *a priori* to reflect the six levels of the Council of Europe Framework of Reference (CEFR). Nonetheless, the evaluation team considers it is possible to consider, at least in preliminary form, how the performance of BEP students in the tasks set for Study 6 might be viewed in CEFR terms. Bearing in mind that these Year 6 children cannot be expected to be cognitively mature, and may be expected to continue developing cognitively during their secondary school education, their level of performance in English as additional language would nonetheless seem to the evaluation team to show some correspondence with the CEFR scale, ranging from in some cases barely A1 to in a few cases B2.

Primary 6 pupils' written English

14. **Study 7** is concerned with Primary 6 students' written English and the aim was to describe the characteristics of written English composition as shown by students in the top, middle and lower ranges of performance. Across the criteria, it was found that a distinction could indeed be established between higher, middle and lower performances.
15. Nevertheless, it is possible that in one or more individual strands within the criteria a middle performance may show some characteristics of a higher, and some of a lower, performance. Similarly, a higher performance may show characteristics of middle performance in some strands and this may also occur with a lower performance.
16. The higher performances demonstrate a very good standard of writing under timed, controlled conditions in terms of range, accuracy and the ability to write a coherent and interesting story of some length. On the basis of this evidence from BEP pupils aged 11 in Primary 6, it is not surprising that the strongest students from the initial cohorts to take the IGCSE at age 16 show themselves to be capable of obtaining the highest grades even at IGCSE English 1.
17. The middle performances overall were good, but did not sustain accuracy or display the range of language of the higher performances. Some may be comparable in length and ambition with higher performances but their resources become overstretched. However, many of them suggest the students are on course for a respectable grade at IGCSE
18. The lower performances may include some passages of reasonable accuracy with appropriate vocabulary, but do not have the resources for composing a narrative without support under timed conditions. They tend to be too short in length for a story to be developed. Communication and coherence may be undermined by a convergence of inaccuracies: orthographical, morphological and syntactical. Sometimes the style and spelling suggest these students may be capable of stronger performances in speaking.

Secondary 2 students' written Spanish: BEP and non-BEP compared

19. The performance of the students in the BEP groups was clearly stronger than that of the non-BEP groups.
20. Analysis of the results by school indicates that the BEP groups had a clear advantage in three of the four schools, with the results being roughly equal in the fourth. The fourth school in the non-BEP group was set in an area with a significant middle-class professional intake, which offers at least a hint that in respect of writing in Spanish the BEP may have generated most benefit for students from backgrounds that were not socio-economically privileged.
21. It would be reasonable to conclude that the BEP experience has not been detrimental to the Spanish of the students involved and that indeed there are grounds for considering that it may have been beneficial when compared with non-BEP students.
22. At the same time, however, it should be noted that even in the BEP group, over 25% of scripts were considered as less than adequate. This signals no room for complacency and suggests that even in the BEP group there is a need to address students' writing capabilities in Spanish, and even more so in the case of the non-BEP group.

Secondary 4 students' attainments in an international external examination

23. Despite a number of areas being identified for further improvement, the performance of BEP students in the 2009 IGCSE examinations deserves to be viewed as highly encouraging. Not only was there an increase in the number of presenting schools as compared with 2008, but there were increases also in student numbers, performance levels and the range of subjects examined.
24. Not only are the results impressive in English (in many cases in English 1 which is mainly intended for native speakers) but they also show promising and improving performance in the content subjects such Biology, History and Geography which have been learned in whole or in part through the medium of English and which here were examined in English.
25. Performance in Spanish 1 (an examination intended for those with Spanish as mother tongue) was also impressive. The students' performance, along with that of BEP students in Study 7, suggests that BEP students are not 'losing out' in their command of the Spanish language as a result of receiving a significant portion of their education through the medium of English.
26. Also welcome are findings in areas which the evaluation team has not been able to cover fully through our own research. In particular BEP students' capabilities in reading show up strongly, not only in the 'language' subjects of English and Spanish but also in key content subjects.
27. Finally, the performance of BEP students is not only a reflection of their attainments. It also suggests a positive picture of the attitudes, aspirations, self-confidence and enterprise shown by schools, parents and students in putting forward the students' knowledge and skills for a searching examination in an international arena.

