



English language teaching in secondary education and the use of English outside school

A comparison of the Basque Country and Friesland

RESEARCH REPORT

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Acknowledgements

Since 2007, the Mercator European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning of the Frisian Academy and the University of the Basque Country have been working together on a comparative research project on *The added value of multilingualism and multilingual education*. This research is carried out in two different European regions where a regional language is spoken: Friesland in the Netherlands and the Basque Country in Spain. In this project, the Mercator Research Centre cooperates with the University of the Basque Country with the aim of analysing bilingualism and multilingualism for the individual and society, and analysing bilingualism and multilingualism as resources in school. Part of the analysis involves a comparison of the ways in which languages and multilingualism are dealt with in both regions.

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1 Introduction

This comparative report is part of the comparative research project entitled: “The added value of multilingualism and multilingual education”. Six reports have been published so far as part of this project: *Languages and Language Education in Friesland. The role and position of Frisian in the province of Friesland and in Frisian Education* (Douwes, Hanenburg & Lotti, 2010), *Frisian and Basque Multilingual Education: A Comparison of the Province of Friesland and the Basque Autonomous Community* (Arocena, Douwes & Hanenburg, 2010), *Trilingual Primary Education in Europe; some developments with regard to the provisions of trilingual primary education in minority language communities of the European Union* (Björklund, et al. 2011), *Multilingualism in Secondary Education: A Case Study of the Province of Friesland and the Basque Autonomous Community* (de Vries and Arocena, 2012) and *The Multilingual Classroom in Primary Education in the Basque Country and Friesland: beliefs of teachers and their language practices* (Arocena and Gorter, 2013). A seventh report is to be published in 2014, which is an analysis of Basque and Frisian secondary school students’ language proficiency in writing, entitled *Written language competence in three languages in the school context: A Comparison of the Province of Friesland and the Basque Country* (Popma & Arocena).

Through these reports, much has been learned already about the similarities and differences between the two contexts; in terms of minority languages, Basque has a relatively strong position at school but is weaker in society, with the Frisian case being almost the opposite. Frisian has a weak position at school and a relatively strong position in society (at least as a spoken language). In both regions the majority language has a strong presence inside and outside education.

This current report comes as a continuation to the previous reports and findings, and it focuses solely on English; English inside and outside school, with a particular focus on the didactics of English language teaching in secondary education and on the exposure to, and use of, the English that students in those grades experience outside of the school environment.

Chapter 2 includes a general background on the theory behind the principles of the didactics of second language teaching and also on the exposure to and use of English outside school. It also presents the method used to collect and analyse the data and the research questions on which this study is based. Chapter 3 consists of a description of the schools and students who participated in this current research and from whom data was collected.

Chapter 4 presents the results and findings of the analysis conducted with the data collected on English language teaching didactics and the use of English that teenage students experience in the Basque Country and in Friesland.

Chapter 5 consists of the conclusion and suggestions for further research and finally, Chapter 6 is a list of reference of the literature used for this study.

2 Theoretical considerations and methodology

In this chapter we describe the theory and previous studies done on the didactics of foreign languages (2.1) and on the use of English outside school (2.2). We also present and describe the methodology and instruments used for collecting data for this study (2.3). And in the last part of this section, we present a summary and the research questions (2.4).

2.1 Foreign language didactics

Everyone remembers his or her own education in a foreign language, in which there was usually a heavy focus on grammar, syntax and spelling. Chomsky (1965) claims that language competence is exclusively associated with rules of grammar. The grammar-translation method was replaced by the audio-lingual method, and the underlying assumption was that foreign language learning was basically a mechanical process of habit information and automatization (Rivers, 1964). This meant that students were presented with language patterns and dialogues which they had to mimic and memorize. The belief in this method was so strong that traces of audio-lingual materials can still be found in today's methods. But at the time, the audio-lingual method did not create speakers who were able to communicate in the target language. A broader notion of competence, that of communicative competence is also proposed and is intended to include not only grammatical competence (using the grammatical rules), but also a contextual or sociolinguistic competence (using the rules of language use). In other words: knowing a language includes much more than the knowledge of rules of grammar. This claim had an enormous impact on the field of second language teaching and learning. This division in language teaching is called formal vs. functional, by many educationalists, but there is also a lot of confusion (cf. Stern 1978 for discussion). Practically everyone agreed that previous approaches to second language teaching which focus on presentation and practice of grammar in an isolated way had not been very successful. A didactic approach which emphasizes the opportunity for the learners to express ideas and to communicate and to interact spontaneously and naturally would lead to more successful learning. This communicative language teaching reached a peak in the early 1980s, in North America and Great Britain. Canale and Swain (1980) make a general distinction between grammar-based and communication-based approach to second language teaching. Grammar-based, or the grammatical approach is organized on the basis of linguistic, or grammatical, form (phonological and morphological forms, syntactic patterns and lexical items) and emphasizes the way in which these forms may be combined to create grammatical sense. A communicative approach is organized on the basis of communicative functions (for example apologizing, describing, inviting, promising) that a learner needs to know and emphasizes the ways in which particular grammatical forms may be used to express these functions appropriately. There is a third approach made earlier by Morrow (1977) called the situational approach. But this approach can be either grammatical or communicative, so we assume, like Canale and Swain, two approaches. Although the communicative approach is approved, learning a foreign language also requires knowledge of formal aspects like grammar and syntax. So both approaches are important in language teaching. For example, Allen (1983) made a distinction between meaning-based, form-based and form- and

meaning-based instructions, suggesting that both approaches ('form' and 'meaning') are important in education.

In the last few decades, numerous methods have come and gone. What has emerged from this time is a variety of communicative language teaching methodologies, in which (from some to all of) the principles of CLT can be recognized: Communicative Language Teaching. The principles are: Use tasks as an organisational principle; Promote learning by doing; Input needs to be rich (materials need to be authentic and to reflect real-life situations and demands), meaningful, comprehensible and elaborated; Promote cooperative and collaborative learning; Focus on form; Provide error corrective feedback; Recognize and respect affective factors of learning (Brandl, 2007). The use of tasks has become known as Task-Based Instruction (TBI). A well-known definition of a task is offered by Nunan (1989): "Any classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing, or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form."

This part of the research focuses on the didactics. Looking at the final exam standards of a foreign language, pupils have to show reading skills, viewing skills, listening skills, conversation skills (conversing and speaking), writing skills (linguistic skills and strategic skills) and knowledge of the literature. These are the statutory objectives of secondary education in the Netherlands (Ministerie van OC&W, 2007).

A general trend in foreign language teaching in the Netherlands is the increase of working independently and cooperative learning (Kwakernaat, 2010). Cooperative learning is a teaching strategy in which small teams, each with students of different levels of ability, use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a subject. Each member of a team is responsible not only for learning what is taught but also for helping teammates learn, thus creating an atmosphere of achievement. Students work through the assignment until all group members successfully understand and complete it.

However, comparative European research has shown that the use of English as the target language and as the medium of instruction in The Netherlands was most used during traditional situations, lesser during independent study activities and the least during group work (Bonnet, 2002). A decrease of classical time is disadvantageous for speaking in the target language. With using the English language as medium of instruction, cooperative learning can be a successful didactic principle in foreign language teaching. Cooperative learning fits also the Common European Framework of Reference. In Spain the CEFR is called '*Marco Común Europeo de Referencia para las Lenguas*', and is abbreviated to MCER or '*el Marco*'. The exams are not yet linked to the European Framework of Reference.

Knowing this, we have to find a way to compare the state of affairs inside the classrooms in the Basque Country and Friesland. We have to select an observation scheme which is meaningful and useful in both regions, and that will cover the didactic principles in both regions. We are interested in an observation scheme that provides a combination of form and meaning. In the next section we will explain the use of the method.

2.2 English outside school

Nowadays, English is the first foreign language taught at school in both the Basque Country and in Friesland. In Friesland most pupils start to learn English by age of ten, whereas “most schools in the Basque Autonomous Community start teaching English (...) at the age of four” (Cenoz, 2009: 119). During these years, English language teachers have little influence on what happens outside the school. Yet, for developing productive skills – like the written proficiency tested by Popma & Arocena (2013) – it seems to be important that pupils do not merely use a language inside school. Thomas & Roberts (2011: 91) state that it is in the child’s *social use of a language* that multilingualism becomes a reality.

Research done in the Basque Country shows that English is hardly used in everyday life in the Basque Country (Cenoz, 2009: 114). Cenoz (2009: 115) writes: “(...) there are very few opportunities to use English outside the classroom. Spanish and Basque television use dubbing and not original versions with subtitles and (...) in most cases the only exposure to English is at school.” She also speaks about the lack of proficiency of the English teachers because of the lack of exposure: “Proficiency in English among primary and secondary teachers in the Basque Community is not high, because English is not used in everyday life (...)” (Cenoz, 2005: 48).

Many parents send their children to private classes of English (English Academies), because they want their children to learn more English. According to Cenoz (2009: 116), the situation will change in new generations. Because of internet and computer games, people will be more exposed to English.

In Friesland the situation is different somehow to the Basque Country because English television programmes or movies contain the originally spoken language with Dutch subtitles. In this way, English penetrates the daily life of Frisian pupils more than is the case with their Basque counterparts.

In 2002 already, the TV and the internet were stated to be important sources of contact with English. For a report by the European Network of Policy Makers for the Evaluation of Education Systems the outside school exposure to English was studied in several countries. This report states that among Dutch pupils between the ages of 12 and 15 (N = 1515) “an average of 205 minutes was spent daily on TV/video/radio. Also on internet (...) English holds a strong position.” Regarding the exposure to English on TV, the same report says that “On average, Dutch TV consumers will get at least one hour of English every day.” Furthermore, the report adds that “English is remarkably present in various forms of advertising in the Netherlands” (European Network of Policy Makers for the Evaluation of Education Systems, 2002: 47).

In the above-mentioned report, four major categories of contact with English are given: contact through (1) spoken language, (2) written language, (3) interaction with peers and family members, and (4) computer use. It is not completely clear what category contact through music and television comes under, but the report affirms that “music, radio, TV and computers/internet are the most important types of contact. English is the language of music for this group and the number of hours spent listening to music is considerable, even

more than 4 hours a day for some groups.”¹ About the television the report states that “English spoken programmes are common. This is not surprising given the dominance of English spoken programs on Dutch channels and the popularity of music channels for this group”. More surprising still is that more than 30% indicate “having watched BBC programs that are typically not subtitled” (European Network of Policy Makers for the Evaluation of Education Systems, 2002: 140-141).

2.3 Methodology

This section details the method used to collect the necessary data to describe what happens inside the classroom and the exposure to and use of English the students in the Basque Country and in Friesland experience outside the school. First of all, the instrument used to collect the data is defined and then, the manner in which data was collected in both regions. Afterwards, the process of analysing the data is recounted.

2.3.1 Lesson observation instrument

A lesson consists of innumerable interactions; first there is the interaction between teacher and class (whole group), teacher and pupil, pupil and pupil, and pupil and material. Then the work forms: individual, in groups, pairs, speaking, listening, writing, reading, combined or not, type of material, working independently, or controlled by the teacher, explaining, correction of tasks, working on tasks, and so on. Therefore, and in order to build up a rich and meaningful set of data, an extended scheme that allows a close look at what happens inside the classroom is essential. COLT (Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching) observation scheme (Spada and Fröhlich, 1995) serves that purpose. One of the assumptions to design the COLT-scheme was that instruction which provides a combination of form and meaning to be a predictor of better learning, although, at the time, the acceptance of exclusively meaning-based teaching was very strong. Nowadays, the role of form-focused teaching has changed. It is one of the aspects of CLT (Communication Language Teaching). COLT consists of two parts: Part A gives a description of what happens inside the classroom and Part B focuses on the interaction. We have used Part A to collect our data in the Basque Country and Friesland. This part consists of seven main features²:

1 Time

Time is the length in minutes of the instructional period and its components.

2 Activities and episodes

Activities are separate units that constitute the instructional segment of the classroom. An activity consists of episodes or is divided into episodes. In this study, we identified nine types of episodes and labelled them as follows:

- Management
- Introduction to task
- Work on task
- Check task

¹ The study was conducted eleven years ago, so we may assume that the time spent on the internet has increased in the meantime.

² For further detail see Appendix I.

- Review task
- Instruction/explanation
- Homework assignment
- Closure
- Interruption by another teacher/student

3 Participant organisation

This refers to the way in which students are organized: Class (a central activity led by the teacher, one central activity led by a student, or choral works by students), Group (doing the same task or different tasks) and Individual (students work on their own on the same task, or on different tasks).

4 Content

This refers to the subject of activities what the teacher and students are talking/reading/writing about or listen to. Content consists of three different categories; management, language, and form. Each category is further analysed as:

- Management:
 - Procedure (procedural directives)
 - Discipline (discipline statements)
- Language:
 - Form
 - Function
 - Discourse
 - Sociolinguistics
- Form: (Other topics)
 - Narrow (topics referring to the classroom and the student's immediate environment and experiences)
 - Broad (topics going well beyond the classroom)

5 Content control

This refers to who selects the topic or task that is the focus of instruction: Teacher and/or text determines the topic, Teacher and students jointly decide the topic, or the student(s) has decided on the topic.

6 Student modality

The focus is on the students and indicates which skill(s) occur (in combination): Listening, Reading, Writing, Speaking, Other (drawing, acting etc.)

7 Materials

This feature describes the used materials. In terms of type: Minimal (written text: captions, isolated sentences, word lists etc.), Extended (written text: stories, dialogues, connected sentences, paragraphs etc.), Audio (recorded material for listening) or Visual (Pictures, cartoons etc.). In terms of source: Not Native Speaker (material especially designed for second language teaching), Native Speaker (originally intended for native speakers), Native Speaker Adapted (native speaker materials which have been adapted for second language teaching purposes) or Student made.

Once the instrument for the analysis of the characteristics of the didactics of English language teaching was selected, two teams of researchers, one in the Basque Country and the other in Friesland, proceeded to select the participating schools and groups. For comparison matters, same-age students were selected in both regions. The teams of researchers observed and took notes for a period of a whole week in each of the schools and they observed and collected data from English language lessons and lessons of content subjects taught through the medium of English. Two researchers in the Basque Country were involved in observing, taking notes and filling in the COLT scheme in two Basque schools, and two other researchers in Friesland proceeded to do the same in their region.

The data collected was then labelled and entered into the SPSS programme for a quantitative analysis of the didactics and materials used in those English lessons observed.

2.3.2 English outside school diary

Collecting data for the analysis of English outside school is not an easy task, taking into consideration that it is not a process the researcher can do directly. We decided that the most appropriate method was to use a diary.

The purpose of the diary was to record whether the pupils were exposed to English or used English, and to what extent, during the course of a whole week. We gave each student a handout in the form of a check-list. This form was divided into seven days (Monday to Sunday) and each day had a list of activities grouped by skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing. To help students fill in the diary, we included different activities such as listening to music, watching TV, and speaking face-to face - to mention some - and there was also the choice "other" included. The students therefore marked with a check (✓) if they used English in any of those media. The students were also encouraged to add information on whom they used English with, and where they used English. We also asked them to tell us how long they had spent on any of the activities. Therefore, they had to jot down the length of time spent on watching television in English or the time spent on speaking in English with a friend, for example.

When analysing the collected data, a check mark means that the students have used English or were exposed to English in that manner. In some cases, students are exposed to English or use English through an activity more than once per day. For example, they can listen to English through TV and radio on the same day. Therefore, when we present the amount of times they listen to English in a week it does not mean how many *days* per week they listen to English but rather how many *times* per week they do so.

The language diary was filled in at home over an entire week period, and then collected by the researchers the following week. Appendix II shows the diary scheme that was used to collect this data.

2.4 Research questions

In 2005 Cenoz wrote: "Traditionally students in the Basque Autonomous Community have achieved relatively low levels of proficiency in English at school" (Cenoz, 2005: 46).

Popma & Arocena (to be published) have studied the written proficiency level of Basque and Frisian secondary school pupils in English. Their conclusion is that the Frisian pupils outperform their Basque peers in writing in English. This is despite the fact that since 1991 Basque pupils began learning English at the age of four while Frisian pupils started at the age of ten (Educational Inspectorate, 2006: 110).

It is a fact that Frisian and Dutch (Germanic languages) are linguistically closer to English than Basque (an isolated language) or Spanish (a Romance language), but there are more factors that can be of influence, such as the attitude towards English, the motivation to learn English, the outside school exposure to English, the English lesson materials, the didactics, et cetera. For this study we have selected the last two factors: the English lesson materials and the didactics, and the outside school exposure to, and use of, English.

As mentioned before, until 1980, the practice of grammar provided the main content of the lessons. Nowadays, communicative strategies are seen as more important. We expect to recognize this strategy in the data we have collected in both regions. We will try to narrow down the characteristics by identifying the small units which form a lesson. We want to observe the characteristics of the manner in which lessons are structured, of the focus on the four language skills, of the activities of the pupils (listening, writing, talking, group wise, individual, et cetera), of the origin of the materials, of the subject of the assignments, and so on. The COLT-scheme (Part A) assists in observing the lessons and determining the units. Due to the trends in foreign language teaching, we expect this to be reflected in the materials used. We expect to see the use of English as language of instruction and we expect to find more emphasis on communication skills than grammar in both regions. The use of English as medium of instruction is seen as valuable and necessary, therefore we will analyse the use of the languages in the materials also. This study is explorative: we have no strong indications about the nature of the differences between the two regions.

The research questions are thus formulated as following:

- “What are the characteristics of the didactics of English language teaching and of the materials used?”
- “What is the amount of use and exposure to English that secondary-school students experience outside school, and in what manner do they obtain that exposure and use?”

The next chapter is a description of the schools and students that participated in this research study.

3 Participating schools and students

The data were collected from two schools in the Basque Country: *Udarregi Ikastola* and *Orioko Herri Ikastola* and from three schools in Friesland: *CSG Gaasterland*, *Zuyderzee College* and *OSG Sevenwolden*. A total of seven teachers took part in the study: three in the Basque Country and four in Friesland. We observed 43 lessons where English was taught as a subject, or where Social Sciences were taught through the medium of English. The 43 lessons comprised a total of 37 hours: 21 lessons in Friesland (17 hours and 12 minutes) and 22 lessons in the Basque Country (20 hours and 10 minutes).

All classes observed were in secondary education and the grades varied between 8, 9 and 10: DBH-2, DBH-3 and DBH-4 in the Basque Country and comparable to those vmbo-t-2/havo-2/vwo-2, vmbo-t-3/havo-3/ vwo-3 and havo-4 in Friesland. A footnote is that because we left out the graduating classes, the comparison of DBH-4 with level-4 grades in Friesland is not entirely balanced.

3.1 The schools

We will first briefly give the main characteristics of the two schools in the Basque Country and thereafter of the three schools in Friesland.

Udarregi Ikastola is a school located in the town of Usurbil, in the province of Gipuzkoa, in the Basque Country. It is a member of the network of *Ikastolas* (*Ikastolen Elkarte*, the Federation of Basque Schools) which are schools that promote the use of Basque in all spheres of life. The instruction in all subjects, except the language subjects Spanish and English, is done through the medium of Basque, and the school only offers the linguistic model D³.

In this study we observed the 2nd and 3rd grades of secondary education, where all students were between 13 and 15 years old. The English language lessons observed were taught by one teacher. This teacher had an extensive teaching experience and used a quite traditional teaching style in which she led the lesson from the front of the classroom. The teacher used the textbook *Subject Projects* published by the *Ikastolen Elkarte* and she sometimes used additional photocopies or worksheets from other instructional books. The teacher only uses English for the instruction of the language and expects and encourages the students to also use English during the lesson time. From time to time some Basque can be heard, but its presence is minimal, used mainly by the teacher to clarify the meaning of a word, to communicate with an individual student or about an extraneous topic. The lessons in this school last for 55 minutes each.

