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The Legal Rights of Aragonese-Speaking Schoolchildren: The Current State of Aragonese Language Teaching in Aragon (Spain)

Aragon is an autonomous community within Spain where, historically, three languages are spoken: Aragonese, Catalan, and Castilian Spanish. Both Aragonese and Catalan are minority and minoritised languages within the territory, while Castilian Spanish, the majority language, enjoys total legal protection and legitimation. The fact that we live in the era of the nation-state is crucial for understanding endangered languages in their specific socio-political context. This is why policies at macro-level and micro-level are essential for language maintenance and equality. In this article, we carry out an in-depth analysis of 57 documents: international and national legal documents, education reports, and education curricula. The aims of the paper are: 1) to analyse the current state of Aragonese language teaching in primary education in Aragon, and 2) to suggest solutions and desirable policies to address the passive bilingualism of Aragonese-speaking schoolchildren. We conclude that the linguistic diversity of a trilingual autonomous community is not reflected in the real life situation. There is also a need to implement language policies (bottom-up and top-down initiatives) to promote compulsory education in a minoritised language. We therefore propose a linguistic model that capitalises all languages. This study may contribute to research into Aragonese-Castilian bilingualism in contexts of possible language loss.

Keywords: Aragonese language; language policy; minority language; Aragonese teaching; minoritised language; Aragon; Spain.

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Comentado [FG1]: Syntax unclear, meaning ambiguous

Comentado [FG2]: Letters can be capitalized, but not languages. What do you mean to say? I suspect the intention is to say something like "raise the profile of", "bring to the forefront", etc. Please clarify.

1. Introduction

Recently, there has been increased interest in language learning. This has triggered, and at the same time speeded up, the disappearance of others. The number of existing languages is estimated at around 6,900 all over the world (Lewis, 2009). Although it is difficult to predict the total number of languages that will disappear, 90% of them are in danger of disappearing in this century (Crystal, 2000; Krauss, 1992; Nettle & Romaine, 2000; Harrison, 2007). For this reason, it is important, in the worst cases, to examine language endangerment and shift before these languages die.

Spain is a diverse linguistic and cultural state where many languages coexist alongside Castilian Spanish¹ in their respective autonomous communities. The implementation of bilingual education models in some communities has helped the inclusion of languages other than Castilian in curricular designs (for example, in Catalonia and the Basque Country). Language loss and language shift are not only a question of “biology” (languages die, become obsolete or change), but also a question of power, subordination, and discrimination (May, 2000). In this sense, schools function as micro-societies, where it is essential to emphasise the prevention of discrimination, (unequal) competition, and prejudice. This is because all of this will help towards the preservation of and equity between languages, cultures and minority groups.

This paper focuses on one example of language endangerment in Spain. Aragon is an autonomous community with regional institutions, within which three languages are spoken: Aragonese, Catalan, and Castilian. Aragon is a trilingual region, *de facto*, but officially a monolingual one. In this paper we will focus on the relationship between Castilian (the majority language) and Aragonese (the minority one). Unlike Catalonia and the Basque Country, bilingual education has not been implemented in Aragonese territory, and this is one of the reasons that explain the current minoritised status of Aragonese.

¹ *Castellano* (“Castilian”) and *español* (“Spanish”) are two terms used differently in literature and with different connotations: “Castilian” refers to the geographical area where the language comes from, and “Spanish” is frequently used to refer to this language as a global lingua franca (i.e., Spanish as foreign language). That is why we use once Castilian Spanish as the clearest translation for the term *castellano* within the text for a reader who is not familiar. Nevertheless, we decide to write “Castilian” throughout the remainder of the text.

Comentado [FG3]: Increased interest from whom? In which circles?

Comentado [FG4]: Do you mean “of other languages”?

Comentado [FG5]: Most commentators would say that it's not a matter of biology (even if the word appears between inverted commas). And languages *as such* don't “die”. Anyway, is this sentence indispensable?

Comentado [FG6]: Correct, but slightly odd sentence structure. It would be a bit more idiomatic to write: “Aragon is *de facto* a trilingual region” or “Aragon is a *de facto* trilingual region”.

According to various official sources (Moseley, 2010; Committee of Experts, 2016), the Aragonese language is an endangered Romance language. It is spoken in the northernmost autonomous community, situated in and near the Pyrenees, now well-known as Upper Aragon (*Alto Aragón* in Castilian) in the northeast of the country. It borders onto Catalonia, the Valencian Community, Castile-La Mancha, Castile and León, La Rioja and Navarre. The *European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* states that both Aragonese and Catalan are languages spoken traditionally in the Aragonese territory (Committee of Experts, 2016) and that Spain has ratified this Charter with the corresponding *Instrument of Ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* (2001).

According to European recommendations, Spain is required to adopt a specific legal framework for the protection of minority languages (Committee of Experts, 2016). In this sense, the Aragonese Government should adopt specific measures for the revitalisation of both Catalan and Aragonese. If we focus on the language we are analysing in this article, it is certainly essential to understand the current situation of Aragonese at school, as well as to analyse the internal political and legal jurisdiction directly or implicitly affecting its citizens, speakers, and especially schoolchildren. This would be a first step to reverse Aragonese-Castilian passive bilingualism and enhance the intergenerational transmission of the language at school.

The inclusion of cultural and language diversity in educational settings is important since it helps the construction of a cohesive society across Europe in the context of the challenges of globalisation (Commission of the European Communities, 2006). To fully understand the situation of the Aragonese language, it is necessary to consider the numerous historical, political, sociolinguistic, and educational factors involved. The organisation of this article takes into account various dimensions, such as: (a) the legal status of the Aragonese language and its evolution, (b) the functioning of the Aragonese teaching system considering its legal framework, and (c) the teaching of the Aragonese language in primary education (but also in early childhood when necessary in order to understand the reality of language teaching).

