

EVALUATION STUDY ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EARLY BILINGUAL EDUCATION PROJECT

- FINAL REPORT -

(Translated document)

Coordination: Marta Mateus de Almeida

Central Technical Team: Estela Costa e Ana Sofia Pinho

Field supervisors: Vanessa Antão e Patrícia Rocha

CONTRACTING AUTHORITY: DGE/MEC

PROCEDURE REFERENCE: PEPC 1308/2014

December 2014

Table of contents

Executive Summary	5
Introduction.....	7
I. Project’s background.....	9
II. Methodological Procedures of the External Evaluation Process	9
1. Objectives.....	9
2. Methods and Techniques of data collection and processing.....	10
3. Population	11
3.1. Characterisation of the teachers involved in the study	12
4. Sampling	12
III. Global Results	14
1. Document Analysis	14
1.1. Feasibility Study.....	14
1.2. Project Framework	16
1.2.1. General objectives of the EBP project.....	16
1.2.2. School clusters involved in the project.....	16
1.3. Training.....	17
1.4. Project guiding documents.....	18
1.4.1. Development plan	18
1.4.2. Guidelines and Recommendations.....	19
1.5. Monitoring.....	19
2. Case Studies.....	21
2.1. Characterisation of the group covered by the study.....	21
2.2. Results	22
2.2.1. Implementation Conditions.....	22
2.3. Attitudes towards bilingual education	27
2.3.1. Results of questionnaires to Students and Parents/Guardians.....	27
2.3.2. Interviews to Educational Community and Questionnaires to Parents/Guardians	29
2.4. Innovation and good practices	30
2.5. Quality of Learning	32
2.5.1. Results of Questionnaires to Students	32
2.5.2. Summative Assessment Register Sheets	33
2.5.3. Assessment of Learning.....	33

SHORTCOMINGS..... 38
CONCLUSIONS 39
RECOMMENDATIONS 47
References..... 49
Consulted documents..... 49

Acronyms Index

1. º CEB – 1st cycle of Basic Education
AE – School cluster
AEC – Curriculum Enrichment Activities
BC – British Council
CA – Monitoring Committee
CCPFC – Conselho Científico-Pedagógico da Formação Contínua
CEF – Education and Training Courses
CLIL – Content and Language Integrated Learning
DGE – Directorate-General for Education
DGEstE – Directorate-General for Schools
DGIDC – Directorate-General for Innovation and Curriculum Development
DRE - Educational Regional Services Directorate
DSR - Regional Services Directorate
DSRA - Alentejo Regional Services Directorate
DSRC - Centre Regional Services Directorate
DSRLVT - Regional Services Directorate of Lisbon and Tagus Valley
DSRN – North Regional Services Directorate
EBP – Early Bilingual Education Project
EFA – Adult Education and Training
EPP – Project Pedagogical Team
ESF – European Social Fund
GI – Research Group
IEUL – Institute of Education of the University of Lisbon
ME – Ministry of Education
MEC – Ministry of Education and Science
NEBP – Non EBP class group
NEE – Special needs
OC – Complementary Offer
O/R – Guidelines/Recommendations
PD – Development Plan
PCA – Alternative Curriculum Pathways
PEA – School Cluster Educational Project
POAT – Operational Programme for Technical Assistance
PTT – Class teachers
SEAE – Secretary of State for School Administration

Executive Summary

This document is the Final Report of the external evaluation study on the effectiveness of the implementation of the Early Bilingual Education Project (EBP) in the 1st cycle of Basic Education in Portugal. For purposes of implementation of early bilingual education in English in the 1st cycle, the EBP Project was funded by the Operational Programme for Technical Assistance (POAT) of the European Social Fund (ESF), running under the authority of the Ministry of Education and Science (MEC), through the Directorate-General for Education (DGE). The British Council (BC) was a partner entity, by collaborating in the training of participating teachers and monitoring processes. The monitoring also included the participation of the Directorate-General for Schools (DGEstE).

The EBP Project began in the school year of 2010/2011, and is expected to end in 2015. Its implementation was preceded by the completion, in 2009/2010, of a Feasibility Study, funded by the BC that made it possible to make a set of recommendations relating to school clusters that could be involved in the Project. Originally, the project involved seven school clusters, distributed by the five Regional Services Directions (DSR), located in Aveiro, Évora, Fundão, Lisbon, Porto and Silves. In several cases, there was the participation of more than one school of the 1st Cycle per cluster. The study was focused on six of the seven clusters initially involved, because one cluster had not met the necessary requirements for participation.

The present study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of the EBP Project. The data collection has allowed to make recommendations for learning English in a bilingual context, the training of bilingual teachers, and the proposal of criteria for extending the Project.

The study was structured in two stages. The first, focusing on the analysis of the document corpus, made it possible to know the Feasibility Study, to identify the conditions for the participation of school clusters in the Project, and the guidelines for the implementation; to understand the project; and to know the teacher training provided, the evaluation made by participants and the type of monitoring developed. The second stage consisted in six case studies of school clusters that took part in the pilot project.

By using semi-structured and focus group interviews, and mixed questionnaires, we analysed the views and opinions of the different stakeholders. To assess the students' learning, we took as units of analysis the 4th grade class groups that participated in the project in the previous school year (2013/2014). Whenever possible, we made a comparison with class groups not involved in the Project, but belonging to similar socio-educational contexts. The purpose was to identify key information and general trends and reveal tendencies. To this end, students' assessment sheets and dossiers of activities were analysed. Essentially, we assessed the language proficiency of students in the fields of speaking and spoken interaction, listening, and writing (comprehension and production). This was based on the objectives defined to assess the quality of learning: to examine the level of proficiency in reading, writing and speaking in English and in other subject areas (Social Studies and Expressions).

The results show high levels of motivation to bilingual education in the 1st cycle by the different socio-educational stakeholders. Regarding the language proficiency in English, the results place the EBP classes in level A1 (Breakthrough) and A2 (Waystage) depending on the skills under analysis and the School Clusters. The classes which were not included in the bilingual project have displayed more difficulty in carrying out the proposed activities. These results highlight the potential of the project to the development of students' proficiency in English.

From interviews with stakeholders, the motivation of students and families for bilingual learning emerged as an added value. Moreover, teachers said the EBP project increases the cognitive abilities of

students and encourages their ability/pace of work, which leads to less indiscipline in classroom. Also highlighted are the changes in teachers' professional development, the existence of collaborative work among teachers of different cycles and levels of education, and the importance of the EBP project for changing conceptions on teaching in the 1st cycle.

The most striking concerns are related to the difficulty of exploring in sufficient depth the Social Studies contents and managing the syllabus, along with some apprehension on the results of the final cycle exams (Portuguese and Mathematics), and the fear of discontinuity of the EBP project in the 2nd cycle. Regarding the conditions of effectiveness, these are related to human resources management policy issues (continuity/stability of the teaching staff) and 1st Cycle teachers training (introduction of English language in initial teacher education courses). The commitment of school head teachers in managing the EBP Project is also important, in addition to the organisational dimension, that is to say, intermediate structures, in particular the coordinators selection process and other stakeholders. The investment in committed and participatory leaderships leads to richer dynamics, with more positive effects on school atmosphere and culture. Also valued was the contribution of the training provided about bilingual methodology, especially to improvements in planning and didactics, classroom organisation and management, and the diversification/innovation of strategies, materials and activities.

Recommendations are based on the following dimensions: implementation conditions, training and monitoring, training in CLIL methodology, dissemination and recognition, and promotion of learning.

Finally, with regard to the EBP project enlargement criteria, it is considered that it should progressively cover all classes of a school cluster. Furthermore, it will be essential:

- To ensure adequate human resources (in terms of qualification/training and credit hours), and the stability of teams (class teachers and assistant teachers).
- To guarantee the curricula are adapted to the reality of learning in a bilingual context by enabling an interdisciplinary approach to content and a gradual learning of language structure.
- To take steps to link the 1st Cycle curriculum to the curricula of subsequent cycles, in order to ensure the continuity of the teaching/learning process.

Introduction

This document is the Final Report of the external evaluation study on the effectiveness of the implementation of the Early Bilingual Education Project (EBP) in the 1st cycle of Basic Education (1.º CEB) (reference of the procedure PEPC 1308/2014) resulting from the Project financing n.º 000834402013 – “Evaluation study on the impact of public policies on foreign language teaching: the case of early bilingual education project in English in the 1st cycle”, funded by the Operational Programme for Technical Assistance (POAT) of the European Social Fund (FSE).

The report was prepared in accordance with the proposal presented by the Institute of Education, University of Lisbon (IEUL), and the contract for services celebrated with the Directorate-General for Education (DGE), of the Ministry of Education and Science (MEC).

The EBP project run under the authority of the Ministry of Education and Science, through the DGE, having as a partner the British Council (BC), which accompanied the training of teachers, and took part in the monitoring processes. The monitoring also included the participation of the Directorate-General for Schools (DGEstE). It was preceded by the completion, in 2009/2010, of a Feasibility Study¹, funded by the BC. It was in the school year 2010/2011 that its implementation was prepared, having been promoted specialized training in English language and bilingual teaching to the 1st Cycle teachers and to the other English language teachers of the 2nd and/or 3rd Cycles involved in the project. The project began in 2011/2012, was developed in the four following years and is expected to end in 2015. The project involved seven school clusters distributed by the five Regional Services Directions (DSR), located in Aveiro, Évora, Fundão, Lisbon, Porto and Silves. In several cases, there was the participation of more than one school of 1st Cycle per cluster.