Orioko Herri Ikastola is located in the town of Orio, also in the province of Gipuzkoa. It is also a member of the network of *Ikastolas* and thus promotes the use of the

³ There are three linguistic models in which instruction is done in the Basque Country: Model A (instruction in Spanish), Model B (instruction in Spanish and Basque), and Model D (instruction in Basque).

Basque language and all subjects, except Spanish and English, are taught through the medium of Basque. A characteristic of this school is that there is no bell or any other device to announce the beginning and end of the lessons. We observed the 2nd, 3rd and 4th grades 8, 9 and 10 (years 2, 3 and 4 of obligatory secondary education) and the students were between the ages of 13 and 16 years. The lessons observed were English language as a subject and Social Sciences in English.

The lessons were given by two teachers. The first teacher taught English as a subject in the 2nd grade and the other English and Social Science in the 3rd and 4th grades. The number of years of teaching experience was different. The first teacher was a relative novice teacher with only a year and a half's experience, and the second teacher had an extensive teaching experience of more than 15 years. The novice teacher was doing a long-term substitution. Both teachers use a fairly traditional teaching style in which they lead the lesson from the front of the classroom. The two teachers also use the instructional material published by the *Ikastolen Elkarte* as the basic texts and they also use additional material when needed, mainly for grammar practice. The language of instruction both teachers use is English, with very few exceptions, such as when a clarification is needed. The lessons at this school are also 55 minutes long.

CSG Gaasterland is located in the Frisian town of Balk, in the south-western part of the province, and it is a school based on the Protestant faith.

There was one teacher whose lessons were observed at this school. We observed the 8th and 9th grades and the pupils were between 13 and 15 years old. These students were distributed into three different levels according to their ability (from high to low). The lessons observed were English language and they were taught by only one teacher. This teacher followed the *Stepping Stones* method. The teacher used Dutch during the English instruction. The teachers in this school use mainly Dutch as the instruction language, sometimes Frisian but never English. In this school each lesson is scheduled for 70 minutes.

Zuyderzee College is located in Lemmer, a town in the very south of Friesland. This school is at the forefront of modern teaching approaches in the Netherlands. The teachers do not use any textbooks, but rather Moodle, an Electronic Learning Environment (ELO), and they design their own teaching materials. The English teacher does the same and every pupil receives a laptop from school that they use in the classroom.

We observed grades 2 and 3 (from three different levels, from high to low) where students were between 13 and 15 years old. The lessons observed were English language as a subject and although the teacher uses Dutch as the basic language of instruction he tries to use as much English as possible in the higher-level class (3-havo-vwo).

In this school, each lesson is scheduled for 45 minutes but we also observed one 'double lesson' of 90 minutes.

OSG Sevenwolden is located in the town of Heerenveen, in the south-eastern part of the province. The teaching style of this school is traditional, where the teacher leads the

lesson from the front of the classroom. A characteristic of this school is that there is no bell to announce the beginning and end of each instructional period.

The observed group is Grade 4 (havo) and the students are between 15 and 16 years old. We observed the instruction of English as a subject, where the teacher follows the method *Stepping Stones*. The English teacher uses English as the language of instruction but sometimes uses Dutch to explain vocabulary or grammar.

The lessons in this school are scheduled for 45 minutes but we also observed one 'double lesson' of 90 minutes, which the teacher marked as two separate lessons.

3.2 The students

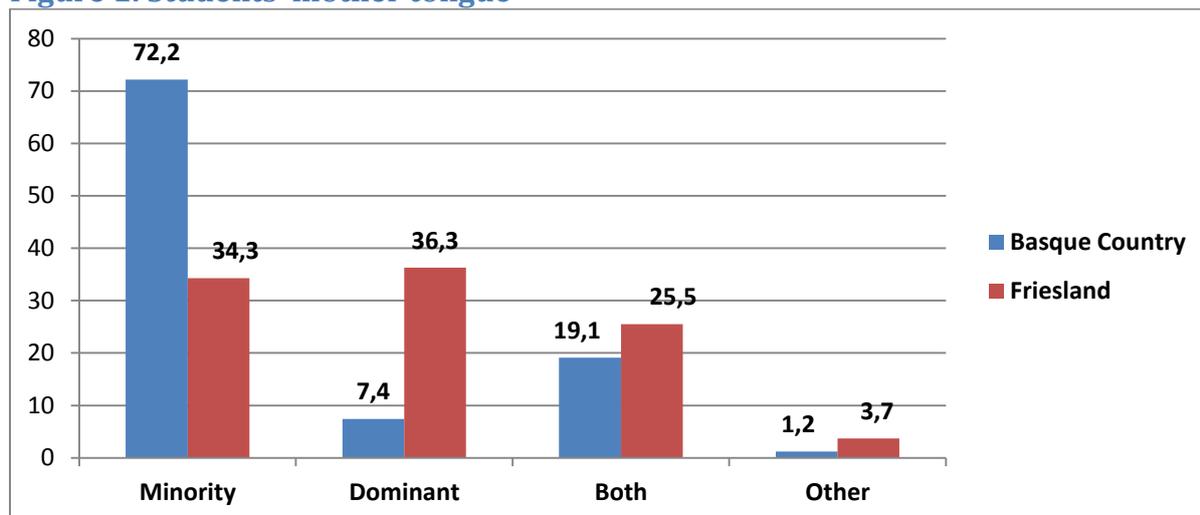
In this section we briefly describe some of the main characteristics of the students. We already remarked that they are in grades 2, 3 and 4 of secondary and thus between 13 and 16 years old. The average age was 14.2 years for the Basque students and 14.3 for the Frisian students, as we deduced from the background data included in the language diary part of the study.

We only collected data from the students who attended the English classes. However, the number of students whose language diaries were analysed is lower than the number of students in those classes. This is because some students only partially filled in or did not return the English language diary. In the analysis, only fully completed language diaries were included, a total of 290 diaries: 113 from Basque students and 177 from Frisian students.

The gender division is balanced in both regions too: in Friesland the participants are 50% male and 50% female and similarly, in the Basque Country they are 54% male and 46% female.

The mother tongue of the students is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Students' mother tongue



As can be seen in the figure, the mother tongue of the students varies: while in Friesland the number of students whose mother tongue is Frisian and the number of students whose mother tongue is Dutch is quite balanced, in the Basque Country there are more students whose mother tongue is Basque than whose mother tongue is Spanish. This is probably because the schools are located in predominantly Basque speaking areas.

We also asked these students to state the languages they used most in four different situations: at school, while going out, while practising sports, and at home. We ranked the results and those rankings are presented in table 1.

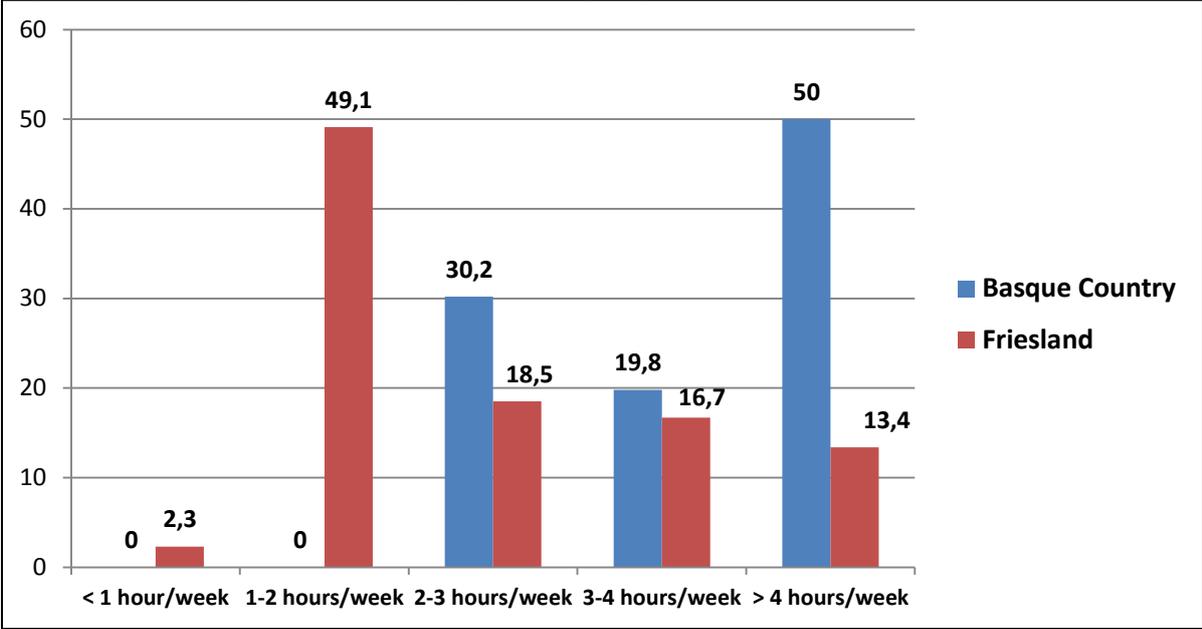
TABLE 1: Rank of languages used

Language Use		
	Friesland	Basque Country
At school	DL>ML>EL	ML>DL>EL
While going out	DL>ML>EL	ML>DL>EL
While practising sport	DL>ML>EL	ML>DL>X
At home	ML>DL>EL	ML>DL>X

According to their responses, as can be observed in the table, the Frisian students use mainly Dutch, for them the dominant language (DL), in most of the four situations, except at home where they use mainly Frisian, the minority language (ML), and they report a limited use English (EL) in all situations. The Basque students, on the contrary, use Basque, the minority language as main language in all four situations, followed by Spanish, and do not use English either at home or while doing sport-related activities.

We were also interested to learn from the students themselves as to how many hours of English language instruction they received. The results are presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Hours per week of English language lessons



Half of the Frisian students receive between one and two hours of English instruction per week, the other half receives more than 2 hours per week, equally distributed over the categories 2-3, 3-4 and more than 4 hours per week. In the Basque Country, in contrast, half of the students have more than four hours of English instruction per week and the minimum is at least 2-3 hours per week, as can be seen in Figure 2.

4 Results

In this chapter we will discuss the results of the analyses. We will distribute them into three separate parts. First, we discuss the features related to instruction in the subsection **Characteristics of the didactics** (4.1) and next the features of the instructional material that is used will be presented in the subsection **Characteristics of the materials used** (4.2), in the final section (4.3) **English use outside the school** will be discussed.

4.1 Characteristics of the didactics

In this section we discuss the results of the instructional features of teaching English we found for each separate region, first the Basque Country and then the province of Friesland. A short comparison will be presented in chapter 5 **Summary and conclusion**.

The seven features of the COLT-scheme that we will discuss are the following:

1) Activities and episodes, 2) Time, 3) Participant organization, 4) Content 5) Content control, 6) Student modality and 7) Materials.

Taken together these features comprise the main general characteristics of the didactic approach used in the classrooms we observed. The more specific aspects related to the teaching of English are not included, but as a whole they represent a good idea of what goes on during the English lessons.

4.1.1 English lessons in the Basque Country

We observed 22 lessons in the Basque Country, and because each lesson is scheduled for 55 minutes, the total observed amounted to 1,210 minutes. However, it turned out there that we only recorded 1,073 minutes of 'instruction time'. That means that about 6 minutes of each lesson was lost for different reasons - for example when the students were not ready to begin or the teacher arrived late from the previous lesson (because in the Basque Country each group has its own classroom and teachers go from classroom to classroom).

To describe general aspects of instruction in English we use the seven features of the COLT scheme (see section 2.3 for the details). We will present the results of the analysis following the COLT scheme, step by step to describe the characteristics of the didactics of English. We begin with the feature '**activities and episodes**'. This feature is used in the COLT scheme to describe a range of different aspects of instruction. An activity can include one or more episodes, where 'episodes' are a smaller unit than activities. An example of an activity could be a writing task, and its episodes can comprise the introduction to the writing task, the discussion of the topic aloud, organization of the writing, the writing itself, and the reading aloud of the written production.

Next we will present an overview of the number of activities per lesson that we observed in the Basque Country. During the observation of 22 English lessons a total of 87 different activities were identified - about four activities per lesson on average. These activities consisted of 201 episodes, hence 2.3 episodes per activity (or 9.1 per lesson). In

Figure 3 below we look at it from the perspective of the activity, where the number of activities per lesson is indicated.

Figure 3: Distribution of activities per lesson

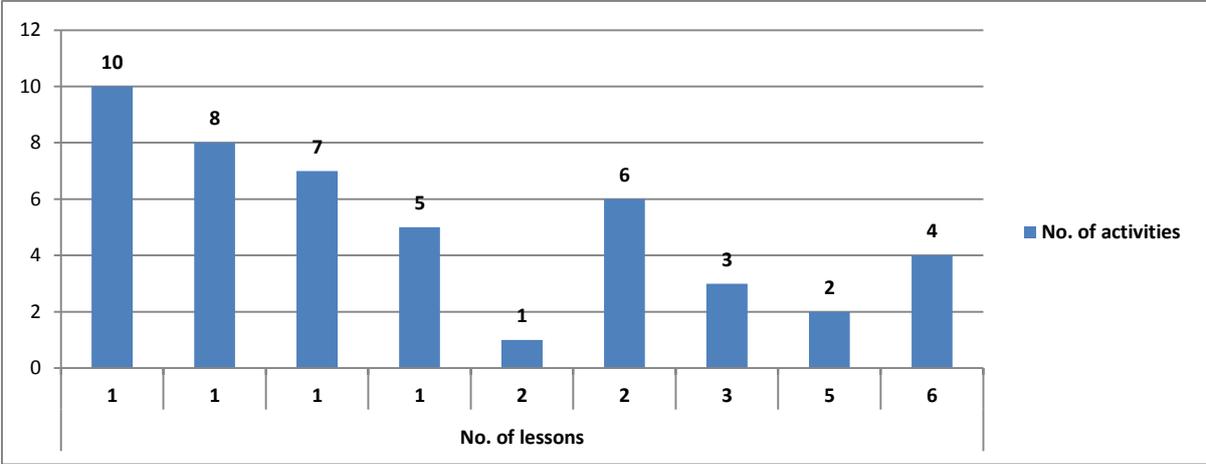


Figure 3 shows that there is only 1 lesson with 10 activities which is the lesson with the most number of different activities and on the other side, there are 2 lessons with only one activity each. We can also see that there are only 4 lessons out of the 22 observed that include 5, 7, 8 or 10 activities. The rest of the lessons, with the exception of two that include 6 activities each, include 4 or fewer activities. Thus, on average, an English lesson in the Basque Country consists of 3.9 activities.

In the following figure we show the number of episodes those activities consist of. As said, episodes are smaller units of the activities.

Figure 4: Distribution of episodes per activities

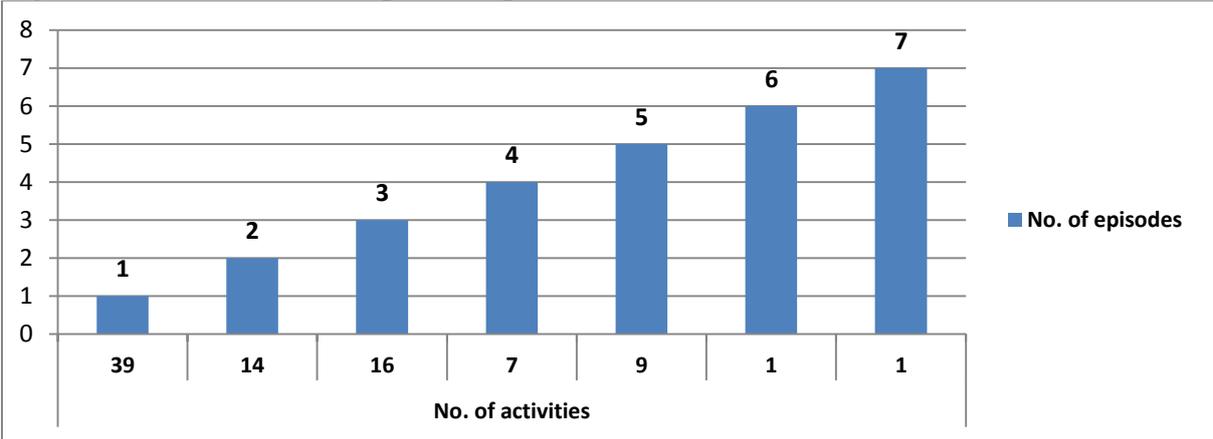
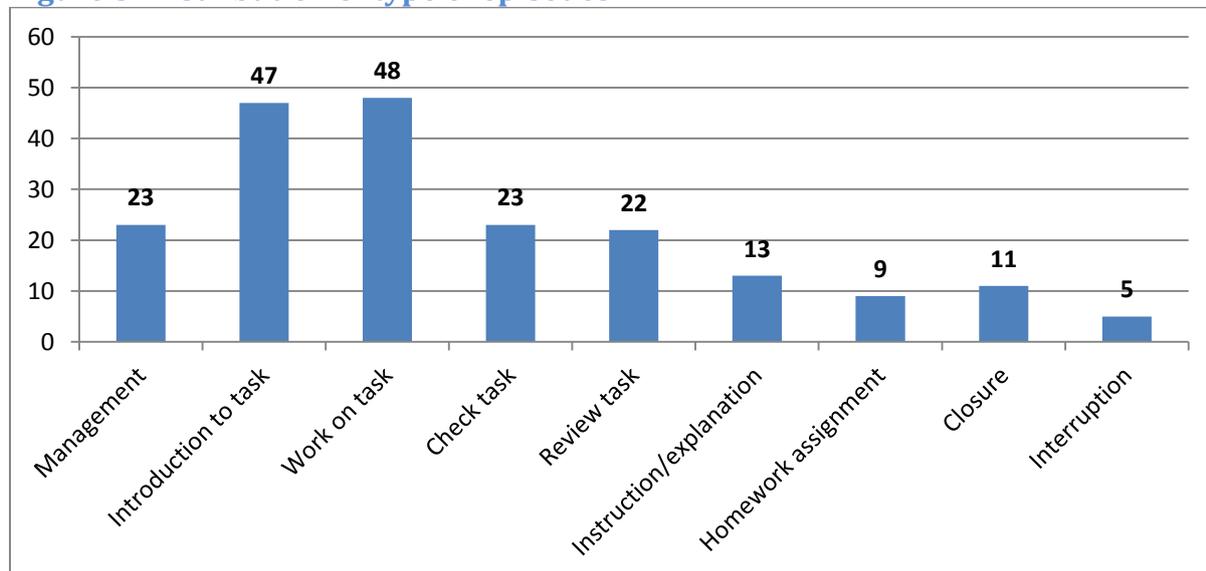


Figure 4 shows that there are 39 activities of 1 episode each and on the other side there are 2 activities of 7 and 6 episodes each. There are 14 activities of 2 episodes and 16 of 3 episodes. And there are 7 activities of 4 episodes and 9 of 5 episodes. Thus on average, an activity consists of 2.3 episodes.

The episodes are of different types. We were able to identify nine types of episodes (see section 2.3). In figure 5 the distribution of the types of episodes is given (in absolute numbers).

Figure 5: Distribution of type of episodes



The figure shows that the two most frequent types of episodes are *Introduction to task* (47 occasions), and *Work on task* (48 occasions). These two types of episodes are carried out during almost half of the activities.

