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Learning Local Languages as a Means of Preserving Culture: An Analysis of the Federal Education Laws' Treatment of Regional Languages in the Basque Country and Colombia

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Introduction

Regional languages are essential components of vibrantly diverse cultures. Across all regions of the globalizing modern world, regional languages remain one of the clearest markers of the rich heritage and history that each continent, country, state, city, town uniquely possesses. Unlike the more dominant languages of our evolving international landscape, local and regional languages explicitly capture precise cultural experiences of limited populations. These languages carry specific nuance, meaning, grammar, and vocabulary obscured by other forms of communication. This project, researching and analyzing two individual countries' regional language education under the federal legal systems, holds the importance of safeguarding local languages as its guiding central theme.

The growing use of the world's major languages, including English and Spanish, in the globalizing workforce and in mainstream mass communication, such as social media and messaging apps like WhatsApp and telegram, threaten regional languages. I argue that preserving regional languages necessitates facilitation via the education system to maintain their lifespan in and around their regions of prevalence. The education system reproduces and passes down language structure, grammar, vocabulary, and cultural aspects of language at a level that individual communities can't always produce. Regional language preservation through educational upkeep is a key aspect to uniformly disperse and continue the cultural experiences and richness that local languages have to offer. Alongside the importance of regional language-learning, this project views education as a central element of analysis. In order to research the preservation and promotion of regional languages, I evaluate the role, federally, of the education system in each respective country of analysis. Education is the system that is primarily charged with preserving the languages so central to my research.

In my thesis, I chose to study the regional language education occurring in Colombia, South America and the Basque Country located in Northern Spain, two areas that have sparked my interest in past university studies. In both, the national language spoken by most residents is Spanish, hence their tie to my personal area of study. In my project, I identify the principally definitive factor that allows for a meaningful cross-regional analysis that fills a gap in the current research: both the Basque Country and Colombia have experienced recent histories of violence. In the Basque Country, Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA) was a movement demanding autonomy based on a distinct nationality from dominant Spanish culture. In Colombia, the FARC arose as a class-based guerrilla movement. In this sense, the Basque ETA unified around promoting one regional language—Euskera—while the FARC was neutral or even hostile to learning local languages. Yet in both regions' post-peace accords, legal frameworks promote the regional teaching of Euskera and Colombian indigenous languages to support specific cultural identities and pride. By comparing and contrasting the different ways these educational policies have been codified into federal law, I show that regional language learning is widely understood to promote cultural pride and rebuild cultural stamina from years of violence. In any two regions of the world, comparing regional language education programs could result in thoughtfully similar comparison and starkly diverse contrast. In my two focus regions, the Basque Country in Spain and Colombia, there are elements of both educational correlation and divergence on both the frontend and backend of my research on regional language education.

To analyze the regional language education in these two regions, I first focus on a developing a literature review that gives an in-depth description and analysis of the history of regional languages in each country, followed by a current run-down of the regional languages in present day education systems, and I conclude with a report on the current documented

challenges facing regional languages in each country, respectively. This literature review gives the comprehensive background knowledge required to understand the circumstantial differences and similarities between my two focus regions.

My qualitative analysis follows the literature review. As my methodology will describe, this project relies on federal legislative analysis of Spain and Colombia's education laws to deeply understand the legal functions of regional language education in both the Basque Country and Colombia. In each country, the federal government holds the highest power in granting regional autonomy and directing regional education guidelines which then enforce language education. I will focus on the highest powers at play federally that form the legislation at all levels below.

Due to access issues, this thesis spends more time discussing Euskera. This is due to availability of documents and materials online, as well as the numbers of Colombian languages taught. In Spain, the wealth of information on various regional groups caused me to narrow my focus on the Basque Country and Euskera as the sole case of study. In Colombia, I faced the opposite lack of information available for my research. Hence, my broader focus on regional groups as a whole. Since Colombian federal law does not codify different measures for independent indigenous groups who speak regional languages, I will examine Colombian federal legislation holistically. However, the points about education as a vehicle for cultural revitalization via language, hold across diverse case studies with differing scopes.

Overall, this thesis asks what is the rationale for emphasizing regional language acquisition in post-conflict areas? By analyzing the federal legal framework of regional language education for previously discriminated against languages, I argue that both Colombia and the Basque Country emphasize the educational efforts for regional cultural continuity and pride. My

case selection on the surface seems odd. Why the Basque Country and Colombia? I argue that finding continuity across both regions demonstrates the importance of education in regional languages because of how it contributes to social life and cultural stability.

Chapter 1: Justification of Case Selection

In this chapter, I will explain why I have chosen to compare the Basque Country to Colombia in my research on regional language education policy. The shared essential factors that I deem as relevant to these two distant regions is their shared history of conflict, paired with signs and efforts towards modern educational growth. This regional comparison between the Basque Country and Colombia has not been studied in prior published research on international education, or really any other topic. I wish to fill this gap in the existing research by justifying that examining the growth of regional language education in both the Basque Country and in Colombia is beneficial for future scholars in the field of language education. Connecting two international regions in academic education literature is pertinent to understanding the nuances of regional language education as seen in federal legislation on a global scale. I hope that my project fosters an understood connection between the two regions and that a mutually beneficial cross regional analysis will help to understand regional language education programs and their role in strengthening cultural continuity and pride.

Euskera: The Regional Language of the Basque Country

The culturally rich Basque Country is located along the Northern Spanish border. As of 2019, the region is home to 2.187 million residents, comprising about 4 percent of the total Spanish population ("Basque Country"). The Basque Country earns its name from these residents that inhabit the region. The Basque people are a European ethnic group who share common ancestry, common history, and, important to my research in regional language

education—a common language called Euskera. This language, like the Basque ethnic group, is "one of the oldest if not the oldest" living languages in our world, and linguistic researchers have yet to define the definite origin of the language (Woodworth xv). Euskera is a non-Indo-European tongue and has no found relationship to any other language (Bitong). The history surrounding the survival of Euskera is just as complicated and unstable as one might expect from a language with such longevity and an enduring lifespan.

The Basque people and their language, Euskera, faced a history overwhelmed by conflict from the "fifth century to the fifteenth" (Tornabane). Through the reign of antagonistic leaders and arduous historic periods, the Basques faced consistent persecution as the cultural minority while fighting for their full independence. The Romans, Visigoths, Arabs, French, and of course the Spanish, each attempted to dismantle Basque autonomy through repeated invasions. In fact, "around 1516" the Basques' land in both Spain and France was usurped by various groups until it was divided up and returned in 1876 across the Spanish-French border. The most recent manifestation of historical conflict in Spain occurred under the leadership of Francisco Franco, the Spanish dictator from 1939 to 1975 who encouraged the violent oppression of Basque culture. In his desire for a culturally homogeneous Spain and totalitarian power, he launched attacks to frighten the Basque population from pursuing independence. He closed Basque schools, tortured Basque citizens, imprisoned families, and completely banned the use of Euskera (Tornabane). The Basque culture and language were forced to constantly shift and adapt to combat active opposition by actors such as Spain's own federal government. To withstand the test of time, the Basque minority and language had to endure an elevated level of conflict and created parties that persevered against the discriminant, dominant cultures who actively sought to remove their individualized culture from the dominant Spanish narrative.

The Basque Country's Recent History of Violence

Contributing to the Basque Country's recent history of violence is the Basque separatist group or armed organization called Euskadi Ta Askatasuna (ETA). Scattered throughout the strenuous political troubles faced by the Basques, the defined history of terrorism by ETA heightened the existing Spanish chaos. With the commencement of the Second World War, a sector of the Basque population resisted Spain's powerful control and maintained autonomy through the foundation of the resistance group named Euskadi ta Askatasuna (ETA). In 1959, ETA emerged from what was previously the Basque Nationalist Party (Partido Nacionalista Vasco; PNV). Various members of the political party were particularly angered by the group's refusal to allow an armed struggle and broke off to form the terrorist organization that pushed Marxist and radically socialist perspectives ("Timeline: Key Events"). ETA began as a group that campaigned for the preservation of Basque culture and wholly transformed into an organization involved in organized crime—bombing, assassinations, kidnappings—in hopes of achieving Basque independence and eventually, separation.

The criminal actions taken by this group added to the intense conflict already occurring in the Basque Country. For example, Franco was enraged by the illegal actions taken by ETA because they represented the most extremist segment of the Basque culture. Franco's regime reacted severely to the opposing ETA movement with punishments such as erratic arrests, irrational beatings, and subjective torture. The interactions between the already harsh, discriminatory regime were ultimately encouraged by ETA's inability to moderately compromise and de-escalate existing political tension, adding the overall cultural conflict that the population faced. The politically arbitrary actions taken by both ETA and the Franco Regime generated political strife and increased physical danger in the Basque Country by executing dangerous

political actions in a capricious manner. The final and legitimate ceasefire of ETA did not occur at once, but instead became an ongoing process that required international action and ultimately enforcement by the United Nations (UN). Finally, in May of 2018 ETA formally disbanded after half a century of conflict and crime that took the lives of over 800 Spaniards ("ETA's Bloody History").

The Regional Languages of Colombia

Though Colombia does not house a geographically defined, autonomous cultural community like the Basque Country in Spain, scholars do estimate that 800,000 indigenous peoples reside in the country, landing at approximately 2 percent of the total population (Roux 188). This estimate falls on the low side of competing data. According to the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs there are an estimated 1.5 million indigenous peoples in Colombia, about 3.4 percent of the country's total population ("Indigenous Peoples"). These basic statistics show that the indigenous peoples of Colombia make up a similar portion of the population when compared to the approximately 4 percent of the Spanish population that identify as Basque. In fact, Colombia's official website writes that about one third of Colombian land is owned by regional ethnic and indigenous groups ("Colombia's Indigenous Groups").