AIMS 1&2 RQ 1&2

CHILDREN'S CLASSROOM PERFORMANCE AND TEACHERS' GOOD PRACTICE IN INFANTS AND EARLY PRIMARY

28. The lessons observed in **Study 5** which focuses on younger children in infants and primary show substantial progression in pupils' learning during their initial years. Initially, their activity is based on actions, songs, chants, games, objects and visuals. Their utterances are of two sorts: learnt phrases and individual words, the latter often in response to the teacher's questions. Their pronunciation is generally very good and they show enthusiasm for what is asked of them. They also show high speed of comprehension and an ability to demonstrate this quickly through actions and mimes.
29. By Year 2 of primary school, however, they have moved into the use of English for doing science in the form of studying the environment. They learn to understand and to complete correctly quite complex incomplete utterances given by the teacher; and they are challenged to provide longer utterances in response to technical questions and which show some degree of verbal reasoning (e.g. ... 'because there is a lot of rubbish ...') and they are acquiring increasing amounts of technical language which derives from the environmental theme they are studying (e.g. 'viviparous').
30. The teachers are generally calm, organized and encouraging. Their English is good, as is their planning and organization, and initially they make use of established routines. They have high expectations of their pupils. When environmental science is introduced at the primary school stage, this is intended and taken seriously, though with no obvious loss of enjoyment, and there is a focus not only on subject-matter and relevant activity but also on the sorts of language that are needed to do environmental studies well. This includes encouragement of accuracy and recap of vocabulary (e.g. 'fish, fin, scales') and the pronunciation of particular sounds in different words (e.g. 'rooster; sister').
31. Study 5 shows the benefit of beginning at a young age, provided that the teaching is appropriate, as it was in the classes observed. Knowledge, understanding, insights, attitudes, routines and skills are all being developed in these early years which explain in part at least the promising attainments of students as observed in Studies 1 & 3.

AIM 2 RQ2

WHAT EVIDENCE IS THERE OF 'GOOD PRACTICE' AND HOW MAY THIS BE DEFINED AND EXEMPLIFIED?

Good practice in Primary 5&6

32. The teachers involved in **Study 2** exemplified an impressive range of 'good practice' teaching strategies. We have not sought to analyze these into fine categories but present them in two groups. Both groups consisted of good practice strategies which involved the use of English as target language. One group consisted of strategies relevant to good teaching in general; the other group consisted of strategies specifically focused on language forms.

Good practice strategies: Language used for general teaching	Good practice strategies: Specific focus on language
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeps all pupils involved in the lesson • Checks pupils' outputs • Is willing to collaborate with colleagues • Is firm but pleasant • Uses visual aids • Gives clear explanations of what pupils are to do • Reviews pupil outputs with the whole class • Gives clear guidelines for use of ICT in class • Exudes 'presence' • Keeps pupils' attention focused • Avoids spoon-feeding • Presents tasks in a clear and interesting way • Keeps a log of mistakes for subsequent comment • Chooses websites which are appropriate and comprehensible • Helps pupils work out their own solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps pupils focus on linguistic form as well as function and meaning • Pays due attention to accuracy, especially where meaning would otherwise be compromised • Introduces deliberate mistakes for pupils to identify and correct • Helps pupils focus on key words • Helps pupils develop clear definitions • Helps them describe the properties of things • Helps them make contrasts, e.g. whereas • Helps them develop robust classifications • Helps them develop use of the passive voice, essential for science • Pupils have to extend their utterances by using additional vocabulary • Colour-codes in order to highlight particular types of word, e.g. verbs • Allows judicious use of Spanish

33. We cannot claim that strategies such as those listed above were the direct cause of the impressive learner performance which is set out in Study 1. What we can claim with certainty, however, is that these strategies were recurrently observed in Study 1 lessons which had impressive learner outcomes, and so at the very least there is an associative relationship if not one that has been demonstrated to be causal.
34. It is worth noting that, regardless of whether the lessons were science, language & literacy or other, the teaching was focused on language as well as on subject content and skills. If we take science, for example, learning to 'do' science did not just mean learning to do experiments; it also meant learning the vocabulary and the discourse of the language of science, hence the importance, for example, of getting definitions and classifications right and of learning the use of the passive voice. In the language of current language-teaching research, there was ample 'focus on form' as well as focus on meaning and function.