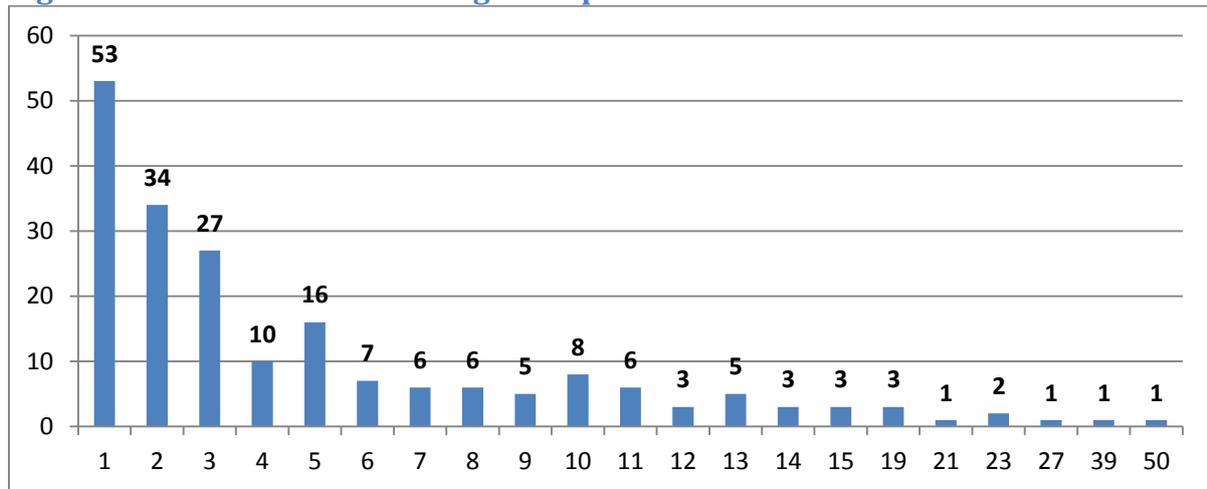
There are three episode types that have a frequency of 22 or 23 occasions: *Management*, *Check task*, and *Review task*, which means that those occur in about one quarter of the activities, or about once each lesson.

Less frequently we observed the type of episodes *Instruction or explanation of a linguistic aspect* (13 occasions), *Homework assignment* (9 occasions), and *Closure* (11 occasions) which refers to an explicit wrapping-up of the lesson. It means that specific attention to linguistic aspects occurs only in about half of the English lessons we observed. It also implies that homework is not always given and that lessons are not always clearly resolved (but came more abruptly to an end).

The least observed type of episode is *Interruption by another teacher or student* (5 occasions), where another teacher or student opened the door to the classroom, usually with an announcement or question. Overall, we can see that the lessons we observed were task-oriented.

We also analyzed the length of each episode in minutes. It will be obvious that not all the episodes are equally long. Figure 6 shows the distribution in time of all episodes.

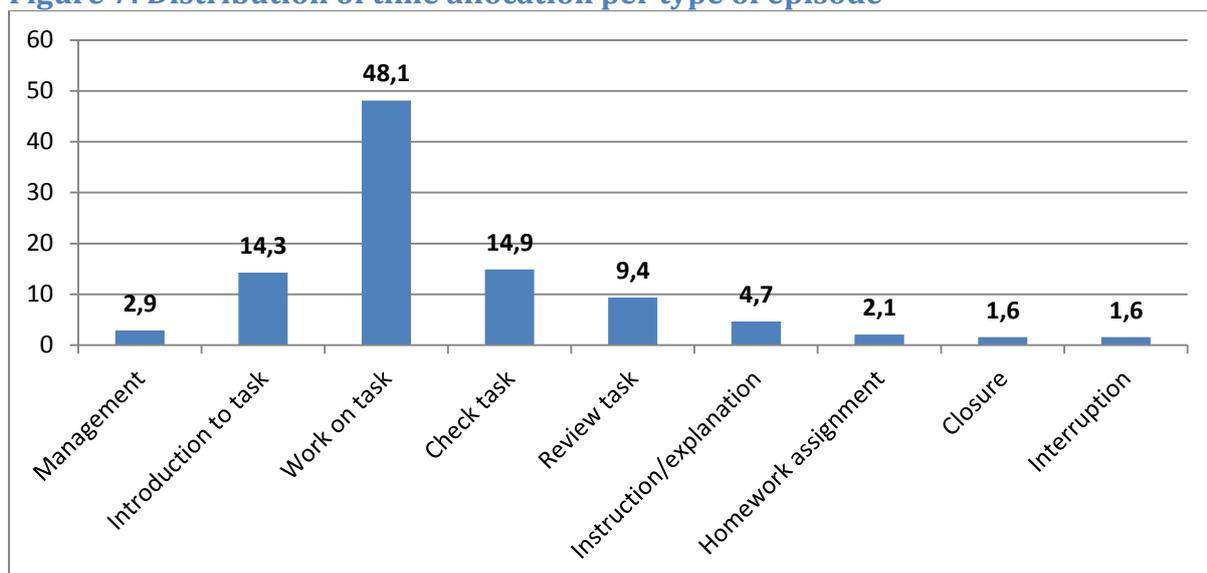
Figure 6: Distribution of the length of episodes in minutes



In figure 6 we can see there were 53 episodes of one minute, 34 of two minutes etc, with the longest episode lasting 50 minutes. This last one was an almost complete lesson where the episode was *work on task* in which the students worked in groups on writing a script for a video project. Most of the episodes lasted for less than ten minutes. The average length of an episode was 5.3 minutes. Therefore, a lesson of about 49 minutes (scheduled for 55 minutes) usually consisted of a series of short episodes (9.1 per lesson).

In order to estimate the place (or weight) of the different types of episodes in all lessons, we wanted to know how much time was dedicated to each type. In figure 7 below, we have taken the sum of the time dedicated to each episode type (in minutes), and expressed this as a percentage of the total observed instruction time (the total was 1.073 minutes).

Figure 7: Distribution of time allocation per type of episode



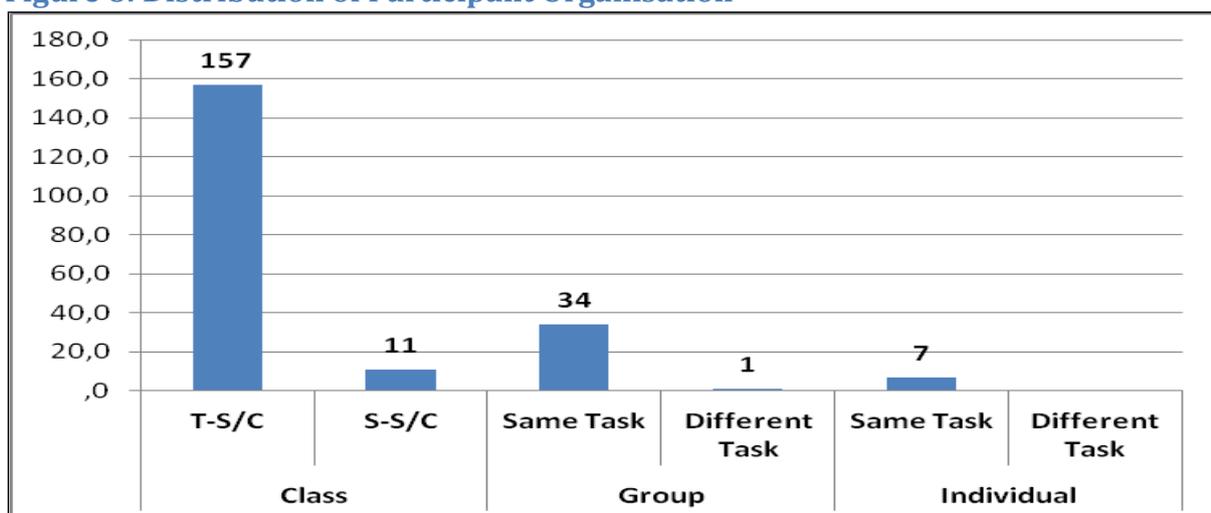
The result gives another insight into what goes on in the lessons. The *Work on task* is the type of episode that not only happens most often (48 occasions, see figure 5) but it is also the episode type to which most time is dedicated, as it takes almost half of the instruction time (48.1% in figure 7). The *Introduction to task* has about the same frequency (47 occasions) but it only takes up 14.3% of the instruction time. Of course, it also makes sense that introducing a task takes less time than working on it, except when there is a complicated task that needs extra explanation.

A similar percentage of the time, 14.9%, is dedicated to *Checking task* (i.e. correcting the activities or exercises the students have done). This type of episode was observed as often as *Introduction to task*, which implies that not all tasks are checked, but as often as *Review task* (i.e. a revision of a previously learned aspect), but with somewhat less time, 9.4%. The *Management* episodes (23 occasions) only take up 2.9% of the instructional time.

From the point of view of teaching English it is interesting to see that the *Instruction or explanation* of grammar or other linguistic aspects take up almost 5% of the time, more than *Homework assignment, closure or interruption*, each of which take up approximately 2% of the time. Therefore, in general, we can observe that about half of the instruction time is spent on *work on task*.

The next feature is **participant organization** - the manner in which the students are organized when working. There are three basic patterns of organization: class, group and individual. We show the results here describing first the frequency in which they occur during the English lessons, in Figure 8, followed by a description of the time allocated to each pattern in Figure 9. The analysis allows us to see which pattern of participant organization is most preferred or most common among the teachers.

Figure 8: Distribution of Participant Organisation



Explanation:

T-S/C: teacher to student or to class

S-S/C: student to student or student to class

The analysis of frequency of episodes shows that working as a whole class happens more often (157+11= 168 occasions) than working in groups (35 occasions) or individually (7 occasions). Notice that here the sum of all episodes (210) is slightly more than the number of observed episodes (201) because during an episode more than one type of participant organization can occur. This is known as a ‘combination’ and how this happens can be explained by an example: Episode number 170:

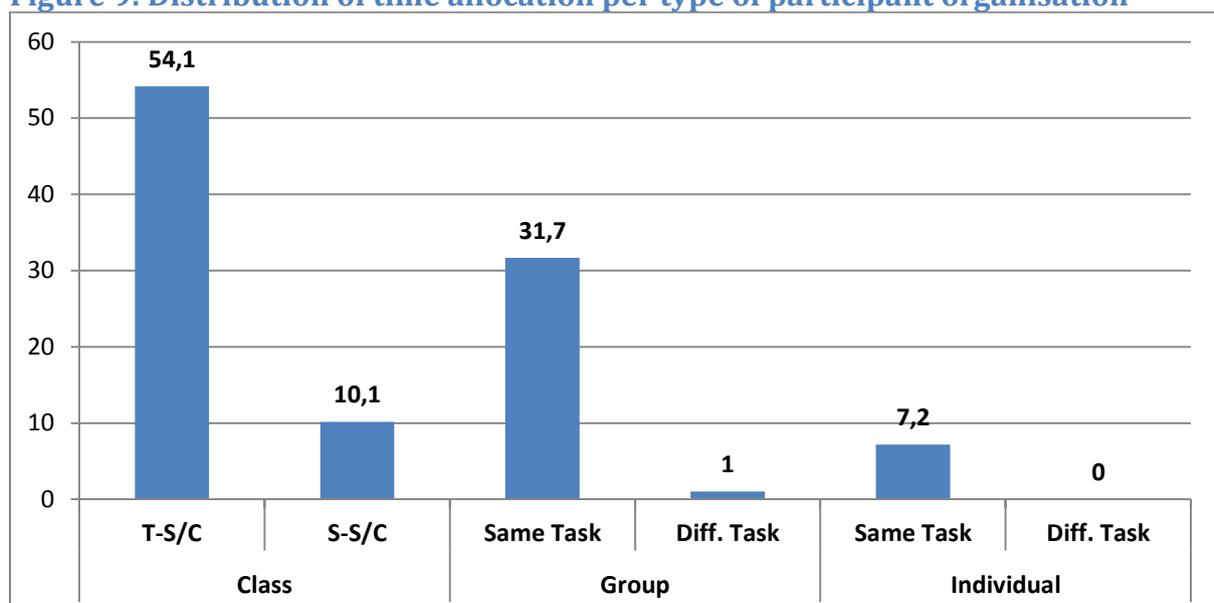
Group work: “Students are working in groups, they read quotes and need to identify the person who might have uttered it (parent, doctor, young person,...). Students take turns to read and then they discuss their opinion”.

Class work: “The teacher intervenes by asking what they have learned up till then on “viewpoint””.

Episode 170 is a clear example of a combination of the categories *group work* and *class work* where the primary focus is on group work.

In Figure 8 we can also see that when the students are working on task as a whole class, there are 157 episodes when the teacher leads the activity (T-S/C: teacher to student or to class) and 11 episodes when a student, or students, lead(s) the activity (S-S/C: student to student or student to class; e.g. presentations by students). We observed that more group work occurs than individual work, but that the students always work on the same task, and that there is no differentiation according to task. We only observed one episode of working on different tasks (Episode 33). In that case there were 4 groups of 4 students each and 2 groups had to make a list of vocabulary while the other 2 groups had to make a different list. Although the aim of the activity was the same for all students the different groups had to write different lists of words during that episode.

Figure 9: Distribution of time allocation per type of participant organisation



The analysis of the participant organization according to time in minutes brings about a very similar outcome. We see that the type of organization where the students work as a

whole class and are led by the teacher gets the most time allocated (54.1%), while classes led by students gets less time (10.1%). This figure also shows that group work by students on the same task represents almost a third of the total instruction time (31.7%). Finally, students working individually and on the same task only represents 7.2% of the time. From those percentages we can conclude that teachers prefer to work with all students together - most of the time as a whole class but, also in groups.

The next feature is **content**, which describes what the episode/activity is about, the subject matter or theme of the activity, but always in relation to the language being taught. It is one of the most important characteristics of the activities and episodes, it “was developed to measure the extent to which a focus on meaning and/or form may contribute to differences in L2 development” (Spada, 1995). There are three major content categories: *Management*, *Language* and *Other Topics*. Each category and its subcategories can be the exclusive focus of an activity or episode but in most cases they co-occur with others. We can give an example to make this clear. In the case of Episode 94 it was described as: “*Activity Compare and Contrast; Episode Introduction to grammar task*”

Content: Management: **Procedure**: Teacher says: “*Get your notebooks because I’ll explain grammar and you need to copy it down*”

Content: Language: Form: **Grammar**: *The teacher goes over, explains and writes on the board expressions to compare and contrast (both, and, too, but, whereas,...).*

Content: Language: **Function**: *Explanation.*

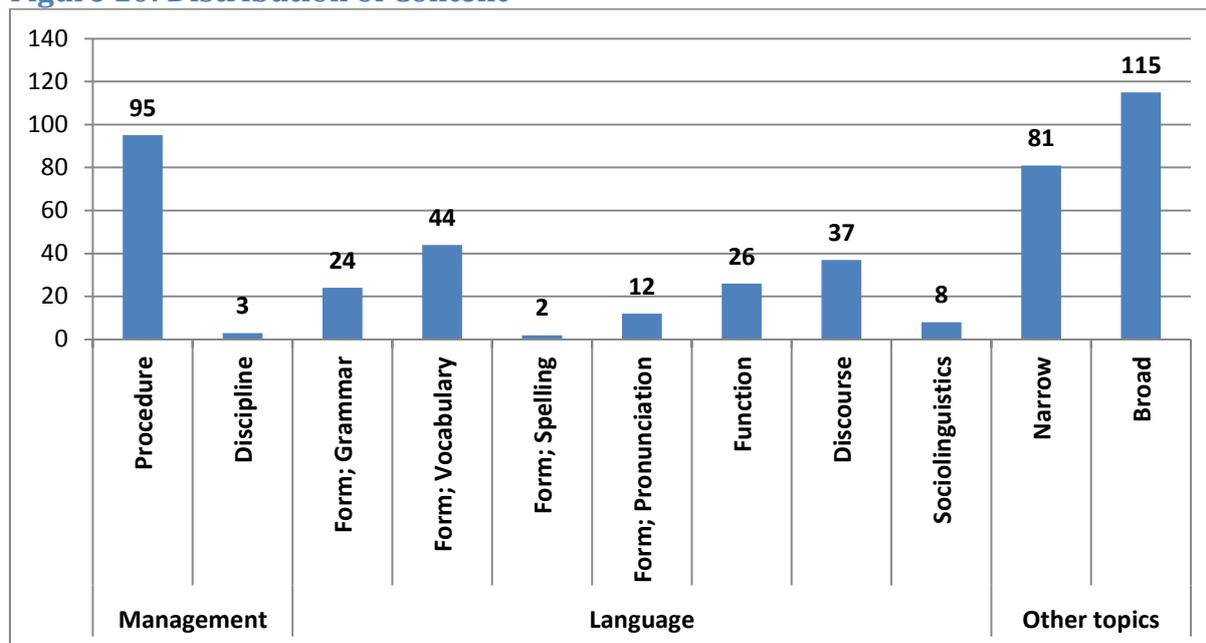
Content: Language: **Discourse**: *How to construct sentences to compare and contrast (Whereas rich people had glass windows most people could not afford them).*

Content: Other topics: **Broad**: *The topic is on the 1300’s and 1900’s in England.*

In the example of this episode we can see how the three categories of content and five subcategories co-occur in one episode. Therefore, the total frequency of these categories does not add up to the total of 201 episodes that were observed. The frequency here means the number of occasions in which these (sub-)categories were observed during the 22 lessons.

We present in Figure 10 the frequency of the content categories and in the next Figure 11 the percentage of instruction time dedicated to each category.

Figure 10: Distribution of Content



In Figure 10 we see that the management category (98 occasions), is mainly procedural sub-type (95 occasions). This means that on 95 occasions the students listened to the type of utterance as “open your books”. On only 3 occasions was the management language used actually related to discipline, with utterances such as “be quiet and start working”. All these utterances of management were usually short directives or statements.

Included in ‘*language as content*’ there are seven sub-types. On the one hand, four focus on form, and on the other there are three regarding function, discourse or sociolinguistics. The teaching or practice of vocabulary is the category most often identified (44 occasions), followed by grammar instruction (24 occasions), pronunciation (12 occasions) and spelling (2 occasions). The instruction of two or more of these forms of language can happen simultaneously. We can illustrate with the example of Episode 132 how grammar and pronunciation are instructed at the same time. In this episode groups of students are doing an oral presentation on Egypt:

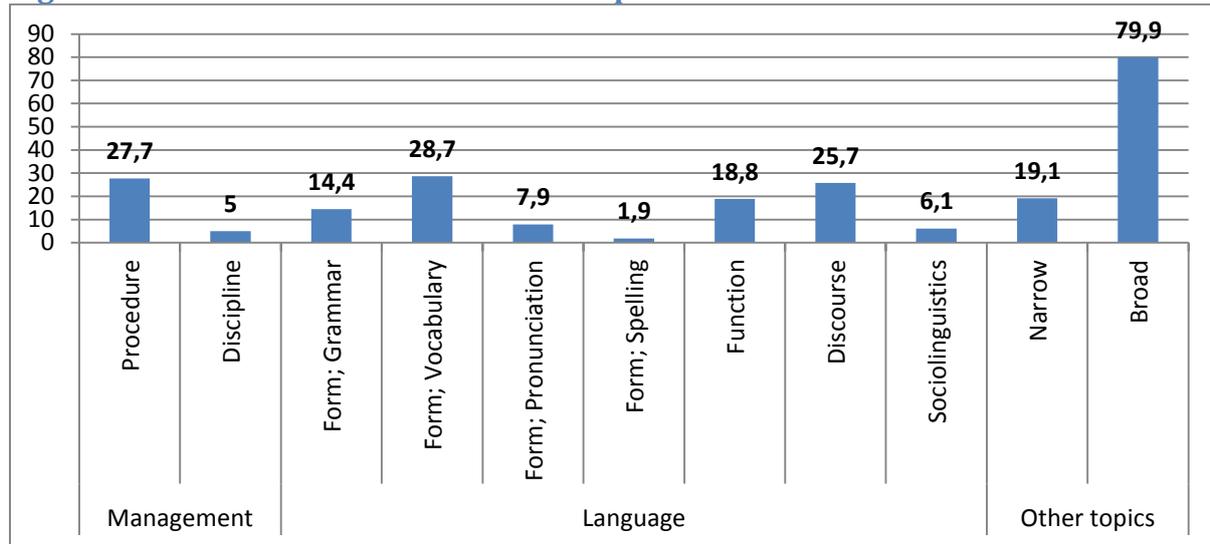
- Student: “*He don’t going to resigned*”
- The teacher goes over the grammatical error with the whole class (will not = won’t) and tells them the correct pronunciation of “resign”.