For this purpose, we carry out an in-depth analysis of 57 documents: seven international documents ratified by Spain (i.e., declarations, treaties, conventions, etc.), 29 legal documents directly regarding Aragonese language legislation, eight education

reports by the Aragon School Council, and 13 education curricula on the Aragonese language.

The aim of this paper is twofold: 1) to analyse the current state of the teaching of the Aragonese language in primary education in Aragon, and 2) to suggest solutions and desirable policies to address the passive bilingualism of Aragonese-speaking schoolchildren. Since the implementation of programmes for Aragonese language learning in schools in 1997, there has been a gap in research focusing on Aragonese-Castilian bilingualism in educational settings (see Campos, 2015a, 2015b, 2015c; 2015d; Huguet, 2006a, 2006b; Huguet et al., 2008). For this reason, this paper contributes and adds to the knowledge of research on Aragonese-Castilian bilingualism.

2. General Spanish legal framework

The Spanish Constitution of 1978 constitutes the fundamental law of the state. But there are other international norms, conventions, and treaties that seek to protect and promote languages in order to build a Europe based on cultural and linguistic diversity (e.g., the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages; see López [2000: 42]).

Spain is organised into 17 regions or autonomous communities, and two autonomous cities. The Statutes of Autonomies (Organic Laws) function in a hierarchy under the authority of the Constitution. But, before analysing the specific autonomous regulation of Aragon, it would be of interest to examine the Constitution. The treatment of languages within the Constitution conditions the treatment of languages within the Statutes. Ultimately, this also will (in)directly affect the design of education curricula.

Article 3 of the constitutional text provides the basis for understanding the linguistic model:

- (1) Castilian is the official Spanish language of the state. All Spaniards have the duty to know it and the right to use it.
- (2) The other languages of Spain will also be official in the respective Autonomous Communities, in accordance with their Statutes.
- (3) The richness of the linguistic modalities of Spain is a cultural patrimony which will be the object of special respect and protection. (“The Spanish Constitution”, 1978: 9)

Regarding Article 3.1, Castilian enjoys legal recognition throughout Spain, but “the other languages of Spain” (Art. 3.2) and/or “the linguistic modalities² of Spain” (Art. 3.3) —the text fails to mention the names of the regional languages— are only official in accordance with their respective Statutes. In this regard, one interpretation could be that “the linguistic modalities of Spain” are only the different dialects of Castilian. According to Ferrer (2000), Article 3.2 can be interpreted not only as a possibility, but also as a mandate, i.e. mandatory in effect, which guarantees the linguistic plurality of the territory. Focusing on the aforementioned analysis, according to López (2000), there are two different doctrines: the preceptive —he positions himself defending this tradition— and the facultative. The thesis of López (2000) defends that the *co*-official status of languages lies on the constitutional text, so that the other languages of Spain are immediately official in their respective autonomous communities, i.e. Statutes only regulate the scope of the *co*-official status.

For this reason, Article 3 clearly ignores and renders regional languages invisible, since in the wording of the article, the prevalence of Castilian over the other languages is observed, according to the ideals of the Franco and previous regimes.

3. Autonomous communities with their “own languages”: the case of Aragon

Only one year after the current Constitution (1978) was drafted, both the Catalan and the Basque Country Statutes were signed. These documents provide both communities with some competencies and the recognition of their own identity and language, among others. In 1982, four years after, Aragon adopted its Statute, but it was not until 1999 that this territory was given some competencies on non-university tertiary education (“Royal Decree 1982/1998”).

The Statutes regulate the status of regional languages. Nevertheless, the Constitution does not include the definition of what an *official language* is. The basis of the constitutional text follows the principles of a nation-state that integrate linguistic plurality but in an ambiguous, imprecise, and unclear way. For this reason, a hierarchy (i.e., an asymmetry) is established between Castilian and regional languages (official or not) (Alcaraz, 1999; Guaita, 1989). The Aragonese case is not an exception, and unless the Statute of Autonomy of Aragon recognises the legal status of Aragonese and Catalan,

² We use the term “modalities” in the translation in accordance with its original use in the text.

these languages will not benefit from the minimum protection equivalent to that granted to Castilian. The autonomous communities where official recognition is granted by the autonomous governments are the Balearic Islands, Catalonia, the Valencian Community, Galicia, Navarre, and the Basque Country (Siguan, 1992).

In the following sections we will present: (1) the evolution of the Statute of Aragon to examine the treatment of languages within it, and (2) the specific autonomous regulation in relation to languages.

3.1 The Statute of Autonomy of Aragon and its “linguistic modalities”

Since 1982, three reforms of the original text have been passed (1994, 1996, and 2007).

Table 3 shows the evolution of the Statute and the major linguistic contributions (1982-present), which help to understand the treatment of minority languages therein. As will be seen, the (political) ideology does not include the construction of a diverse group of persons or political unity where many languages have their place within it.

[Table 3 near here]

In Article 7 of Organic Law 8/1982 the construct of “linguistic modalities” was already codified (see note 2). The fact that the text emphasises the concept of “linguistic modalities” renders the existence of languages invisible, minimises and denies them. The first major reform of Article 7 is implemented by Organic Law 5/1996. This Statute is expanded with regard to the wording used to name the languages and the areas of language planning to which it refers. It is the first attempt to show concern for the sociolinguistic situation of the territory (“the languages and linguistic modalities”, “their teaching shall be guaranteed”). Nevertheless, it does not specify which “linguistic modalities” (“Organic Law 8/1982”) or “languages and linguistic modalities” (“Organic Law 5/1996”) are regulated in this article.

Organic Law 5/2007 embodies the actual Statute and it includes the second major reform concerning the language issue. In this reform, Article 7 is significantly extended:

Article 7. Languages and own linguistic modalities.