Good practice in Secondary 1&2

35. As was the case in Study 2 which featured Primary Years 5&6 teachers, the more specialised teachers of Years 1 & 2 at Secondary in **Study 4** show a wide range of ‘good practice’ strategies. As with Study 2, we cannot claim that these strategies are causally related to the learners’ impressive classroom performance, but they are certainly at least associated with it. Some of the strategies featuring in the Study 4 text are listed below. They do not appear to be greatly different from the strategies used with Primary 6 pupils (Study 2). With the teachers in the present Study 4, however, there may be a somewhat greater emphasis on using English for purposes which reflect the Secondary 2 students’ more mature cognitive capacities. These purposes could include articulating underlying principles, expressing particular types of relationship, and clarifying the consequences of particular processes. As with the good practice strategies identified in Primary 5&6 lessons, we provide a similar grouping for classes in Secondary 1&2:

<p>Good practice strategies: Target Language used in general teaching skills</p>	<p>Good practice strategies: Specific focus on target language form: morphology, syntax, discourse in relation to specific subjects</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates relaxed, focused and respectful atmosphere • Adapts material to suit different student need • Requires class to ask probing questions about peers’ presentations • Monitors progress sensitively • Steers students away from the anecdotal and guides towards underlying principles • Prompts students to draw on their own latent knowledge • Encourages students to work things out for themselves • Encourages peer assessment & evaluation • Constantly checks for understanding • Asks questions which guide thinking but still pose a challenge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses on spelling distinctions, e.g. flour / flower • Helps students express particular relationships, e.g. The more the more; the less the less • Expects high standards of pronunciation & spelling • Helps develop initial drafting skills, e.g. What do you need to take into account • Emphasises proper procedures for setting out data • Elicits precise use of language • Requires regular presentations by students to whole class • Provides clear explanations • Helps students clarify the consequences of particular processes • Has special grid for taking notes in order to monitor student performance

36. These strategies appear to come from the teachers’ professional experience accumulated over a number of years, and so in addition to the strategies listed above there are issues such as

how well the teacher knows a particular student or class, how the teacher interprets the particular situation within a given lesson, and which strategy a teacher chooses to bring into play at what time, for how long and for what purpose.

Good Practice in managing the BEP in primary and secondary schools

37. Given the complex nature of the BEP, e.g. its 'whole-school' approach in primary school education and the significant amount of time allocated to learning through the medium of English, there were several complex issues that headteachers had to confront.
38. In primary schools these included: finding the most suitable ways of deploying staff who were native speakers or highly fluent in English; deployment of staff to suit learners with special needs; coping with a reduced allocation of supernumerary teachers; ensuring continuity of planning, if teachers on certain kinds of contract move to another school; and maintaining the goodwill and motivation of non-BEP teaching staff.
39. In secondary schools, similar issues arose, including: deciding whether or not to integrate BEP and non-BEP students for subjects which were taught in Spanish; integrating students into the BEP who came new to the BEP at the start of their secondary school education; coping with differences between national and IGCSE syllabuses; and considering how to provide continuity of bilingual education and examinations after Secondary Year 4.
40. In addition, as is evidenced in Studies 13 and 14, although the headteachers were well-disposed towards the BEP, they did have some uncertainties in their minds, e.g. whether or not it was compromising BEP students' command of Spanish. Study 16 reveals a similar uncertainty in the minds of some parents, and this might cause something of a problem for headteachers when in discussion with parents seeking reassurance. It is hoped that the evidence on BEP students' Spanish in Studies 8 and 9 will bring some reassurance to headteachers and parents in this regard.
41. A range of strategies were operated by headteachers and/or other senior managers in school which seemed to be achieving a positive impact on staff and student's morale, perceptions, activity and sense of community.
42. These included: the promotion of flexible forms of team-teaching; regular meetings of staff, with staff having an important say in decision-making; adapting the *Guidelines* in order to suit the needs of learners with particular needs; use of the school website to showcase the BEP for students, staff, parents, local community and partner schools; encouragement of regular and meaningful links with schools abroad; ensuring good links with staff teaching very young children and also with staff in secondary schools; promoting effective cross-curricular links, e.g. between art and science; the use of formative assessment to support learning (a significant increase in this was noted in the past 18 months); attending to the visual profile of the school so that through public signs, symbols, notices, photographs and other means the school projects itself as a school which takes pride in its bilingual education.

AIM 3 RQ3

HOW IS THE BEP PERCEIVED BY KEY GROUPS WHICH HAVE A STAKE IN IT?