This report is intended to give an account of the results obtained in the study of this pilot project and is the sole responsibility of the following members of the IE-UL team:

Ana Sofia Pinho – PhD in Language Didactics and work done in *Content and Language Integrated Learning approach* (CLIL) (Technical Team)

Estela Costa – PhD in Educational Policy and Administration (Technical Team)

Marta Mateus de Almeida – PhD in Teacher Education (Coordinator)

Patrícia Rocha – Master in Educational Administration (Research Fellowship)

Vanessa Antão – Master in Educational Administration (Research Fellowship)

¹ For more detailed information, see Appendix 2 - Document Analysis.

In accordance with the terms of the contract for services, the report has three main goals:

- To evaluate the effectiveness of the EBP Project implementation;
- To make recommendations that may have a positive impact on public policies on English learning and training of bilingual teachers;
- To put forward Project's enlargement criteria.

The report is organized into three chapters.

In the first chapter - *Project Framework* -, a contextualization of the project is done by defining the conditions that led to its implementation and the purposes that underlie it.

The second chapter - *Methodological Procedures of the External Evaluation Process* -, is intended to present the study design, instruments for data collection and the analysis procedures. The target population of the study is identified and the sampling process is described.

In the third chapter - *Global Results* -, the analysis and interpretation of the collected data is carried out.

Finally, the main conclusions are presented, the research limitations are mentioned and recommendations are made.

I. Project's background

The EBP project, implemented in Portugal, and here evaluated, had as reference point the experience carried out, in Spain, since 1996, in 122 public schools.

In 2009, the DGE, the former Directorate-General for Innovation and Curriculum Development (DGIDC), appointed a Steering Committee to conduct a feasibility study that was approved in November in that year, by the Ministry of Education (ME). The study became a reality with the support and collaboration of the BC, and its main objective was "to evaluate the feasibility of the implementation of EBP in schools of 1st cycle in Portugal", as well as making recommendations on the "advantages and disadvantages of the implementation", the "factors that need to be considered" before it starts, and how it would be scheduled and developed (DGIDC, 2010: 1). Therefore, two teams were formed: the Monitoring Committee (CA), responsible for the study, and the Research Group (GI), responsible for data collection in school clusters (AE). The AE were appointed by the ME, using criteria established along with the BC, based on the Feasibility Study.

In February 2011, following the completion of the Feasibility Study, the pilot project has been implemented in 1st Cycle schools of seven AE. Planned for a period of four years, after endorsement by the Assistant Secretary of State and Education (EEAS), in February 2011, the pilot project was developed in two phases. In the first phase, of preparation (2010/2011), the teachers' needs analysis and teachers training were carried out; in the second phase, the project was implemented, with an expected duration of four years (2011 to 2015) (adapted from DGE, 2013: 1). At present, the project takes place in four of the five initial DSR, due to the withdrawal of one of the AE. Teachers received accredited training (in bilingual education and CLIL) prepared by DGE, resorting to the BC specialized trainers. The training was free and accredited by the Scientific and Pedagogical Council for Continuing Education (CCPFC).

II. Methodological Procedures of the External Evaluation Process

1. Objectives

This study had as overall objectives:

- i) To evaluate the effectiveness of the EBP Project's implementation;
- ii) To make recommendations that may have a positive impact on public policies on English learning and bilingual teacher education;
- iii) To put forward Project's enlargement criteria.

From the first general objective, there are several specific objectives. Therefore, this study aims to specifically evaluate:

- i. The degree of students' proficiency in English, in bilingual curricular context, through their performance in English classes of OC and/or AEC;
- ii. Students' knowledge and skills in curricular contents of Social Studies and Expressions;
- iii. Students' learning in Portuguese (students' mother tongue) and Mathematics;

- iv. The representations, attitudes and motivations, and behaviours of stakeholders (students, parents, teachers and management of school clusters) in view of a bilingual school and a context of bilingual learning;
- v. The degree of coverage, participation and awareness of the project in the educational community and the level of inclusion;
- vi. Stakeholders' opinion on the effect of continuous training in bilingual methodology, for professional development and pedagogical change / innovation.

2. Methods and Techniques of data collection and processing

A mixed-methods approach (Shulman, 1986) was used to allow for the complementary use of quantitative and qualitative methods in data collection and processing. In a first phase, the study focused on document analysis, based on documents produced during the Project implementation. In a second phase, we opted for a case study design (multiple case studies with multiple analysis units) (Yin, 1994). Of the seven initial AE, only six met the conditions to proceed. For that reason, cases under analysis in the present study were those six AE that participated in the pilot project. In each AE class groups of the 4th grade that in the previous school year (2013/2014) were covered by the Project, were defined as units of analysis. These were the basis for the study's sampling.

The techniques selected to access subjects' representations were: a semi-structured interview with key informants (principal, local coordinator of the EBP project, teachers and assistant teachers, students sampling of EBP classes); mixed questionnaire to all students and parents/guardians of EBP classes. The data collected were subjected to content (Bardin, 2009) and statistical analysis. Also, the EBP and non EBP (NEBP) students' assessment sheets with the register of the final assessment of the 3rd grade of the 1st Cycle were analysed, as well as of the dossiers of activities.

The assessment of students' language proficiency focused mainly on speaking and spoken interaction, listening, and writing (comprehension and production). This was based on the objectives to assess the quality of learning: (i) analyze the level of proficiency in reading, writing and speaking skills in English, (ii) in articulation with other curricular subject areas (Social Studies and Expressions).

Regarding the assessment of students' learning in bilingual teaching context, and in the scope of the CLIL approach, the topic choices for the language activities were the basis for the data collection instruments, were anchored in the identification of objectives linked to curriculum content. For this purpose, an analysis of the Social Studies syllabi of 1st, 2nd and 3rd years of schooling (1st CEB) was carried out, with special attention to the thematic blocks that were selected to be taught in English. Accordingly, we complied with topics that 4th year students should know in English. In addition, because many students involved in EBP attend English language as AEC, we also took into account the AEC syllabus guidelines. The purpose was then to meet the linguistic knowledge transversally built, and which is an integrating part of students' plurilingual repertoire. As such, the purpose was to assess students' communicative competence

in English in an articulation with the knowledge acquired in the curricular areas of Social Studies and Expressions. The analysis of data on students learning followed a methodology of ethical and emic nature. On the one hand, to identify the learning objectives, we use the 'Common European Framework of Reference for Languages' (Council of Europe, 2001) and the proficiency levels described therein, in order to build the general categories of analysis regarding English communicative skills, the guidelines for teaching English as AEC, and the Social Studies syllabus. On the other hand, a dialogue was established with data for validation of the analysis grids. When these were fixed, the data collected underwent statistical treatment.

3. Population

The study's target population includes 1st Cycle EBP classes from the six AE, their school head teachers, the local Project coordinators, teachers of EBP classes, assistant teachers², and students of EBP classes that in 2013/2014 were in the 3rd year of the project, and their parents/guardians. In addition, for comparison purposes, we included five NEBP class groups.

The study population can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Study population (2014/2015)

DGEstE	AE	Schools	Classes	No. Of students per class	Class Teacher	Assistant teachers	Coordinator Teachers	Principals	No. of students per class (NEBP)
DSRN	AE C	E1	T1 EBP	19	4	1	1	1	-----
			T1 EBP	25					
		E2	T2 EBP	21					
			T3 EBP	20					
	AE F	T1 EBP	20	1	1	1	20		
DSRC	AE E	T1 EBP	23	1	1	1	21		
	AE D	E1	T1 EBP	20	6	2	1	1	20
			T2 EBP	19					
	E2	T1 EBP	21						
		T2 EBP	20						
		T3 EBP	26						
T4 EBP		20							
DSRLVT	AE A	T1 EBP	21	1	1	1	26		
DSRA	AE B	T1 EBP	26	2	1	1	1	25	
		T2 EBP	25						
TOTAL				326	15	7	6	6	112

Legend: DGEstE: Directorate-General for Schools; DSRN: North Regional Services Directorate; DSRC: Centre Regional Services Directorate; DSRLVT: Regional Services Directorate of Lisbon and Tagus Valley; DSRA: Alentejo Regional Services Directorate; AE: School Clusters; E1: School 1; E2: School 2; T1: Class 1; T2: Class 2; T3: Class 3; T4: Class 4.

² Teachers of the 2nd or 3rd Cycles with qualification for teaching English language, which supported the work carried out by the 1st cycle class teachers in classroom during the periods of time in which the class is taught in English.

The study population includes 326 students from EBP classes, and 112 students from NEBP classes. It also includes 15 teachers of EBP classes, seven assistant teachers, six Project local coordinators and the six AE principals. A sample of 169 students of EBP classes and a group of students of NEBP classes of equal size was extracted, in a total of 59 students (sample for convenience).