In addition to numerical relevance, indigenous populations of Colombia play a necessary cultural role, just as the Basques do. Home to 87 ethnic groups and 65 different languages, Colombia is the second most ethnically diverse country in the Americas, after Brazil. The broad existence of a multiplicity of cultural groups is essential to Colombia's history and the country's modern, holistically understood culture ("Colombia's Indigenous Groups"). In each region of the country, various cultures coexist, creating the strong, shared sense of being "Colombian." In the Guajira Peninsula of Northern Colombia, one of the biggest indigenous groups, the Wayuu

people, maintain their culture and still speak the Wayuunaiki language frequently. In the expansive Amazon region of Colombia, nearly 70 ethnic groups protect their individualized cultures, untouched by the modern world. Connected closely to nature, the Yuri and the Passe for example, prove the existence and strength of fully indigenous tribes. In the lowlands and mountainous region that the Tairona indigenous group once roamed, the indigenous ancestral ties remain strong: the Arhuaco, Wiwa, Kogi and Kankuamo peoples still preserve the native lifestyle with a population numbering around 30,000. As demonstrated by the strengths of these groups, there is strong evidence to exhibit that the Colombian profusion of native cultures is inherent to understanding the country's modern landscape ("Colombia's Indigenous Groups").

Colombia's Recent History of Violence

Colombia also faced a history overwhelmed by recent conflict. From 1964 until 2016 the Colombian government, far-right paramilitary groups, criminal organizations, and far-left guerrillas groups entered a "low-intensity asymmetric" war. This war, appropriately named "The Colombian Conflict," did not emerge from one catalyst. Instead, ongoing social, political, and economic factors fueled a tense political and social Colombian landscape that eventually resulted in this long-lasting conflict (Felter). Scholars have attempted to trace the beginnings of this country's enduring struggles and have narrowed their findings down to various causes: ongoing political violence across many generations, steep social and economic inequality, a government incapable of providing for its citizens' needs, polarizing political ideologies, and an unequal distribution of wealth within the country (Felter). The coalescence of each of these contributors led to the undefined start of the longstanding Colombian conflict.

Colombia faced recent violence imposed by armed groups, worsening the already existing conflict within Colombia. The leading group of the time, a guerilla group called the

Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), reassembled in 1948 when the oppression facing citizens who held communist beliefs led both Liberal and Communist activists to reorganize into a guerilla group. This guerilla group claimed to represent the economically marginalized populations of Colombia by preventing government violence and providing social justice through communism. The FARC relied on violence to increase their influence in Colombian territory against copious other actors in the Colombian Conflict: internally, the National Liberation Army (ELN), the Popular Liberation Army (EPL), the Colombian government, and externally, multinational corporations, the United States, Cuba and the drug trafficking industry. Eventually, international action by the UN was required to stop the brutality of the FARC. In June 2016, the FARC signed a ceasefire accord with the President of Colombia, and in 2017, the organization ceased to be an armed group, as it handed over its weapons to the United Nations. Since the ceasefire accords, the violence has not completely ended. Official sources have noted that “the FARC returned to armed struggle because the government has not complied with the agreement” under Ivan Duque’s leadership (Casey). While the “ex-combatants have renegade on several promises made,” Colombian society does suffer noticeably less violence than pre-peace accords (Casey).

The FARC left a violent, ruinous impact in Colombia, especially against rural, indigenous populations who speak the regional languages of Colombia. A study by Colombia’s National Center for Historical Memory concluded that 220,000 people died within the Colombian Conflict between 1958 and 2013— a large number dying at the hands of the violence caused by the FARC. Most of the lives taken, 177,307 of them, belonged to everyday civilians. Only 40,787 of the deaths belonged to fighters within the war. Other Colombian citizens remain displaced as refugees despite the reaching of the 2016 ceasefire agreement. Five years after the

peace deal, approximately 5 million people are displaced by armed conflict (Norwegian Refugee Council). The International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) notes that the FARC targeted and murdered indigenous leaders consistently. Once the peace agreement with the FARC was signed in 2016, 250 murders of indigenous leaders still occurred between 2016 and 2020 (“Indigenous Peoples in Colombia”). Another point of conflict between the FARC and indigenous groups was the “coca growing” that occurred on approximately 14,000 hectares of the Indigenous reserves. While indigenous leaders are proposing coca farming to be substituted by the Colombian government, the FARC is responding violently—threatening leaders, displacing citizens from their territories, and murdering community members. The IWGIA notes that Indigenous authorities in regional rural areas have become “the military targets of drug trafficking rings” (“Indigenous Peoples in Colombia”).

In Colombia, violence from the country’s longstanding conflict forced an estimated 44,000 children out of education in 2018 alone. That year, teachers, 2,285 of them, and students alike, stayed home after classes were suspended due to clashes of armed groups that could turn violent (Briggs). 80 schools are estimated to have temporarily stopped educational instruction to avoid the FARC’s disturbances in rural, indigenous regions where battles over coca farming break out (Norwegian Refugee Council).

Two Countries Pursuing Educational Advancement

After major steps towards peace and development following the de-escalation of major political conflict and termination of guerilla warfare, Colombia and the Basque Country have the time and money to refocus political and social energy on the resources available to students.

Turning from the political strife faced under the Franco regime, the Basques have recaptured their culture and now aim to promote the use of Euskera and the traditions of Basque

culture through their regional education system. Since gaining a high level of autonomy as recognized by the Federal government of Spain post-Franco regime, the Basque Country has heavily invested into education (Coughlan). Euskera has entered the curriculum of schools in the Basque Country as mandated by the Spanish government (Coughlan). The measures taken to protect the Basque heritage and language within the education system are relatively new and therefore are still evolving and changing to fit the needs of the Basque Country and its people. The Basque Country tops any other region in Spain when measuring education expenditures. Public expenditure per non-university student in the Basque Country falls at 6,572 euros, compared to Madrid's 4,015 euros per student ("The Basque Country Leads"). The BBC article titled "Basques reinvent themselves as education power," informs us that in just the past 30 years, the Basque Country has revolutionized their education system with an indebted commitment to maintaining and promoting the region's national identity.

Colombia is home to a comparatively successful education system within South America. Colombia's access to education is increasing in the 21st century as the government raises "efforts to increase spending and participation in education" (Carroll et al). President Juan Manuel Santos'—Colombia's president from 2010 to 2018—goal to make Colombia the "most educated country" in Latin America by 2025 pushed the Nation's "tertiary gross enrollment ratio (GER)" to 55 percent in 2018, almost double the 28 percent stat from 2004 (Carroll et al). Illiteracy rates in Colombians above the age of 15 dropped from 7.2 percent to 5.8 percent between 2002 and 2014. Similarly, school enrollment for "lower secondary" students rose from 62.3 percent to 71.9 percent between 2005 and 2014 ("Secondary and Tertiary"). And finally, the number of years that students are expected to be in school has risen by two years since 2007 (Carroll et al). Colombia has proven itself to be changing educational policy in recent years. The government

has pumped national funding through the system and has adopted modernized policies to better Colombian schools. With a more modern entry to democracy, Colombia has experienced recent timelines of educational expansion, placing the country in the position to move towards progressive cultural growth via regional language education policies.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

As the world globalizes and the economy encourages international systems to move towards a more universal language system, regional language education takes the backseat. More common curriculum pushes the primary use of English and other broadly used major languages. Regional languages throughout the world "have been subjected to genocidal processes, governmental policies entrenched in linguistic imperialism" (Chiblow 1). These local languages still remain culturally relevant across the globe in order to facilitate communication with millions of people living in almost every country. Not only essential to communication, local, and often lesser spoken, languages possess "a unique, relational way of naming, seeing, and relating to the world, which is particular to a specific area, land, and ecosystem" that is lost when the language is neglected to be passed down via the education system (Chiblow 2). Developmentally and culturally, acquisition of a regional language strengthens societal relationships and communal, cultural systems (Biyalstok, Mitchell).

Broadly, education consistently serves as the foundation and the solution to improving both the health and wealth of a nation. At its best, education works to inform and empower each individual citizen so that they can make knowledgeable life choices to protect themselves and others. In contrasting scenarios, education forms a societally conforming citizen, unaware of their own self-determination. Second Language Acquisition is a key aspect of the first and stronger situation in which the student succeeds with intrinsic motivation and knowledge of their

identity as an individual. The “Self-determination theory,” when applied to language learning, draws a connection between the individually energized student and language speaking abilities. This theory contends that when a student is personally invested in their educational experience then the results of their time in the classroom are much more evident in their language speaking abilities. In the context of “language pedagogy,” the internally motivated learner holds enhanced “target language performance, proficiency, and intercultural competence” (Davis 1). From this connection, we learn that schools who see success in language learning goals foster an environment that invests in individualized learning and the advancement of each student. The Self-determination theory in relation with language education supports schools that promote student-centered approaches to classroom learning.