Perceptions of BEP students

43. The great majority of students in Primary 6 and Secondary 2 had developed clearly positive attitudes to their BEP. They found the bilingual programme especially interesting and they expressed their satisfaction with it. With regard to gender differences, female pupils seemed to be slightly more enthusiastic than males. Three quarters of the respondents, regardless of their gender, felt confident in learning through English.
44. Students felt the BEP had helped them broaden their understanding of other subjects, and a motivating factor was the sense of success in learning other subjects through the medium of their additional language. They did not feel that their Spanish language skills had been compromised by their participation in the BEP.
45. They felt rather more confident in the receptive skills (listening and reading) than in the productive skills (speaking and writing). The primary female pupils seem to provide more positive answers on this than their male counterparts, whereas secondary pupils did not show significant gender differences.
46. In general, pupils felt that they were not making frequent use of ICT resources available at school such as interactive whiteboards, though there were differences across schools. Overall, students seemed to be using the internet outside school more often than at school, and a third of the secondary pupils admitted making frequent use of it to improve their English.
47. Students strongly believed that English would bring benefit to their future studies and their eventual career. They were well aware of the considerable effort needed in becoming bilingual in an essentially monolingual environment (they had little opportunity to use their English outside school and most had never visited an English-speaking country).
48. The secondary students' main concerns were related to studying content subjects in English, specifically the complexities of content words or the nature of the syllabus they learn as opposed to pupils in monolingual schools. Similarly, primary pupils expressed concern regarding their abilities in the target language, in relation to specific language skills. Newcomers to the BEP, usually minority pupils who have little or no English proficiency, seemed to feel that they had more problems. Interestingly, their negative comments were often followed by positive remarks, and pupils who did not like the BEP were a small minority.

Perceptions of Primary 6 classteachers

49. Views were sought from classroom teachers in 24 primary schools. Their responses to the questionnaire show overwhelmingly positive perceptions towards the BEP in respect of its impact on pupils, teachers and schools, though in a small minority of cases some reservations exist about the suitability of EBE for low-attaining children.
50. Among the perceived benefits of the BEP for pupils were: increased proficiency in English;

stimulus to cognitive development (e.g. flexibility, open-mindedness, learning to think before doing, development of strategies, acquiring a disciplined approach to learning).

51. Of the provisions made at national level, the most appreciated was the documentation which sets out the *Guidelines* for the integrated curriculum, followed by the courses and conferences. There were signs that a review of the website might be appropriate.
52. With regard to other issues of perceived importance, the classroom teachers were not yet making substantial use of ICT but many already used it on a limited basis and could see its potential, especially the internet.
53. There were clear signs of a wish to have more contact with BEP colleagues in other schools in order to share ideas and materials and there was also a significant demand for more in-service support on practical aspects of planning and teaching for Early Bilingual Education.

Perceptions of secondary school classteachers

54. Overwhelmingly, secondary school teachers considered the BEP brought benefit to their students. Most examples given referred in some way to the development of the students' use of English; about half as many referred to their personal development and career prospects. The proportion of teachers who thought the BEP brought benefit to themselves as teachers was also very high. Most examples referred to professional development/ opportunity to try new approaches or to the rewarding experience of teaching well motivated BEP students. A significant number of teachers referred to the opportunity to develop their own English. The main reservation expressed concerned the pressure and time involved in teaching BEP courses. A large majority thought that the BEP brought benefit to their school. The main reservation expressed concerned the attitudes and perceptions of colleagues not involved in BEP.
55. The national factors most often appreciated were the *Guidelines* and courses, followed by the magazine/ materials and the website. However, reservations were expressed about the match to the needs of secondary schools, particularly the website and the magazine/materials.

Perceptions of primary school headteachers

56. The general perceptions of the BEP submitted by the primary school head teachers were overwhelmingly positive. There were no entries for 'neutral', 'unfavourable' or 'highly unfavourable'. All entries were in the category of 'Favourable' or 'Highly Favourable', with 'Highly Favourable' dominant. The primary school headteachers' perceptions of all 21 specific aspects of the BEP in the questionnaire are also clearly positive.
57. The area most clearly identified as bringing most benefit to students is their proficiency in English. Other areas of the BEP to be rated most positively are: 'helping to broaden pupils' social and interpersonal skills'; 'good preparation for future studies'; 'knowledge and skills useful for future employment'; and 'benefit to pupils from socio-economically disadvantaged

backgrounds'. The only two items registering uncertainty (though not going as far as negativity) are both concerned with Spain rather than with 'abroad' – in the one case, it is pupils' 'understanding of life in Spain', and in the other it is their 'knowledge of the Spanish language'.