3.1. Characterisation of the teachers involved in the study

The characterisation of the teachers that participated in the study can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Teachers' characterisation

AE	Gender		Age					Job position			Qualifications		Years of service					Project's entry year				
	F	M	36 / 40	41 / 45	46 / 50	51 / 55	+ 55	PT	PA	CL	Lic	M	10 to 15	16 to 20	21 to 25	26 to 30	31 to 35	36 to 40	1	2	3	4
AE A	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	5	5	5	5	-	-	-	-	5	-	10	-	-	-
AE B	14	-	-	-	5	-	10	10	5	5	14	-	-	-	5	-	5	5	14	-	-	-
AE C	19	5	10	5	5	-	5	19	5	5	24	-	19	-	-	5	-	-	14	10	-	-
AE D	33	-	10	10	10	5	-	24	10	5	33	-	-	14	10	10	-	-	19	5	-	10
AE E	10	-	-	5	-	5	-	5	5	5	10	-	-	-	10	-	-	-	10	-	-	-
AE F	10	-	5	-	-	-	5	5	5	5	10	-	5	-	0	-	-	5	10	-	-	-
Total (%)	96	5	25	20	20	10	20	68	35	30	96	5	24	14	25	15	10	10	77	15	0	10

Legend: AE: School Clusters; F: Female M: Male; PT: Class teacher; PA: Assistant teacher; CL: Local Coordinator; Lic: Graduation; M: Master.

According to Table 2, it 95% of respondents are female and 5% male. The highest percentage of teachers lies in the age group from 36 to 40 years old (25%). The remaining respondents are in the age groups of 41 to 45 years old (20%), of 46 to 50 years old (20%) and over 55 years old (20%). The lowest percentage is in the age group between 51 and 55 (10%).

The large majority of teachers (95%) are graduated and only 5% holds a Masters Degree. 25% are between 21 to 25 years of service and 24% are between 10 to 15 years. The following group includes teachers with 16 to 20 years of service, which constitutes 14% of the population, the same proportion of the group with 25 to 30 years of service (14%). The groups with more years of service, with 31 to 35 years and 36 to 40 years of service, correspond each one to 10% of the population.

The large majority of teachers participates in the EBP Project from the 1st year of implementation on (76%); 14% joined the project in the 2nd year and 10% did it the present year (4th year).

4. Sampling

Due to the fact that the total number of students participating in the project is high, and since deadlines for data collection were reduced, it was unfeasible to study the entire population. For this reason, we used a representative part of it. Thus, data collection instruments on the quality of learning in

English, in the domains of speaking and spoken interaction, listening, writing and reading aloud, and the interviews to the students, were applied to a population sample.

The sample constitution was carried out so as to get a number of individuals that would allow to draw similar conclusions to those that could be attained if the whole population were analysed. To get a representative sampling, we selected a *random stratified sample* (Villelas, 2009). The sampling process was based on the information (number figures) given by the DGE about the number of students per AE and class. These data were updated according to the current situation of classes (Table 3).

Table 3. Population and sample of EBP students involved in the project

DGEstE	AE	Schools	Classes	N.º of students Per class**	Sampe		
					Total	M	F
DSRN	AE C	E1	T1 EBP	19	10	6	4
			T2 EBP	25	13	8	5
		E2	T1 EBP	21	11	6	5
			T3 EBP	20	10	5	5
	AE F	T1 EBP	20	10	3	7	
DSRC	AE E	T1 EBP	23	12	7	5	
	AE D	E1	T1 EBP	20	10	4	6
			T2 EBP	19	10	5	5
		E2	T1 EBP	21	11	6	5
			T2 EBP	20	10	3	7
	T3 EBP		26	14	7	7	
	T4 EBP	20	10	5	5		
DSRLVT	AE A	T1 EBP	21	11	5	6	
DSRA	AE B	T1 EBP	26	14	6	8	
		T2 EBP	25	13	8	5	
TOTAL				326	169	84	85

Legend: DGEstE: Directorate-General for Schools; DSRN: North Regional Services Directorate; DSRC: Centre Regional Services Directorate; DSRLVT: Regional Services Directorate of Lisbon and Tagus Valley; DSRA: Alentejo Regional Services Directorate; AE: School Clusters; E1: School 1; E2: School 2; T1: Class 1; T2: Class 2; T3: Class 3; T4: Class 4.

** We only considered students who were attending the EBP Project in the 3rd year (school year 2013/2014) and currently remain in the class groups in the 4th year (2014/2015), according to the information provided to us. Thus, students who attend the EBP Project for the first time this school year (2014/2015) were not counted.

Thus, whereas in the previous academic year (2013/2014) the total population of students was 343, in the present school year (2014/2015) the total number of students totals 326, which is the population considered in the external evaluation.

The target population of each class from each AE was divided into two extracts - female and male - in order to comply with the proportionality criterion. Having defined the sample values of each extract, we

randomly selected students from the list of students/class. The same procedures guided the definition of the group of students of NEBP classes (Table 4).

Table 4. Population and comparison group of NEBP students (2014/2015)

DGEstE	AE		No. of students per class	Sample		
				Total	M	F
DSRN	AE C		----	----	---	---
	AE F		20	11	5	6
DSRC	AE E		21	10	5	5
	AE D		20	10	6	4
DSRLVT	AE A		26	14	7	7
DSRA	AE B		25	14	8	6
Total			112	59	31	28

Legend: DGEstE: Directorate-General for Schools; DSRN: North Regional Services Directorate; DSRC: Centre Regional Services Directorate; DSRLVT: Regional Services Directorate of Lisbon and Tagus Valley; DSRA: Alentejo Regional Services Directorate; AE: School Clusters.

III. Global Results

1. Document Analysis

The first phase of the study focused on the analysis of DGE and BC documents concerning the Project's design and implementation process. In general terms, the document analysis was focused on the feasibility study, whose purpose was to identify the conditions for the projects' implementation; the process of the EBP project's implementation, its objectives and methodological options; on the training offered to teachers, as well as on the monitoring system put in practice.

In the following sections, we present a summary of the main elements emerging from the document analysis, and we make a brief appreciation of its contribution to the project's understanding and implementation process.

1.1. Feasibility Study

The EBP project had as reference the experience carried out in Spain, since 1996, and was preceded by the appointment, in 2009, of a Steering Committee,³ in order to carry out a feasibility study that would allow for the selection of which AE would be involved in the process and to guarantee the basic conditions for its implementation.

³ Composed of representatives of the Ministry of Education – the Directorate-General for Innovation and Curriculum Development (DGIDC) and the Educational Regional Services Directorate (DRE) – and the BC. It also has three members of the Feasibility Study Research Group – the Director and two leading researchers.

When examining the experience in Spain, a set of guidelines was identified by DGE/BC to lead the design and implementation of the EBP project in Portugal. The criteria set out for the development of a project of this nature "are governed by high quality standards," to which the BC "attaches great importance" (BC, s.d.: 1)⁴, namely: political commitment, official system, a school holistic approach, educational community agreement, in accordance with other community sectors, time commitment, approval of the curriculum development plan by the Ministry of Education, increase of curriculum areas offer and challenge to cognitive demands, articulation with interdisciplinary activities, introduction to Early Literacy and focus on literacy competences, assessment focusing on learning, promotion of continuing professional development of teachers (DPC) and ensurance of evaluation studies (BC, s.d.: 1 e 2)³.

The main objective of the Feasibility Study was "to assess the feasibility of implementing the EBP in the 1st CEB schools in Portugal", as well as to make recommendations about the "advantages and disadvantages of the implementation" of the project at national level, the "factors that need to be considered" before its implementation and how it would be scheduled and developed (DGIDC, 2010: 1).

The selection of schools took place by nomination, and it was based on a set of criteria defined by the ME together with the BC (IG, 2010: 6). Such document was sent to the five DRE, who assumed the task of selecting schools according to these criteria. In this context, 12 AE were selected⁵.

The Feasibility Study includes the analysis of data from the AE, and considerations and recommendations. The manifestation of "interest and commitment" in view of the project's implementation was seen, although there were different levels of motivation in the interviewees' discourse. The study also revealed the existence of different degrees of teachers' preparation for the particularities of the project. Regarding curriculum integration, Social Studies was pointed out as the preferred subject area for the teaching of content in English, and it was highlighted that there was no "need for curricular adaptations." As for the number of hours per week to be assigned to the project, it fluctuates between two and seven hours (DGIDC, 2010: 2).

The Feasibility Study underlined an existing favourable attitude to the implementation of the EBP Project in Portugal. However, despite this positive attitude from the observed twelve AE, only seven met the conditions to join the project. Nevertheless, the "lack of proficiency in English" and the "(understandable) weak domain of the appropriate pedagogy" by teachers (DGIDC, 2010: 3) are recognised, and therefore should be taken into account. As a result, to minimize the detected training needs, before the implementation of EBP Project, English language and "EBP specific pedagogy" training was organised and provided for teachers (ibid, ibid).

³ Synthesis of this document in Annex 1 (BC1 document).

⁵ 4 school clusters of Lisbon and Tagus Valley Regional Directorate (DRELVT), 3 North Regional Directorate (DREN) school clusters, 3 Regional Center Direction (DREC) school clusters, and 1 school cluster in the Algarve Regional Directorate (DREALG) and in the Alentejo Regional Directorate (DREA), respectively.