There is a proven developmental importance for second language learning. These developmental differences can be seen starting in young populations of language learners. In “Second-language acquisition and bilingualism at an early age and the impact on early cognitive development," Ellen Bialystok concludes that the overwhelming effect of early bilingualism is positive (3). Bilingual children tend to experience increased metalinguistic awareness, the understanding of linguistic structure, when compared to monolingual children. Bilingual children between the ages of 4 and 8 have heightened problem-solving skills and demonstrate advanced abilities in controlling attention and conceptualization of a problem in salient and non-salient categories (Bialystok 2). The same is true for young second language learners who may not yet be bilingual. In her study titled “Weighing the benefits of studying a foreign language at a younger starting age in a minimal input situation” Jennifer Larson-Hall concluded that there is an overall benefit to beginning foreign language study as young as possible, even when input is only minimal. Students who started learning their second language at a younger age, obtained

enhanced phonological and basic morphosyntactic abilities (Larson-Hall 58). The American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) cites a multitude of positive effects stemming from childhood second language proficiency: improved memory, enhanced creative thinking, improved verbal and spatial abilities, higher standardized test scores, higher academic performance at the college level, to name a few. Second language acquisition, especially at a young age, gives students a cognitive advantage that positively affects their developmental abilities in the future.

There also exists a major cultural importance for second language acquisition for students who learn a regional language second to their native tongue. Language is an essential element of culture, so when a student begins to learn a new language, they are often introduced to an unfamiliar culture as well. Within second language acquisition research, the Acculturation model of Second Language learning by John Schumann initiates the connection between culture and language learning. In his 1978 theory, Schumann argues that familiarity with a certain culture facilitates the language learning process of that culture's language. Schumann identifies second language acquisition as just one category of many within the acculturation process (Zaker 81). Vice versa, it is important to recognize that language acquisition facilitates cultural understanding. Language socialization and tradition researchers believe that language and culture are inseparable; these two factors are interdependent as increasing knowledge of a language promotes increased knowledge about a culture and vice versa (Mitchell 235). Second language acquisition of regional and indigenous languages therefore promotes added cultural perspective within diverse societies such as the Basque Country and throughout regions of Colombia.

In contexts of bilingualism, especially considering the linguistic norms of the Basque Country, familiarity with a regional language that is a student's native tongue "increases

students' metalinguistic awareness, allows students to learn more academic content, and gives students more well-developed identities and self-esteem" (Ryan). So, while Basque students may not be introduced or familiarized with a new culture by learning Euskera at school, these students do grow in comfort with their native Basque identity when Euskera is taught in conjunction with Spanish by teachers. This caveat is especially important to remember in societies like the Basque Country and Colombia where regional groups faced past discrimination. Now, efforts to teach these groups' native tongues in the classroom revert the once difficult and shameful cultural practices into prideful and appreciated cultural transmission via regional language learning (Ryan).

As a result of the positive cultural effects that second language acquisition provides, my research project promotes cultural continuation for regionally located cultural groups in both Spain and Colombia through language education. Cultural continuity is defined as the transmission of the meanings and values characteristic of a culture, down through time and generations (Auger 1). Preserving language, a key characteristic of culture, is one measure of preserving the existence of multiple cultural groups. Both the Basque people in Northern Spain and regional indigenous groups of Colombia do not dominate the mainstream national culture. Past governments and social groups attempted to override regional cultural influence via uniform education laws and social ignorance surrounding internal cultural diversity. My research evaluates educational plans laid out in previous and acting federal legislation that acknowledge cultural differences and promote the continuity of indigenous languages in schools. For example, I will analyze both acting federal laws for education in the Basque Country and Colombia, the LOMCE and the General Education Law of Colombia, picking out the clauses that strengthen or harm indigenous language education. By identifying the successes and failures for Euskera or

Colombian regional languages as demonstrated by federal law, my research will advocate for strengthened legislation that pushes for the continuation of regional cultures within dominant societies.

Preserving language as a means of cultural continuity allows multiculturalism to flourish. Within my research, I argue that second language acquisition promotes the presence of several diverse cultural and ethnic groups within a society. Multiculturalism is justified by a few main factors: recognition, equality, freedom from domination, and addressing historical injustice (Song). With particular attention on the Basque Country and Colombia, this project attempts to use second language education of regional languages to undo the discriminatory practices put forth by past governments. Instead of the assimilative efforts extended by violent regimes, revised and successful local language policies will allow for regional cultural groups to maintain their individual traditions and identities alongside the dominant culture (Song). It will promote the equal treatment and recognition of culturally distinct students and community members. With the coexistence of many languages in the educational system, I am hopeful that the result is a multiculturalist society in which distinctive cultures also coexist.

To conclude, my thesis sets out to sharpen the international educational focus on learning regional languages as an integral piece of schooling that preserves cultural heritage across different continents. Very basically, this second language acquisition of a local language can be key in basic issues such as childhood development. In more nuanced areas such as cultural matters, regional language education is key to grow familiarity with non-mainstream ways of life and to therefore keep intact the daily interactions of multicultural societies. Regional language education facilitates the cultural understanding that grows general cultural competence within the dominant culture to create a society that honors the rights of non-dominant, secondary

populations. To promote the wellbeing of all citizens, especially the rights of those who have traditionally been previously discriminated against by the dialogue of mainstream populations and governments, education should linguistically honor smaller, local cultural groups by teaching languages such as Euskera and Colombian indigenous tongues in the classroom.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

The History of Regional Language Education in Spain

Euskera, the language of the Basque people, is an isolated language—the only language in its own language family. As the sole surviving pre-Indo-European language of Western Europe, there is little evidence that Euskera is related to any other language in the world (Le Pichon-Vortsman 70). Euskera and its majority counterpart, Spanish, have been in contact for centuries in a "diglossic situation in which Spanish has enjoyed greater prestige" (Elousa 688). Before the 19th century, little conflict existed between Euskera and Spanish, but the introduction of "industrialization, immigration, and the loss of the Carlist Wars" threatened the reign of Basque culture and language. Spanish foreigners soon took over primary industrial centers and the use of the Basque language "quickly declined" (Smith). Years later, Franco's rule deepened the discrimination facing the Basques as he outlawed all forms of Basque nationalism and the use of their language, going so far as to replace "birth, marriage, and death certificates with Spanish copies, and Basque names were scratched off tombstones" (Smith). Despite their history of perseverance against tense social, political, cultural inequity, the Basque speakers of the distinct Euskera have dedicated themselves to maintaining their linguistic independence the dominant Spanish culture.

At the turn of the 20th century, revitalization efforts took place in the Basque Country to undo the persecutory efforts against Euskera and to revive the spoken and taught Basque

language. At the second Basque Congress of 1918, pro-Basque officials established *Euskaltzaindia*, the project dedicated to creating a streamline dialect of the Basque language to be taught in a uniform manner. The group successfully developed a standard variety of Euskera which it named "*Batua,*" the variety used in Basque schools today (Echeverria 50). With a unified orthography and uniform written standard, the Basque Congress hoped that the use of Euskera would become less complicated and therefore more commonplace.

The Spanish Civil War from 1936 to 1939 halted these educational attempts to strengthen Euskera as both a subject and a medium of teaching (Gardner 2005 13). Amidst the wartime landscape, Franco ended supplemental cultural pursuits by the Basques. For one, his administration outlawed the Basque language "in all schools and public settings" (Smith). He stripped away customary Basque rights, banned any use of Euskera, and ordered an attack on the Basque establishment, Guernica (Blakemore). After the Spanish Civil war, Franco's repressive policies banning the use of Euskera simply accelerated the language loss that was already taking place. Under the regime of Francisco Franco, the percentage of Basque speakers fell from one-third to one-fifth of the population (Echeverria 49).

To recover from the governmental inequalities imposed on Euskera, the Basque people largely turned towards the education system. The Basque people first established *Ikastola* schools during the brief Second Republic (1931-36). *Ikastola* schools used Euskera as a medium of instruction to teach Basque language and culture to younger generations but were quickly banned by Franco's government. In the 1960s, hidden from the Franco regime, the *Ikastola* movement resurged. Clandestine *Ikastola* schools met after school hours in personal homes and garages teaching young children in Euskera until they mastered reading and writing (Echeverria 53). By the time of Franco's death in 1975, *Ikastola* schools constituted about 10% of the

primary school system in the Basque Autonomous Community (BAC), an estimated 110 schools (Gardner 2005 13).

Following Franco's death and therefore the end of his regime, legislative changes occurred that created a legal framework in which *Ikastola* schools could properly function and Euskera could spread. Under the newly adopted constitution of 1978, the Spanish state adopted a more positive stance on its minority languages (Gardner 2020 10). As a result of the 1978 constitution, Euskera was granted co-official status to Spanish in 1979. The 1982 Act Governing Standardization of the Use of Euskera specified that every inhabitant of the BAC has the right to know and use both Basque and Spanish. It required that upon completion of compulsory education, all BAC students should have "sufficient practical knowledge of Euskera" (Elosua 688). These new governmental standards inspired development plans to revitalize the language that then grew through the 1980s.

The State of Basque Language Education Today

The Statistic National Institute (Instituto Nacional de Estadística) estimates that the January 2018 population of the Basque Country stands at 2,846,642 and has seen consistent growth since 2013 (Gardner 2020 6). As the Basque population grows, so does the knowledge and use of Euskera. As of 2016, 33.9% of the Basque Autonomous Community (BAC) population speaks Euskera in addition to Spanish compared to 24.1% in 1991. Similarly, the percentage of Basque-Spanish bilinguals in Navarre has increased from 9.5% to 12.9%. This means that the acquisition of Basque has almost doubled in the past 35 years (Gardner 2020 7). Since the original legislation was created to promote Basquisation of Spanish society in the Basque Country, the spread of Euskera has seen major success via the education system.

The federal government of Spain sets the educational standards for schools throughout the country, but different levels of lower government maintain different responsibilities with regards to Spanish schooling. Regional governments, take, for example the government of the BAC or the government of Navarre, have the liberty to adapt and change language policy adhering to federal standards. Regional governments are also responsible for building construction, hiring teachers, curriculum development not set by the federal government, and control of the materials used in schools. At the lowest level, local councils control basic maintenance, and sometimes extracurricular activities (Gardner 2005 14).