58. Not surprisingly, the area where the BEP is considered to produce the most positive outcomes is in pupils' command of English, where the instances of 'Definitely Yes' heavily outweigh the 'Yes'.
59. Use of ICT was not reported as being consistent or widespread but there were signs that its uptake was increasing.
60. In most cases transition to secondary school was not seen as a major problem (this no doubt influenced by the signed agreement when the BEP began that secondary schools would continue the bilingual education which pupils had received at primary school). Where difficulties had been identified, it was claimed in some cases at least that improvements were now taking place. There was a fairly general view that late starters could find it difficult to integrate into the BEP, especially in the case of older pupils, and some aspects of good practice in this area were noted. There were few instances of reported drop-out, and where these occurred the reasons were usually considered to have no connection with the BEP.
61. A major recommendation by the Ministry and the British Council had been the early introduction of reading and writing in English, as well as in Spanish. Generally, this was accepted and attracted an enthusiastic response.
62. Of the provisions made nationally in support of the BEP, the two attracting the most frequent positive mentions were the *Guidelines* and the courses. There seems to be a case, though, for reviewing the website (the evaluation team understands that in fact this is already being planned).
63. With regard to other possible factors, there was mention of staffing issues, including some concern that the number of supernumerary native or near-native speakers of English might be reducing.
64. The two main curricular areas by far to be undertaken in English were English Language & Literacy and Science (which in Spanish primary schools is an overarching concept embracing aspects of science, geography and history). There was considerable variation in the number of minutes per week allocated to each of these areas. There was also variation in the number of *asesores lingüísticos*, *funcionarios con plaza fija* and *funcionarios sin plaza fija* available to schools, this reflecting the size of schools but also possibly differences in staffing provision from one area to another. Just under half of the *asesores lingüísticos* and *funcionarios con plaza fija* had received some form of in-service training during 2008/9, less so in the case of *funcionarios sin plaza fija*. Most schools reported some evidence of links with schools in English-speaking countries, especially in correspondence and materials-sharing rather than particularly in visits of staff or pupils, but the evaluation team considered that this is an area which desirably might be developed further in order to enhance pupils' intercultural experience.

65. Which variables seem to be associated with schools showing a relatively high drop-out rate from the BEP? There were only two schools with a relatively high drop-out rate. It is not possible to identify any variables which stand out and distinguish these two schools from the others.
66. The data arising from Study 13 point clearly to considerable variation across the schools in respect of key contextual factors. This suggests that the original wider sample of schools was a good one; it gives confidence also that the number of responses submitted by primary school head teachers for the present study does reflect a widely varied context, and also provides clear evidence that the strongly positive perceptions of the BEP do not arise only from contexts that are highly privileged from a socio-economic perspective.

Perceptions of secondary school headteachers

67. The secondary school headteachers' view of the BEP overall in the first four years of their school as reflected in the findings are clearly positive, with 'Very favourable' heavily outweighing the other four possibilities.
68. The area attracting clearly the most positive view is 'BEP generally helps students develop a good command of English'. Next comes 'Good preparation for their future studies at secondary school and beyond', followed 'Helps develop knowledge and skills useful for future employment'. The two main areas of uncertainty (but not going as far as negativity) in the minds of the secondary school headteachers are 'Helps students in their knowledge of the Spanish language; and 'Helps students broaden their understanding of life in Spain'.
69. ICT use was reported by most respondents as occurring in all year-groups, with some signs of plans for increased uptake.
70. Transition from primary to secondary education was generally perceived as being successful, with students adapting well, despite difficulties which could arise in respect of time-table planning, or fitting into a school culture which embraced non-BEP as well as BEP education, and despite the persistence of some students (or their parents) in continuing with BEP despite advice to the contrary from staff at primary school. 'Late starters' in the BEP were generally not perceived as a major problem, though there could be initial difficulties with their listening as they sought to adapt to a more widespread and substantial input of spoken English than they would have experienced in a non-BEP education at primary school. Nor was 'drop-out' viewed as a serious problem, and where it occurred, the reasons for it were not necessarily intrinsic to the BEP.
71. As was the case with primary school head teachers (see Study 13) the two national factors provided through the services of the Ministry and the British Council which attracted the greatest overall approval were the *Guidelines* and the courses. The problem with courses was not their content or methodology but one of access and availability. The magazine and the web-site were regarded as requiring up-dating in order more fully to reflect the nature and needs of education at secondary school. With regard to more local and other factors a fairly wide range of issues was identified. These included some expressions of need for

sorting out supernumerary and other staffing contracts and for the provision of in-service support at more local levels. There was also an appreciation that the success of the BEP depended on the exceptional commitment of the teachers who were delivering it in class.