1.2. Project Framework

The beginning of the pilot project in the 1st Cycle took place in February 2011, after the consent of the Assistant Secretary of State and Education (EEAS), for a period of four years, in seven AE. It was developed in two phases. The first one, of preparation (2010/2011), consisted in the teachers' needs analysis and training. In the second phase, the implementation took place, expected to last four years (2011 to 2015) (DGE, 2013: 1)⁶.

1.2.1. General objectives of the EBP project

The objectives defined for the EBP project s⁷ were : i) to improve educational opportunities for public school students by providing them with the necessary mechanisms to achieve a high level of proficiency in English, which is required in an increasingly global context; ii) to encourage the development of a prestigious network of bilingual schools; and iii) to improve English teaching in public schools and foster better practices in the classroom context through a curriculum-based and student-centred approach.

1.2.2. School clusters involved in the project

Taking account of the above-mentioned objectives, the project was implemented in seven AE, distributed by five Regional Services Directions (DSR) in the 1st year of implementation (2011/2012). It is currently being developed in only four of the five initial DSR after withdrawal of one of the AE. After this withdrawal, another AE underwent a change, since one of its schools joined another AE, which still makes seven the remaining AE participating in the project. Thus, in the 3rd year, which is the focus of analysis in this study, the EBP had been running in seven AE, including ten schools, in a total of 390 students spread over 17 classes, with the participation of 17 teachers and 19 experts (DGE, 2013: 3)⁸.

The curriculum areas selected were Social Studies and Expressions, of which part of the contents were taught in English. These subjects represent "20% (5 hours) to 40% (10 hours) of weekly timetable of the 1st CEB (22,5 to 25 hours)" (DGE, s.d.: 2)¹⁰. To ensure the development of English literacy, the percentage gradually increased, depending on the grade. Although a certain weekly distribution of hours is recommended per subject, the school is free to adjust this time according to the specificity of their context, and the available resources. Schools may even chose to use Curriculum Enrichment Activities (AEC) to complete the number of planned hours.

Classes in English are taught by class teachers who are advised by 2nd / 3rd Cycle English language teachers, 45 minutes per week. Teachers can also be supported by a Comenius Assistant (CA).

The DGE recommendations to teachers considered that: i) teachers must have in their teaching component the subject of Expressions; ii) the teaching component of English language teachers should

⁶ Document Synthesis in Annex 1 (DGE2 document) - Síntese do documento no Anexo

⁷ Document Synthesis in Annex 1 (DGE1 document)

⁸ Document Synthesis in Annex 1 (DGE3 document)

ensure the co-teaching in the classroom in the curriculum components of Social Studies and Expressions, in order to surpass any difficulties that may result of students' learning these content areas in English; iii) the teaching component of teachers must include English as Complementary Offer (OC) and AEC as a way of extending the Project; and iv), hours shall be added for individual and collaborative work in the project (DGE, 2013: 4)⁹. These teachers attended training provided by the DGE, in conjunction with BC.

1.3. Training

During the implementation of the EBP Project, teachers attended training in bilingual and CLIL education. This training was organised by DGE with specialised BC trainers. Training was free and accredited by the Scientific and Pedagogical Council for Continuing Education (CCPFC) (see Table 5).

Table 5. Training under the EBP Project

Type of training	Bilingual Workshop (total 3)	Bilingual Training Course (total 5)
Local	Lisboa: 26/04 a 15/07/2011; 03/09 a 24/11/2011 Coimbra: 26/04 a 15/07/2011	Lisboa:13/03 a 21/04/2012; 13/10 a 17/11/2012 (2ªedition); 28/09 a 26/10/2013; 25/01 a 22/02/2014 Aveiro: 13/10 a 17/11/2012
Theme and objectives	<p>Workshop of Early Bilingual Teaching in the 1st cycle of Basic Education (CCPFC/ACC-66367/11 - April/July 2011) – To introduce to theoretical concepts and bilingual teaching practices.</p> <p>Workshop of Early Bilingual Teaching in the 1st CEB (1st year) (CCPFC/ACC-69732/12 - March/April – October/ November 2012) – To deepen "the fundamental approaches and teaching techniques inherent to a bilingual learning context".</p> <p>Training Course of Early Bilingual Teaching in the 1st CEB (2nd year) (CCPFC/ACC-71433/12 - September/November 2012) – "To prepare a new portfolio with lesson plans and other teaching resources".</p> <p>Training Course of Early Bilingual Teaching in the 1st CEB (3rd year) (CCPFC/ACC-74783/13 – september/october 2013) – To learn about "the importance of the adequate content sequence, the need to diversify the learning activities and interaction patterns, the balance of powers and particularly the importance of reading and writing at this level".</p> <p>Training Course of Early Bilingual Teaching in the 1st CEB (1st and 2nd years) (CCPFC/ACC-76504/14 - january/february 2014) – To learn about "fundamental approaches and teaching techniques specific to a bilingual learning context".</p> <p>Training Course of Early Bilingual Teaching in the 1st CEB (4rd year) – To deepen "the fundamental approaches and teaching techniques inherent to a bilingual learning context".</p>	

Since the beginning of the implementation to the writing of this report, there were three workshops and five training courses¹⁰. The training workshops were developed in a total of 50 hours each, 25 hours for training and the remaining 25 hours of individual work. In turn, each of the training courses lasted 25 hours over four days (two days x 6 hours and two days x 6.5 hours).

In average each workshop had 22 participants, and were given by a minimum of two trainers and a maximum of three. The trainings took place mainly in Lisbon (six), whereas a workshop occurred in Coimbra and a training course in Aveiro. The purpose of this training was to prepare teachers for bilingual teaching practices, develop their communication skills in English, enable the exchange and the sharing of

⁹ Document Synthesis in Annex 1 (DGE/BC2 document)

¹⁰ Information taken from each training An2 (DGE4 document)

experiences and practices, and to assist teachers in the production of teaching materials and resources to be used in class.

Training was evaluated¹¹ by trainees, by filling in an online questionnaire. The positive aspects more regularly mentioned were: i) the relevance of the training; ii) the exchange of experiences; iii) the practical training; iv) the tools made available; and v) the didactic approach to content. As for the negative aspects, the following were mentioned: i) the distance from the teachers' place of residence; ii) teachers' mastery of English; iii) the timing of training (on Saturdays); and iv) the training concentrated in time (four consecutive Saturdays, or with interval break inbetween). With regard to suggestions, there were teachers who referred to the benefit of more resources / materials being delivered and that training should have 50 hours.

In the following table (Table 6), it is possible to observe the overall evaluation average scores obtained in each training (1 to 4). The rate is the mean result of each of the aforementioned items.

Table 6. Evaluation of training activities

Type of training	Overall Evaluation
Workshop of Early Bilingual Teaching in the 1 st cycle of Basic Education (CCPFC/ACC-66367/11 - april/July 2011)	3,4 e 3,5 (Coimbra and Lisboa, respectively)
Workshop of Early Bilingual Teaching in 1 st CEB (1 st year) (CCPFC/ACC-69732/12 - march/april 2012)	3,8
Workshop of Early Bilingual Teaching in 1 st CEB (2 nd edition) (CCPFC/ACC-69732/12 – october/november 2012)	3,7 e 3,6 (Aveiro and Lisboa, respectively)
Training Course of Early Bilingual Teaching in 1 st CEB (2 nd year) (CCPFC/ACC-71433/12 - september/november 2012)	3,9
Training Course of Early Bilingual Teaching in 1 st CEB (3 rd year) (CCPFC/ACC-74783/13 – September/october 2013)	3,7
Training Course of Early Bilingual Teaching in 1 st CEB (1 st and 2 nd years) (CCPFC/ACC-76504/14 - january/february 2014)	3,8

It should be noted the significant degree of satisfaction teachers regarding the training, since the global average result is 3.7 (in 4).

1.4. Project guiding documents

1.4.1. Development plan ¹²

The Development Plan is prepared and submitted by the school management at the beginning of each school year, so that an appreciation of the implementation of the Project of the year before is made. The strategies, priorities and needs to be considered, are also specified therein, bearing in mind the guidelines and recommendations of the DGE. The development plan also includes how the project is going to be developed, by making it clear how it is integrated in the school cluster's educational project (PEA). This plan is subjected to the approval of DGE, DGEstE and BC, at the beginning of each school year.

¹¹ Information taken from evaluation questionnaires of each training (DGE5 document).

¹² Information from Development Plans (AE1 document).

1.4.2. Guidelines and Recommendations¹³

At the end of each school year, the DGE defines a set of guidelines/recommendations for schools, providing guidance on the allocation of weekly hours devoted to the English language, both in terms of Social Studies and Expressions, and AEC. The DGE also defines guidelines for the content of the development plan, as well as the constitution of the pedagogical team. The following items are to be included in the specifications of the development plan: the appreciation of the project's implementation in previous years, including the fulfilment of the DGE guidelines/recommendations, and the project benefits and constraints; Project goals for the AE, in overall, and schools, in particular; the project's development, which includes compliance with the guidelines / recommendations of the DGE, strategies, priorities and needs; Monitoring and evaluation of the project, for with the school needs to confirm their collaboration in the visits; Confirmation of the inclusion of the project objectives in the PEA ¹⁴ and its implementation in activity plan of class groups; Confirmation of the participation of all groups of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd grades in the schools of the 1st CEB involved; Students of 1st CEB involved in the project, i.e, number of students per grade and number of students per class; EPP teachers¹⁵, teachers of the 1st cycle,¹⁶ AEC and AC teachers; Teacher training, for which it is required that the participation of the EPP in the national and international training activities is confirmed; Curriculum and AEC, with the indication of the weekly teaching time of Social Studies and Expressions in English, English Language and AEC; Prevision of eventual changes in the Project's implementation during that school year and the next. As for recommendations, as already mentioned, the DGE considers that, depending on the grade, the number of teaching hours in English should progressively increase. Another recommendation points out as an advantage the continuity of teachers linked to a particular class group over the schooling years.