In 1983, the regional Basque government established the bilingualism decree. This legislation, set forth by the Basque department of education, designed 3 bilingual educational models that are still used in modern schools: models A, B, and D. Each of these models fulfill Basquisation goals as they all attempt to increase the proportion of Basque as a language of instruction in both public and private institutions (Elosua 688).

First, in Model A schools, Spanish is the official teaching medium and Euskera is treated as a school subject. The number of weekly class hours spent in the Euskera classroom is established by the Department of Education and Culture. Once a high enough level of Euskera is acquired, the language is used as a teaching medium in the upper levels of primary schooling (Elosua 688). According to information from Eustat in 2016, 60,586 students (15.7%) in the BAC attend model A schools; 15,032 Navarre students (13.9%) attend Model A schools (Gardner 2020 15).

Second, Model B schools treat both Spanish and Basque as instructional mediums to teach other subjects and treat the languages as subjects themselves. Spanish is used to teach foundational skills such as reading, writing, and mathematics. Euskera is used to instruct in

supplemental subject areas: general science, art, and movement. Additionally, both Spanish and Euskera will form their own subjects with the number of weekly class hours established by the Department of Education and culture (Elosua 688). Eustat tells us that 69,559 students (18%) in the BAC are enrolled in Model B schools; In Navarre, this model is much less popular, with just under 1 percent of the population enrolled in Model B schools.

Thirdly, within Model D schools, all subjects are taught in Euskera, except for the Spanish language subject. In addition to being the primary medium of instruction, Basque will also be treated as its own subject. Again, the number of weekly class hours spent in the Euskera subject is stipulated by the regional Department of Education. In the BAC, Model D is overwhelmingly popular, with 253,877 students (65.7%) enrolled in the primarily Basque instructional model. In Navarre, 26,494 students (24.6%) participate in Model D schools.

Lastly, there also exists a Model X (in Navarre, Model G) that relies on Spanish as a teaching medium and does not use or teach Basque. In the BAC this model is marginally present—only 2,268 students (<1%) enroll in Model X schools. In Navarre, Model G does maintain the dominant percentage of enrolled students; 66,149 students (61.3%) participate in predominantly Spanish schools.

Current challenges facing regional language education in the Basque Country

Data drawn from a 2012 Basque Government sociolinguistic survey shows that most of the BAC population holds a positive attitude towards promotion of Euskera, 62% to be exact. 26% of the population expressed indifference, and 12% expressed opposition (Elosua 694). This survey marks a historical shift in attitudes towards the Basque language as it portrays a drastic turnaround from the discriminatory narrative that Franco pushed throughout Spanish society.

While newfound popular support now exists for the promotion of Euskera, the language still faces many challenges in the societal and educational context of the Basque Country.

Societally, Euskera struggles because it is rarely the dominant language of the environment. Because Spanish is overwhelmingly dominant, Euskera is rarely relied on as a primary language, and is therefore rarely spoken fully or correctly (Gardner 2005, Gardner 2020, Le Pichon-Vortsman). For example, individual families utilize Euskera with varying levels of use contingent upon ancestry from diverse historical territories (Le Pichon-Vortsman 74). It is important to remember that virtually all people who speak Euskera are bilingual speakers of Spanish as well. This bilingualism does limit the speakers' language competence in Euskera (Gardner 2005).

Another societal challenge facing Basquisation is the rising level of foreign immigration (Gardner 2020, Le Pichon-Vortsman). As immigrants enter the Basque Country in Spain, the use of Euskera regresses as bilingualism between Spanish and other languages rises (Gardner 2020). In fact, page 41 of Gardner's 2020 report on "The Basque language in education in Spain" notes that there is a "noticeable" increase in foreign students who rely on a mother tongue other than Basque or Spanish. This rising use of non-official languages in the family context often complicates the Basque learning process (Le Pichon-Vortsman 74). Adding Euskera to the language capabilities of a student who is already having to learn Spanish to communicate is an educational challenge that many schools in the BAC and Navarre now face.

The societal lack of reliance on Euskera translates negatively into the education system. Students who learn Euskera at school are often taught by non-native, bilingual speakers who never attained the required degree to properly instruct the language. The dependence of Basque education on non-native speakers does not allow students to gain grammatically correct, properly

pronounced, culturally comprehensive, classroom experiences in Euskera (Gardner 2020). Additionally, Basque schools have the option to rely on Euskera as the primary language of instruction and therefore the main vehicle for school communication. Since schools can rely on the regional language primarily, new challenges are presented in communication and comprehension as Euskera essentially functions as a lingua franca (Le Pichon-Vortsman 74).

The educational administration of Spain also faces challenges derived from language barriers. While schools in the BAC and Navarre often rely on Euskera and offer services in both Euskera and Spanish, the Departments of Education in these two communities do not employ the Basque language in school administration (Gardner 2005). The Department of Education in the BAC operates under the dominant language of Spanish even though more Euskera is spoken there than in any other regional government department within Spain (Gardner 2005). While some civil servants are proficient enough in Euskera to provide administrative services in the language, most of the linguistic project management with the Department of Education is administered in Spanish (Gardner 2020 17). Once again, the lack of linguistic consistency between school leadership and higher administration slows the Basquisation process in schools. Often, the administrative services offered by the Department of Education can't meet the demand shown by students and teachers (Gardner 2020). To fully promote the proper use of Euskera, change must be sought at all levels. From administration, to schools, to students, there must be an overarching language shift from Spanish to dominant reliance on Euskera.

The History of Regional Language Education in Colombia

Colombia currently recognizes over 80 ethnic groups with 68 surviving native languages (Uribe-Jongbloed 218). Though data on literacy and linguistic competence is limited in Colombia, the Colombian Constitutional Court ruled that 34 of these indigenous groups and their

regionally spoken native languages are currently "threatened by disappearance" (Uribe-Jongbloed 219). Indigenous languages of Colombia face a complicated history exacerbated by colonialism and systematized discrimination. Though the modern political discourse has shifted to recognize indigenous languages as an essential part of Colombian culture, it is important to understand the intense history that indigenous groups had to endure to gain official language recognition from the federal government. Additionally, the Colombian Conflict, heightened by paramilitary groups such as the FARC, only deepened the indigenous struggle to receive an education and therefore maintain linguistic competency in such a multicultural society.

The original repression of native multilingualism in Colombia originated with Spanish conquistadors who intended to impose Castilian. For example, Christopher Columbus renamed indigenous geographic locales and Colombian Indians who he baptized. The evangelism of the Catholic church required the primary use of Spanish as a vehicle for religious imposition (Nieto 13). Charles III completely prohibited the use of any indigenous language as Castilian was declared the "only acceptable language" (Nieto 14). These original accounts of interactions between colonizers, the Spanish Crown, and Colombian natives contextualize the modern inequalities that indigenous languages confront in Colombian society. The roots of unjust colonialism cause modern perceptions of indigenous culture as inferior to Spanish dominance.

Years after Colombia gained independence from Spain, the country established its first constitution in 1886, "La Gran Colombia," which designated Spanish as the official and only language of Colombia. This constitution reified European colonial power. For over 100 years, this document legally prohibited multilingualism from flourishing (Nieto 14). Additionally, rural, and therefore heavily indigenous, student populations lacked access to schools. This original Colombian constitution, paired with limits on early education infrastructure, is responsible for

worsening many of the challenges that indigenous communities still. It set the precedent for broad societal action against indigenous culture in the 1900s while ignoring the sweeping educational inequality faced by rural, indigenous populations.

In the 1960s and 70s, Colombian indigenous groups organized to claim their linguistic rights that the government confiscated (Nieto, Uribe-Jongbloed). As indigenous groups moved to reclaim their physical land, they also fought for the reclamation of their culture and languages. These grassroots movements saw the first successes in legislation recognizing native culture. In 1978, the Ministry of Education issued Decree 1142 which recognized the right of indigenous Colombians to an education "appropriate to their interests." It acknowledged that these indigenous populations should be involved in the creation and planning of their own curriculum so that it addressed their contexts and needs. Lastly the Decree mandated that teachers in indigenous communities speak that community language (Nieto, Uribe-Jongbloed). This landmark legislation within the Ministry of Education was the first governing document to legally inform standards and policy changes that benefitted indigenous populations. However, this was just an action taken by one department of the Colombian government.

1991 marks the true beginning of the story for the recognition of Colombian indigenous populations (Bonilla 186). Through a democratic process that involved indigenous leaders, political parties, student associations, and diverse ethnic and religious leaders, the new Colombian Political Constitution of 1991 was enacted (Uribe-Jongbloed 220). This contemporary document made steps towards unifying groups previously excluded from national debates, as Article 7 recognized Colombia as a "multiethnic and pluricultural nation" (De Mejía). In this constitution, officials kept Spanish as the "official language of the country," but indigenous languages were included as "official in their respective indigenous territories,"

implying that Colombia would allow bilingual education regionally and would respect diverse cultural identities (Constitución Política de Colombia, 1991). Steps made toward modernizing linguistic policies began after this constitution, characterized Colombia as the "multicultural and multilingual nation" we see today "where there is a convergence of indigenous languages, creoles, several foreign languages, and Spanish" (Nieto 12).