Among the other types of language use we most frequently observed was *discourse* (37 occasions), where the teacher uses a combination of sentences to create coherent and cohesive sequences and utterances. We observed less frequently *function* (26 occasions) which is the use of sentences or utterances as communicative acts (e.g. requesting, apologizing) and we only observed the category *sociolinguistics* as a type on a few occasions (8). This refers to styles appropriate to particular contexts (e.g. formal/informal).

Content is divided into broad and narrow themes of the subject. A narrow subject theme is related to the classroom, familiar topics (e.g. school topics, everyday routines,

family life,...) while a broad subject theme goes beyond the classroom (e.g. international events, geography, science,...). Most often the theme is broad (115 occasions) while a narrow theme was observed less often (81 occasions). There were five episodes without a theme e.g. an interruption by another teacher or an interruption where the teacher directly interacted with one of the students. For example, Episode 16 does not have a theme because the teacher interacted with a student, who was working on a group activity, about an off-task matter.

Figure 11: Distribution of time allocation per Content



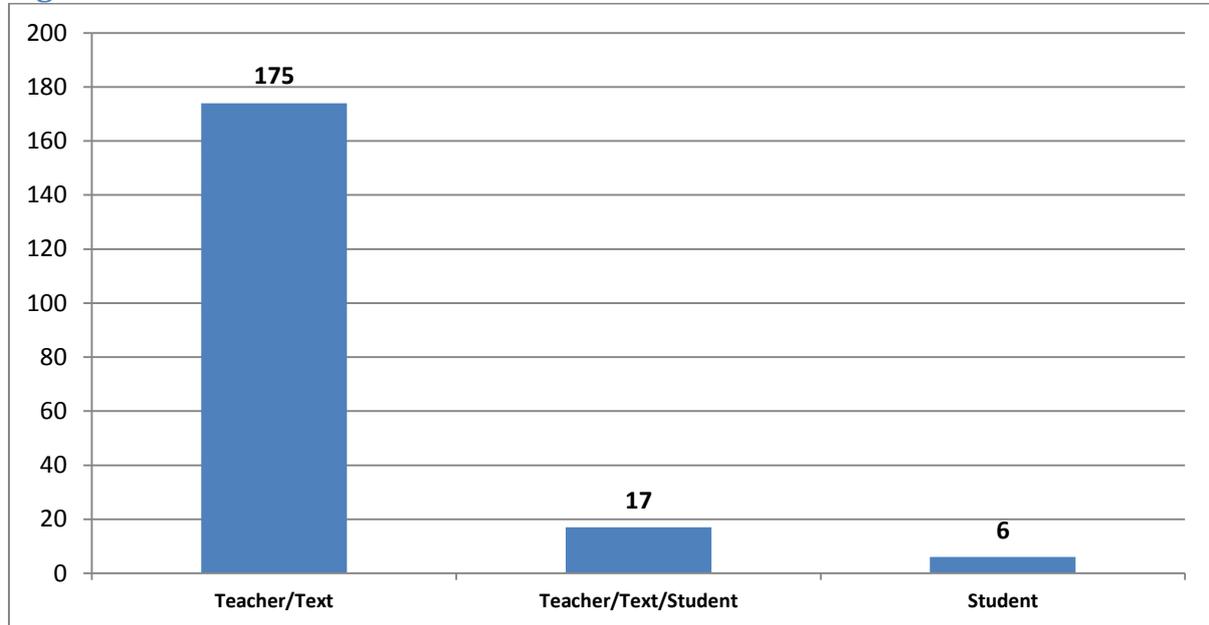
When we look at the same distribution of episodes over content, we see that the sum of all percentages adds up to over 100%. This is because more than one content category and subcategory can co-occur simultaneously as explained with the example of Episode 94 when talking about frequency. In terms of amount of time (minutes) we see in Figure 11 that procedural language (as part of management) occupies over a quarter of the total instruction time (27.7%). Although in Figure 10 we observed on 95 occasions, the time dedicated to procedural language is minimal, disciplinary language is used very little (5.0%) because there were only three short disciplinary episodes in the 22 lessons. Focusing on language instruction we see that teachers dedicate the most time to vocabulary (28.7%), followed by grammar (14.4%), pronunciation (7.9%) and spelling (1.9%).

The amount of time dedicated to each type of language use during instruction shows us that discourse is present for longer than the other two types. Discourse language takes up 25.7% of the total time of instruction while function takes 18.8% and sociolinguistic language accounts for 6.1% of the total time.

The time allocation to content theme, broad or narrow, indicates that most of the language instruction is about broad themes related to topics that go beyond the classroom (79.9% of the time) whereas narrow themes are discussed much less (19.1%). This is in part because the Social Science lessons taught in English.

The next feature is **content control** and refers to who selects the topic or task that is the focus of the instruction. Content can be selected by the *teacher and/or the text*, jointly by the *teacher, students and/or the text*, or by the *students*.

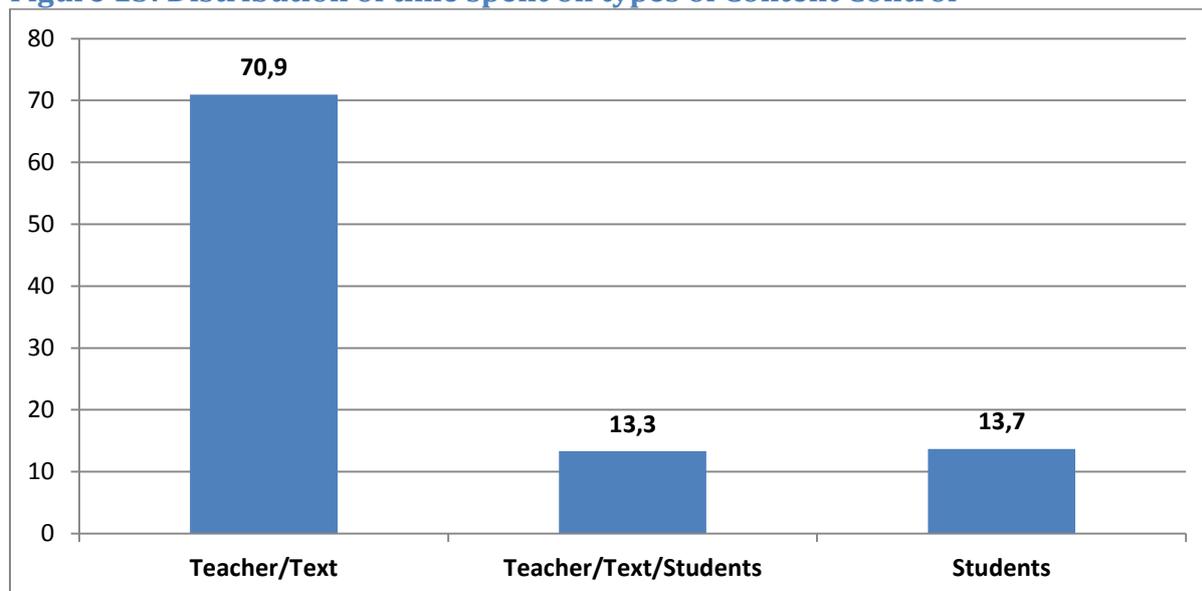
Figure 12: Distribution of Content Control



We can see in Figure 12 that the content is controlled almost always by the teacher and/or the text (175 occasions) in selecting the topic to work on. Only on a few occasions (17) is the topic decided jointly by the teacher, the students and/or the text. During the observations, we only saw the students select the content of the task in 6 cases. Although it is uncommon for the students to choose the topic or content of the task, we did observe, for example, in Episode 140, which was part of a larger activity that had been selected by the text and the teacher, that this episode's content was completely of the students' choice: *"In this episode, which was part of a larger activity where the students had to record a TV programme, they had to write a script in groups. First of all, they had to decide each group member's role, and then write the script. It was the students' decision to choose the topic, divide up the roles and design the script"*.

The next dimension to look at is the time spent on the different types of content control. Given the results above, the distribution of the time as given in Figure 13 does not come as a surprise.

Figure 13: Distribution of time spent on types of Content Control

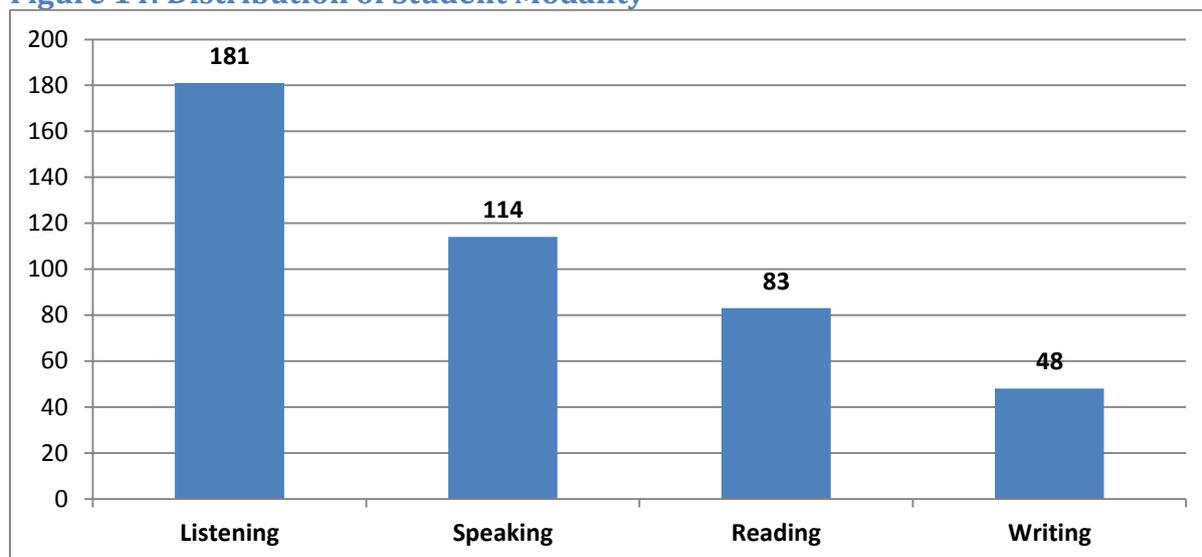


In figure 13 we can see that content is controlled by the teacher and/or text during almost 71% of the total instructional time. What stands out is that the episodes controlled by the students alone are relatively longer, obtaining slightly more time (13.7%) than the episodes where the content is decided by teachers, students and/or text (13.3%), even though there were almost three times fewer episodes by students in absolute numbers. The reason is that the episodes controlled by the students alone were 50, 39, 27, 15, 14, and 2 minutes long (see **episode length** above, page 16) which means that this type of student controlled episode (or task) accounts for a substantial amount of the instructional time.

The feature **Student Modality** identifies various language skills involved in a single episode. This focuses on what the student does, given that the aim is to indicate whether the student is listening, speaking, reading or writing during the episodes. The skills can also occur in combination as we can see in the example of episode 197, where the teacher and students are reviewing the “Present Continuous” form. In this case, the students use all the skills in combination:

*Student modality: **Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing**: The teacher asks “when do you use the present continuous?” The students answer, he asks for some examples and then he writes them on the board. Then the teacher goes over the grammar rules (verb construction) with the help of the students. Students copy those examples and then the teacher hands out worksheets for the students to work on.”*

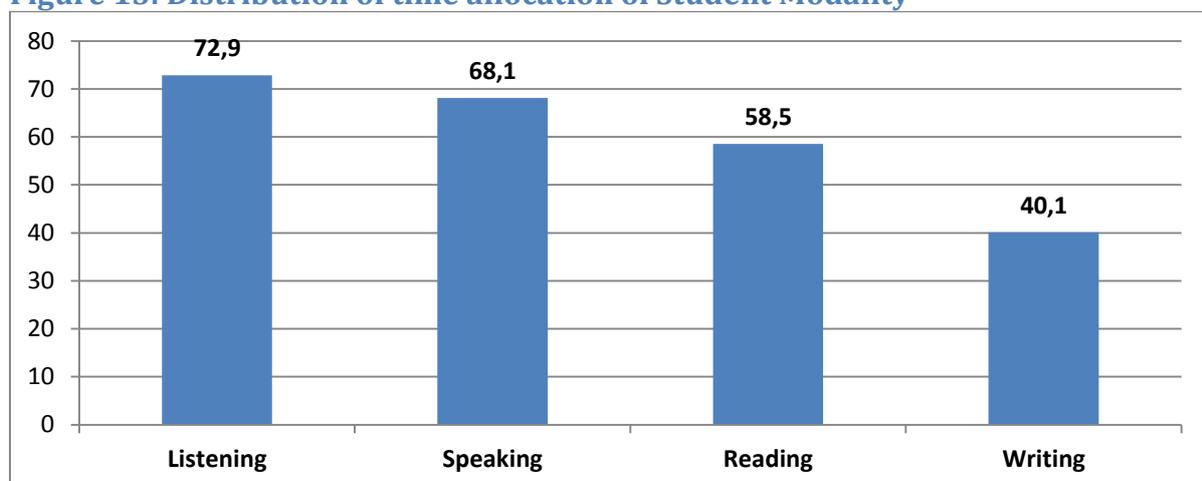
Figure 14: Distribution of Student Modality



In the Basque schools, listening was the modality most often practiced during the observations (181 occasions), followed by speaking which was also done frequently (114 occasions), then reading (83 times) and finally writing (48 times). Since we noted before that whole-group work led by the teacher was the most frequently used participant organisation, it is unsurprising that listening is the skill most practiced. The students listen to the teacher who instructs, gives directions and feedback, guides, corrects,... and even when one student speaks they also listen to their peers. The students also have the opportunity to speak the target language (English) on many occasions. Reading and writing are done less frequently, but still more than once per lesson.

The final step is to present the time allocation of the different language skills (student modality). The results are presented as graphs in figure 15.

Figure 15: Distribution of time allocation of Student Modality



Since different student modalities can happen at the same time, they can co-occur. For example, during one episode, as we saw with the example of Episode 197 above, the addition of percentages adds up to over 100%. Figure 15 shows the percentage of time each modality occupies, based on the total time of instruction (1,073 minutes). Listening skills are practiced during almost three-quarters of the instructional time (72.9% of total time). Speaking skills were practiced on fewer occasions but still occupied a large part of the instructional time (68.1%) which means that the students practise speaking in the target language (English) for more than half of the instructional time. Reading and writing skills were observed frequently and the time spent practising both skills is about half of the total instructional time. The students read for 58.5% of the time and write for 40.1%.

It is important to understand that when discussing the length in time of the listening, speaking, reading and writing production of the students, the exact length of time of a sentence uttered by a student was not measured, nor was the time it took a student write a sentence, for example. The length of time was measured using duration of the whole episode. The following Episode 7 explains how the length of the four language skills was measured.

Episode 7 is described as “*Type of episode: Review Task*”, it consisted of the teacher asking questions on the vocabulary and concepts previously learned on the topic “Natural Disasters”. In this particular case, they were reviewing synonyms and opposites.

Episode length: 14 minutes.

Student Modality: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing.

Description of episode: The teacher asked questions such as “What is ‘mere steps’?” the students gave answers such as ‘very close to’, sometimes after reading from their notebooks. Anytime the teacher wrote something on the board the students copied it down.

Obviously, the students were not writing and reading for 14 minutes, and even if they listened to English for most of the 14 minutes it was not exactly for all 14 minutes.

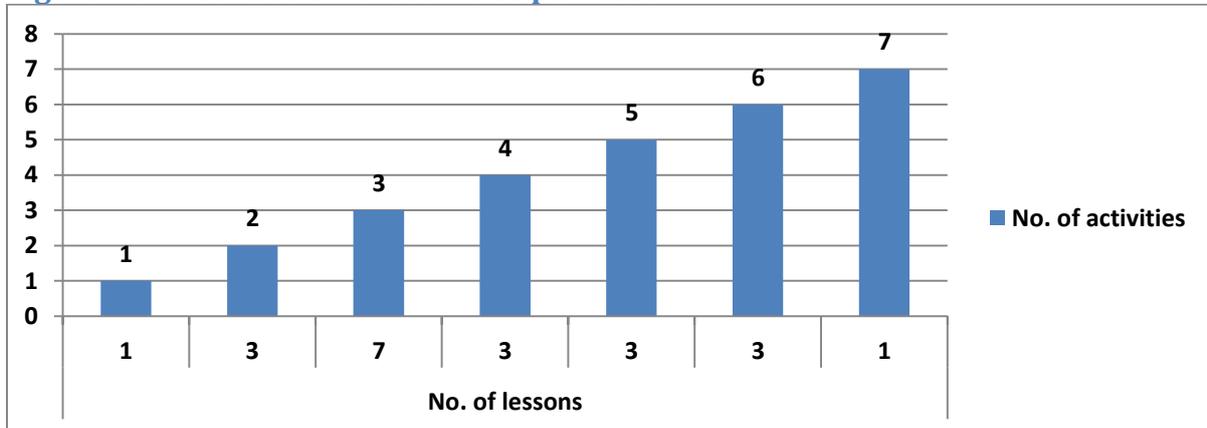
4.1.2 English lessons in Friesland

We observed 21 lessons in Friesland. The lessons were scheduled for either 45 minutes in two of the schools or for 70 minutes in one of the schools. The total time observed should have been 1,170 minutes $[(70 \times 9) + (45 \times 12)]$, however, the actual time observed totalled 1,032 minutes. On average, there are 6.6 minutes of instruction lost in each lesson due to a variety of reasons.

In this section, we will describe the general aspects of instruction of English in Friesland. As we did with instruction of English in the Basque Country (section 4.1.1), we will describe the characteristics of the didactics of English by using the seven features of the COLT scheme (see section 2.3 for details). We see that the feature **activities and episodes** in Friesland identifies 80 activities distributed differently throughout the 21 lessons observed. An activity consists of one or more episodes, which are smaller units, and we identified 184 episodes.

In the next figure we present an overview of the number of activities per lesson observed in Friesland. Since there were 80 activities identified during the 21 lesson observations, that gives an average of 3.8 activities per lesson. In figure 16 we give the number of activities per lesson.

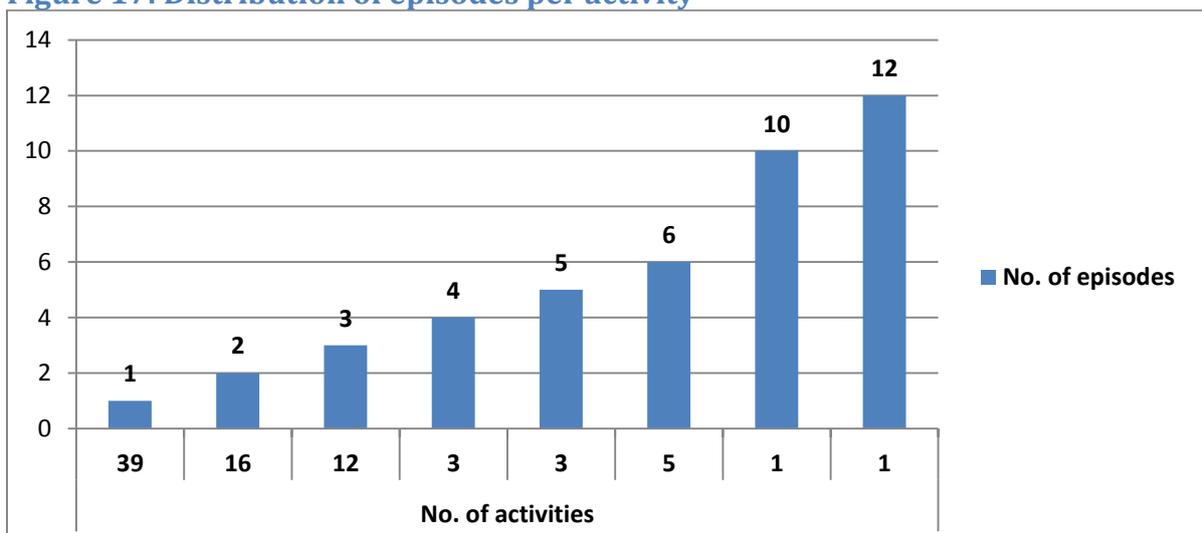
Figure 16: Distribution of activities per lesson



In figure 16 we can see that there is only 1 lesson with only 1 activity. This is the lesson with the least number of different activities and on the other end we can see that there is also only 1 lesson with the most number of activities which is 7. The rest of the lessons consist of 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 activities. On average, a lesson consists of 3.8 activities.