1.5. Monitoring

To determine how the AE comply with guidelines/recommendations and the development plan, and how teachers resort to what they have learnt in training during classes, a quarterly monitoring was carried out (one per school term) by the DGE, DGEstE and BC. Such visits¹⁷ included classroom observations, feedback to teachers and meetings with the management of AE. At each monitoring, DGE and BC prepare a summary report¹⁸ which includes such topics. Its structure is as follows: name of the AE, the DSR, date, school term and stakeholders; Physical indicators of AE / school: number of schools / classes involved, management, number and identification of the EPP teachers; Evaluation indicators in the monitoring by the DGE: compliance with O/R (Guidelines/Recommendations), compliance with the Development Plan and

¹³ Information taken from Guidelines and Recommendations for the 3rd year (DGE/BC2 document).

¹⁴ School Cluster Educational Project

¹⁵ Pedagogical Project Team.

¹⁶ 1st Cycle Class teachers.

¹⁷ Information taken from Proposal Indicators. Synthesis of documents in Annex 1 (document DGE / BC1).

¹⁸ Information taken from Visit Reports. Synthesis of documents in Annex 1 (document DGE6).

with the defined agenda; Assessment indicators in the monitoring by the BC: Class observation and meeting of reflection upon the teaching practice; AE strengths; Main difficulties; Proposals / lines of action agreed upon between the DGE / AE and BC.

The analysis of 2013/2014 monitoring reports, namely the class observations accounts show that teachers comply with the curriculum of Social Studies and Expressions to be taught in English, have well-defined routines in the classroom, and interact with students, involving them in the learning process. Moreover, the large majority of teachers speak English during the whole class, encourage students to speak in that language, and give them time to answer so that students' can think about the questions. However, sometimes the instructions for group/individual work are not clear, some students don't speak much English and teachers give too much time for particular activities. In addition, teachers should be more consistent when asking students to answer the questions in complete sentences. As for the feedback given to teachers, it is centred on their strengths and aspects to improve in the classroom, with particular attention to the materials used and the class activities sequence. Concerning the meetings with the school management, the agenda was based on four key points: i) information provided by the DGE; ii) the feedback of lessons; iii) AE appreciation of the strengths and constraints; and iv) guidelines for the following terms / school years.

A set of strengths and constraints have been identified taking account of the monitoring in the various school clusters. Regarding strengths AE in general met the objectives that had been proposed in Development Plans. DGE Guidelines/Recommendations were fully met in two school clusters and largely fulfilled in the remaining ones. The following strengths were highlighted: the competence and professionalism of the EPP and of schools management; the collaboration between EPP; the continuity of the class groups already involved in the project; the existence of some Comenius assistants; the fact that the majority of the school clusters start the project in September and that the totality of students from bilingual classes are enrolled in English AEC in some school clusters. The greatest difficulties were the allocation of English language teachers, the EPP impossibility to meet weekly to prepare lessons and materials, a slight coordination between teachers and AEC technicians, the few support resources in the Moodle platform and the difficulty of adjusting the number of hours per week with the Guidelines/Recommendations.

In short, the analysis of the document *corpus* was crucial, meaningful and adequate to understand the decision-making processes, the conception, implementation and regulation of the pilot project, at both the macro and meso levels of the development of educational and curricular projects, and the identification of quality criteria for evaluating the various dimensions of the EBP project. Even though the documentation has allowed for the access to the global approach adopted in the project, the political pedagogical intentions and adopted procedures, which were complemented at the time of data collection for the external evaluation process, the following information is still lacking:

- a. The predefinition in due time of the English language proficiency level for the different skills that the project would have the goal to attain (taking into account, in particular, the proficiency levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, Council of Europe, 2001). Also, it seems that an initial characterisation of the students' language repertoire was not carried out, as well as their language learning trajectory (e.g, the identification of students who attend English classes in non-formal settings). These information would be important, in so far as it would allow to regulate learning in a more sustained and comprehensive manner.
- b. The timely definition of NEBP class groups as control groups for the project would also be relevant, including the description and identification of students' English language proficiency levels, so as to make it possible to compare the results at the different learning stages.

In future, and in order to see the impact of the Project, the implementation of learning measurement mechanisms in the different subject areas (Portuguese Language, Mathematics, Social Studies) and in English is suggested for both the EBP and NEBP class groupings.

2. Case Studies

2.1. Characterisation of the group covered by the study

15 EBP groups and five NEBP groups of the 4th grade, spread over six AE, were involved in the study, in a total of 326 students (EBP classes) and 112 students (NEBP classes). In percentages, these figures are translated into 92% of EBP and 86% of NEBP students. The large majority of students (78%) attends the Project since the first year.

The response rates obtained in the questionnaires were as follows:

- a) Students: 92%. Of the respondents, 48% are female and 52% male, between the ages of eight and 11 years old (8 year-olds - 14%, 9 year-olds - 82%; 10 year-olds - 3%, 11 year-olds- 1%).
- b) Parents and Guardians (EE): 80%. Of the respondents, 84% are female and 16% male, aged between 20 and 50 or more (20 to 29: 3%, while 30 to 39: 39%; 40 to 49: 48%; 50 or more: 4%; Not Responding (NR) - 6%). Regarding the academic qualifications, the highest percentages correspond to the Bachelor's degree (43%) and to the qualifications at the level of secondary education (30%).

The response rates obtained with the application of worksheets S2 were:

a) EBP Students: 92%

b) NEBP Students: 86%

Interviews applied to all the head teachers of the AE, local coordinators, classroom teachers and assistant teachers (2nd / 3rd cycle English language teachers who support the latter). Interviews were conducted with all students of the sample defined for the study.

Regarding the S1 worksheet, 52% of students have been enquired.

2.2. Results

2.2.1. Implementation Conditions

2.2.1.1. Results of questionnaires to Students and Parents/Guardians

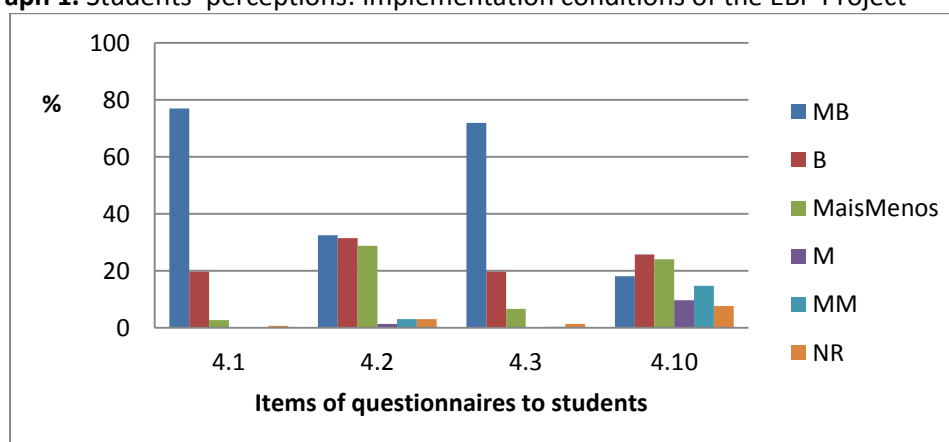
The students' perceptions regarding the implementation conditions of bilingual education, attained by means of questionnaires, are made evident in table 7 and graph 1.

Table 7. Students' perceptions: Implementation conditions of the EBP Project

Question 4.		Very well	Well	So and so	Badly	Very bad	NA	Total
4.1. Teachers have explained to me what bilingual education is	Freq.	230	59	8	0	0	2	299
	%	77	20	3	0	0	1	100
4.2. I can explain to my friends and other people what bilingual education is	Freq.	97	94	86	4	9	9	299
	%	32	31	29	1	3	3	100
4.3. My teachers clarified my doubts all along	Freq.	215	59	20	0	1	4	299
	%	72	20	7	0	0	1	100
4.10. My friends from other schools know about the bilingual project	Freq.	54	77	72	29	44	23	299
	%	18	26	24	10	15	8	100

Legend: NA – No answer

Graph 1. Students' perceptions: Implementation conditions of the EBP Project



Legend: MB – Very good/well; B- Good/well; M- Badly; MM – Very Bad; NR- No answer

As displayed in table 5 and graph 1, most of the students consider that they have obtained from their teachers all necessary explanations about the Bilingual Project (item 4.1). Regarding this, the majority classifies such explanations as *Very Good* (32%, item 4.2), which was also confirmed in the *focus group* interviews. As regards the explaining of doubts in the classroom (item 4.3), most of the students think they have been *Very Well* (72%) clarified. When questioned about the awareness that fellow colleagues from other schools have of the Project (item 4.10), opinions vary from *Well* (26%), *So and So* (24%) and *Very Well* (18%).