Contextually, this political constitution coincided with massive economic policy expansion that increased Colombia's total imports. The greater reliance on international trade encouraged Colombia's first push to improve the English level of students and teachers (Bonilla 187). Soon after, Colombia adopted the 1991 Colombian Framework for English (COFE). This program established a collaborative approach to English instruction using resources from the UK. The COFE project took a "grass-roots approach" that proposed changes to higher education programs for teachers and suggested "increasing the number of hours of English, as well as the inclusion of a research component" (Bonilla 187).

A landmark piece of legislation for the Colombian education system later surfaced as the General education law of 1994. This law, with a similar purpose to the COFE, "broadly stated the need for acquisition of conversation and reading elements in at least one foreign language" while neglecting indigenous language policies (Bonilla 188). After the introduction of this legislation, most schools elected to instruct English as the primary second language in the classroom due to the "international dynamics that were taking place" (Gómez 141). The General education law of 1994 lacked indigenous language policies and contained "no clear criteria, levels, or objectives" for language teaching. The law simply made a statement on the newfound need for diversifying language instruction without any means of then reaching that need. While promotion of second language instruction made leaps and bounds in the 90s, indigenous

language education was largely ignored due to the economic globalization occurring internally within Colombia.

The State of Colombian Language Education Today

Research states that around 65 Amerindian languages exist in Colombia, and they can be grouped into "12 language families." However, even this number is difficult to arrive at as the language of questions asked in the Colombian census make it nearly impossible to verify whether "any sections of the population are monolingual in languages other than Spanish" ("Language Data"). In general, data on the use of indigenous languages in Colombia is almost non-existent despite the number of them in use. And, to my dismay, this same lack of narrative dominates the current access to information on the state of language teaching within the education system. Statistics are few and far between on the use of these 65 Amerindian languages and how they are taught regionally in the classroom. In addition to the lack of information on indigenous linguistics, the major educational focus in Colombia is on English. In the public domain, access to information on English bilingualism programming is abundant, while other languages seem to have disappeared.

To properly introduce the modern educational landscape regarding language learning, I will summarize Colombia's official bilingualism programs as they dominate the most recent language education events. Though most of the governmental reform in these plans is heavily related to the promotion of English, I believe that a summary of these programs properly portrays the current challenges that face indigenous populations in Colombia and the English-dominated environment that I will study.

In 2005, the Colombian Ministry of Education (MEN) addressed concerns regarding a lack of linguistic guidance by creating new governmental platforms and programs to increase

second language use by students. The MEN admitted that previous verbiage, "terms such as 'low, medium, and high' or 'basic, intermediate, and advance,'" were insufficient for clearly defining goals as teachers designed their courses or prepared for their evaluation (Gómez 141). Following the open recognition of the MEN's flawed and immeasurable statutes, "four national bilingualism plans" proceeded (Gómez 142). I will briefly summarize these four plans below as they are pertinent to understanding today's educational environment regarding language instruction in Colombia: each with a heavy primary focus on English, occasional mentions of the importance of regional indigenous languages, and divergent courses of action.

First, the National Plan of Bilingualism (PNB for its acronym in Spanish) was implemented in 2004 with the guiding principle of focusing on the "bilingualism necessities" of all Colombian populations while still "considering the multiculturalism of the nation" (Gómez 142). Under this aspiration, three courses of action were taken to administer the plan: ethno-education in each indigenous community's "aboriginal language," regulation of "the teaching of foreign languages," and the growth of communicative competence in all institutions. While this initial program does acknowledge the importance of regionalism and the local use of regional languages, it praises English as the "mainstream" form of communication in the "global knowledge economy" to "boost national competitiveness" (Uribe Jongbloed 225). By prioritizing English as the language of business and monetary success, the National Plan for Bilingualism deepens "the great gulf" that exists between ethno-education and English instruction intellectually and economically.

Second, the Program for Strengthening the Development of Competences in Foreign Languages (PFDCLE for its acronym in Spanish) launched in 2010 following the change in government and ran until 2014. This program simply echoed the desires of the PNB with a shift

towards the prioritization of English. The Ministry of Education stated that the aim of the PFDCLE was to assist Colombian students in “developing communicative competencies in foreign languages, emphasizing English” so that “Colombian human capital” may enter the “global knowledge economy and the international job market” (Gómez 144). Though the name of this program signals a change, the implementation portrays ideology closely aligned to the PNB that advanced the English preparation occurring in Colombian schools.

Thirdly, the Colombian government launched the “National Plan of English: Colombia Very Well! 2015-2025 (PNI for its acronym in Spanish)” in 2014 (Gómez 147). This program marked a strategic shift in strategy to advance the spread of English. After analyzing the PNB and the PFDCLE, the MEN concluded that these two initial programs “had limited results” (Gómez 147). The PNI was born out of a need to keep past strategies in place while adding new strategies to that same list. The main goal stated in this plan was to have “50% of 11th graders achieve a B1 English level” by the year 2050 (Gómez 147).

It wasn’t long after the establishment of PNI that the Colombian MEN strategically pivoted once again to push a new plan into action. Just “five months after the beginning of the implementation of the PNI” the government launched yet another new plan for language education titled “Bilingual Colombia” (CB for its acronym in Spanish). This program was an attempt to recover after the PNI received harsh criticism as it focused on solely English as a foreign language, displayed all too clearly in its title. Though this plan still sets goals for attaining a certain percentage of high school English speakers by 2018, it lessens the focus on English as publicly perceived in the title. From this quick governmental pivot, I observe that Colombia’s system for language instruction is still adapting and growing to find a healthy

balance between a focus on bilingualism in English, Spanish, other foreign languages, and indigenous languages.

Current challenges facing regional language education in Colombia

First, and likely an obvious challenge after the introduction to such a long and unstable list of language programming, the lack of continuity and consistency in planning by the MEN "results in a feeling of low-achievement and frustration" (Gómez 148). Each change in plans, happening just every few years, causes drastic shifts in policies and strategies on the ground for teachers and schools. As a direct result, progress has been minimal. This constant variation in government preparation reflects the "absolute absence" of clear, understandable policies to reach the targets laid forth by each bilingualism program. These ambiguous measures then expand the gap "between the government's intentions and the actual social conditions" (Bonilla 190).

The second challenge I identify is the intense focus by the MEN on "Employability Instead of Social Development" (Gómez 149). Bilingualism is justified with economic reasoning such as improvement in the job market, trade, and a globalizing world—therefore promoting the teaching of English over every other language, especially regional ones. For example, the "common denominator" of the PNB and the PNI is the claim that learning a second language leads to "social development specifically because it brings forth job opportunities" (Bonilla 187). With this mindset, the value of learning regional languages is lost. Outside of the economic point of view, indigenous languages carry value culturally and socially, just to name two categories of importance. Language is not only a means to a job: it is a means to social connection, cultural preservation, and protection of Colombian heritage. Colombia and its MEN exclude this beneficial form of ideology in past documents.

Namely, the third, and arguably most substantial challenge is the Colombian "Misconception of Bilingualism" that gives English a privileged position in schools at the expense of the full recognition of all indigenous languages and the multilingual nature of the country (Gómez 187, Bonilla 190). Essentially, the "Misconception of Bilingualism" prioritizes English as the only language that grants bilingual capabilities when spoken in addition to another language. The reality is that any language, not just English, spoken in addition to your native tongue is a marker of bilingualism. One issue with educational culture centered around English is that often, learning English comes with such great pressure that the native language, most often Spanish, is neglected. Before students can master fluency in their country's own official language, English education overtakes the classroom causing lacking skills in "deduction, induction, argumentation, and critical reading" (Bonilla 190).

Not only does the push for English overshadow other classroom priorities, but it also represents a "doorway to a market" that only accommodates high-class citizens (Bonilla 191). Latin American countries like Colombia view English as an "elite" form of bilingualism, whereas "minority" bilingualism lives at the other end of the spectrum (Uribe-Jongbloed 230). The "elite" partner on the spectrum, English, is viewed as "socially acceptable and economically advantageous" while the minority language in bilingualism is associated with "poverty and backwardness" (Uribe-Jongbloed 225). Bilingual education (teaching of English) and ethno-education are administered by "different departments," mimicking the "asymmetry" that assigns value to English as "a language of the powerful" and all regionally instructed ones as "powerless" (Nieto 21). Overall, I observe that the MEN, as part of the Colombian federal government, ignores that indigenous, regionally spoken languages too can be learned as a culturally and socially beneficial second language.

Chapter 4: Methodology

To research international approaches to teaching regional languages in the Basque Country and Colombia, I focused on the federal education legislation that mandates these processes as my primary data source. Beginning in Spain, I read and analyzed the two largest general education laws, the LOE and the LOMCE, which reference language education and regional autonomy. I paid closest attention to the individual clauses that affect regional languages and then analyzed the measures laid forth in these clauses. Next, I used the Colombian equivalent to the general Spanish education law as the primary document for my research in Colombia, Law 115. To better grasp the Colombian regional linguistic landscape, I also analyzed Ethno-education as it is a program for regional language education outlined in Law 115. In both countries, federal education law that codifies regional measures for language education serves as my primary source for data and analysis.

Chapter 5: Spain Legislative Analysis

To begin my legislative research in Spain, I first visited the Ministry of Education’s official website, https://www.educacionyfp.gob.es. While navigating the page, I found the government’s pertinent foreign language education legislation by following the proceeding tabs: “contenidos,” “estudiantes,” “enseñanzas de idiomas,” “referencia legislativa.” According to the Spanish Ministry of Education, the following laws are listed as the principal contributors to the foundational regulations and general requirements for Spain’s foreign language education: Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación, Ley Orgánica 8/2013, de 9 de diciembre, Real Decreto 1041/2017, de 22 de diciembre, Real Decreto 1/2019, de 11 de enero, Orden EFP/365/2020, de 22 de abril, Real Decreto-ley 31/2020, de 29 de septiembre.