In the next figure we show the number of episodes per activity. As we said, there are 184 episodes in the 80 activities we identified.

Figure 17: Distribution of episodes per activity

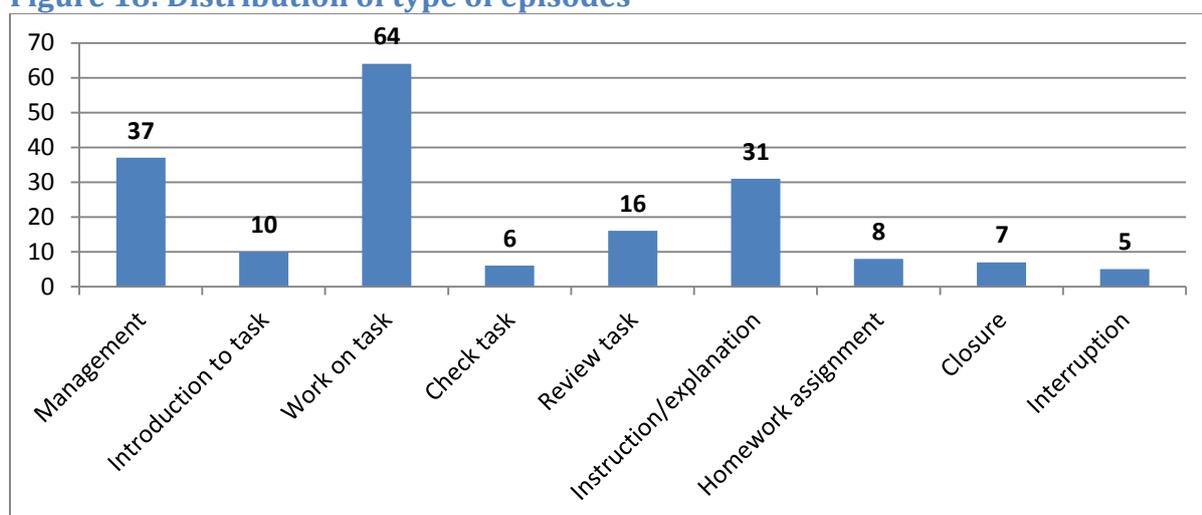


We can see in Figure 17 that there are 39 activities consisting of only one episode, 16 activities consisting of 2 episodes, 12 activities of 3 episodes, 3 activities of 4 episodes and 3 others of 5 episodes. There is one activity that includes 10 episodes and another with 12 episodes. The average number of episodes per activity is 2.3.

We can say, therefore, that the English lessons observed in Friesland consist of, on average, 3.8 activities (80 activities / 21 lessons) and 8.8 episodes (184 episodes / 21 lessons).

In the next figure, we show the frequency (in absolute numbers) in which the nine types of episodes were identified. And then, in figure 19, we present the instructional time dedicated to each type of episode (in percentages).

Figure 18: Distribution of type of episodes



The episode-type analysis shows that the most frequently occurring episode is *work on task* (64 occasions). *Management* (37 occasions) and *instruction or explanation* of a linguistic aspect (31 occasions) are present quite frequently and on similar occasions. *Review task* (16 occasions) and *introduction to task* (10 occasions) are quite often present in the lessons. The remaining episode types appear on less than 10 occasions.

Next, in Figure 19, we present the length in minutes of each episode.

Figure 19: Distribution of the length of episodes in minutes

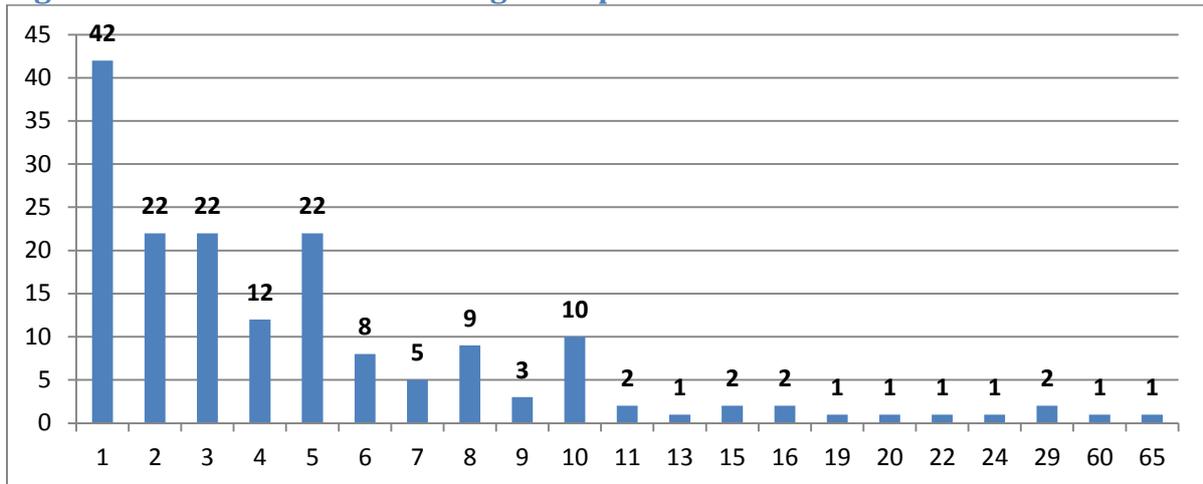
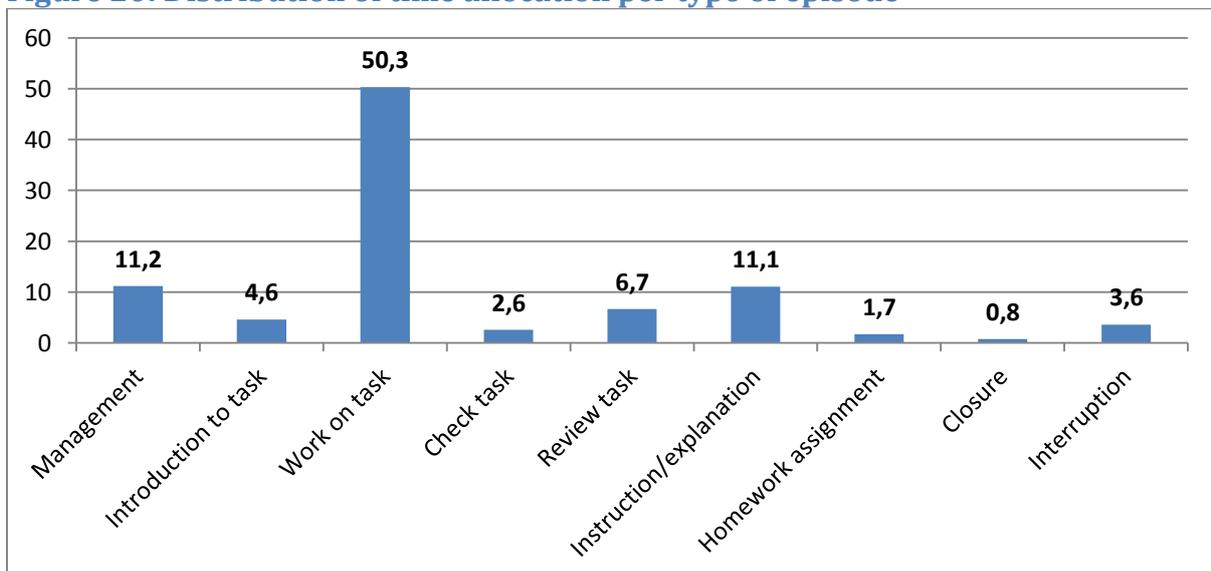


Figure 19 demonstrates that there are 42 episodes that last for only one minute, these being the shortest episodes in length, while the longest episode lasts for 65 minutes. This was the episode where the students took a test that lasted for the whole period. The majority of episodes last less than 10 minutes. The average length of the episodes is 5.6 minutes long. Thus a lesson consists of different activities with a variety of episodes. (There are 14 episodes that were not timed – thus not shown in Figure 19).

75 minutes of the total time of instruction (1,032 minutes) have been lost due to not recording the time of 14 episodes. The analysis of the length of the episodes provides an estimate of the weight of each type of episode in all lessons (the total time of instruction).

Next we will look at the time each type of episode is allocated in the total time of instruction to estimate the weight of them during the teaching-learning process. The percentages are drawn from the total time of instruction, 1,030 minutes.

Figure 20: Distribution of time allocation per type of episode

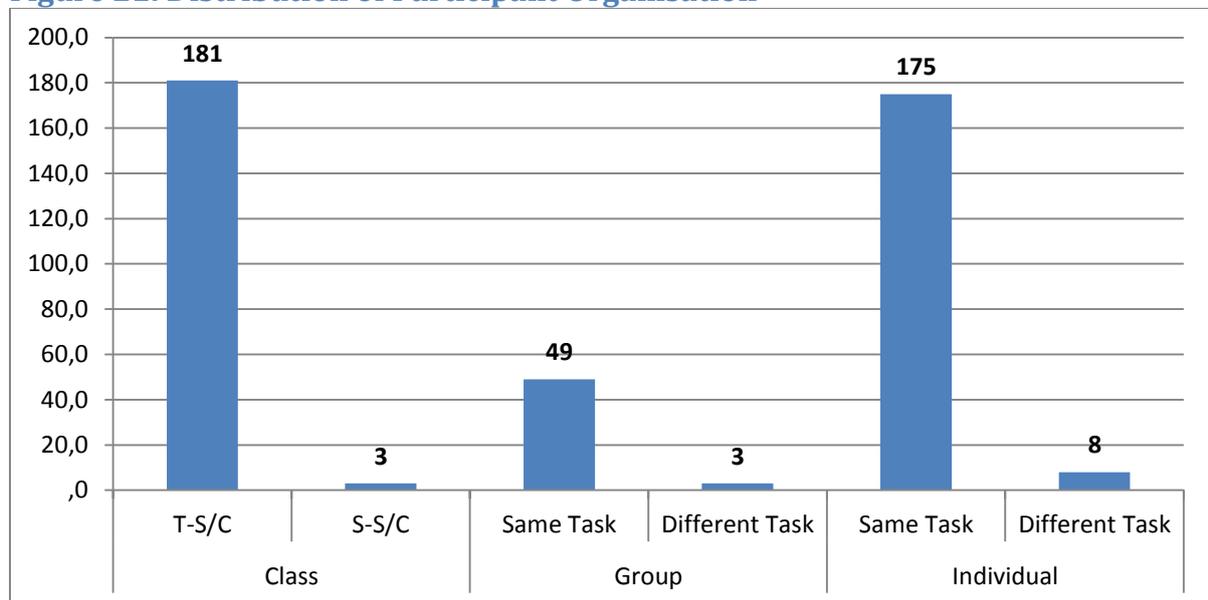


In Figure 20, the percentages of the time spent on each type of episode show that the five most frequent types are also allocated the greatest amount of the instructional time. As seen in Figure 18, *work on task* - which is identified most frequently (64 occasions) - is also the type of episode to which most time is dedicated, namely half of the instructional time (50.3%). *Management* is slightly more frequent (37 occasions) than *instruction or explanation* (31 occasions) but they are both allocated the same instructional time (11.2% and 11.1% respectively). *Review task* takes up very little time (6.7%) and *introduction to task* is allocated even less (4.6%).

The types of episode that were identified on fewer than 10 occasions are allocated less than 4% of the instructional time. *Homework assignment* was identified on 8 occasions but only takes up 1.7% of the total instructional time. The same occurs with *closure*, which despite being observed on 7 occasions only takes up 0.8% of the instructional time. *Check task* and *interruption* were the least observed types of episode but are allocated slightly more time than the previous two types, albeit very little (2.6% and 3.6% of the total time respectively). So the most frequently occurring type of episode, and that which is allocated half of the total instructional time, is *work on task*.

The next feature, namely the analysis of **participant organisation**, describes the manner of the students when they work. First we describe the frequency in which each of the three patterns of organisation (class, group and individual) happen, and next we show the instructional time dedicated to each of those patterns.

Figure 21: Distribution of Participant Organisation



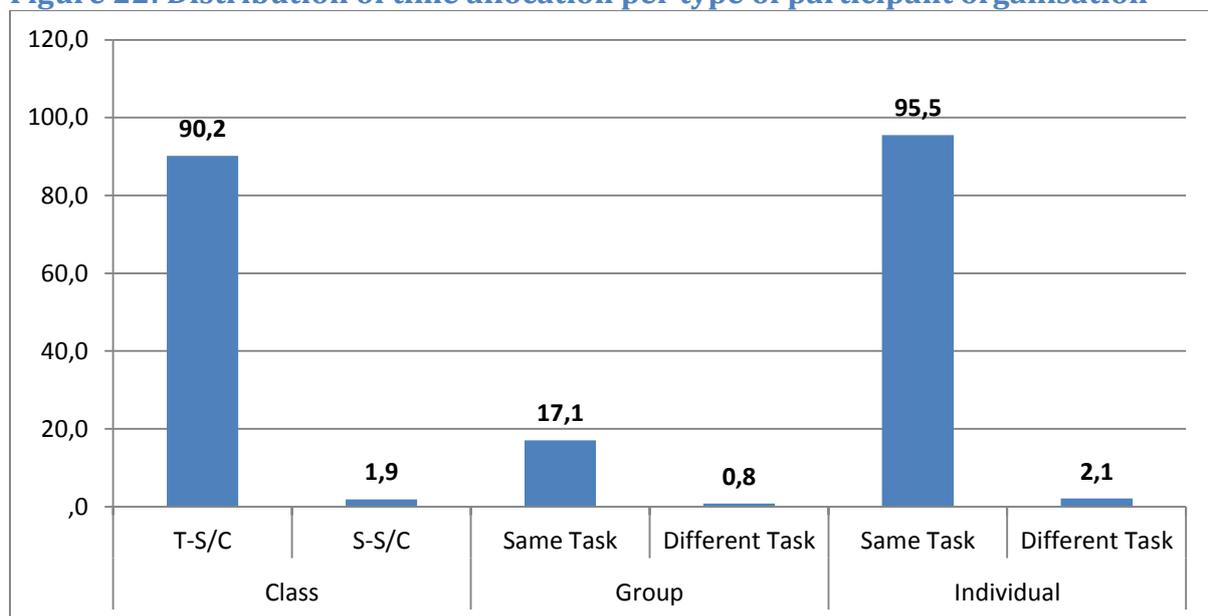
We can see in Figure 21 that in 184 episodes (181+3)⁴ the students work as a whole class. Those occasions are led by the teacher (T-S/C Teacher to Student or Class) on 181 occasions while on only 3 occasions the work is led by the students themselves, and directed

⁴ In Friesland, all episodes (184) were considered as students working as a whole class in collaboration with another pattern of participant organisation.

to their peers (S-S/C Student to Student or Class). When the students work in small groups, the majority of the time (49 occasions) they all work on the same task, and when they work individually the same phenomenon happens (175 occasions). However, there are a few occasions on which the task is different for the students, regardless of whether they work in small groups or individually. The sum of all episodes exceeds the number of episodes identified during the observations (184 episodes), due to a combination of participant organisation during one episode.

We describe next the analysis of the participant organisation according to the time dedicated to the three manners of organisation. In this case, the total of the percentages exceeds 100% because more than one organisational pattern can occur in the same episode.

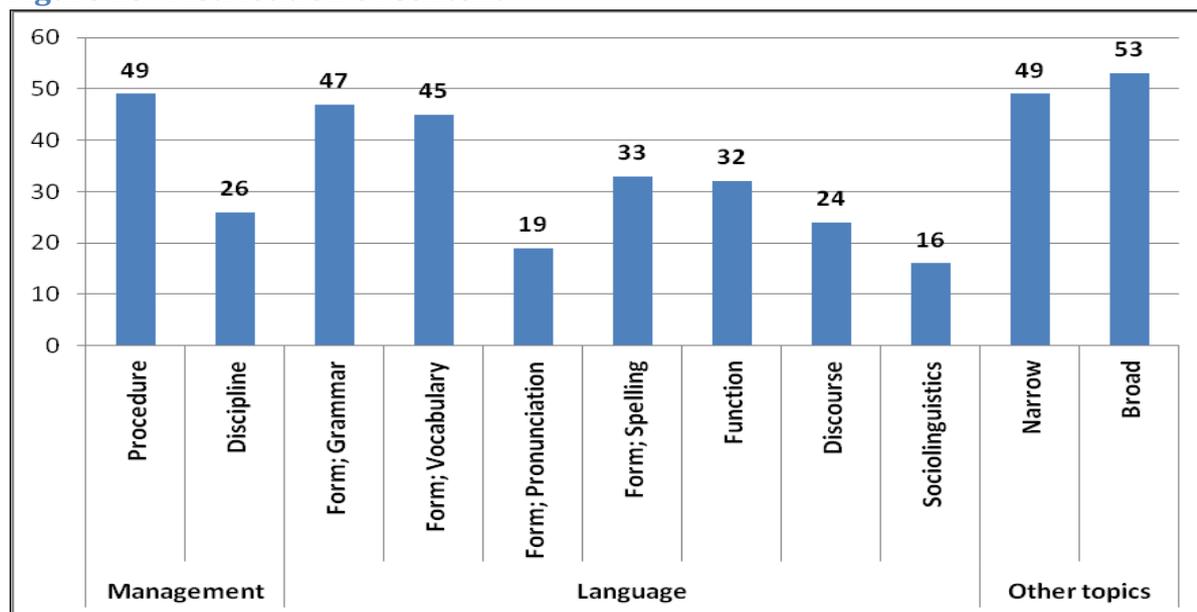
Figure 22: Distribution of time allocation per type of participant organisation



As far as the time allocated to each manner of work is concerned, Figure 22 shows us that most time is dedicated to students working individually and on the same task (95.5% of the total observed time). They also work together as a whole group and led by the teacher for a substantial part of the total instructional time (90.2%). Less than a fifth of the instructional time is dedicated to students working in small groups on the same task (17.1%). Thus the most common manner of working is either as a whole group led (or not led) by the teacher, or individually and on the same task.

The next feature to be analysed is **content**. It describes the subject matter or theme of the activity and episode in relation to the language taught. It consists of three categories and five subcategories, and they can co-occur in one episode. Thus frequency is the number of occasions in which each category and subcategory of content was identified during the observations. First we present the frequency of the content categories and then the percentage of instructional time dedicated to each category.