Additionally, concerning the implementation conditions, students were asked about who helps them with their homework. The majority of them referred to the parents (72% refers the mother and 54% the father), then the teachers of private lesson centres/ATL (19%), siblings (14%), grandparents (13%), uncles/aunts (5%), stepfather/stepmother (25), cousins (2%), other relatives (2%), schoolteachers (1%) and friends (1%).

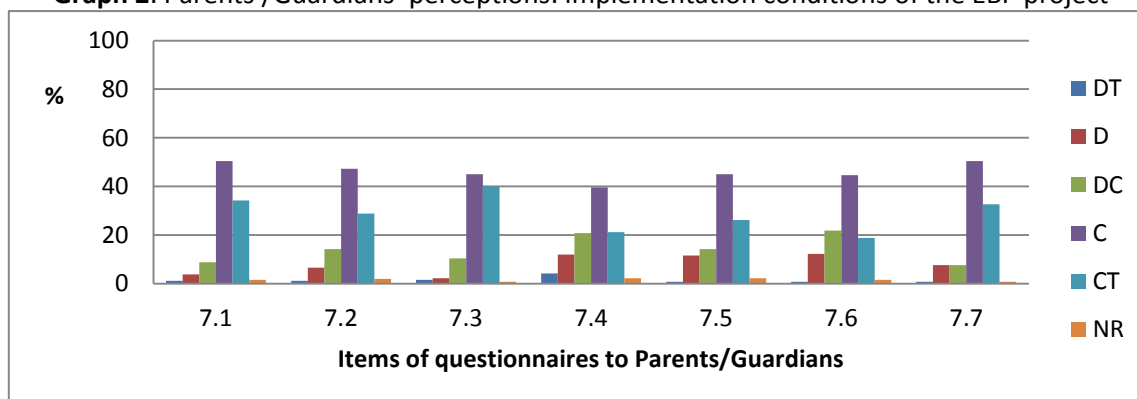
The perceptions of parents/guardians concerning the implementation conditions of bilingual education, which were obtained by means of questionnaires, are made evident in table 8 and graph 2.

Table 8. Parents’/Guardians’ perceptions: implementation conditions of the EBP project

Question 7.		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/ Nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	NA	Total
7.1. I obtained the required information and clarifications about the project	Freq.	3	10	23	131	89	4	260
	%	1	4	9	50	34	2	100
7.2. The participating teachers kept me informed about the project	Freq.	3	17	37	123	75	5	260
	%	1	7	14	47	29	2	100
7.3. The participating teachers were available to clarify doubts/give information	Freq.	4	6	27	117	104	2	260
	%	2	2	10	45	40	1	100
7.4. I keep in touch with the teachers participating in the project	Freq.	11	31	54	103	55	6	260
	%	4	12	21	40	21	2	100
7.5. The advantages of lingual education were presented/discussed	Freq.	2	30	37	117	68	6	260
	%	1	12	14	45	26	2	100
7.6. Parents’ and guardians’ concerns regarding bilingual education were discussed	Freq.	2	32	57	116	49	4	260
	%	1	12	22	45	19	2	100
7.7. It was explained to me how the project would develop, namely how the classes would work	Freq.	2	20	20	131	85	2	260
	%	1	8	8	50	33	1	100

Legend: NA – No answer

Graph 2. Parents'/Guardians' perceptions: implementation conditions of the EBP project



Legend: DT – Strongly disagree; D – Disagree; DC – Neither agree nor disagree; C – Agree; CT – Strongly agree and NR – No Answer

A significant percentage of the respondents affirmed to stay in touch with the project's teachers (item 7.4), and mentioned that the project's advantages were presented to/discussed with them (item 7.5), the parents'/guardians' concerns were debated (item 7.6), and the project's course of action was explained, particularly that of the classes (item 7.7). Half of the respondents ascertain to have been informed and clarified about the Project (item 7.1) and 47% agree on the fact that information has always been given about the Project. 45% point out that teachers were available for clarifying doubts and/or give information (item 7.3). It is noteworthy that 75% of parents/guardians disclosed not being concerned with their children's integration and the majority (83%) asserted to have had no difficulty in supporting their children in subject areas taught in English.

2.2.1.2. Interviews to Educational Community and Questionnaires to Parents/Guardians

The analysis of representations, attitudes and motivations, and behaviours of all stakeholders in view of a prospective bilingual school and bilingual learning context, was based on interviews carried out with local stakeholders (school management, local coordination, class teachers, assistant teachers and students) and questionnaires applied to parents/guardians.

With this purpose in mind, an analysis was carried out to the level of coverage, participation and awareness of the Project by the educational community and their level of inclusion taking into account (a) initial expectations; (b) the information given to educational community; (c) identified constraints; (d) monitoring processes and (e) effectiveness conditions.

a) Initial expectations

There was in all schools an atmosphere of enthusiasm shared by most of the stakeholders about the EBP Project, whose implementation was embedded in great interest. Students' frequently pointed out the importance given by families to the possibility of them learning in English language. Thus this suggests that the anticipated condition in the feasibility study (see document analysis), which stressed the need for the existence of a strong commitment and interest by all those to be involved in the Project, has been attained.

b) Information/explanations given to the educational community

The collected data allowed for an understanding of the level of diffusion of the Project and of participation and awareness of the educational community. Broadly speaking, the stakeholders considered that the information given about the Project, its aims and course of action, was clarifying. Yet, in once case study, there are some dissonant voices, which consider that the information was circumscribed to the school.

In one of the case studies, it is worth noting that the divulgation of the Project was strengthened by a large dimension placard fixed outside the school, activities open to the community, as well as the establishment of partnerships with local entities to carrying out joint activities.

c) Constraints

The interviewees mentioned a set of aspects that were identified as constraints and which took place during the EBP Project's implementation process, namely:

- Difficulty in the curriculum management, which is associated to some inappropriateness of the syllabus themes/contents selected by the BC (this is also connected to the exclusion of the AE/teachers from the selection process of the syllabus contents to be taught in English).
- Disturbance in the quality of learning at the level of the several curricular areas, specifically Portuguese and Mathematics, as a result of the total amount of hours foreseen to the English classes; and Social Studies, due to the difficulty in approaching/deepening the contents.
- Inappropriateness of the class teachers' training, given the difficulties in mastering the English language.
- Shortage of human resources, mainly regarding the joint work with English language teachers of the 2nd/3rd Cycles.
- Scarcity of didactic support/resources made available by DGE/BC, which causes a work overload to class teachers (there is no textbook and the materials are all built from scratch).

In some cases, other aspects were also underlined:

- The possibility of the Project's discontinuance to students involved in the EBP in the 1st Cycle.
- The lack of preparation of the assistant teachers (of 2nd and 3rd cycles) concerning the teaching methodology in the 1st Cycle.
- The shortage of budget to pay for the teachers' travelling expenses to attend the training.

Considering the noted constraints, some of the conditions pointed out as pre-requisites to the Project's implementation (see document analysis) seem not to have been ensured, namely (i) the human resources allocated to the Project, in particular the class teachers training to assure its development, and the amount of hours available to consulting/support; (ii) the possibility of the Project's continuity.

d) Monitoring

With regard to the monitoring process of the EBP implementation, the interviewees refer to positive and negative aspects, and add some suggestions. The main positive aspect is that the monitoring process facilitates getting the teacher trainers' feedback. This helps in the improvement of teachers' performance,

besides concurring to the understanding of how the Project is being implemented and the real difficulties/challenges that teachers and students face. Also, in two schools the good relationship with the teacher trainers is signalled and, in one case in particular, the monitoring is seen as positive because it *disciplines teachers*.

The main negative aspect pointed out is the tension/pressure on teachers (which, according to one of the schools, also spreads out to the students). There was reference to the tendency to put a greater emphasis on the feedback centred in the negative aspects and the absence of positive support by the teacher trainers. In some cases, it is highlighted that the observed classes do not reflect the work carried out over the school year.

The interviewees suggest:

- The timely planning of the monitoring visits.
- The increase of the monitoring periodicity, so that it allows for the ongoing perception of the work developed by teachers.
- The joint analysis of the rationale informing the options taken by teachers.
- A greater openness to and dialogue with the teachers, so that constraints deriving from the national curriculum and the context characteristics be attended to.

e) Effectiveness conditions

The development of the EBP Project depends on the fulfilment of a set of diverse conditions that the interviewed stakeholders signalled as being paramount to the Project's success, thus confirming the recommendations of the feasibility study (see document analysis). All of them referred to the following factors:

- Stability/continuity of the teaching staff.
- Inclusion of English language learning in the pre-service education of class teachers.
- Pedagogical training directed to the work in the 1st Cycle to assistant teachers.
- Support from the AE management.
- Continuous cooperation (joint work between the class teacher and the assistant teacher).
- Motivation/engagement of the participating teachers.
- Allocation of (more) credit hours to schools.

Moreover, the following is suggested:

- The reinforcement of training in CLIL methodology.
- The participation in the EBP of teachers proficient in English.
- The articulation with AEC and OC to work on the structure/grammar of the English language.
- The existence of negotiation process between the AE and the partner institutions.