I will analyze two of the six laws listed under the "referencia legislativa": Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación and Ley Orgánica 8/2013, de 9 de diciembre. The other four listed laws, Real Decreto 1041/2017, de 22 de diciembre, Real Decreto 1/2019, de 11 de enero, Orden EFP/365/2020, de 22 de abril, Real Decreto-ley 31/2020, de 29 de septiembre, are pieces of legislation that are too specific in nature to be applied to my research topic. In fact, two of these laws were released during the pandemic, and account for changes made "ante la situación de crisis ocasionada por el COVID-19" that I do not find relevant to my holistic understanding of language learning in the Basque Autonomous Community (BAC), so I chose to exclude them from my analysis.

"The legislative framework" that governs and guides the education system of Spain, overarching that of the Basque Country is principally composed of "the Spanish Constitution (1978), the Organic Act on the Right to Education (LODE, 1978), the Organic Act on Education (LOE, 2006) and the Act on the Improvement of the Quality of Education 8/2013 of 9 December (LOMCE, 2013)." The latter two listed documents are the ones which I will analyze. Very basically, LOMCE was created after the LOE to "develop the principles and rights established in it." (European agency). Since 2000, these two documents stand to be the most fundamental in creating federal education standards and curriculum in Spain at the national level.

It is clearly noted underneath this listed legislation Ministry of Education's official website, as is defined in the 1978 constitution, that the "Normativa desarrollada por las Comunidades Autónomas para la aplicación de los citados reales decretos en sus respectivos territorios." Basically, each autonomous community of Spain has the freedom to create more specific language learning regulations under the general Spanish law. In turn, the role of the Ministry of Education is to enact the basic standards which specify the constitutional right to

education. Because of this statement that establishes autonomy, each of these laws pertain to my basic understanding of the language education laws in the Basque Country.

Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación

The first listed law as seen on the Ministry of Education website, Ley Orgánica 2/2006, de 3 de mayo, de Educación (LOE), is an indispensable original general education law established in post-Franco Spain. This principal state law regulates education in Spain at all its levels and stages (Arango 4). In force since the 2006-2007 academic year, the LOE understands education as “la mayor riqueza y el principal recurso de un país” (LOE 4).

Following the “preámbulo,” the section titled “principios y fines de la educación,” states very clearly the broad principles and purposes of the governing document. Notable principles include, “la calidad de educación,” “la libertad personal,” “la ciudadanía democrática,” “la igualdad de oportunidades” (LOE 15). Each of these principles highlight the goals set forth by UNESCO that the Spanish government responded to via the LOE. The law was intended to be a unifying document that utilized the force of education to satisfy internal and external standards. Coinciding with the expectations set forth by UNESCO, the LOE of Spain attempted to provide a quality education to all young citizens of both sexes, marking a stark governmental change when compared to the inequitable education system headed by Franco’s administration. The LOE highlights a shift in the role of Spanish education. Now, the role of education in society is to give all students an equal chance to learn, “constituting a clear commitment on the equity of the Spanish system” (Arango 4). The 2006 Education law does not follow the previous hierarchical system that benefits the few while further marginalizing outside populations

With respect to regional language policies, the LOE “regula las enseñanzas de idiomas… que por primera vez se ordenan en una ley de educación” (LOE 12). Relevant to my research,

this is the first Spanish educational law that arranges government standards and state control for language teaching in Spain's schools. Under the goal of creating a quality and equitable education, the LOE contends that language learning is central to forming a culturally aware and holistically minded student. "Artículo 2, Fines" point G establishes that a main purpose of the LOE is "La formación en el respeto y reconocimiento de la pluralidad lingüística y cultural de España y de la interculturalidad como un elemento enriquecedor de la sociedad" (LOE 16). In this clause, the societal motivators behind the LOE's language education policies are revealed: the importance of the existence of multiple cultures and the interaction of these cultures together to create a better society. Essentially, the LOE assigns the Basque Country its own regional autonomy within the realm of language education because the stronger Euskera is, as taught to Spain's students, the more prosperous the Nation is. This tie—established between strength of culture and strength of the country as a whole— fundamentally explains why Spain's students carry the necessity of learning and maintaining Spain's linguistic multiplicity. The Basque Country, although it identifies as somewhat separate from Spain, still contributes to Spain's cultural landscape through the increased use of Euskera.

When interpreting the clauses affecting "lenguas cooficiales" within the LOE, it is necessary to understand the legal relationship between las comunidades autonomas and the state government of Spain. As defined by the LOE, in the section titled "Disposición adicional trigésima octava. Lengua castellana, lenguas cooficiales y lenguas que gocen de protección legal" las comunidades autónomas are legally required to protect las lenguas cooficiales alongside "la lengua castellana" (LOE 100). There are 4 basic protections that both languages deserve as listed in this section. First, students of Spain have the inherent right to "recibir enseñanzas en castellano y en las demás lenguas cooficiales." Second, "al finalizar la educación

básica" (La educación primaria, la educación secundaria obligatoria y los ciclos formativos de grado básico constituyen la educación básica LOE 17) every student should reach "el dominio pleno" in Spanish and the cooficial language recognized in the respective region. For example, in The Basque Country, Euskera is the only official language alongside Spanish. If a student wanted to learn, say, Catalan—not co-official in the Basque Country—this language is not offered in the typical school place setting. Third, "Las Administraciones educativas" should apply the instruments of control, evaluation, and improvement of the educational system ensuring that all students "alcance la competencia en comunicación lingüística" in Spanish and the cooficial language. And lastly, each language shall be taught in its own language. Better stated, Spanish language and literature shall be taught in Spanish and Basque language and literature shall be taught in Basque (LOE 100). The fifth and final attached statement within this section establishes the role of the law in uphold the prior four clauses. If they are not met, then the terms of this section shall be followed.

As far as curriculum is concerned, I will focus on the language learning objectives laid forth by the primary system of education as they lay the foundation for language education. Very broadly, "Capítulo 3, Artículo 6, punto 4" establishes that the minimum educational requirements set forth by the LOE will require 50% of "los horarios escolares" for the autonomous communities that have a co-official language, compared to 60% in the autonomous communities that claim Spanish as the sole official language (LOE 19). This policy shows an attempt by the federal government of Spain to give 10% more time to regions with cooficial languages to implement their linguistic curriculum. Moreover, the chapter titled "Educación primaria" states that one of the main objectives of the primary education system is "Conocer y utilizar de manera apropiada la lengua castellana y, si la hubiere, la lengua cooficial de la

Comunidad Autónoma y desarrollar hábitos de lectura" in Article 17 point e (LOE 24). This article creates the foundation of all education in the cooficial language such as Basque. By implementing a basic objective of early education to promote the use of a cooficial language, the LOE attempts to push multilingualism in Spanish society. By requiring the development of Basque language skills starting at a young age, this law does have the possibility to grow Basque language use in a significant way.

To critique the LOE, the basic language of the law frames "las lenguas cooficiales" as a secondary thought and therefore inferior to Spanish. In general, every statement that mentions "las lenguas cooficiales" essentially adds a qualifying phrase after mentioning "la lengua castellana." This repetitive sentence style treats cooficial languages as secondary in the educational context. If they are "co" official, then the two languages should be understood and learned side by side, with equal attention given to the regional co-official language such as Basque. The LOE creates statements that acknowledge the need to learn co-official languages, but it places primary emphasis on the federal state language, el castellano, and leaves the co-official languages towards the end of each clause, linguistically framing them as a governmental afterthought.

To conclude, the LOE is the first Spanish law to establish legal recognition of "la enseñanza de idiomas" within the educational system. This initial high level of recognition of the Basque language as legally official is absolutely foundational in the power of Basque language education. Federally, it establishes the baseline curricular standards and legal protections for "las lenguas cooficiales." The law also establishes the dynamic relationship between the state government and regional governments in legislating and implementing educational provisions within schools. The federal government produces the minimum standards and expectations while

giving the regional governments limited freedom to create school policies with regards to specific subjects such as the classroom language learning of co-official regional languages. Through this autonomy, Basque people themselves are given more power in the creation of educational plans to preserve their own language and culture. However, the law does follow a sentence pattern that treats co-official languages as secondary in thought. While this pattern may be established for purposes of organizational flow, it is important to observe how it may reify the insignificance of languages other than castellano. Overall, the LOE frames Basque as a secondary language learning concept that shall be taught in the regional communities that demand it.

Ley Orgánica 8/2013, de 9 de diciembre

Under the lens of my study of regional language education, I will examine three principal changes that I observe as altering the Basque education system, as guided by the LOE, within the LOMCE: the changes in "las asignaturas troncales," the obligatory offering of teaching in the vehicular language of "el castellano," and changes to "la educación plurilingüe." Though many other changes received national attention that resulted in national movements, I identify that these 3 alterations most closely affect my research on Basque speakers and Basque language learners in the Spanish education system.

First, the LOMCE changed the LOE by assigning the "asignaturas troncales" as determined by the federal government. As stated in part IX of the preámbulo the LOMCE promotes…

> "La racionalización de la oferta educativa, reforzando en todas las etapas el aprendizaje de materias troncales que contribuyan a la adquisición de las competencias fundamentales para el desarrollo académico de los alumnos y alumnas" (LOMCE 8).