72. Study 14 suggests that the secondary schools are staffed in ways which differ from the primary schools, with very little provision of *asesores lingüísticos* at secondary level but with a greater incidence of the category of *auxiliar de conversación* on whom the teaching staff may rely for native-speaker input and support. It also suggests that a characteristic of the BEP in secondary schools is in some cases at least a significant new intake to the BEP population coming from non-BEP primary schools. Observational and assessment data, e.g. Studies 1-4, and 6-9, do not suggest that such students stand out clearly as being disadvantaged, particularly where help is provided for them in the initial stages, e.g. in extending their listening comprehension skills.
73. The data arising from the present study point clearly to considerable variation across the schools in respect of key contextual factors. As was the case with the survey of primary school head teachers' perceptions (Study 13), this suggests that the original wider sample of schools was a good one; it gives confidence also that the range of responses received by secondary school head teachers' for the present study does reflect a widely varied context, and also provides clear evidence that the strongly positive perceptions of the BEP do not arise from contexts that are highly privileged from a socio-economic perspective.

Perceptions of parents of students in Primary 6 and Secondary 2

74. The findings show that the great majority of parents of students in Primary 6 and also parents of students in Secondary 2 perceive their child's BEP education in clearly positive terms.
75. The most obviously positive aspect was their child's proficiency in English, and in addition there were positive perceptions of their child's better understanding of other countries, personal development and career prospects.
76. Any differences between the Primary 6 and the Secondary 2 parents were not substantial, though the perceptions of Secondary 2 parents were slightly the more positive, e.g. in respect of contribution of the BEP to their child's English, better understanding of other countries and child's personal development and career prospects.
77. Both sets of parents had concerns which they wished to express. Concerns common to both groups were related to their child's command of grammar, to a perceived reduction in the availability of native or near-native speakers and of resources for the BEP more generally, and of the impact of the BEP on their child's learning of important content areas.
78. Studies 6-9 of the present evaluation focus specifically on BEP students' attainments provide information and address some of these concerns. It is natural that parents should have some uncertainties about a phenomenon as complex as bilingual education, and the evaluation team hopes that ways will be found of enabling the maximum number of BEP parents to become familiar with the findings of the evaluation.

RQ4**IS THE BEP ACHIEVING THE AIMS WHICH IT HAS SET OUT FOR ITSELF?**

79. There is no doubt in the minds of the evaluation team that the national Bilingual Education Project in Spain which has been implemented under the auspices of the Spanish Ministry of Education and the British Council has been both radical and innovative by accessing primary schools in the state sector on the basis of a 'whole-school' approach. As such, the BEP moves early bilingual education (EBE) away from the connotations of socio-economic privilege with which it has sometimes been associated in the past and projects EBE as a national phenomenon across a substantial number of schools rather than as a small-scale enterprise in favoured circumstances.
80. Nor is the evaluation team in any doubt that this important innovation has been well-supported at national level and that staff in schools appreciate this support, particularly in the form of three key components: the *Guidelines*, the in-service courses or conferences and the provision of supernumerary teachers, particularly in primary schools.
81. The evidence gathered from our large number of studies demonstrates clearly that a substantial amount of good practice has been observed in classrooms, and in an earlier part of this concluding chapter we have conveyed a sense of what this is.
82. The evidence also demonstrates clearly that the great majority of students are performing well in class. They are reaching commendable levels of attainment, in their spoken English (Study 6), their written English (Study 7), their written Spanish (Study 8) where they outperformed non-BEP peers from the same schools, and also in the IGCSE examination (Study 9). Their progress in the IGCSE was particularly prominent in the 2009 results which showed increased numbers and increased levels of attainment, with some of the cohort of students (with Spanish as mother tongue) being successful in English 1 (which is intended for students with English as mother tongue). The IGCSE examination also shows clearly that the students are showing increasing levels of attainment in content areas such as history, geography and biology, all of these examined in English, and that they achieve a very high level of performance in Spanish 1 (for students whose mother tongue is Spanish).
83. At the same time, it would be surprising if everything went perfectly according to plan, and the evaluation team has identified a number of issues for consideration. These are:
- There clearly is an issue of 'sustainability' in that the costs of delivering the BEP include the provision of a substantial number of supernumerary native or near-native-speakers as *asesores lingüísticos*, particularly in primary schools. The presence of this form of teaching support has been greatly appreciated, so a question arises as to whether this will be maintained more or less indefinitely into the future or whether a plan will be developed for further enhancing the knowledge and skills of classroom teachers to enable them to be less reliant on this form of support, and with possibly a smaller number of *asesores lingüísticos* being trained to assume a more mentoring role in support of classteachers. Moreover, if the same number of *asesores lingüísticos* were retained but with fewer in each school and with more of a 'mentoring' role, more schools could benefit which would be another way of supporting sustainability.