2.3. Attitudes towards bilingual education

2.3.1. Results of questionnaires to Students and Parents/Guardians

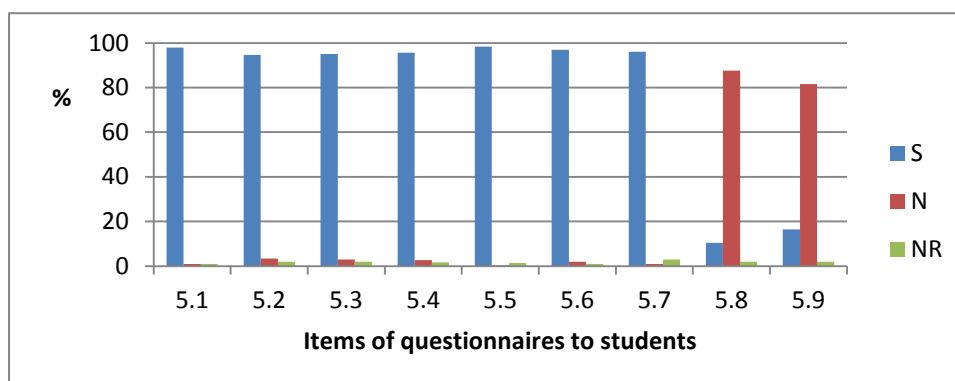
The representations of students towards bilingual education, collected by means of questionnaires, are made evident in table 9 and graph 3.

Table 9. Students's perceptions: Project EBP in the 1st Cycle

Question 5.		Yes	No	NA	Total
5.1. I like to learn how to speak English	Freq.	293	3	3	299
	%	98	1	1	100
5.2. I would like to learn other languages	Freq.	283	10	6	299
	%	95	3	2	100
5.3. I would/like to know other countries and cultures	Freq.	284	9	6	299
	%	95	3	2	100
5.4. I like to speak in English	Freq.	286	8	5	299
	%	96	3	2	100
5.5. I like to have classes in Portuguese and English	Freq.	294	1	4	299
	%	98	0	1	100
5.6. I wish to continue to have bilingual education in school	Freq.	290	6	3	299
	%	97	2	1	100
5.7. My parents/guardians like that I attend bilingual education in school	Freq.	287	3	9	299
	%	96	1	3	100
5.8. I prefer to have classes only in Portuguese	Freq.	31	262	6	299
	%	10	88	2	100
5.9. I prefer to have classes only in English	Freq.	49	244	6	299
	%	16	82	2	100

Legend: NA – No answer

Graph 3. Students' perceptions: EBP Project in the 1st Cycle



Legenda: S – Yes; N – No; NR – No Answer

The interest in the Project is evidenced by almost all students (item 5.6), who also refer to the parents’/guardians’ interest (96%, item 5.7). The large majority of students does not show any preference either for classes only in Portuguese (item 5.8), or only in English (item 5.9).

Most of the students affirm to like to learn in English (item 5.1) and to speak English (item 5.4). A large percentage shows interest in knowing other languages and cultures (item 5.3) and the majority unveils their interest in learning other languages (item 5.2). The vast majority (92%) referred that they would like other children to be involved in the Project.

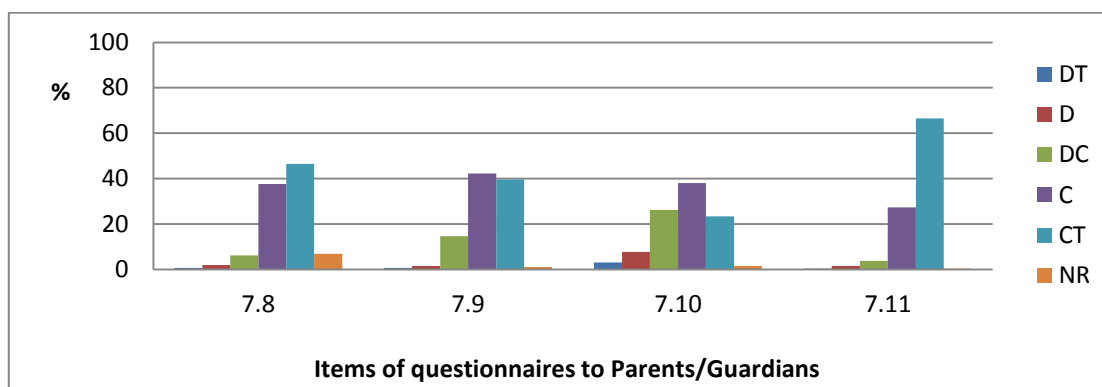
The parents’/guardians’ representations regarding bilingual education, collected by means of questionnaire, are unveiled in table 10 and graph 4.

Table 10. Parents’/Guardians’ perceptions of EBP Project

Question 7.		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree Nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	NA	Total
7.8. My child is motivated to bilingual learning	Freq.	2	5	16	98	121	18	260
	%	1	2	6	38	47	7	100
7.9. The project fostered my child’s wish to know other languages and cultures	Freq.	2	4	38	110	103	3	260
	%	1	2	15	42	40	1	100
7.10. The project fostered my interest in knowing other languages and cultures	Freq.	8	20	68	99	61	4	260
	%	3	8	26	38	23	2	100
7.11. Bilingual education facilitates the learning of English language	Freq.	1	4	10	71	173	1	260
	%	0	2	4	27	67	0	100

Legend: NA – No answer

Graph 4. Parents’/Guardians’ perceptions of EBP Project



Legend: DT – Strongly disagree; D – Disagree; DC – Neither agree Nor disagree; C – Agree; CT – Strongly disagree and NR – No answer

The majority of the respondents consider that bilingual education facilitates the learning of English language (item 7.11). Confirming the students’ perceptions, parents/guardians believe that learners are motivated to bilingual learning (item 7.8), referring to the latter’s natural capacity to know other languages

and cultures (item 7.9). Parents/Guardians also think that EBP has concurred to their growing interest in knowing other languages and cultures (item 7.10). The majority of the parents/guardians (93%) would recommend the Project to other parents and 90% consider that it should be expanded to a national level.

2.3.2. Interviews to Educational Community and Questionnaires to Parents/Guardians

The interviews carried out to the educational community reinforce the answers obtained in the questionnaires. Students and parents/guardians revealed themselves favourable to bilingual education. The following topics were mentioned: (a) advantages and benefits of EBP; (b) disadvantages and setbacks of EBP and (c) enlargement perspectives of the EBP Project.

a) Advantages and Benefits

The following aspects were pointed out as positive by all stakeholders:

- Promotion of the articulation/collaborative work between teachers.
- Commitment of teachers and school management.
- Awakening to/interest in other cultures and languages.
- Learning of English language.
- Motivation to learning.

The following items were also seen as beneficial:

- The development of students' cognitive skills.
- The fostering of students' work capacity/pace.
- The improvement of the behaviour management in the classroom.
- The adoption of active teaching/learning methodologies.

Particularly to a school, the Project EBP was an added-value to the school's prestige, and prevented it from closing. In another case, the early access to the learning of the English language was stressed as valuable taking account of the socioeconomic status of students.

b) Disadvantages/Setbacks

The most problematic aspect shared by all was the weak deepening of the syllabus contents of Social Studies and Portuguese. In addition, there is the case of a school that considered disadvantageous the fact that the EBP Project helped to reinforce the disciplinary perspective of the curriculum to the detriment of an interdisciplinary perspective, which they thought to be more adequate to the 1st Cycle. Another school also mentions that the appointment of the OC to the support of the EBP Project and accordingly to be focused on the teaching of English language, is disadvantageous (this considering that in other schools of the AE the OC was supported to the development of reading in Portuguese language).

c) Enlargement perspectives

The possibility to expand the EBP Project is envisioned, by all stakeholders, as being desirable within the AE itself, in the 1st Cycle and in other school levels, as long as the schools express their agreement. The widening at national level is considered premature, given that the necessary conditions seem not to be gathered: the timely information to schools of the existence of hour credits; a policy favourable to the teaching staff continuity, which ensures the permanence of the Project teachers; accredited training to the participating teachers; provision/support of resources and systematic monitoring.

2.4. Innovation and good practices

The interviews helped to know the stakeholders' representations about the credited training, particularly in terms of its effects on the bilingual methodology and pedagogical change/innovation. Furthermore, it was possible to analyse the implications of such representations to teachers' professionalism.

Next, the following topics of analysis will be presented: (a) contribution of the credited training – positive aspects, negative aspects, suggestions; (b) implications of the EBP Project to teachers' professionalism; (c) implications of the EBP Project to the integration of students with special needs, practices of inclusion and pedagogical differentiation.

a) Contribution of credited training

Positive Aspects

- Quality of the planning and didactic intervention.
- Recourse to active methodologies, which are transferable to other disciplinary areas.
- Strong practical component.
- Class simulation practices.
- Diversification/innovation of materials and activities.
- Support to the teacher and reduction of their insecurities.
- Sharing of experiences amongst participants of other AE.
- Breaking of routines.

Negative Aspects

- There was a widened consensus around the perception that the training was very concentrated in time and excessively centralised in Lisbon.

Other critiques by some schools put in evidence diverse aspects, namely:

- The training was considered to be insufficient and late regarding the teachers' difficulties in the English language.
- The training was seen as inadequate to the real number of students in Portuguese classes, since it was directed to small working groups.
- The training did not take into account the teachers' suggestions/demands, namely the other syllabus components.