These “asignaturas troncales” are then mentioned 52 times throughout the LOMCE, as compared to 0 times in the LOE, proving their newfound importance to the educational amendment. The “artículo 6 bis” lays out the framework of these “asignaturas troncales.” With respect to these core subjects, it is the role of the federal government “Determinar los contenidos comunes, los estándares de aprendizaje evaluables y el horario lectivo mínimo del bloque de asignaturas troncales” (LOMCE 13). The “asignaturas troncales” of “la educación primaria son “Ciencias de la Naturaleza, Ciencias Sociales, Lengua Castellana y Literatura, Matemáticas, y Primera Lengua Extranjera” (LOMCE 15). Here, las lenguas cooficiales are ignored, not even treated as a core subject in the regions that speak said cooficial languages. In secondary education as well, “las lenguas cooficiales” goes without mention as a core subject (LOMCE 17). The caveat to this section is stated below. At the end of each section listing “las asignaturas troncales,” the government states in a secondary clause that…

> “Los alumnos y alumnas deben cursar el área (la materia) Lengua Cooficial y Literatura en el bloque de asignaturas de libre configuración autonómica en aquellas Comunidades Autónomas que posean dicha lengua cooficial, si bien podrán estar exentos de cursar o de ser evaluados de dicha área (materia) en las condiciones establecidas en la normativa autonómica correspondiente. El área (la materia) Lengua Cooficial y Literatura recibirá un tratamiento análogo al del área Lengua Castellana y Literatura” (LOMCE 15, 18, 19, 26, 27).

This quote shows us that although co-official languages are still recognized, their importance is recognized as secondary to the core subjects of education, one of which is the Spanish language and another that is named as foreign language. These core subjects laid out by the federal government ignore the primary importance of language education in the secondary and co

official languages. Once again, as laid out in the LOE, the legislative patterns of government speech place co-official regional languages in a secondary position when compared to the Spanish language.

Secondly, the LOMCE obliges the educational system of Spain to offer teachings in the vehicular language of Spanish. While the LOE allowed for regional autonomy in decisions about vehicular languages in language education, this newly added clause insinuates that regional autonomy to educate in the cooficial language must follow a reasonable proportion of both the cooficial language and Castilian which is advised to "compromise 50% of the school curricula" (ICEF). In the "Disposición adicional trigésima octava," the law directly states that…

> "Las Administraciones educativas determinarán la proporción razonable de la lengua castellana y la lengua cooficial en estos sistemas, pudiendo hacerlo de forma heterogénea en su territorio, atendiendo a las circunstancias concurrentes" (LOMCE 54).

This caveat basically implements a new balance between the official language of Castilian and regional cooficial languages as determined by "las administraciones educativas" that didn't exist before. It is a clause that puts another limitation on the regional autonomy of communities like the Basque Country. In fact, in Catalonia, the opposition facing this legislative change was "so fierce" that the federal government claimed there would be consequences if the vehicular language of Spanish was not appropriately used. The central government threatened to "give parents money to enroll their children in private schools" therefore decreasing the amount of funds normally transferred to Catalonia from the capital city (ICEF). In a similar nature, Minister Wert once claimed that he wished to "espanolizar" or "Hispanize" students across Spain, provoking criticism from even the King of Spain (Blitzer).

Thirdly and lastly, the LOMCE promotes the incorporation of "expertos con dominio de lenguas extranjeras" as language teachers in Spain's classrooms (LOMCE 54). In the "preambulo" of the LOMCE, the law claims that Spain's teaching of foreign languages has become "una de las principales carencias de nuestro sistema educativo" (LOMCE 10). So, this new additional clause attempts to strengthen the forces of foreign language teachers throughout Spain by allowing foreigners to teach languages in Spain and by raising the requirements for current language teachers across the country. While the clause does particularly mention both "nacionales o extranjeros" as potential teachers, it extends the educational reach internationally in a way that had not been exercised previously under the LOE, incentivizing outsiders to perform a necessary role in Spanish schools. While the provision does strengthen the quality of teaching foreign languages by allowing native speakers into the classroom, it neglects to mention the use native language speakers of Spain in the promotion of indigenous languages in the classroom. Once again, the law centers its focus on foreign languages over the instruction of the regional languages native to Spain in the national curriculum. Without the federal dialogue mentioning the importance of these regionally recognized languages, growing concern and credibility for their treatment in Spain's education system will be challenging.

Chapter 6: Colombia Legislative Analysis

Ley 115 de febrero 8 de 1994

First, I will outline the most pertinent General Law of Education in Colombia, or what I define as the Colombian comparative equivalent to the Ley Orgánica de Educación de 2006 de España. The General Education Law of Colombia or "Ley 115 de febrero 8 de 1994" was the first "consolidated law" that attempted to regulate the Colombian educational system after the newly established Political Constitution of 1991 (Mora et al). Basically, the law defines and

develops the organizational structure of formal education in Colombia. It establishes the educational levels as "preescolar, básica (primaria e secundaria) y media, no formal e informal" (Law 115). The law directly states that its purpose is to signal "las normas generales para regular el Servicio Público de la Educación que cumple una función social acorde con las necesidades e intereses de las personas" (Law 115). In addition to establishing the basic educational levels, Law 115 develops the standards for the rights of teachers, students, and educational institutions; it defines the "mandatory topics in school curricula, and goals for each of the education levels" (Johns Hopkins). Since 1994, Law 115 has been revised by a "number of national decrees" under the leadership of the Colombian Ministry of Education.

More specific to my research question, Law 115 is the first Colombian law that regulates language teaching in Colombian educational institutions (Mora et al 58). Throughout the law, the word "lengua" is mentioned 16 times in the context of language education, while the word "idioma" is found 3 times. First, the law outlines the necessities mandated by the government at each level of education. For example, Article 21, titled "Objetivos específicos de la educación básica en el ciclo de primaria." of Law 115 states that…

> "El desarrollo de las habilidades comunicativas básicas para leer, comprender, escribir, escuchar, hablar y expresarse correctamente en lengua castellana y también en la lengua materna, en el caso de los grupos étnicos con tradición lingüística propia, así como el fomento de la afición por la lectura" (Law 115).

Here, in the Colombian law, there is an immediate statement that outright acknowledges the need for language education in not only Spanish, but additionally in the native regionalized tongues of ethnic groups outside of the dominant culture. This clause verifies Colombia's current legal corroboration of the cultural diversity their country holds at the federal level as recognized

by the Ministry of Education. This statement, though seemingly small, creates the foundation necessary for codified practices that positively influence the cultural continuity of regional languages within the currently dominant culture.

Chapter 3, titled "Educación para grupos étnicos" outlines the federal regulations put in place to protect and promote local and indigenous languages, or languages internal to Colombia other than Spanish (Law 115). First, this section defines "etnoeducación," which essentially gives ethnic groups their own individual educational model as understood by the federal law. Ethno-education is defined as education for ethnic groups "que integran la nacionalidad y que poseen una cultura, una lengua, unas tradiciones y unos fueros propios y autóctonos" (Law 115). As understood in this specific definition, to qualify for an individualized program under ethno-education, the group must make up a nationality, have a culture, a language, traditions, and their own and indigenous jurisdiction. After the definition, the federal law guides readers through the ideal enforcement and result of this type of education, stating that it should be "linked to its environment, to a productive social and cultural process, and should hold respect for beliefs and traditions" (Law 115).

Then, Article 57, entitled "lengua materna" advocates for regional teachings based on the needs of indigenous communities that operate under their own linguistic system. These communities are granted a linguistic curriculum that should be bilingual between both the regional mother tongue and Spanish (Law 115). Under these guidelines, students will be afforded the opportunity to continue their individualized cultural fluency, while also learning the dominant language of most environments across the country.

From the General Education Law 115 of Colombia, the ethno-education program and its regulations are described generally, as sharing the principal goal to culturally include groups who

speak regional indigenous languages across Colombia. This program, specifically dedicated to ethnic groups seems like a strong, yet separate, way of honoring the cultural diversity of Colombia. In the next section, I will analyze more closely the program and how it operates on the ground within real Colombian communities.

Decreto 804 de 1995: Etnoeducación en Colombia

During the late 1990s and early 2000s as the recognition of ethnic groups in legal frameworks began to appear more commonly, “several” Latin American nations adopted federally codified programs for ethno-education (Flores). The concept is said to have been brought to Colombia in 1984 when a group charged with leading the ethno-education was created within the Ministry of Education (Araque). The ethno-education division under the Ministry of Education was created in 1991 (Araque). On May 18th of 1995, a decree titled “Por medio del cual se reglamenta la atención educativa para grupos étnicos” to strengthen articles 55 through 63 in Chapter 3 of “la Ley 115 de 1994” as previously discussed (“Legislación Sobre Etnoeducación”).

Throughout the decades that ethno-education has been in place in Colombia, the definition has changed many times. In Article 1 of “El decreto 804 de 1995,’ the Ministry of Education further “complemented Law 115, making it more complex” than the brief definition stated earlier (“Legislación Sobre Etnoeducación”). This new definition expressed that ethno-education is a "permanent social process of reflection and collective construction, by means of which indigenous peoples and ethnic groups strengthen their autonomy in the framework of interculturality, bringing about the internalization and production of values and knowledge and the development of skills and abilities according to their cultural reality, as expressed in their life projects” (Flores). This definition, when compared to the earlier more general one, emphasizes

three new concepts central to the program. First, it emphasizes that ethno-education is an ongoing, long-term process. Second, this definition sees ethno-education as an opportunity for political empowerment of regional groups to conserve their culture. Third, this definition establishes the desire for a collaborative approach towards regional models of learning, in which multiple actors participate, forming intercultural relationships (Flores).