1. Aragon’s own languages and linguistic modalities are one of the most prominent manifestations of Aragonese historical and cultural heritage, and a social value of respect, coexistence and understanding.
2. A Law of the Parliament of Aragon shall establish the areas of predominant use of Aragon’s own languages and linguistic modalities, shall regulate their legal

status, the rights of use of the speakers within those territories, shall foster the protection, recovery, education, promotion and dissemination of Aragon's linguistic heritage, and shall favour, in the areas of predominant use, the use of the own languages in the relations between citizens and Aragonese public administration.

3. No one shall be discriminated against on grounds of language. ("Organic Law 5/2007": 17823; Source of the translation: Campos, Martínez & Paricio, 2016)

Although, the article once again renders the name of the languages invisible, it is worth emphasising that it brings forward the drafting of a law by the Aragonese Parliament to promote specific actions to protect the historical languages of the territory. Therefore, this last claim that appeared in the previous law focuses not only on the delimitation of areas of use and the teaching of Aragonese (and Catalan), but also on the protection, restoration, promotion, and dissemination of both historical regional languages (Article 7.2).

3.2 The language acts of 2009 and 2013

In 1999, Marcelino Iglesias (Spanish Socialist Worker's Party [PSOE]) was the regional President. In this context, the approval of Law 3/1999 on Aragon's Cultural Heritage marks an unprecedented and historic milestone in the sociolinguistic context of Aragon: it is the first time that both minority and minoritised languages are named in a law with their respective scientific designations (i.e., Aragonese and Catalan).

In 2009, the PSOE won the election and Marcelino Iglesias repeated for the third time as President with the support of the Aragonese Party (PAR). At that moment, the first Aragon Language Act was passed: Law 10/2009 on the Use, Protection and Promotion of Aragon's Own Languages. Table 4 shows the evolution of autonomous community legislation on the language issue. The sole laws addressing the specific regulation of Aragon's linguistic situation are the 2009 and the 2013 Language Acts.

[Table 4 near here]

Article 2 of Law 10/2009 for the first time recognises the Aragonese language as Aragon's own³ historical and original language of the territory (Art. 2.2) ("Law 10/2009": 30329). Paragraph 2.3 of this article also specifies that Catalan and Aragonese "shall

³ We use the adjective "own" and not "regional" in the translation in accordance with the original text.

benefit from protection and their teaching shall be guaranteed and promoted”⁴ (“Law 10/2009”: 30329).

With respect to the teaching of Aragon’s own languages (see note 3), it states that it shall be guaranteed: “the teaching of Aragon’s own languages and linguistic modalities in the areas of predominant historical use, and their learning shall be on a voluntary basis”⁵ (“Law 10/2009”: 30332). Thus, we understand that the teaching will be *of* the languages, i.e. not *in* Aragonese. In other words, it involves the teaching *of* languages as a subject and not as content-based language instruction through a bilingual programme that could promote its revitalisation and learning.

In the 2013 election, the PSOE lost nearly 30% of its 2007 vote and the People’s Party (PP) obtained the most votes in Aragon since 1999. As a result of the election, Luisa Fernanda Rudi (PP) was elected President. At that moment, Law 10/2009 was repealed and Law 3/2013 was passed. Law 3/2013 is an amendment of the previous one. In contrast, it mentions minority languages only once and at no point does it consider the sociolinguistic situation or the linguistic vitality of both regional languages. Both historical languages lose their scientific name within this legal document:

a) An area of predominant historical use of Aragon’s own language inherent to the Pyrenean and Prepyrenean areas of the Autonomous Community, with its linguistic modalities.

b) An area of predominant historical use of Aragon’s own language inherent to the Eastern area of the Autonomous Community, with its linguistic modalities. (“Law 3/2013”, Article 4: 11780)

The first language in paragraph a) refers to Aragonese, the second in b) to Catalan. Nevertheless, two descriptions are used within the text instead of scientific terms to name these languages and/or “linguistic modalities” (according to the law). With regard to teaching, only one difference exists between the 2009 and the 2013 laws: “the right to the teaching of the languages and their linguistic modalities shall be guaranteed”⁶ (“Law 10/2009”: 30332) and “the right to be taught the own languages and their linguistic

⁴ Original quote: “gozarán de protección y se garantizarán y favorecerán su enseñanza”.

⁵ Original quote: “la enseñanza de las lenguas y modalidades lingüísticas propias de Aragón en las zonas de uso histórico predominante, cuyo aprendizaje será voluntario”.

⁶ Original quote: “se garantiza el derecho a la enseñanza de las lenguas y modalidades lingüísticas”.

modalities of Aragon in the areas of predominant historical use shall be recognised, and their learning shall be on a voluntary basis”⁷ (“Law 3/2013”: 11781).

While the difference might appear to be minor at first sight, if we observe the objectives of both laws closely, we see that the 2009 law states that teaching “shall be guaranteed and fostered”⁸ (“Law 10/2009”: 30329), and in 2013 the verb “guarantee” is deleted and replaced by “shall be promoted”⁹ (“Law 3/2013”: 11779). Ultimately, these linguistic nuances mark a considerable difference in the conception, recognition, and legal protection of the language between one law and the other.

4. Sociolinguistic data and evolution

From a sociolinguistic point of view, there is an asymmetrical bilingualism as the three languages spoken in Aragon are not given the same recognition and legal status. Therefore, Catalan and Aragonese (i.e., the original and historic languages) are classified as being in a deficient status with regard to their intergenerational transmission, legal protection and recognition, degree of institutionalisation, and social prestige (Ramallo, forthcoming).