- There is an issue of ‘the bottom 10%’ of students. It is a real achievement that, on the evidence of the present evaluation, up to 90% of students may be considered as having experienced a successful or highly successful BEP. It was not part of the evaluation team’s remit to consider how this compares with mainstream education in Spain nor with other bilingual education projects, but 90% represents a real achievement. Given however the strong commitment to a ‘whole school’ approach, the evaluation team suggests there will be merit in giving further consideration as to how the bottom 10% of students may be helped in deriving a richer benefit from their BEP than what seems to be the case at present.
 - There is an issue of ‘relevance’ to secondary schools of what the BEP at present provides by way of its website and its magazine. These seem to be more geared to the needs of primary schools, and this is understandable, given the fact that primary schools have been much longer involved in the BEP than have secondary schools. However, there are real needs in secondary schools, especially with regard to covering key areas of subject content, since at present teachers have to spend much of their spare time generating their own material.
 - Closely related to the point immediately above is the matter of ICT provision. During the initial phases of the evaluation, the researchers found very little evidence of students being engaged in meaningful ICT activity, whether in primary or secondary schools. More recently there have undoubtedly been some encouraging signs of development in this area, but still with much to do. While understandably the BEP has not been viewed as being primarily a ‘materials provider’, there is a strong case for considering ways and means of helping teachers to access materials for their students which are appropriate for their age and stage and for the curriculum which they are following, and for viewing ICT as a useful means of facilitating this. The British Council has been exploring possibilities for early bilingual education elsewhere in Europe (with Feasibility Studies undertaken in Italy and Portugal) and also for bilingual education (beginning at various ages) in East Asia (in particular Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, the Philippines and South Korea) through its Access to English programme. This points to the possible merit of developing an international pool of resources on which BEP students in any country could draw within a framework endorsed by the British Council and the respective Ministries of the participating countries involved. Such resources would not only consist of material but also of contacts and projects, thereby helping students to gain a greater degree of intercultural experience on the basis of participation in common, well-resourced and fully approved initiatives on the transnational scale.
84. It is necessary to comment briefly on three matters which arise from the BEP experience. These are briefly set out in paragraphs 85-87 below.
85. First, it is evident that EBE (early bilingual education) of the sort implemented in the national BEP in Spain, is a radical and distinctive form of education, beginning as it does at an early age and allocating roughly 40% of children’s time to education through the medium of English as additional language. Belonging to the same family as EBE is CLIL (content and language integrated learning). CLIL has deservedly attracted much interest across several countries. It represents a form of education that potentially has much to offer. However, it is less radical than EBE, in that CLIL students have usually acquired literacy in a

first language before embarking on CLIL in the additional language; and in many cases CLIL begins with students at a later age, receives a smaller time-allocation than does EBE and some forms of CLIL cover fewer subjects. There is room for both CLIL and EBE, but the two should not be confused by professionals in the field.

86. Second, it is important to signal a caveat about the interpretation of the evaluation report's findings: the evaluation was not commissioned to compare the possible merits or demerits of the BEP with mainstream non-BEP education in Spain, nor with other bilingual education programmes, whether in Spain or elsewhere. Our remit was to focus on the BEP phenomenon in its own right, and we believe that the sixteen studies provide a wealth of information relevant to this purpose.
87. Third, there is still much to learn about EBE, not only in Spain but also across Europe and globally. The evaluation research has necessarily had to cover several different topics – e.g. attainments in classroom, attainments in assessment tasks, good practice, perceptions, and overall innovation impact. As such, it would not have been compatible with the remit of the evaluation to have focused exclusively on one topic in order to go into this in depth, as would be the case with (say) a doctoral thesis. In conducting the evaluation, it became evident that a large number of specific topics would merit further investigation, perhaps by doctoral students, or perhaps by research staff or groups in universities, or perhaps by teachers themselves. Examples of possible topics might be: focusing on lower attainers (the bottom 10% that our evaluation suggests are having difficulty with the BEP as it is at present) in order to investigate ways of enabling them to enjoy a more successful and enriching BEP experience; or investigating ways and means of enabling BEP students to gain greater exposure to and interaction with English-speakers additional to their BEP teachers (on whom our findings show they are at present heavily dependent), and making use of ICT networks and materials in the process; or investigating the extent to which BEP students really do gain a rich intercultural experience and seeking ways in which this might be extended; or reviewing the role of *asesores lingüísticos* in order to pilot and monitor a mentoring role for them in support of BEP classteachers .
88. There are many more such topics, demonstrating that EBE offers rich potential for further research, as more and more countries come to view EBE as a model of education that is well worth exploring in the attempt to provide young people with an education that will prepare them for citizenship both of their home country and of a global world.