Given this newly expanded definition, Article 2 of this decree states that the expanded objective of ethno-education, as stated by the Ministry of Education in Colombia, is more broadly to place "intercultural education" in all schools—both public and private— so that all kids and families understand that afro-colombian, indigenous, and gypsy cultures are part of the racial makeup that completes Colombia's nationality ("Legislación Sobre Etnoeducación"). Principally, ethno-education will advance interculturality, recognize and respect other diverse cultures, and develop cultural identity through multilingualism ("Etnoeducación una Política"). Specifically, point b references the goal of "diversidad lingüística," understood as the conception and construction of the world expressed via the regional languages that form the realistic Colombian nationality ("Legislación Sobre Etnoeducación"). This program meets each of these goals by "strengthening the autonomous decision-making capacity of a culturally differentiated society so it can lead its own development and exercise self-determination" (Flores).

Two of the key elements of ethno-education that are laid forth under both the expanded definitions and objectives, expressed in points c & d of Article 2 in Decree 805, are "autonomia" and "participacion comunitaria" ("Legislación Sobre Etnoeducación"). The Ministry of Education states that the collaborative approaches taken to design curriculum interculturally alongside regional groups, "los hacen protagonistas de su propio desarrollo" ("Normatividad Basica"). Together, governments and regional leadership create "planes de vida," a reflection

that is born out of the needs of each community as seen in their own territory and identity ("Normatividad Basica"). Through this system, Colombia has created a conscious federally codified system that links educational authorities with district, municipality, or traditional authorities of regional groups. Colombia's education department believes that the designing of "large scale projects" in a collective, synergistic manner places ethnic groups in a position of leadership, in charge of their own perception and prospective future ("Normatividad Basica").

Ethno-education, as ideal as it sounds for recognizing the linguistic diversity across Colombia, still comes with several challenges. First off, and a key challenging factor that I recognized early in my research, the geographical dispersion of the target population, necessitates a broad and geographically dispersed approach from the Ministry of Education ("Etnoeducación una Política"). This geographic spread of regional ethnic populations speaking regional languages puts pressure on the Ministry of Education to offer appropriate coverage for all groups, located centrally and remotely across Colombia, often resulting in poor correspondence of the educational service with the reality of the people and inadequate administrative management. Finally, many regional ethnic groups live on the outskirts of the less developed Colombia resulting in poor infrastructure, coverage, and funding ("Etnoeducación una Política").

Though ethno-education still faces many challenges in Colombia, it is important to note its creative approach to a collaborative educational system. By prioritizing partnership with community leadership, the program makes strides towards a diverse federal approach that diversifies linguistic curricula across the Country so that they better serve geographically, culturally, and linguistically divergent populations.

Conclusion

To conclude and compare, regional language education in both the Basque Country and Colombia is a vehicle by which non-mainstream culture is nurtured after histories of conflict. In both cases, though under distinct curriculums, federal governments, through education legislation, have initiated efforts to maintain the use of local languages in the locales where they are traditionally spoken. From my research, it is observed that in two regions across the globe federal education legislation emerges as a key factor in determining language practices in both societies with regards to educational autonomy and mandated standards. In Colombia and the Basque Country, two differing legislative strategies emerge as a means of rehabilitating regional culture. Each federally backed strategy carries separate tools useful to international regional language learning and its role in safeguarding cultural variety. These tools have the potential to go further than solely linguistic and cultural maintenance—efforts in both regions may eventually increase the awareness and knowledge of regional languages in the future.

In the Basque Country of Spain, the LOE designates that Euskera is a “co-official” language alongside Spanish. This legal framework is pertinent to understanding the educational emphasis placed on learning Euskera. Without the governmentally assigned definition that places Euskera alongside Spanish, instead of beneath it, the federally mandated standards would not carry the same weight of importance for Euskera education. With a “co-official” definition, Euskera meets the legal qualifications for societal seriousness and governmental requirements in the classroom. In the Basque Country, I also observe that both the LOE and LOMCE demonstrate the importance of federally mandated educational standards combined with regional autonomy for language education. Students are, as mandated by the LOE and LOMCE, required to have access to schools that teach their native language, so with the presence of both native speakers of Euskera and Spanish, a variety of linguistic education is offered. In the Basque

Country, schools are offered in a variety of linguistic preferences due to the regional choices that the Basque Country has made separate from Spain's federal government. The federal government lays forth its expectations in the law and the Basque Country has the freedom to meet those expectations as desired. The LOE and LOMCE simultaneously show the relevance of federal oversight and regional freedom, a seemingly powerful separation of powers working together to grow the interculturality of the Spanish and Basque Education systems.

In Colombia, regional languages are recognized by the federal government, but go without a defined status under the law. Though consistently referred to in Law 115, they are given the title "lengua materna" without any recognition as "official" under the Colombian educational code. This difference, most likely related to the geographic spread and variety of languages in Colombia, does not aid the cultural gravity assigned by Colombian society when considering the relevance of regional languages. The Colombian government does create a national program built for regional collaboration, Ethno-education, that works to preserve local languages alongside local communities. Colombia's approach to regional language education highlights the importance of partnership and individualized educational planning under a federally supervised program. Instead of separating powers, Colombia places federal actors on the same level as regional leaders to compromise and create a linguistic curriculum built to properly serve all students. Instead of giving regional groups with languages the full charge of responsibility for creating an education system, the Colombian government works alongside the community, using federal experience and knowledge to guide communities towards appropriately reaching the needs and desires of their students.

The shared lesson that seems most prevalent between both the Basque Country and Colombia is the need for regional voices during the process of regional language education

planning and enforcement. The Basque Country and Colombia facilitate this local voice under differing levels of autonomy, but both countries recognize the need for regional language speakers to be involved in the planning of their own regionally enforced curriculums. This lesson is pertinent to growing cultural recognition internationally. The main actors in preserving culture are the members of that culture themselves as they can most accurately define and describe the practices, problems, needs, wants, and importance of their culture. Colombia and the Basque Country also both legally prioritize outlining ethnic languages in federal law. Again, each country outlines them differently, but at the foundation, each country's federal law recognizes regional linguistic differences to draw awareness on a national scale.

Looking at both the Colombian and Basque approaches alongside each other, there are strengths and weaknesses that can be pulled from both places. I observe that Spain grants stronger autonomy to the Basque Country which allows for better customized language education without the need to meet with any other organized bodies outside of the Basque Country. Under this framework, there is less hierarchical dissension and delay to set back regionalized education goals under federal regulations or challenges. Because of the regional autonomy, there are many school options customized to fit the actual linguistic needs of the Basque population based on the current linguistic landscape. Spain also gives a stronger legal definition to Euskera, naming it "cooficial." This title is much stronger than the lack of title given to any regional language in Colombia and raises the question of what title should be given to regional languages in Colombia.

Even amidst the strength of Basque language programming, Colombia is not the weaker system in my researched comparison. It is important to recognize that circumstantially, Colombia is making a strong choice to oversee regional educational programming given the country's

challenges. Regional languages are often spoken in remote and lesser developed parts of Colombia that necessitate federal oversight and aid given the lack of resources in said communities. These regional communities also may not hold the institutional knowledge of larger cities in Colombia like the Basque Country does in Spain. The federal guidance, though it increases hierarchical challenges and delays, is an essential component to ensuring that regionally dispersed culturally diverse populations have the fundamental backing needed to properly run an inclusive, effective educational system that teaches regional languages.

These two cases appropriately demonstrate the international differences in growing regional language education. In different countries, there are different legal frameworks to support different linguistic landscapes. No matter which two regions of the world we study, differences will arise as no uniform system is built to fit the assorted global profiles that speak regional languages. However, these two cases converge on the importance of cultural rehabilitation post-conflict through regional language education within said language's home region. For cultural groups who suffered oppression under past regimes or national conflict, such as the Basques or indigenous groups in Colombia, facilitating language education as a federal priority is key to restoring one essential element of culture. LOMCE and ethno-education, the two most up-to-date federal laws with respect to regional language education in my two cases, are both fundamental in restoring and maintaining multicultural harmony in Colombia and the Basque Country. Regional language education is a peaceful and effective strategy that recognizes cultural importance and variety in once conflicted areas.

To further research this topic, I would be interested to evaluate student and teacher first person opinion from within and Basque and Colombian schools who teach regional native languages. To have the insider experience and opinion of the actors and participants who have

personally experienced the implications of this federal legislation analyzed side-by-side would enhance my study by offering powerful glimpses into the realities of each system. Further research could also be completed on the relationship between increased peace and cultural growth via regional language instruction. As I bring my research to a close, I still wonder… Is a potential implication of these policies that if regional languages are supported, centered, and valued in education, could future conflict be reduced as a direct result? I am very intrigued at the possibility of a causal relationship between these two factors which would most definitely enhance the field of research.

In closing, my qualitative analysis on the role of federal education legislation in Colombia and the Basque country reifies the facilitative role of regional language instruction in cultural recognition for post-conflict societies. Both regions, though located thousands of miles away, are home to regional groups whose local languages were subject to cultural, political, societal discrimination. Now, in a post-conflict state, each region has implemented educational strategies, via federal law, that strengthen multiculturalism by teaching native languages in the classrooms of said regions. Though tackling this task in a variety of forms, the analysis of Basque and Colombian strategies creates a thoughtful comparison and contrast between effective procedures and programs to rehabilitate regional culture by teaching local languages in now peaceful and modernizing societies. Both Spain and Colombia, though with differing levels of autonomy, hierarchy, and programming, federally implement educational methods that can broaden international approaches and contribute to fostering a strengthened global effort to safeguard regional languages.

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