Few sociolinguistic studies have been conducted in Aragon. Furthermore, there are differences among them in terms of methodology and population covered. Table 1 shows a summary of the existing sociolinguistic data sources concerning the Aragonese language and the most important findings. There are studies based on the analysis of different population censuses of Aragon (Aragonese Seminar of Sociolinguistics, 2011; Nagore 2002a, 2002b), and based on the population of Upper Aragon and its language uses and psychosocial behaviours (Euskobarometro Team, 2001; Lapresta, Huguet & Janés, 2005).

[Table 1 near here]

If we focus on language vitality, there are two differentiated areas in Upper Aragon: an area with greater language vitality and an area with less language vitality (Giles, Bourhis, & Taylor, 1977). In Figure 1, the Aragonese-speaking territory is divided into two areas that are represented by two contrasting shades of black and grey in the

⁷ Original quote: “se reconoce el derecho a recibir enseñanza de las lenguas y sus modalidades lingüísticas propias de Aragón en las zonas de uso histórico predominante, cuyo aprendizaje será voluntario”.

⁸ Original quote: “se garantizará y favorecerá”.

⁹ Original quote: “se promoverá”.

northernmost territories of Aragon. Black represents the area of greater language vitality (area 1) and dark grey represents the area of less language vitality (known as “area of historical use of Aragonese”, area 2). As we can see, the Catalan-speaking territory is depicted in light grey in the region of Eastern Aragon (area 3).

[Figure 1 near here]

Table 2 provides complementary data to Figure 1: the percentages of Aragonese and Catalan speakers according to reported linguistic skills (Aragonese Seminar of Sociolinguistics, 2017).

[Table 2 near here]

Therefore, regarding the language shift of the Aragonese language that we mentioned previously, the language is extremely fragmented into several dialects. The geographical characteristics of the territory have influence this segregation. If we take into account the administrative divisions (*comarcas*), in Figure 2 we find that six of them are bilingual (Aragonese-Castilian): *Chazetania/Jacetania*, *Alto Galligo/Alto Gállego*, *Sobrarbe*, *Plana de Uesca/Hoya de Huesca*, *Semontano de Balbastro/Somontano de Barbastro* and *Cinca Media/Cinca Medio*, and that one administrative division is trilingual (Aragonese-Catalan-Castilian): *Ribagorza/Ribagorça/Ribagorza*.

[Figure 2 near here]

5. Overview of the teaching of the Aragonese language

In the following section, we will review the specific characteristics of education in Spain, in particular the current situation of the teaching of Aragonese. This topic will be analysed according to different dimensions such as (1) the evolution of education laws, (2) the Aragonese language curriculum, (3) the reality inside the classroom, and (4) the specific training for teachers of Aragonese.

5.1 The evolution of education laws

During the first stages of the transition to democracy, several different education laws were passed in Spain. First, it is important to mention Organic Law 8/1985 regulating the Right to Education. This legal document allowed the creation of the Rural Schools for Educational Innovation (*Centros Rurales de Innovación Educativa* or *CRIE* in its Castilian acronym). Aragon was one of the first territories to implement these centres. Moreover, during the 1980s, this territory saw the birth of the Rural School Cluster

(*Colegio Rural Agrupado* or *CRA* in its Castilian acronym), a type of institution crucial to the understanding of the current functioning of the Aragonese education system, especially in Upper Aragon, which has a low population density.

After Organic Law 8/1985, Organic Law 1/1990 on the General Organisation of the Education System was adopted. Teaching was decentralised so that each autonomous community had greater responsibility in decision-making, which allowed the development and drafting of curricula. Afterwards, in 2006, further steps were taken with the promulgation of Organic Law 2/2006 on Education. This law emphasised the evaluation of the entire education system, including planning, organisation, teaching and learning processes, and results, as a task carried out by public power and public policies. Finally, the Organic Law on the Improvement of the Quality of Education of 2013 embodies the current law of education, which helps us to understand the treatment of the Aragonese language at schools.

5.2 The Aragonese language curriculum

Aragonese language teaching has been regulated within school curricula as a subject since 2005 (“Order of May 6”, 2005, Article 22). Later, in 2008, a new curriculum that allows both the teaching *of* Aragonese *in* Aragonese is developed (“Order of May 9”, 2007, Article 22).

The teaching of Aragonese within the primary education curriculum appears as a subject launched by the autonomous community: Aragon’s Own Languages (capital letters are maintained as in the original text) (“Order of June 16”, 2014). This subject was introduced into the primary education curriculum in the form of two modalities: a) language of instruction in line with a Linguistic Centre Project, and b) language subject in line with a Centre Project. This is limited to one hour per week, together with Mathematics and Castilian Language support lessons, and in fifth grade and above, together with a second language lesson.

In 2016, the Aragonese High Court of Justice suspended the primary education curriculum because of the imposition within it of specific Aragonese spelling. Curricula were redrawn and a new curriculum for Aragonese was published in 2016 (“Order ECD/850/2016 of June 29”, 2016). This document specifies that the teaching of Aragonese as a curricular subject can be taught after school hours in order to ensure its

teaching. In this last amendment, the teaching of minority languages appears referring to the Aragonese Language and the Catalan Language.

Nowadays, we can differentiate two types of Aragonese language teaching in primary education: a) language subject (one hour per week), and b) language of instruction (up to six hours), where the school should schedule 25 hours of teaching.

5.3 *The reality of classrooms in early childhood and primary education*

Aragonese language teaching started in 1997 as a pilot project in four schools. Nowadays there are twenty schools where the Aragonese language is taught as a “curricular subject”, although many schools give Aragonese class after school hours. The number of early childhood and primary education students learning Aragonese has increased remarkably from 50 students in 1997 to 1068 in 2017. Figure 3 shows the evolution of the number of students during the last twenty years. Although it would be interesting to know the percentage of students of Aragonese over the total number of students in Aragon, it is impossible to calculate due to limited data¹⁰. Also, the number of teachers increased to twelve in the aforementioned academic year (data provided by the Directorate-General for Language Policy, 2017). The teaching of Aragonese has increased due to the effort of the first Directorate-General for Language Policy, created in 2015, to promote minority languages.