RQ4

KEY FACTORS INFLUENCING THE SUCCESS OF THE BEP (SPAIN)

89. Having in the previous section identified some areas which merit attention, development or improvement, we believe it is right to reflect briefly on the undoubted success of the BEP (Spain) thus far.
90. The evidence points clearly to a number of factors as playing a significant role.

Two major challenges: a reminder

91. However, before we list these positive factors, we should remind ourselves of two major challenges which the BEP (Spain) has had to confront:
 - a. the challenge of being successful in the state school system across a wide range of socio-economic circumstances
 - b. the challenge of being successful in a societal environment in which (as our evidence clearly shows) very little English is accessed by or used by pupils in their lives outside school. This makes the challenge different from that in Scandinavia where there is much more access to and use of English in society at large.

Three groups of key factor

92. For present purposes, we limit ourselves to naming the key positive factors only, rather than seeking to define or exemplify them. Our full report will do this in more detail.
93. A system of three groups of key factor has been adopted:
 - a. **Societal factors**, operating in Spanish society at large
 - b. **Provision factors**, consisting of specific provisions which the education system makes, whether at national, regional or school level
 - c. **Process factors**, consisting of processes of teaching & learning, management, assessment and evaluation.

What then are the key factors which seem to exercise a positive influence on the BEP (Spain)?

94. These are set out opposite:

Societal factors

- Political will
- Parental interest & demand
- Widely held view that the BEP (Spain) in the regions in which it took place ought to involve Spanish-English, in view of Spanish as national language and global status of English

Provision Factors

- An early start (in some cases from age 3)
- Substantial time for English (40%)
- Leadership at national level from Ministry & British Council together
- Supernumerary teachers fluent in English
- Supportive national Guidelines on BEP curriculum
- In-service courses for teachers
- Highly reputable external international examination for students at age 16

Process Factors

- General teaching strategies, articulated through English
- Language-focused strategies, covering grammar and vocabulary, plus the discourse of different school subjects
- Creation of community atmosphere in class, in which students collaborate
- Activities which offer students cognitive challenge, integrating their knowledge across subjects
- Use of assessment in support of learning
- Management approach based on consultation and collaboration with teaching colleagues.

95. We are not suggesting that all of these factors applied in full across all BEP schools, but the evidence of our evaluation indicates that all of them have contributed to the general success of the BEP in Spain. This success cannot be explained by reference to one factor only. We have heard it said, for example, that the BEP success is largely due to the provision of supernumerary teachers. It is true that this factor has been important and that any attempt to withdraw it suddenly and on a large scale would cause damage. However, we have not heard of any plans to do so, and in any case the provision of supernumerary teachers is only one positive factor among many.
96. The Spanish public, politicians, national and regional officials and schools are to be congratulated for putting so many positive factors in place, in order to give this important innovation a chance of success.
97. We feel it is important to point out that our list of factors in their three groups presents each factor separately from the others. However, we see no reason to think that this is in fact how they operate. We believe it is better to view these factors as interacting with each other in highly complex ways. As such, they form part of a *dynamic, complex adaptive*

system (e.g. Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008⁸). The ways in which this system operates within itself are too complex to be fully understood or controlled, but the system does produce patterns of activity which lead to the sorts of outcome which we have identified in the case of the BEP (Spain). Being complex and adaptive, little if anything within the system remains static, so the system is dynamic and 'on the move', capable of absorbing new sorts of input, whether positive or negative. We hope in fact to have identified and discussed some possible new inputs to the system which will help it to continue to develop in a positive direction.

Thanks

98. Finally, the evaluation team would like to conclude this text by repeating our thanks to the Ministry of Education in Spain, to the British Council, to staff in primary and secondary schools, to staff in regional authorities and to the large numbers of BEP students whom we have observed, for being unfailingly helpful and for enabling us to benefit from an enriching experience.

⁸Larsen-Freeman, D. & L. Cameron. (2008). Research and methodology on language development from a complex systems perspective. *The Modern Language Journal* 92.ii, 200 - 213.

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