Figure 23: Distribution of Content



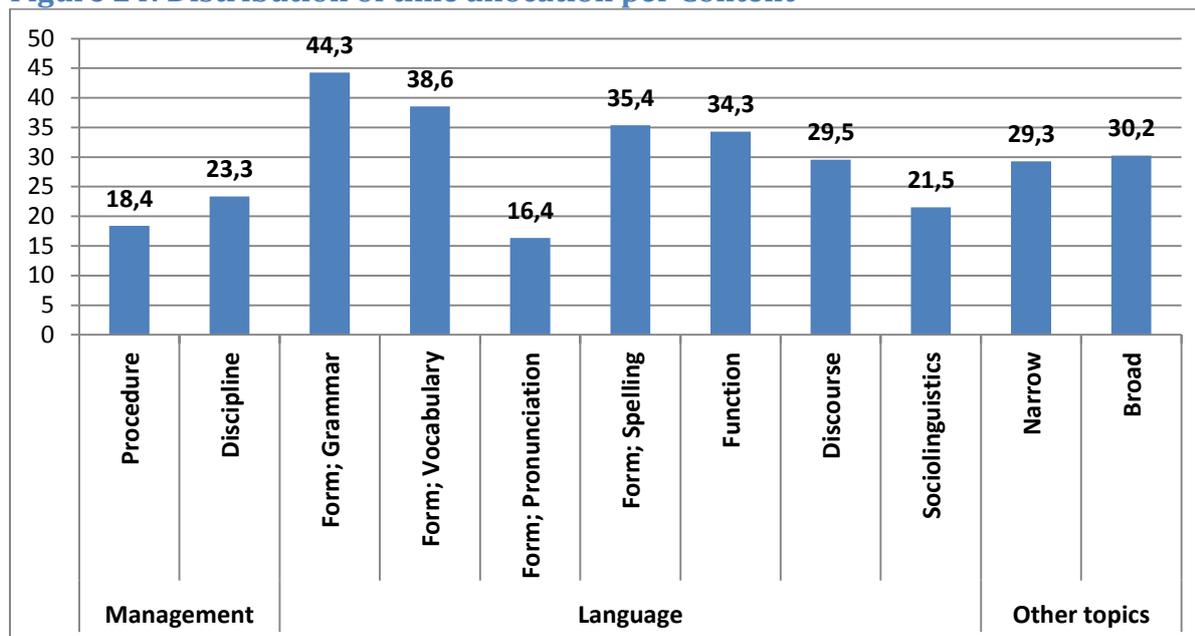
In the analysis of frequency shown in Figure 23 we can see that when the language used is of the *management* category, it is more frequently of the *procedural* type (49 occasions). This includes language such as “take your workbooks out” rather than of the *discipline* type observed on fewer occasions (26), where the language features include phrases such as “stop chatting”. When the content is of the *language* category, where the teacher refers explicitly to language features, we can see that *grammar* and *vocabulary* are similarly present (47 and 45 respectively). The instruction of *pronunciation* was observed on fewer occasions (19) and of *spelling* a few more times (33).

The type of language, referring to the style of sentences and utterances, can be of the type *function*, *discourse* or *sociolinguistic*. During the observations, we identified the type *function* most often (32 occasions), followed by *discourse* (24 occasions) and finally *sociolinguistics* (16). This means that the language type most present is the use of sentences and utterances for requests, apologies and other short communicative acts.

When the content describes the topic, we can see that it is mainly *broad* (53 occasions), where the theme goes beyond the classroom (e.g. international events, geography, science), but also often *narrow* (49 occasions) where the topic is related to the classroom and/or the students’ personal experiences related to the school environment. In the English lessons in Friesland both broad and narrow themes are present on similar occasions. However, there were 82 episodes for which the theme was not recorded.

In figure 24 we show the time allocated to each content category. Here again the sum of the percentages exceeds 100% because we can find more than one category combined in one episode.

Figure 24: Distribution of time allocation per Content



The distribution of the time allocation of content - Figure 24 - shows us that although the procedural type of language was more frequent (49) than the discipline-related type (26), the latter occupies more of the instructional time (23.3%) than does the procedural type (18.4%). The time dedicated to different parts of language shows no significant differences from that observed in the frequency analysis. So *grammar* remains the part on which most time is dedicated (44.3%), followed by vocabulary (38.6%), spelling (35.4%) and pronunciation (16.4%). The same can be seen with the type of sentences and utterances used; function takes up more time of the total instructional time (34.3%) than discourse (29.5%) and sociolinguistics (21.5%). And the two topics, *narrow* and *broad*, take up similar percentages (29.3% and 30.2% respectively) of the total time of instruction.

The analysis of the following category **content control** tells us who selects the topic or task that is the focus of instruction. We first present the frequency in which the three types of content control (*teacher and/or the text*, jointly by the *teacher, students and/or the text*, or by the *students* alone) were observed and after that the percentage of the total time that each category obtains during instruction. (Content control was not recorded for 9 episodes therefore the sum of frequency does not match the number of episodes observed nor does the sum of the percentages reach 100%).

Figure 25: Distribution of Content Control

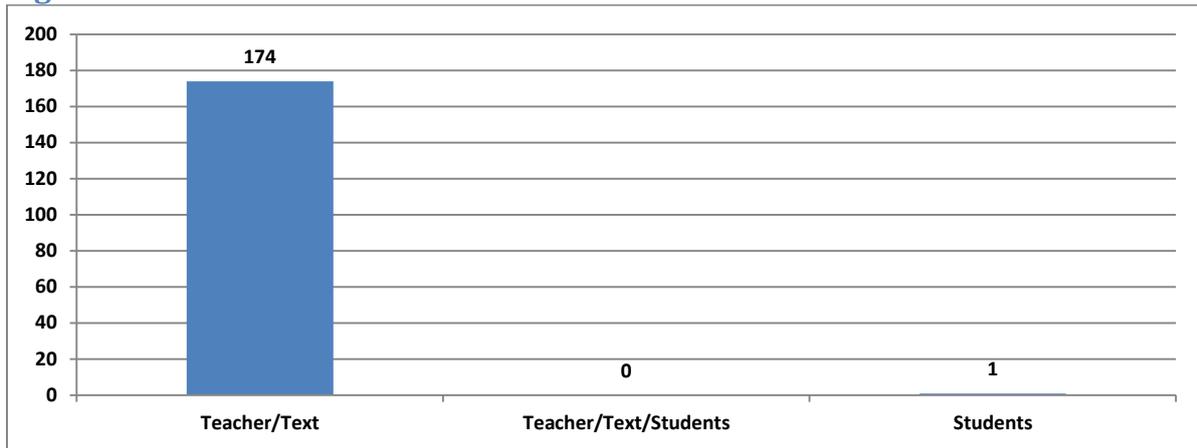
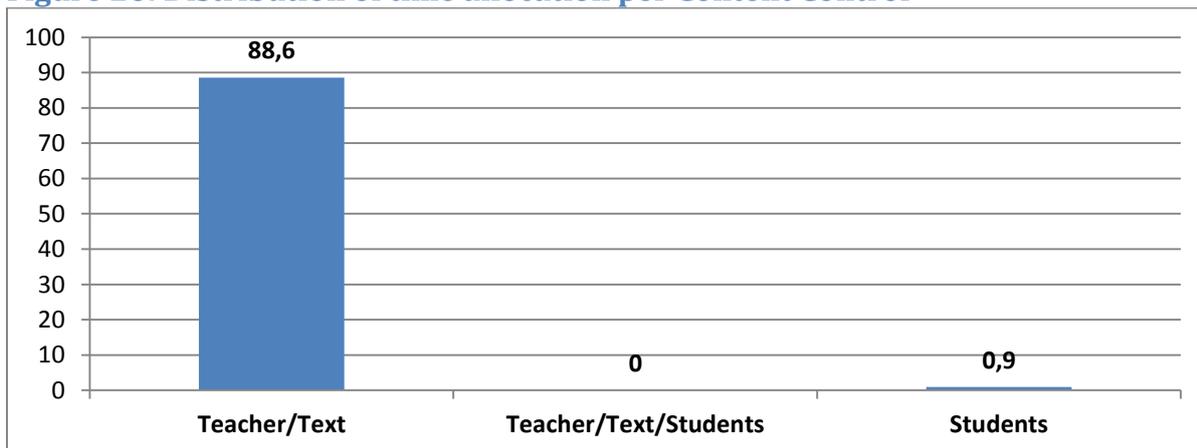


Figure 25 shows us that on 174 occasions the teacher and/or text was responsible for the topic and task selected, and that on only one occasion were the students actively responsible for the selection of content. We can also see that the teacher, text and students in combination never select the topic or task.

Figure 26: Distribution of time allocation per Content Control



The analysis of the time allocation, in Figure 26 shows us that the topic and task selected by the teacher or determined by the text takes up the majority of the instructional time (88.6%) whilst the time taken by the topic or task selected by the students is minimal (0.9%). Thus in the English lessons the task or topic is predominantly selected by the teacher or dictated by the textbook.

The following category, the analysis of **student modality**, indicates the skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) that are most practiced in the classroom. The focus is on the students and on what skills they are practising during an activity or episode. More than one skill can be practised during the same activity or episode. We present next the frequency in which each skill was involved in an episode (in absolute numbers).

Figure 27: Distribution of Student Modality

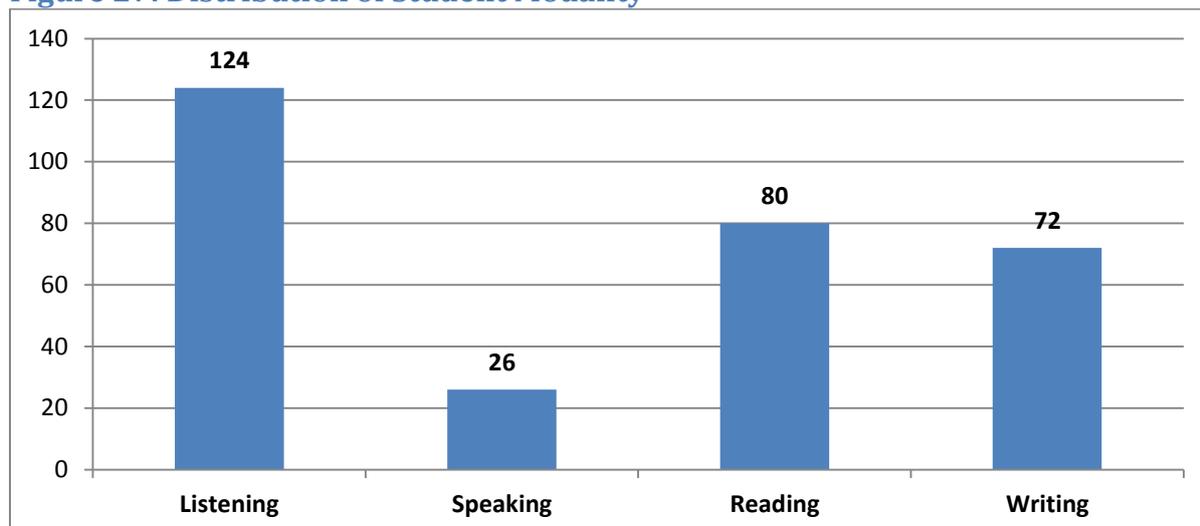
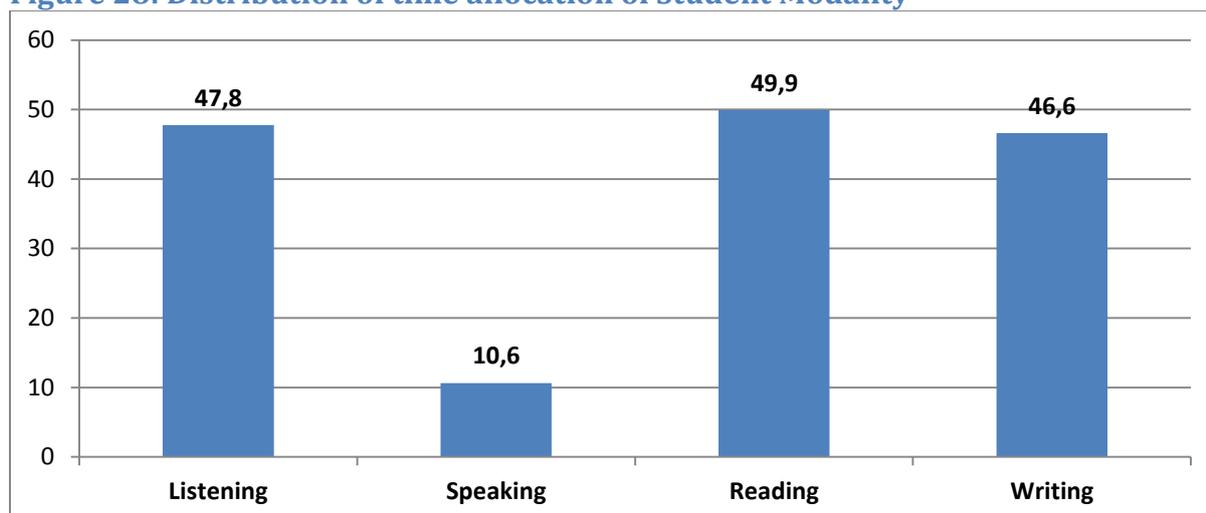


Figure 27 shows us, the skill *listening* is the most practiced modality by the Frisian students in the English lessons (124 occasions), this is because participant organisation is most frequently work as a whole group and led by the teacher, therefore, the students listen to the teacher and other peers use the target language (English).

The analysis also shows that reading and writing are practised quite frequently by the students too; reading was identified in 80 occasions and writing in 72 occasions. On the other hand, speaking is the least practised skill (26 occasions).

In the next figure we present the analysis of the time spent, in percentages, on each student modality during the instruction of English.

Figure 28: Distribution of time allocation of Student Modality



When we look at the time allocated to each modality in Figure 28 we can see that the modality of listening, which was observed the most frequent (124 occasions), is allocated almost half of the total time of instruction (47.8%). The modality of speaking was only

observed on 26 occasions and received very little instructional time (10.6%). The reading modality was practised for almost half of the instructional time (49.9%) and writing during less than half of the instructional time (46.6%). (Because more than one student modality can occur in one episode, the sum of all percentages exceeds 100%).

Thus the Frisian students speak little in English and practice mainly listening, reading and writing during the English lessons.

4.2 Characteristics of the learning materials

In this subsection we present the results for the second part of the first research question, the characteristics of the learning materials used in the English lessons. First we present the characteristic in the Basque Country and then in Friesland.

The feature **material** describes classroom materials in terms of text type and source. According to the COLT scheme, the type of material can be minimal, extended, audio or visual. And the source of the materials can be:

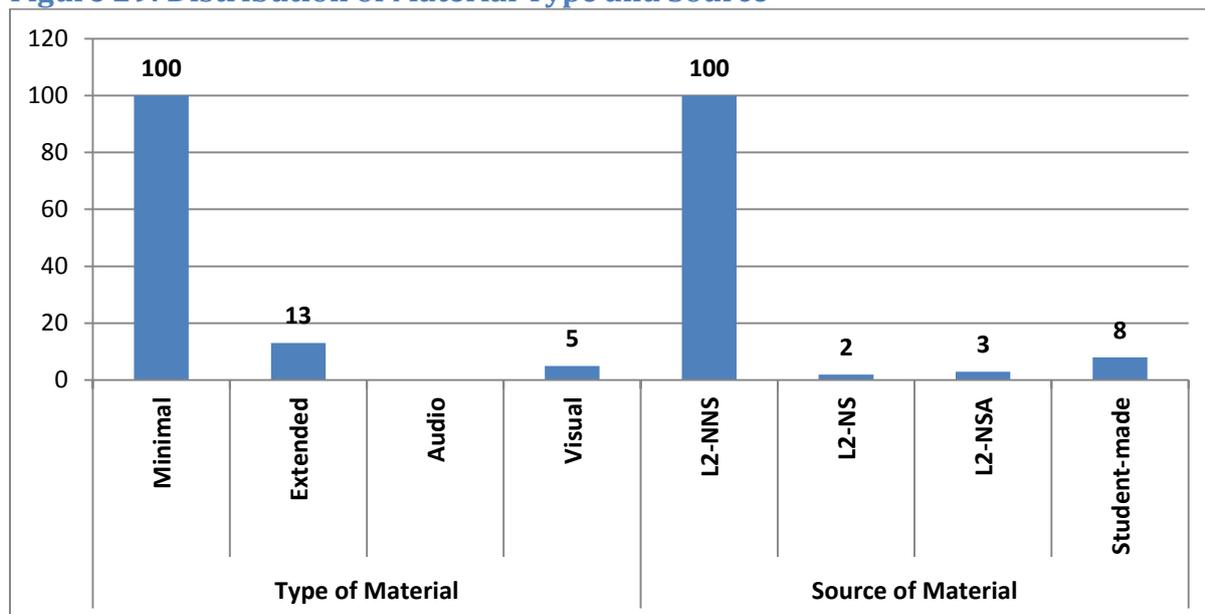
- L2-Non Native Speaker: Created for L2 learning where the language is for non-native speakers.
- L2-Native Speaker: Created for L2 learning but the language is for native speakers.
- L2-Native Speaker-Adapted: Created for L2 learning where the language is for native speakers but has been adapted for non-natives.
- Student-made: Created by L2 students.

Notice that there is no option to record the material source as L1. Therefore we were not able to distinguish that difference with the scheme. These types and sources describe the material used during an episode therefore more than one category occurs during the same episode.

4.2.1 Learning materials in the Basque Country

We will describe here the characteristics of the materials (textbooks, photocopies, CD's...) used for teaching English in the Basque lessons we observed. We present the analysis in the next figure.

Figure 29: Distribution of Material Type and Source



Looking at the results (Figure 29), it is clear that in the Basque Country there are more minimal materials (on 100 occasions) used than extended materials (in 13 occasions) Thus in the English lessons the written texts are captions, isolated sentences and word lists (minimal) rather than stories, dialogues or paragraphs (extended).

Audio-visual materials do not seem to be used very often (on 5 occasions only), according to the episodes analysed.

Most of the time, the materials used are for second language teaching and aimed at non-native speakers (L2-NNS), where the language has been adapted to the non-native learners' ability. In 2 occasions the material used was created for second language learners with native speaker language (L2-NS). One of these cases is episode 168 in which the students were using computers to do a web search activity in English. In reality, the web pages that the students were using were not created specifically for L2 learners but for any reader.

In 3 occasions the material used was created for L2 learners and although the language was aimed at native speakers it had been adapted for L2 learners (L2-NSA).

Very seldom are the materials created by the students (on 8 occasions) – only on the occasions when they create posters, stories, and presentations that are used to instruct other students.

4.2.2 Learning materials in Friesland

The characteristics of the learning materials used in Friesland are also drawn from the analysis using the COLT scheme. We present the results in Figure 30.

Figure 30: Distribution of Material Type and Source

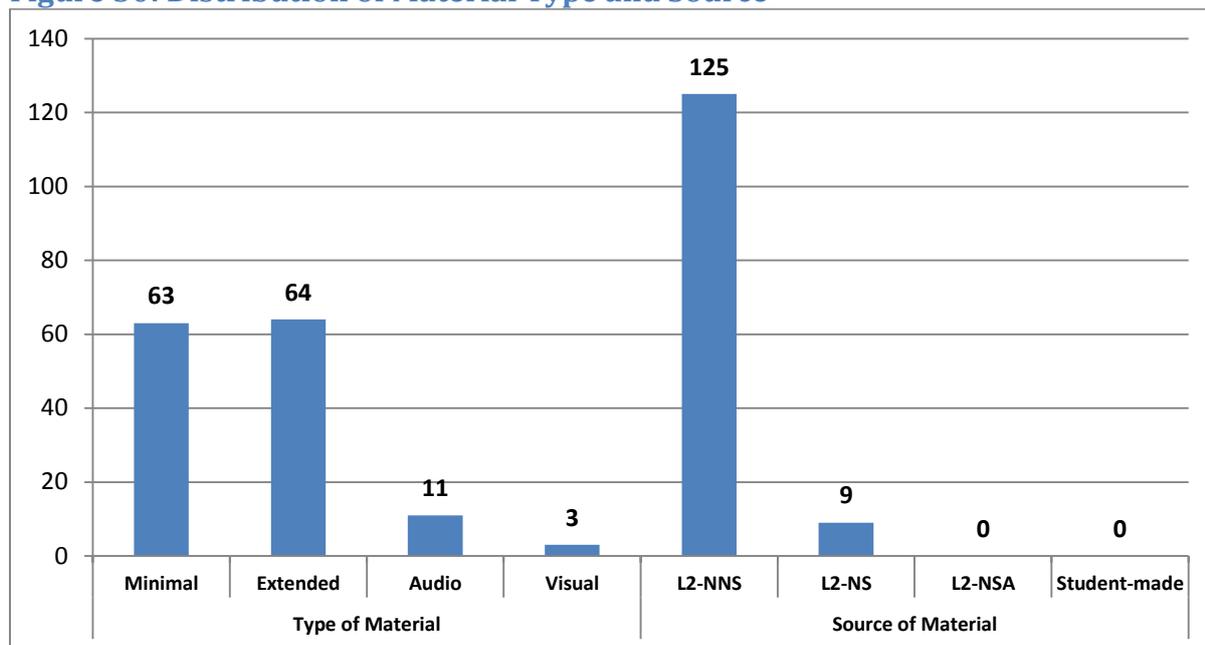


Figure 30 shows that, in Friesland, the material used is minimal and extended in almost equal amounts (on 63 and 64 occasions respectively). The materials used comprise both isolated sentences from lists of words as well as longer stories, dialogues and paragraphs. However, more audio is used (11 occasions) than visuals (3 occasions). As regards the sources, it is mainly material created for second language learning which is aimed at non-native speakers. However, on 9 occasions the material used was identified as being aimed at native speakers, meaning that although it is created for second language learning the language is authentic and written for native speakers without adaptation. The material used for the instruction of English in Friesland is mainly traditional.