[Figure 3 near here]

The current situation of the Aragonese language at schools is not very favourable in comparison with other languages within the education system. Each school organises Aragonese classes and its curriculum in a different way. According to the law, Aragonese is a curricular subject, but there are only six primary education and early childhood schools that offer Aragonese as a curricular subject as they have implemented a Linguistic Centre Project or Centre Project (personal communication, Directorate-General for Language Policy Office, 2017).

In addition, in early childhood education the first pilot project with Aragonese as a language of instruction has been implemented since 2016, i.e. the Rosario Ustáriz

¹⁰ Number of students who study Aragonese concerns early childhood (3-6 years) and primary education (6-12 years old). Number of total students in Aragon according to the Aragon School Council appears in different age ranges (0-4 / 5-9 / 10-14 / 15-19 years old). For this reason, it is difficult to know the exact percentages.

Programme. It is worth mentioning that in Rural School Clusters children learn in multigrade classrooms, normally one-room or two-room schools. School clustering maximises resources, decentralises education, and gives access to education to all children in small and rural towns. Moreover, the teaching of Aragonese is also conducted in some Early Childhood Care and Primary Education Schools (*Centro de Educación Infantil y Primaria*) with less variation regarding the ages and corresponding grades of the children attending the same classroom, but this depends on each school.

A survey conducted in Upper Aragon in 2001 found that 50.02% of the population prefers Castilian as the medium of instruction in compulsory education (Euskobarometro Team, 2001). Conversely, the other half of the population opts for different teaching scenarios: 30.05% prefers Castilian most of the time and a little Aragonese, 16.3% prefers half in Castilian and half in Aragonese, 0.9% opts for Aragonese most of the time and a little Castilian, 0.3% prefers only Aragonese and 1.8% of the population does not know. In this study, a folkloric awareness of language among speakers of Upper Aragon becomes visible. Most of the population does not opt for education in Aragonese, which highlights that part of the population wants protection for the language but they do not perceive the critical situation of endangerment. However, they do show favourable attitudes towards and full awareness for the revival of the language through its teaching. According to the theory of ethnolinguistic identity (Giles & Johnson, 1987), language defines identity and, reciprocally, identity influences the use of language(s) and attitudes towards language(s) and linguistic groups.

Campos (2015c, 2015d) analyses the attitudes of the educational community towards Aragonese. She concludes that there is passivity or ignorance towards the Aragonese language among early childhood and primary education teachers. She also analyses students' competences in another study. She concludes that students from an area with greater language vitality achieved better results than students schooled in area of historical use of Aragonese where it does not matter if the language is taught as a curricular subject or as an extracurricular activity (Campos, 2015a). Among the studies that analyse language attitudes in secondary education we have only the one carried out by Huguet, Lapresta & Madariaga (2008).

In essence, while Aragonese language at school and its teaching has ensured continuity over the last twenty years, the aforementioned instability leads us to doubt if "real" bilingual education exists, because the best-case scenario is that children attend

one or one-and-a-half hours of Aragonese classes per week at primary education, mostly after school hours.

5.4 Training for Aragonese language teachers

University studies are divided into three cycles: bachelor's degree, master's degree, and PhD. There is no bachelor's degree in teaching with specific courses or an itinerary on Aragonese language teaching at the moment. For this reason, we find only three different courses aimed at training Aragonese language teachers. Within the university system, only one graduate diploma that offers specialisation in Aragonese Philology exists today. This is an unofficial qualification, i.e. a specific university degree endorsed by the prestige of the university but not by the recognition of the state. It has a lower workload than a master's degree and it has been taught at the University of Zaragoza since 2011 with a total of 37 ECTS credits (only 2.5 ECTS about language learning).

Apart from that, the Seminar for Aragonese Language Teachers (*Seminario ta profesors de luenga aragonesa*, in Aragonese) is the only course aimed at Aragonese language teacher training since 2005-2006. Additionally, the first training day for Aragonese language teachers participating in the Rosario Ustáriz Programme took place in 2017. Both courses are coordinated by the Directorate-General for Language Policy.

6. Discussion and conclusions

If we focus on the analysis of the legal framework, it is clear that both state-level regulation and the regulations applicable to the autonomous community of Aragon ignore regional languages such as Aragonese. This explains the current minoritised situation of minority languages in Aragon and helps us to understand better the diglossic situation of minority languages from a new perspective. In addition, the Aragonese Statute does not improve this situation to preserve the rights of Aragonese-speaking people to use the language in public spaces or educational settings.

This '(un)regulated' situation means that the language rights of Aragonese-speaking schoolchildren are not being guaranteed and safeguarded. As Benítez (2017) states, the approval of the Centre Projects and the Linguistic Centre Projects by the School Council obstructs the teaching of Aragonese and its presence in school curricula. In many schools, the educational community has become accustomed to the teaching of Aragonese as an extracurricular, non-compulsory, and non-assessable activity. **For this reason, when,**

as a curricular subject, Aragonese has to compete with foreign languages (i.e., students should choose one subject or the other), global elite lingua francas are the ones chosen. Hence, this entire complex situation has consequences on the Aragonese people's literacy acquisition (see Martínez Ferrer, 1990, 1995), and their right to receive content-based instruction in their historical regional language. All of this hinders the teaching *of* and *in* Aragonese and consequently, the right of schoolchildren to be taught in their mother tongue is denied. Definitively, the Aragonese language occupies a subordinate position in the social arena.

Aragon is one of the trilingual autonomous communities within Spain. Nevertheless, this strength is not reflected in reality. Multilingualism has positive effects in terms of cognitive, metalinguistic and communicative benefits (Baker, 2001; Bialystok, 1991, 2001; Cummins, 1978, Genesee, Tucker & Lambert, 1975; Thomas, 1992). Moreover, learning foreign languages as well as regional languages helps to capitalise all languages, including those spoken by minoritised groups (Alarcón & Parella, 2013; Coelho, Oller & Serra, 2013; Hornberger, 2009).

We have seen how the Aragonese education system indirectly (but no less effectively) relegates the Aragonese language to the private sphere when the educational community does not support the approval of linguistic projects with Aragonese at school. Furthermore, such pressure intensifies when Aragonese has to compete with foreign languages, e.g. English, French, and German, but mostly English as the lingua franca *par excellence*. So, the education system as a whole becomes a “softer” and subtler way of exercising power (Bourdieu, 1992). To improve this situation a combination of bottom-up and top-down initiatives are needed. Parents (and public opinion in general) must demand the teaching *of* and *in* Aragonese in schools, that teachers should use it more in the classrooms, that there should be more bilingual teachers, and that the Aragonese Government should encourage the process (courses, materials, training for teachers and other specialists, etc.).

Compulsory education in a minoritised situation is a right for the citizenship, and the state is responsible for creating the institutional conditions that promote language use and the recognition of all cultures (Kymlicka, 2018). But the answer is more complex since many forces come into play in the inextricable link between language and social life. There is a set of social, historical, and political conditions endowing Castilian with the status of the official language of Aragonese territory. Hence, the official language has

emerged as dominant in Aragon, in conjunction with the formation of the modern nation-states.

Thus, a situation of bilingualism has developed, but mostly in the private sphere. This bilingualism, in many cases passive bilingualism, occurs because some hierarchical relations of power are arbitrary social constructions, which serve the interests of some languages or communities of speakers. Considering the training of Aragonese language teachers, there is clearly a lack of specialised training for these professionals. As a consequence, their professional rights are neither guaranteed nor promoted. This is an area where further action is required to improve the current situation because the lack of rights for teachers affects schoolchildren. Desirable policies to address passive bilingualism would be government policies aimed at societal attitudes in order to strengthen the construction of a strong bilingual identity. Although many studies confirm that the attitude of the Aragonese population towards Aragonese is favourable, this attitude is folkloric and it contributes to what is known as “ideological erasure” (Gal, 1992) in contexts of minoritisation. Some specific measures to improve the situation would be as follows:

1. The promotion of the local language as well as foreign languages in a context of equity at kindergarten, primary school and high school: students should not have to choose between learning a majority language and the local minority one.
2. All languages should become an essential aspect of the school’s symbolic capital. The linguistic landscape of the school should reflect this multilingual reality, especially minority languages.
3. The creation of a specific line with solid training in Aragonese in the Early Childhood Education and Primary Education university degrees. It is also necessary to train teachers to become professionals at schools.
4. Teachers working in areas where more than one language coexist should know the local language in order to preserve equal citizenship rights.
5. Local governments should use the local language in public (documents, speeches, etc.). They should promote jobs where speaking Aragonese is an advantage.

In short, language planners and policymakers should apply a framework that identifies the distribution of different languages (and literacies), their goals and uses. Hornberger (2006) proposes an integrative framework that synthesises different

frameworks and typologies in the field of language policy and planning (LPP). The main axis of the Aragonese revitalisation process should be based on status planning (uses of language), corpus planning (language itself) and acquisition planning (users of language).

It would be advisable to generalise the teaching *of* and *in* Aragonese to all stages of the education system, a measure allowed by the legal framework. Although the legal framework does not allow Aragonese as the sole medium of instruction (similar to a language immersion programme) it would be also advisable to modify it. Therefore, a completely open curriculum in all establishments would be the best option to adapt the particular sociolinguistic situation to each school. In Table 5 we present a proposal for a linguistic model.

[Table 5 near here]

We have looked carefully at the ways Castilian has emerged as dominant through a set of documents to comprehend the link between the specific institutional practice and how it is explicitly articulated in language treatment. Further work on Aragonese language teaching should be conducted in order to understand the bilingual phenomenon among Aragonese-speaking children at school. It is necessary, for example, to analyse and understand classroom and linguistic practices from different perspectives in each area, valley, and/or village and city in order to thoroughly explore different sociolinguistic contexts. Ethnographic methods can help assess the effectiveness of language policies as well as the tension created by policies (Canagarajah, 2006; Hornberger & Johnson, 2007). Once this has been done, different language programmes, depending on each sociolinguistic situation, could be implemented to foster a multilingual society.

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Table 1 Existing sociolinguistic data sources about the Aragonese language.

Year	Author	Database	Population covered	Methodology	Findings
1981	Nagore (2002a)	1981 Population census	Aragon (1,196,952 people)	Census included one question about the linguistic situation.	In Aragon: Active speakers 11,824 (1%) Passive speakers 17,653 (1.5%)
1981	UNESCO (Moseley, 2010)	Based on Nagore (2002b) / 1981 Pop. census	Upper Aragon (179,037 people)	Reinterpretation of data from the 1981 census.	In Upper Aragon: Active speakers 9,265 (37.11%) Passive speakers 15,701 (62.89%)
1991	Euskobarometro Team (2001)	1991 Population census	Upper Aragon (129,964 people)	1,000 questionnaires ≥ 15 years old	In Upper Aragon: Aragonese 1 st lang. 10,917 (8.4%) Castilian 1 st lang. 115,148 (88.6%) Both 2,079 (1.6%) / Others 1,818 (1.4%)
2001	Lapresta, Huguet, & Janés (2005)	Aragonese- speaking area (2001 Preliminary draft	Upper Aragon (125,340 people)	431 questionnaires ≥ 16 years old	In Upper Aragon: Castilian monolingual (90.3%) Aragonese monolingual (0.2%) Castilian-Aragonese bilingual (7.9%)

					of the Languages Act)	Castilian-Other lang. bilingual (0.2%) Trilingual (1.4%)
2011	Aragonese Seminar of Sociolinguistics (2017)	2011 Population census	Representative sample of Aragon (13.64% of the total population).	Census included one question about the linguistic situation. It is a second analysis of the census: Different statistical analysis for Aragon (1,331,189 people), Upper Aragon (159,010 people), and administrative divisions.		In Upper Aragon: Understand Aragonese 14,924 (9.4%) Speak Aragonese 8,425 (5.3%) Read Aragonese 6,923 (4.4%) Write Aragonese 4,010 (2.5%)

Table 3 Evolution of the Aragonese Statute.