Material for L2 learners with native speaker language adapted was not observed, nor was material created by the students.

4.3 English use outside school

In this section we will present the results from both regions together. The second research question of this study was:

- “What is the amount of use and exposure to English that secondary-school students experience outside school, and in what manner do they obtain that exposure and use?”

In order to collect data for this study, the students were asked to fill in a check-list style language diary (Appendix II). Of all the students who filled in the diary, few wrote down how long they spent on each activity and therefore the results cannot be regarded as conclusive. However, this information is used to illustrate and understand the data when necessary.

For better understanding of the amount and different types of exposure to English, we present the results of the analysis in four sections. First, we present the activity of listening, the second activity is speaking, the third is reading, and the final one is writing.

4.3.1 Listening

The first step in the analysis was to look at the total number of times the students were doing an activity related to listening in English, and to compare the two student groups. The results are presented in Table 2. We made a fourfold division: 0 times per week, 1-5 times per week, 6-10 times and more than 10 times per week.

Table 2: Percentage of students versus amount of times per week

		0 times	1-5 times	6-10 times	>10 times
Listening	BAC	9.7	34.5	36.3	19.5
	FRY	0	6.8	28.3	65

Comparing the times of exposure per week with the number of students, Table 3 shows that all Frisian students listen to English at least once per week while there are 9.7% of Basque students who never listen to English in a week. We can see that over a third of the Basque students (34.5%) listen to English between one and 5 times per week in contrast with 6.8% of the Frisian students who listen to English between one and 5 times per week. A similar amount of Basque students (36.3%) listen to English between 6 and 10 times per week and fewer Frisian students (28.3%) listen to English between 6 and 10 times per week. The big difference here is that 65% of Frisian students listen to English more than 10 times whilst only 19.5% of Basque students listen to English for more than 10 times per week.

The second step in the analysis was to look at the activity of listening in more detail. We wanted to see which activities these secondary students used in order to listen to English.

Table 3: Times per week listening to English through a variety of activities per region

	Area	N	Mean	SD	Sig. (1-tailed)
Music	BAC	113	4.1	2.6	,053
	FRY	177	4.6	2.4	
TV	BAC	113	0.9	1.6	,000
	FRY	177	4.5	2.1	
Internet⁵	BAC	113	1.2	1.9	,000
	FRY	177	2.4	2.4	

Looking in more detail at the type of activity through which the students listen to English (Table 3), it is clear that in both regions listening to music is the main type of exposure. On average, the Basque students listen to music 4.1 times per week and the Frisian students 4.6 times. In Friesland, the second type of activity through which the

⁵ We have excluded the activity "Other" because the analysis shows that the occurrence is so low that it is not representative of a general trend.

students listen to English is while watching TV. This activity is done 4.5 times per week on average, almost as often as listening to music. In contrast, listening to English through TV is hardly ever done by the Basque students (0.9 times per week). This is unsurprising since foreign programmes are usually dubbed into Basque or Spanish on the local TV channels. Listening to English on the internet (e.g. YouTube, games, music...) is reported much less often. In both regions the students listen to English a few times per week, on average, 1.2 times per week in the Basque Country and 2.4 times per week in Friesland.

The standard deviation (SD) is high in all the types of listening activities, and the last column in Table 3 indicates whether the difference between the averages in the two regions is significant. As far as listening to English through music goes, there is no statistically significant difference in the mean scores for Frisian and Basque students. However, for the responses for listening to English on TV and on the internet, there are statistically significant differences between the two groups of students (shown in bold).

We said at the beginning of this section that although the students were encouraged to add information regarding the length of time they do an activity, very few included that information. However, the information added by some helps to illustrate the exposure to English they have. So here we include additional information regarding listening to English activities, first listening to English, then watching TV and then listening through internet.

We have seen that both Frisian and Basque students listen to music in English for a similar amount of time per week. When looking at the information added by some, we see that they also do it in similar ways. According to their diaries, they listen to music on a variety of devices, such as on the radio, PC, and the mobile phone. Some students report listening at home, others do not provide information, but both Frisian and Basque students report listening to music in English when they are alone. Some students added the titles of the songs or of the artists they listened to. Some Frisian students say that they listen to music for “2 hours” (student 626) or “all morning” (student 659) whilst some Basque students say they listened to “various songs”, and others that they listened to “just one song”. Taking into account that an average song might last for 3 or 4 minutes, it represents a small amount of exposure.

As regards listening to English while watching TV, we saw in Table 3 that the quantity of listening to English through television differs between both groups of students (4.5 times per week in Friesland and 0.9 times per week in the Basque Country). This is mainly because the Frisian students can watch series, films and other programmes in English on TV because foreign programmes are shown in their original language with subtitles in Dutch on the local television channels. As some students informed, they watch films that last for 1.5 or 2 hours, which is a more extensive exposure to the language. For example, student 514 wrote “a film for 2 hours at home” and student 609 said “a movie for 2 ½ hours in the house”. They also watch series and other programmes such as “CSI for 1 hour and MTV⁶” as reported by student 670. By contrast, the information provided by some Basque students shows that although some report listening to English on TV, the exposure time is not extensive. For example, students 4, 13 and 14 (to mention three) report having watched a “Coca Cola” advertisement whose exposure might have been between 30 seconds to 1 minute. Some

⁶ Music Television Channel.

others report having listened to English on MTV. Although many do not clearly state what they have seen on that channel, student 55 and a few others say that they have watched *“Teen Mom”*, *“Parental Control”* and *“MTV Ink”* which are 30 minute programmes. It is important to bear in mind that MTV Spain dubs most of its programmes into Spanish, and although those programmes mentioned by the students are dubbed using the “voice over” technique, this technique does not allow them to hear English clearly because the Spanish translation is over the back-grounded English original.

Listening to English through the internet happens in both regions mainly through the website YouTube, as the following students wrote: *“YouTube for 1.5 hours”* - student 606 in Friesland and *“in YouTube”* from student 58 in the Basque Country, for example.

There is one more manner of exposure to English through listening in Friesland that does not happen in the Basque Country: the cinema. For example students 606 and 587 reported having watched a film at the *“bios(coop)”* (=cinema) that lasted for at least 90 minutes. Basque students are not usually exposed to English when they go to the cinema as films are rarely shown in the original version.

We excluded the activity of listening to English through “other” ways from the analysis because the occurrence was minimal and only in the Basque Country. However, this is what they reported as other ways to listen to English:

- using technology: *“Playstation”* (student 8) and *“computer game”* (student 36)
- by chance: *“listening to other people speaking on the street”* (student 24)
- school or academy: *“in the academy”* (student 29) and *“with my English teacher”* (student 36)

So the main source for listening to English for the Frisian students is through music and television, but only through music for the Basque students.

4.3.2 Speaking

First, we are going to present the analysis of the total number of times the students were speaking in English and then re-consider the analysis in more detail regarding the activities of speaking in English.

Table 4: Percentage of students versus amount of times per week

		0 times	1-5 times	6-10 times	>10 times
Speaking	BAC	33.6	55.7	7.2	3.6
	FRY	63.8	32.2	3.5	0.6

The Frisian and Basque students do not often speak in English outside school, according to their language diaries. We can see in Table 4 that 33.6% of the Basque students and 63.8% of the Frisian students never speak in English in a week. Just over half of the Basque students (55.7%) and 32.2% of the Frisian students speak in English between 1 and 5 times per week. Only 7.2% of the Basque students and 3.5% of the Frisian students speak in English between 6 and 10 times per week. And few Basque students (3.6%) and almost none

of the Frisian students (0.6%) speak in English more than 10 times per week. This latter is student 519 who reported speaking 14 times during that week.

The second part of the analysis is a more detailed description of the different activities related to speaking that gives these students the opportunity to use English outside school. As mentioned in the method section (section 2.3.2), the students had to account for the type of speaking they did; *face to face*, *on the phone*, *using the internet* (e.g. Skype), or *other* (excluded from the results). The Basque students were given the option of *speaking at the English academy* since many of them go to English lessons outside their regular school hours. The Frisian students were not given the option of the English academy because it is not a common phenomenon in Friesland.

Table 5: Times per week speaking in English through a variety of activities per region

	Area	N	Mean	SD	Sig. (1-tailed)
Face to face	BAC	113	0.7	1.6	.002
	FRY	177	0.2	0.6	
Telephone	BAC	113	0.2	0.9	.090
	FRY	177	0.1	0.6	
Internet	BAC	113	0.5	1	.416
	FRY	177	0.5	1.4	
English academy	BAC	113	0.9	1	N/A

According to the diaries, on average both groups of students participate in any English-related activity less than once a week. The Basque students speak in English most often at the English academy, on average 0.9 times per week. But comparing both regions, we can see in Table 5 that the Basque students speak face-to-face 0.7 times per week and the Frisian students 0.2 times. Both groups of students speak 0.5 times per week using the internet. They almost never speak in English on the telephone, with the Basque students recording a mere 0.2 times per week and the Frisian students 0.1 times.

The standard deviation shows that while some students speak face-to-face or at the English academy quite often during the week, others never do. Speaking face-to-face and on the internet show a statistically significant difference, indicated in bold.

Now that we have seen the frequency with which these students participate in an activity related to speaking in English, we are going to look next at these activities in more detail. In the Basque Country, speaking in English at the English academy is the most frequent activity in which the Basque students speak in English. When we analysed the information the students added, we saw that they usually attend those academies twice per week and for one hour each time. For example, student 58 reports speaking at the academy “with my teacher” on Tuesday and “talking to our teacher” on Thursday. Student 24 wrote next to the English academy section “1 hour” on Tuesday and “1 hour” on Thursday.

We have also seen that the internet is the medium most often used to speak in English by the Frisian students, but is the third choice for the Basque students. Nevertheless, they use it less than once a week (0.5 times per week for both groups). Students tend to use programmes such as ‘Skype’ and ‘Messenger’ and speak with their friends. In the Basque Country student 22 reports “(I spoke) with my friend joking” and student 30 says “with my

friend from the Netherlands". The Frisian students also reports speaking to their friends when they have spoken in English through internet; for example student 566 says "Skype with a friend, 6 minutes" and student 533 says "with a friend that comes from Finland".

Speaking in English face-to-face is done slightly more often in the Basque Country (the second most frequent activity) than in Friesland but in both regions less than once a week. According to their diaries, the Basque students spoke face-to-face in situations such as "I spoke with an English friend in the street" (Student 2) or "with American friends" (Student 31). However, some students reported speaking face-to-face when they were interacting at the academies - as can be seen from the following quotes:

- *With the teacher at the academy* (Student 8 on Thursday)
- *At the English academy with my friends* (Student 15 on Monday and Thursday)
- *At the academy* (Student 11 on Tuesday and Thursday)
- *In the academy* (Student 29 on Tuesday and Thursday)
- *With my teacher* (Student 30 on Tuesday and Thursday)

These responses strengthen the idea that the Basque students attend academies at least twice per week and that those are the places where they speak in English when they are outside school. In Friesland, speaking face-to-face is the second most common manner of speaking in English, reportedly done "with a friend for 3 minutes" (Student 514), "with my brother for 5 minutes (Student 649), and "with my mother for 10 minutes and my friend for 5 minutes" (Student 650).

As far as speaking on the phone is concerned, very few students said that they did this in English. The few who did said that they spoke with friends or relatives who live abroad. Basque student 31 reported "talking with American friends" and student 17 said "I talk with my cousin" but they did not add information on the length of these conversations. Frisian student 519 claimed to have spoken in English on the phone for one hour every day "with Ulla" and student 569 said that he had spoken on the phone "with Kelly for 1 second" on Monday (of that week). It is a common thing among these youngsters to intertwine single words or short sentences in English into their conversations.

So the Basque and Frisian students do not speak in English often; the Basque students speak mainly at the English academies and through the internet and the Frisian students mainly through the internet.

4.3.3 Reading

First, we are going to present the total number of times the students were doing an activity related to reading in English, and second, we are going to look in more detail at those activities and the frequency with which they read in English.

Table 6: Percentage of students versus amount of times per week

		0 times	1-5 times	6-10 times	>10 times
Reading	BAC	40.7	35.3	18.6	5.4
	FRY	36.7	48.6	11.9	2.8

Looking at Table 6, we see that many students never read in English outside school; 40.7% of the Basque students and 36.7% of the Frisian students reported never having read in English during that week. More Frisian students (48.6%) than Basque students (35.3%) read between 1 and 5 times per week, and more Basque students (18.6%) than Frisian students (11.9%) read between 6 and 10 times per week. 5.4% of the Basque students and 2.8% of the Frisian students read more than 10 times per week.

Next we are going to see in more detail the times per week that these students engage in different activities related to reading in English.

Table 7: Times per week reading in English through a variety of activities per region

	Area	N	Mean	SD	Sig. (1-tailed)
Digital media	BAC	113	1.6	2.3	.253
	FRY	177	1.5	2.1	
Printed media	BAC	113	0.6	1.3	.039
	FRY	177	0.4	1	
Signs and posters⁷	BAC	113	0.6	1.4	.043
	FRY	177	0.3	1	

The students were given the options of reading *digital media* (e.g. sms, chat, e-mail, Facebook, Tuenti/Hyves, websites), *printed media* (e.g. magazines, newspapers, books), *signs and posters*, and *other*. Table 7 shows the number of times that Frisian and Basque pupils read any type of writing in English during the week. Basque pupils read significantly more often English signs and posters and printed texts than Frisian pupils. The Basques (1.6 times) and Frisians (1.5 times) read some through digital media, but the difference between the two groups is not significant. The standard deviation shows once more that there are students who do not read in English and that there are others who read more often. Again, the significant differences are shown in bold in the last column.

So these students read in English mostly through digital media. In their diaries, some students added information concerning the type of texts they read. Again, there is not much information on the amount of time spent reading in English, but based on what some students added in their diaries, what they read through the digital media seems to be short texts, in some cases, and a few words in others. According to their diaries, what they read digitally are messages received through e-mail, MSN (messenger) social networking services (Tuenti in the Basque Country and Hyves in Friesland), posts on Twitter and Facebook, and other information on internet pages:

- *MSN everyday* (Student 13) and *MSN for 15 minutes* (Student 607)
- *Some words on Tuenti* (Students 15, 17, 20, 36) and *In Hyves with a friend* (Student 607)
- *In Google* (Student 17) and *Reading internet sites for 20 minutes* (student 674)
- *In the chat section of Facebook* (Student 36) and *A chat on Skype with a friend* (Student 566)

⁷ We have excluded the activity "Other" because the analysis shows that the occurrence is so low that it is not representative of a general trend.

The students also have other opportunities to read digital texts. For example, when playing digital games they report reading a game title (student 23) and the information in the game (students 515, 571, 609, 646, 669...). They also read titles of television programmes and of films in English (students 23 and 36).

So, it would seem that the digital reading that these students engage in is not very long, only involving some words or short sentences. But they also read some printed material as well as posters and signs. On the one hand, those Basque students who say they have read printed material in English, report having read newspapers, magazines and books, but two students also added that the reading was *“the book of the English academy”* (student 15), *“the exercises of the academy”* (student 36), *“in the class”* (student 38) and *“I read the exercises in the academy”* (student 39). On the other hand, few Frisian students claimed to have read printed texts, but one mentions *“a manual”* (Student 590) and another says the book *“Breaking Down”* (669). In both regions the students are exposed to English through signs and posters, sometimes in the street as one Frisian student reports *“T-shirts in the street”* (student 86) and *“a Festival poster in the street”* (Student 646), other times in their bedrooms *“in my bedroom”* (student 31), at restaurants *“Pan’s is the Best”* (student 160) and *“poster at McDonald’s”* (student 607) and once again *“at the academy”* (student 11) and *“in the academy”* (student 82) in the Basque Country.

So, the Frisian students do not read much in English; however, even if the Basque students seem to read in English slightly more, the English academy appears to be a strong source outside school. We have been told by the Basque students that they read printed material and signs and posters at the academy but if we excluded the times they read at the academy, the times the Basque students read in English would have been considerably fewer. Therefore, both groups of students do not read much in English outside of the school environment.

4.3.4 Writing

We will present the findings of writing outside school in two parts: first, we will show the times the students write in English in a week, comparing both regions, and second, we will show the times they write in English using different types of activities, again comparing both regions.

Table 8: Percentage of students versus amount of times per week

		0 times	1-5 times	6-10 times	>10 times
Writing	BAC	45.1	38.1	16.9	0
	FRY	63.3	30.5	6.2	0

Writing in English outside school is not done very often by these students, according to their diaries. Table 8 shows us that a large group of students never write in English outside school. 45.1% of the Basque students and 63.3% of the Frisian students reported never having written in English during that week. 38.1% of the Basque students and 30.5% of the Frisian students told us that they wrote between 1 and 5 times. 16.9% of the Basque

students wrote between 6 and 10 times and 6.2% of the Frisian students wrote between 6 and 7⁸ times. None of the Basque or Frisian students wrote in English more than 10 times.

Next, we will present the different activities related to writing in English, and the frequency with which these students used said activities to write in English.

Table 9: Times per week writing in English through a variety of activities per region

	Area	N	Mean	SD	Sig. (1-tailed)
Digital texts	BAC	113	1.5	2.3	.029
	FRY	177	1	1.8	
Handwritten texts⁹	BAC	113	.5	1	.000
	FRY	177	0	0.2	

When filling in the diary, they were given the options of writing *digital texts* (e.g. *sms, chat, e-mail, Facebook, Tuenti*), *handwritten texts* (e.g. *letters, notes, essays*), and *other*¹⁰. We can see in Table 9 that the activity of writing digitally is the most frequent. On average, the Basque students write digitally 1.5 times per week and their peers in Friesland write once per week. As far as writing by hand is concerned (handwritten texts), it almost never happens; on average the Basque students write 0.5 times per week and the Frisians never (0 times).

The Basque pupils wrote significantly more digital and handwritten texts in English than the Frisian pupils (resp. $P=.029$ and $P=.000$). The standard deviation shows that the differences among individual students are once again high.

Although not much information was collected in the Basque Country on the length and type of writing these students do in English, the information added by some students does give us an idea of what it is like. For example, they seem to prefer digital writing to handwriting, tending to use services like Facebook, Tuenti or Hyves, e-mail and MSN (messenger), as one of them summarises: “*chat and Tuenti, email, Messenger*” (Student 24). Once again, the length is not stated on many occasions but a few of them say that they only write single words in English: “*some words in Tuenti*” (Student 15) and “*some words with my friends*” (Student 39).