Year	Legal document	Major linguistic contributions
1982	Organic Law 8/1982, of August 10, on the Statute of Autonomy of Aragon. <i>BOE</i> , No. 19, August 16 1982, pages 22033-22040. [<i>Ley Orgánica 8/1982, de 10 de agosto, de Estatuto de Autonomía de Aragón. BOE, núm. 19, 16 agosto 1982, páginas 22033-22040.</i>]	- Linguistic diversity as cultural and historical heritage. - There are “linguistic modalities”, not languages.
1994	Organic Law 6/1994, of March 24, on the Reform of the Statute of Autonomy of Aragon. <i>BOE</i> , No. 72, March 25 1994, pages 9636-9638. [<i>Ley Orgánica 6/1994, de 24 de marzo, de reforma del Estatuto de Autonomía de Aragón. BOE, núm. 72, viernes 25 marzo 1994, páginas 9636-9638.</i>]	- There are no changes to legislation relating to language issues.
1996	Organic Law 5/1996, of December 30, on the Reform of the Organic Law 8/1982, of August 10, on the Statute of Autonomy of Aragon, as amended by Organic Law 6/1994, of March 24, on the Reform of this Statute. <i>BOE</i> , No. 315, December 31 1996, pages 38912-38918. [<i>Ley Orgánica 5/1996, de 30 de diciembre, de Reforma de la Ley Orgánica 8/1982, de 10 de agosto, de Estatuto de Autonomía de Aragón, modificada por la Ley Orgánica 6/1994, de 24 de marzo, de reforma de dicho Estatuto. BOE, núm. 315, martes 31 diciembre 1996, páginas 38912-38918.</i>]	First major reform: - A concern for the sociolinguistic situation of the territory is expressed: it brings forward the drafting of a law by the Aragonese Parliament. - It officially opens up the possibility of teaching in minority languages. - There is no mention of minority language names.

2007

Organic Law 5/2007, of April 20, on the Reform of the Statute of Autonomy of Aragon. *BOE*, No. 97, April 23 2007, pages 17822-17841.

[*Ley Orgánica 5/2007, de 20 de abril, de reforma del Estatuto de Autonomía de Aragón. BOE, núm. 97, lunes 23 abril 2007, páginas 17822-17841.*]

Second major reform:

- It renders languages invisible and minoritises own languages.
- Areas of predominant historical use of languages are defined.

Table 4 Evolution of the autonomous community legislation.

Year	Legal document	Major linguistic contributions
1985	The proposed preliminary draft of Aragon's Linguistic Normalisation Act. [<i>Propuesta de Anteproyecto de Ley de Normalización Lingüística de Aragón.</i>]	- First proposed preliminary draft that covers the language issue of Aragon.
1993	Report and Resolution by the Aragon Ombudsman on Minority Languages in Aragon. Official Gazette of the Aragonese Parliament (<i>BOCA</i> , Castilian acronym), March 3 1993, pages 2418-2427. [<i>Informe y Resolución del Justicia de Aragón sobre a las lenguas minoritarias en Aragón. Boletín Oficial de las Cortes de Aragón (BOCA), de 3 de marzo de 1993, páginas 2418-2427.</i>]	- Multilingualism, both minority languages (Catalan and Aragonese), and the existence of linguistic minorities are recognised
1997	Agreement of the Aragonese Parliament, of November 6 1997, approving the Final Report of the Special Study Commission on Language Policy of Aragon. Official Gazette of the Aragonese Parliament (<i>BOCA</i>), November 21 1997, pages 5714-5728. [<i>Acuerdo del Pleno de las Cortes, de 6 de noviembre de 1997, por el que se aprueba el Dictamen de la Comisión especial de estudio sobre la política lingüística en Aragón. Boletín Oficial de las Cortes de Aragón (BOCA), de 21 de noviembre de 1997, páginas 5714-5728.</i>]	- A Languages Act is promoted to recognise Aragon's multilingualism: legal recognition, <i>co-official</i> status, and teaching <i>of</i> and <i>in</i> Aragonese.

1998	Preliminary draft of the Languages Act. [<i>Anteproyecto de ley de lenguas.</i>]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The legal status of Aragonese is recognised. - The bill was never drafted by the Aragonese Parliament.
1999	<p>Law 3/1999, of March 10, on Aragon's Cultural Heritage. Official Gazette of Aragon (<i>BOA</i>), No. 36, March 20 1999, pages 1780-1795.</p> <p>[<i>Ley 3/1999, de 10 de marzo, del Patrimonio Cultural Aragonés. Boletín Oficial de Aragón (BOA), núm. 36, 20 de marzo de 1999, páginas 1780-1795.</i>]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is the first time that both minority languages are named within a law: Aragonese and Catalan.
2001	Preliminary draft of the Languages Act. [<i>Anteproyecto de ley de lenguas.</i>]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is only announced. - Linguistic ambiguity within the text is removed.
2009	<p>Law 10/2009, of December 22, on the Use, Protection and Promotion of Aragon's Own Languages. Official Gazette of Aragon (<i>BOA</i>), No. 252, of December 30 2009, pages 30327 to 30336.</p> <p>[<i>Ley 10/2009, de 22 de diciembre, de uso, protección y promoción de las lenguas propias de Aragón. Boletín Oficial de Aragón (BOA), núm. 252, de 30 de diciembre de 2009, páginas 30327 a 30336.</i>]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The <i>co</i>-official status is not promoted, but the text recognises the name of both minority languages: Aragonese and Catalan.
2013	<p>Law 3/2013, of March 9, on the Use, Protection and Promotion of Languages and Aragon's Own Languages. Official Gazette of Aragon (<i>BOA</i>), No. 100, of May 24 2013, pages 11778 to 11784.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A reversal within the legal framework.

[Ley 3/2013, de 9 de mayo, de uso, protección y promoción de las lenguas y modalidades lingüísticas propias de Aragón. Boletín oficial de Aragón (BOA), núm. 100, de 24 de mayo de 2013, páginas 11778 a 11784.]

- The teaching of minority languages is not ensured.

- Both regional languages lose their scientific name: “the own Aragonese Language Inherent to the Pyrenean and Prepyrenean areas” and “the own Aragonese Language Inherent to the Eastern area” (*LAPAPYP* an *LAPAO*, in their respective Castilian acronyms).

Fig. 1 Distribution of the Aragonese-speaking area and the Catalan-speaking area.

Source of the map of Aragon: Aragonese Seminar of Sociolinguistics (2017)¹¹.



Table 2 Percentages of speakers in Upper Aragon and Eastern Aragon according to reported linguistic skills. Adapted from Aragonese Seminar of Sociolinguistics (2017).

	Understand	Speak	Read	Write
Aragonese-speaking area (1-2)	14,924 (9.4%)	8,425 (5.3%)	6,923 (4.4%)	4,010 (2.5%)
Greater language vitality (1)	6,540 (28.4%)	4,457 (19.4%)	3,612 (15.7%)	1,832 (8%)
Less language vitality (2)	8,384 (6.2%)	3,968 (2.9%)	3,310 (2.4%)	2,178 (1.6%)
Catalan-speaking area (3)	30,768 (64.6%)	25,663 (53.9%)	23,058 (48.4%)	11,468 (24.1%)

¹¹ Mapping: Guillermo Frías.

Fig 2 Differentiation of monolingual, bilingual and trilingual zones taking into account the administrative divisions. Source: adapted from Aragonese Seminar of Sociolinguistics (2017).

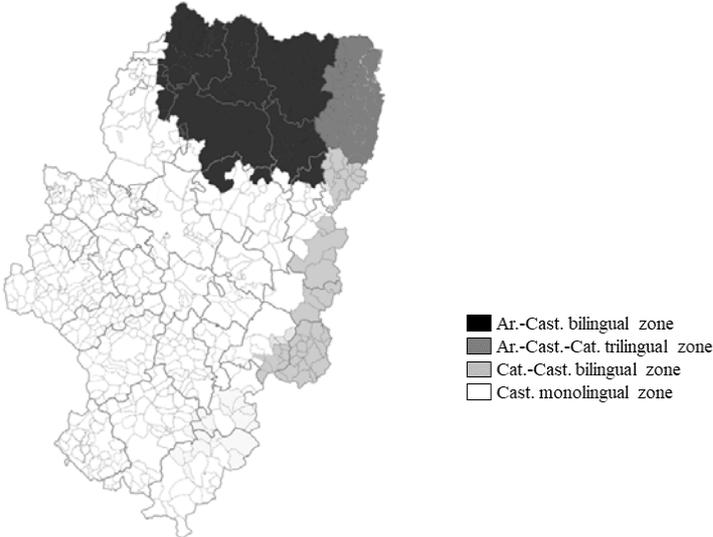


Fig 3 Evolution of Aragonese teaching in primary education and early childhood (number of students). Source: data from the Aragonese Education Department and the Directorate-General for Language Policy.

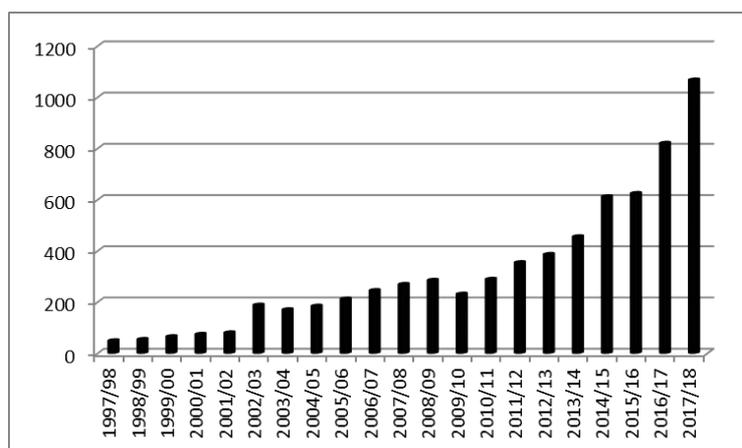


Table 5 A proposal of a linguistic model for Aragon.

	Linguistic model	Area	Language variety
Model A	Language maintenance programme with Aragonese as the language of instruction since early childhood. Castilian should be introduced progressively in primary education.	Area of great language vitality, where with a little luck there are children with Aragonese as their first language before schooling.	Dialectal variety.
Model B	Recovery of the language programme with Aragonese as the language of instruction in some subjects (in line with a Linguistic Centre Project).	Area of less language vitality; mostly the area of historical use of Aragonese.	Dialectal variety/ Standard.
Model C	Immersion programme since early childhood for those families interested in bilingual education for their children.	Cities like Zaragoza where the number of (mostly new) Aragonese speakers is growing.	Standard.