As far as handwriting in English is concerned, the Basque students’ responses show that they only use that activity when they are not communicating in writing with their friends, preferring for that purpose to use a digital device. According to their diaries, the place of the academy once again stands out as very important, since in this case it is the only place where they write by hand in English outside school:

- *In the English academy* (Students 5, 12, 18, 29, 30, 35,...)
- *Doing the writing at the academy* (Student 15)

⁸ None of the Frisian students wrote in English more than 7 times.

⁹ We have excluded the activity “Other” because the analysis shows that the occurrence is so low that it is not representative of a general trend.

¹⁰ We have excluded the activity “Other” because the analysis shows that the occurrence is so low that it is not representative of a general trend.

- *I wrote a letter in the academy* (Student 16)
- *My school homework and the activities of the academy* (Student 36)
- *I wrote the exercises in the academy* (Student 39)

The Frisian students also write digitally using chats and social networks, “*writing for 6 minutes with a friend in a chat*” (student 566) as one said. We saw in Table 9 that on average the Frisian students do not write by hand in English but there is one student who reported that he “*wrote a letter in English*” (student 652).

So the Frisian students write very little in English outside school and usually by digital means only. The Basque students write very little in English too, and also more digitally than by hand. However, if we take into account that handwriting in English only happens at the English academy, then the situation in which both Frisian and Basque students write in English outside school is the same for both groups - only by digital means.

5 Summary and conclusions

This chapter consists of three sections: in the first section we are going to present a summary of the findings and of the conclusions we have drawn from the analysis of the didactics of English. In the second section we are going to present a summary and conclusions as to the use of English outside school. And in the third section, future research, we are going to present the research topics for a follow-up to this study.

5.1 English language didactics

The first research question this study aimed to answer was:

- “What are the characteristics of the didactics of English language teaching and of the materials used?”

It must be remembered that two groups of researchers, one in the Basque Country and another one in Friesland, collected the data. Although we tried to be consistent, there is a possibility that different researchers labelled and identified aspects of didactics differently. Thus conclusive decisions should not be taken.

After we have done the analysis of each region with the COLT-scheme (Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching), we conclude that the didactics of teaching English and the type of teaching materials used have similarities and differences in the Basque Country and in Friesland. We are going to present those similarities and differences one by one.

We must note that lessons in both regions are similar on the surface; we observed 22 lessons in the Basque Country and 21 in Friesland and similarly, on average, a lesson in the Basque Country consists of 3.9 activities and 9.1 episodes and in Friesland it consists of 3.8 activities and 8.8 episodes. So, superficially, there are hardly any differences. Also, the length of the episodes is similar; in both regions, the majority of the episodes are up to 5 minutes long. 69.6% of the episodes in the Basque Country and 65.2% of the episodes in Friesland are of 5 or less minutes in length. So, English lessons in the Basque Country and in Friesland are dynamic with different episodes and activities.

Nevertheless, when we look deeper, we see that the content of the lessons are not the same in the Basque Country and in Friesland. We have found that the teachers in both regions do not always agree in their didactics, language use and the learning materials used. We will summarize and discuss these aspects in that order; first the didactics, next the language use, and then the learning materials.

As far as didactics is concerned, we saw that the time allocated to the different types of episodes differs, that the manner in which the students are organised when working also differs and that so do the treatment content and its modalities get during instruction. In Table 10 we summarize the time allocation to the different types of episodes in each region.

Table 10: Time allocation to each episode in both regions

	% of the observed time	
	The Basque Country	Friesland
Management	2.9%	11.2%
Introduction to task	14.3%	4.6%
Work on task	48.1%	50.3%
Check task	14.9%	2.6%
Review task	9.4%	6.7%
Instruction/explanation	4.7%	11.1%
Homework assignment	2.1%	1.7%
Closure	1.6%	0.8%
Interruption	1.6%	3.6%

Table 10 we conclude that *working on task* is the most relevant episode in the English lessons in both regions and *closure* and *homework assignment* the least. However, the lessons in both regions differ in that the Basque teachers spend more time introducing tasks (*introduction to task* episodes) and checking them (*check task* episodes) and that their colleagues in Friesland spend more time on *instruction or explanation* of grammatical or linguistic aspects related episodes and on *management*. The reason for this difference might be that Basque instruction of English is more communicative oriented than Frisian instruction of English. As told in the theory section, the Communicative Language Teaching principles focus on task-based learning thus the Basque teachers of English do not spend much time explaining new grammatical or linguistic aspects; they are introduced through activities and tasks. The Frisian teachers also focus on Communicative Language Teaching principles but as Allen (1983) suggested that both form and meaning based instruction are important, the Frisian teachers also focus on and spend time teaching grammar and other linguistic aspects. Thus the Basque teachers focus on introducing tasks and checking them and the Frisian teachers focus on introducing and explaining linguistic aspects.

The analysis of the participant organisation (the way students work) shows some interesting aspects also related to the communicative approach of teaching English. On the one hand, students in both regions work predominantly as a whole group (the whole class working together) and led by the teacher, this type of instruction limits students in their use of the target language and their opportunity to engage with more than a few words. But on the other hand, the Basque students work sometimes individually but more often in small groups and the Frisian students work sometimes in small groups but more often individually. This latter fact agrees with Kwakernaat's study (2010) that suggested an increasing general trend to work independently and cooperatively, in small groups, in the Netherlands. And the former fact is important because group work allows students to communicate and focus on expression rather than on accuracy. This feature is consistent with a more communicative approach of the English lessons in the Basque Country.

When the content of the episode is language instruction, the teachers in both regions also tend to focus on vocabulary and grammar instruction. However, it happens more often

in Friesland, where the instruction of vocabulary was observed on 45 occasions (44 occasions in the Basque Country) and the instruction of grammar on 47 occasions (24 occasions in the Basque Country). Frisian teachers also spend a considerable time on spelling and pronunciation in contrast to their Basque colleagues. The focus on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and spelling instruction is stronger in Friesland (144 occasions in total) than in the Basque Country (82 occasions in total), again, because in the Basque Country English didactics are more communicatively oriented. We conclude that the Frisian teachers focus more on form while the Basque teachers focus more on communication.

Regarding language use, we saw that the Basque students have more opportunities to speak in the target language (English) than the Frisian students (114 versus 26 occasions). With the COLT scheme we did not record the exact length of time the students spoke, listened, read or wrote in English, we only recorded the length of time of the episodes in which the students used those modalities. Therefore, we are going to use the occasions in which those modalities were used in order to summarize and draw conclusions. The analysis of the student modality, or the skills practiced by the students, also shows that the Basque students practice more often their listening skills (181 occasions) than the Frisian students (26 occasions). Reading and writing are practiced less often than the other two modalities in both regions. Reading is done more often in the Basque schools (83 occasions) than in the Frisian schools (80 occasions). But writing is done more often in the Frisian schools (72 occasions) than in the Basque schools (48 occasions). Thus the Basque students speak, listen and read more in the target language than the Frisian students and the Frisian students write more in the target language than the Basque students. The reason why the Basque students practice more often speaking and listening is that they do more group work and the didactics of English have a more communicative approach.

We found that the type of language used in both regions also differs; it is more often discursive in the Basque Country (37 versus 24 occasions) while it is more often functional in Friesland (32 versus 26 occasions). Therefore we find a more cohesive and coherent sequence of sentences and utterances (such as describing a process) in the Basque Country, versus shorter sentences and utterances (such as apologising, requesting and explaining) in Friesland. This fact also shows that the Basque lessons of English have more emphasis on communicative skills than the Frisian lessons of English.

Another aspect of language use and English didactics that we observed and the COLT scheme does not show is the use of the target language (English) during instruction. In the theory section we saw that cooperative learning can be successful in foreign language teaching with the use of English as medium of instruction, because otherwise the students do not use the target language when working in small groups. We saw that the language of instruction in the Basque Country is English, this is the language used by the teachers and the language expected to be used by the students. In Friesland we saw that the teachers try to use English as much as possible but also use Dutch during instruction. We conclude that the reasons why we saw that the Basque students practice the listening and speaking skills in English more often than the Frisian students are that the language of instruction is English and they work more often in collaboration either as a whole group or in small groups.

And the third aspect we want to comment on is the learning materials used for teaching English in the Basque and Frisian schools. According to the analysis done with the COLT scheme, they are similar. One similarity is that the learning material is traditional in both regions. So it is mainly a textbook that includes different activities for learning and practising the language. Digital material is seldom used - just for occasional video and audio activities, web search activities and Power Point presentations. According to the observations, more visual activities (Power Point presentations and web searches) were included in the Basque lessons (5 versus 3 occasions) and more audio activities in the Frisian lessons (11 versus 0 occasions). Another similarity is the type of language included in the textbook and in other resources, such as photocopies, is minimal in both regions. This means that the language consists of short paragraphs, lists of vocabulary words and it is material created specifically for L2 learners. Thus the language is simplified, or adapted, for non-native speakers in order to increase the learners' comprehension ability. However, there were a few occasions where although the material used aimed at L2 students, the language was of native speakers' levels (2 occasions in the Basque Country and 9 occasions in Friesland).

Through the observations we saw that in general the teachers in both regions follow the textbooks and the content they include. When we analysed the content and the content control of the lessons with COLT, we saw that in both regions the tasks and the content of the tasks are selected by the teacher and/or the textbook. Reality is that the teachers select the content but following the textbooks, in a few occasions, we saw that the teachers expanded the content with the addition of other activities. The difference we found is that there are more cases in the Basque Country when the students, either in combination with the teacher or the book, or by themselves, select the content of the task.

In relation to the materials used, the observations gave us a different picture from that described by COLT. In the Basque Country, all the schools observed had a textbook while in Friesland, two schools used a textbook and one school used the ELO ("*Elektronische LeerOmgeving*") or "electronic learning environment" platform which does not include a textbook. With ELO each student has a laptop each and the teacher creates her/his own material or borrows from other sources. An additional aspect not registered with the COLT scheme is that textbooks in the Basque Country are monolingual English while textbooks used in Friesland were bilingual Dutch/English. The exception was the monolingual English textbook used in grade 4¹¹ in Friesland but the textbooks from the same series used in grades 2 and 3 include grammar explanations and other instructions in Dutch¹².

The textbooks used in the Basque schools have a communicative approach. There are texts and audios to introduce the students to a topic and then different activities to develop around that topic using the four skills. The textbook *Subject Projects*¹³ used in the second and third grades of secondary does not include sections aimed at grammar and other linguistic aspects; the instruction and practice of different linguistic aspects is done through

¹¹http://epub00.publitas.com/Noordhoff_Voortgezet_onderwijs_Groningen/ProefkaternSteppingStonesTweed eFase4havo/

¹² http://epub00.publitas.com/Noordhoff_Voortgezet_onderwijs_Groningen/SteppingStones_1vmbo-thv_textbook_H4/#/spreadview/0/

¹³ Published by *Ikastolen Elkarte*.

different activities and tasks. And the textbook *Social Sciences*¹⁴ used in Grade 10 (4th year of secondary), as the name suggests, is on social studies and includes neither grammar instruction nor other linguistic aspects' instruction of an explicit manner. In Friesland, on the other hand, the textbook used in two out of the three schools visited, *Stepping Stones*, does include clear grammar and other aspects of explicit linguistic instruction, done mainly by using explanations in Dutch. Therefore, although the analysis of the material used in both regions (using the COLT-scheme) shows certain characteristics of the materials used, it does not give a very detailed description. In reality, the materials used in both regions differ more substantially than indicated by the COLT-analysis.

To sum up, according to our study, the Basque didactics of English has a more communicative approach than the Frisian didactics of English. We saw that Basque teachers spend more time correcting and reviewing tasks than their Frisian colleagues who spend more time introducing and explaining grammar and other linguistic aspects. We also saw a more communicative approach when the Basque students work more often in small groups and have more opportunities to speak and listen using the target language (English). The Frisian didactics of English also have a communicative approach but focus on form too. We saw that the Frisian students work collaboratively as a whole class and also individually, and the didactics focus more evidently on linguistic aspects. In general, the instruction of English in the Basque schools is done through English with little use of Basque or Spanish and the learning materials used are in English. In Friesland, the instruction of English is done using Dutch and the materials are bilingual in Dutch and English.

5.2 English outside school

The second research question that this study aimed to answer was:

- “What is the amount of exposure to and use of English secondary school students experience outside school and in which manner do they get that exposure and use?”

After analysing the data collected from the student diaries, we conclude that the students in the Basque Country and in Friesland use very little English outside of the school environment. In order to summarize the content of section 4.3, we include below a table that shows all the data together.

Table 11 : Average times per week

	Basque Country	Friesland
Listening	6.3	11.9
Speaking	2.4	0.9
Reading	3	2.2
Writing	2	1

¹⁴ Published by *Ikastolen Elkartea*.

Table 11 shows the average times per week these students use English in the stated four manners (listening, speaking, reading and writing) outside of school. We found that listening is the manner in which these students are most often exposed to English outside school. In general, the Frisian students listen to English 5 more times per week more than the Basque students do. As explained before in the results section, this is mainly because the Frisian students can watch TV in English.

What we discovered about the Frisian students agrees with what we said in the theory section; the 2002 report by the European Network of Policy Makers for the Evaluation of Education Systems stated that music, radio, TV and computers were the most important type of contact with English that Dutch teenagers had. This current study shows that music, TV, and computers (used for communicating as well as for listening and reading) are still the main source of English exposure for teenagers in Friesland. In the Basque Country, it is music and computers. That same report also stated that the Dutch students watched at least one hour of programmes on TV in English and our study shows that Frisian students do indeed watch one to one-and-a-half hours of programmes on TV in English, in contrast to the half-hour programmes some Basque students watch. The amount of music to which the students listen in English also shows that the Frisian students still listen for quite a long time, as stated in the European Network of Policy Makers' report (2002) on Dutch students. Both groups of students, Basques and Frisians, listen to music with similar frequency and in a similar manner; they listen to music about 4 times per week and they do it on the radio, on TV, on their mobile phones, or using other digital devices.

We found that the second most frequent manner in which these students use English outside school is reading. The Basques read 3 times per week while the Frisian students read 2.2 times. These students read mainly digital media, such as chat messages on social networking services using computers, and text messages on the phone, usually with their friends. The reading is not extensive; it appears to be short phrases or single words intertwined within another language. Reading in English while playing computer games is also another means of exposure to digital texts in English, as well as reading the subtitles of films in English. According to these results, we can conclude that digital media is the main source of reading for both the Basques and the Frisians, that the reading is not extensive, and that both groups of students read in a similar manner and with a similar frequency.

The third most common manner in which these students use English outside school is speaking for the Basque students (2.4 times per week) and writing for the Frisians (1 time per week). However, the Frisian students speak 0.9 times per week, almost as often as they write in English. As far as speaking is concerned - as we explained in the results section - many Basque students claim to speak in English twice or three times per week, information which matches with the times they attend the English academies. Many of them also clearly stated that the academy is the place they speak in English outside school. So if we took away the academies, the Basque students would have the same opportunities to speak in English outside school as the Frisian students, less than once a week. Thus we can conclude that both groups of students do not speak much in English outside school, but that when they do, they do so using the internet to communicate with friends or relatives who live abroad - and in the case of the Basque students, face-to-face with the teacher at the English academy.

As far as writing in English is concerned, it is the least-used manner in which the Basque students use English outside school, and it is the third-placed manner for the Frisian students. The Basque students write in English twice per week and the Frisian students once a week. After analysing the results, we said that the Basque students also wrote some handwritten texts in English, but this happened either in the English academy or during homework for school or the academy. Therefore, excluding those times the Basque students write by hand in English, we can conclude that these students do not write very much in general in English outside of school, and that when they do write it tends to be through a variety of social networking services on the internet, mainly to communicate with friends.

To conclude with this section on English outside school, we can say that the Basque students use English in the form of reading, writing and speaking mainly at the English academies and listening more in their spare time. They do not yet really have other opportunities to use the foreign language outside school, as Cenoz's study in 2009 suggested. Cenoz (2009) also stated the possibility for an increasing amount of exposure to English through the internet and computer games "in new generations", and this current study shows that internet is actually a good source of exposure to English for Basque students.

We can also conclude that the Frisian students use English outside school mainly through listening. They listen to English through music and television. They hardly speak, read, or write in English and if they do so they do it using the internet and the social networking services.

To finish, we can say that computers, the internet and other digital devices such as the mobile phone, are the means by which these students use English outside school.

5.3 Future Research

This study has looked at the characteristics of English language didactics, as well as at the use of English outside school that secondary students experience in the Basque Country and in Friesland. On the whole, this report shows that secondary school students in the Basque Country and in Friesland do not use the foreign language (English) very extensively, either at school or outside. English is for them, at least in most cases, the foreign language they learn at school. The study of the didactics carried out for this report shows that the Basque students have the chance to use more English in school than their peers in Friesland, but that the situation changes slightly outside of school where the Frisian students seem to be more exposed to English than their Basque counterparts (not taking into account the exposure and use the Basque students accrue at the English academies).

We saw that the didactics and the materials used in both regions for the instruction of English are similar in many aspects, but that they also differ in several others. We reached this conclusion after we analysed the data collected with the aid of a scheme. This scheme permitted us to identify the characteristics of the didactic practice and of the material used, although the analysis is a descriptive study. This description of the didactics and materials does not go deeply into the study of the language used, and therefore, for a better understanding of how the language is both used and learned, a more thorough study of the

use and allocation of the languages involved in education in the two regions would constitute a good follow-up to this current study. Together with this, a more detailed study of the materials would be necessary to better understand and learn the characteristics of the didactic practice in each of the regions involved.

Within the topic of language didactics, another aspect that has not been studied is that of the challenges that teaching in third language creates for the teachers involved in the process. There are challenges specific to language teachers that have consequences, if not addressed, related to the learning success of the students. Certain needs arise for the teachers as a result. Therefore, a study of the challenges and needs of language teachers in multilingual schools would be necessary to understand the current situation in the classrooms of the Basque Country and of Friesland. A study of the progression from the language classrooms (English classrooms especially) in primary schools into the language classrooms in secondary schools would also give a good insight for school administrators, teachers and language-policy makers when designing their language curricula.

This study also shows that the Basque and Frisian students seldom use English outside school, and that they rarely use it in an extended way. The diary used for data collection proved to be a good instrument for the purposes of this study, but not all students returned them complete. It also proved to be a good means for collecting illustrative data, but a poorer means for gathering narrower and more specific details. It allowed us to obtain an idea of the type of exposure to English and of the opportunities to use English that the students have at their disposal. For future studies, another instrument, or a variety of instruments, could widen the possibilities of a more detailed analysis. It would also be interesting to research into whether the exposure and use of English outside the school really helps the students to learn the foreign language more easily or extensively, and whether this is reflected in their proficiency levels. Another future study could be to analyse whether the use of English outside school increases motivation to learn the foreign language.

6 Literature

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Appendix II: Student Diary for Exposure to and use of English outside school

		<i>Monday</i>		<i>Tuesday</i>	
		√	Description (What, Where, Who, How long?)	√	Description (What, Where, Who, How long?)
<i>Listening</i>	Listening to music				
	Watching TV/movies				
	Through Internet				
	Other:				
<i>Speaking</i>	Talking face to face				
	Talking on the phone				
	Through Internet (e.g. Skype)				
	At an English Academy ¹⁵				
	Other:				
<i>Reading</i>	Digital media (e.g. sms, chat, e-mail, Facebook, Tuenti ¹⁶ , websites)				
	Printed media (e.g. magazines, newspapers, books)				
	Signs and posters				
	Other:				
<i>Writing</i>	Digital (e.g. sms, chat, e-mail, Facebook, Tuenti)				
	Handwriting (e.g. letters, notes, essays)				
	Other:				

¹⁵ Asked only in the Basque Country.

¹⁶ Asked in the Basque Country, in Friesland it said "Hyves".