Other more specific aspects are to be mentioned, particularly:

- The (great) effort demanded of teachers to prepare the sessions.
- The attitude of the teacher trainers, who did not recognise the teachers' effort, and made considerations that were perceived as inadequate.
- The fact that teachers had to pay for the travel expenses.

To finish off, only to one school the training was not innovative. In this case, another training opportunity was mentioned to have concurred to the improvement of the teaching practices. This one had been carried out in other contexts and in other areas and was promoted by the school.

The results seem to largely confirm the general trend to a positive appreciation of the training, already highlighted in the document analysis (appraisal questionnaires).

Suggestions

The proposal of the broadening of the training focus is shared by all, namely to integrate in the CLIL training, the training in English language.

Further suggestions refer to the following aspects:

- Training scheduled to before the beginning of the school year and in intensive sessions/day's journeys to avoid the wearing out caused by travelling and taking over the weekends.
- Timely planning/guidance to avoid burn out and improve the teachers' planning.
- Monthly planning with teachers.
- Greater spacing in time between training sessions.
- Teachers' involvement in the selection of the contents to be taught in English.

b) Implications to teachers' professionalism

The participation in the EBP Project is seen as a factor that concurred to changes in the teachers' professionalism. All of them say to have existed (i) changes in teaching/learning methodologies and (ii) modification in the conceptions about the 1st Cycle. Two other changes are also mentioned: the improvement in the classroom organisation and management in the 1st Cycle, and the learning and use of CLIL methodology, which is considered in itself an innovation.

c) Implications to the integration of students with special needs, practices of inclusion and pedagogical differentiation

According to the interviews, the participation in the EBP Project did not have implications to the way students with special needs are included in the teaching/learning process. In the individuals' discourse prevails (i) the principle of inclusion, (ii) the inexistence of specific indications/support, and (iii) the maintenance of pedagogical differentiation practices. Only one school refers to the impossibility of all students with special needs follow the class group.

2.5. Quality of Learning

2.5.1. Results of Questionnaires to Students

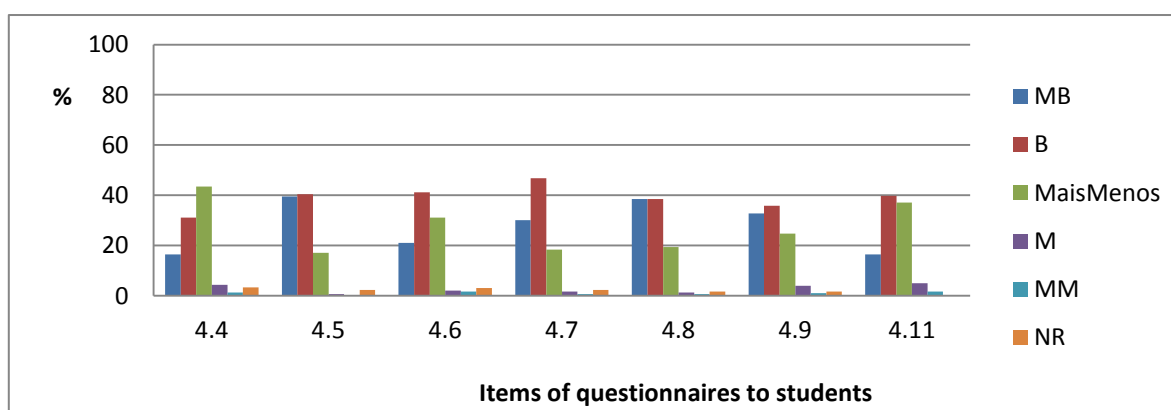
The perceptions of students about their learning, collected by means of a questionnaire, are illustrated in table 9 and graph 5.

Table 11. Students' perceptions: learning

Question 4.		Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor	NA	Total
4.4. I can write in English	Freq.	49	93	130	13	4	10	299
	%	16	31	43	4	1	3	100
4.5. I can understand/follow the classes taught in English	Freq.	118	121	51	2	0	7	299
	%	39	40	17	1	0	2	100
4.6. I can speak in English	Freq.	63	123	93	6	5	9	299
	%	21	41	31	2	2	3	100
4.7. I can learn the topics/contents taught in English	Freq.	90	140	55	5	2	7	299
	%	30	47	18	2	1	2	100
4.8. I can solved the activities in English	Freq.	115	115	58	4	2	5	299
	%	38	38	19	1	1	2	100
4.9. I can read in English	Freq.	98	107	74	12	3	5	299
	%	33	36	25	4	1	2	100
4.11. I can understand what I read in English	Freq.	49	119	111	15	5	0	299
	%	16	40	37	5	2	0	100

Legenda: NA – No answer

Graph 5. Students' perceptions: learning



Legend: MB – Very good; B- Good; M: Poor; MM – Very poor; NR- No answer

Overall, students have a positive perception of the quality of their learning in the English language. However, despite this positive perception, 30% of students acknowledge that they only know *fairly* how to write in English (item 4.4; 43%), to understand what they read in English (item 4.11; 37%) and speak in English (item 4.6; 31%).

2.5.2. Summative Assessment Register Sheets

Table 3. Global Results of Summative Assessment Sheets

	Portuguese					Mathematics					Social Studies					Expressions				
	VP	U	S	G	VG	VP	U	S	G	VG	VP	U	S	G	VG	VP	U	S	G	VG
EBP	1%	2%	35%	42%	20%	1%	5%	34%	40%	20%	0,3%	1,0%	18%	48%	32.7%	---	0,3%	19%	61%	20%
NEBP	---	3%	18%	54%	25%	---	5%	26%	37%	32%	---	3%	12%	36%	49%	---	2%	24%	47%	27%

Legenda: EBP – EBP Project class; NEBP – NEBP Project class; VP – Very poor; NS – Unacceptable; S – Satisfactory; B – Good; MB – Very Good.

After the analysis of the summative assessment register sheets of the six AE involved in the study, it was possible to identify that, in the Portuguese subject, and in both the EBP and non EBP classes, the prevailing grade is *Good* (42% and 54% respectively). Both class groups have students with negative grades, wherein the EBP classes there is *Very poor* (1%), through in a much reduced percentual value.

In the Maths subject, the prevailing grade is *Good*, both in the EBP classes (40%) and in the NEBP classes (37%). Both class groups have students with negative grades, but it is only in the EBP classes that the *Very poor* (1%) occurs, even though in a reduced percentual value.

In Social Studies, the dominant grade is *Good* (48%) in the EBP classes, whereas in the NEBP classes the main grade is *Very Good* (49%). There are also negative grades in both class groups, but only in the EBP classes the grade *Very poor* (0,3%) is to be found.

In Expressions, the predominant grade is *Good* in both class groups, EBP (61%) and NEBP (47%).

Of note is the dominance of grade *Good* in all subject-matter areas in both class groups, except for Social Studies, in which there is a higher average level in the NEBP classes in comparison with the EBP class groups. Also, only in the EBP class groups the grade *Very poor* is to be found.

2.5.3. Assessment of Learning

2.5.3.1. Spoken interaction and speaking

With regard to spoken interaction, the EBP students are between **levels A1** (Breakthrough) and **A2** (Waystage), depending on the AE, and following the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2001). In general, they are able to:

- Interact in a simple way, keeping a conversation based on answers to simple and direct questions, mainly about everyday familiar topics;
- Use simple phrases or sentences and drilled/memorised expressions, either with syntactic accuracy (less frequent) or with a (sometimes, very) limited control of grammatical structures (more frequent).

Simultaneously, and frequently, several students with an A1 level tend to give answers based on isolated words. In this case, these are said both in English and Portuguese. When students introduce spontaneous topics in the conversation, they are able to formulate in English the utterances mentioned in Portuguese provided that they are helped by the interlocutor.

Students are able to:

- Understand, most of the times, the questions posed by the interlocutor, although, with some frequency, the latter had to resort to the Portuguese language to ensure comprehension (even after the questions had been rephrased in English).

In this scope, the NEBP classes in general showed more difficulty in taking part in a conversation based on topics assumed to be familiar to them, predominating a more reduced vocabulary and a higher speech time rate by the interlocutor in order to keep up the conversation. If there are students that are able to broadly understand the interlocutor's discourse, others clearly need the recourse to translation. These students are considered to be at a pre-A1 level.

2.5.3.2. Reading aloud

When asked to read an excerpt from a storybook, whose text includes short and simple sentences and other with more elaborate and unknown vocabulary, the results of the EBP class groups put in evidence that:

- Students can read sentences both with familiar and unknown words, with (very) good expressive reading and pronunciation;
- Students can do an expressive reading mostly of sentences with familiar vocabulary, displaying some difficulties (pauses, hesitations) when reading sentences with more complex or unknown vocabulary (usually, the help of the interlocutor was not needed);
- Students showed substantial difficulties, doing a sometimes much spelled reading and with many pauses. In these cases, the help of the interlocutor was frequently needed for students to carry on reading.

Generally, the EBP students are in **level A1** (Breakthrough). As regards the NEBP students, very similar results were found, although there are differences in terms of frequency. This means that overall these students show more difficulties in reading the chosen excerpt, whereas the EBP students are placed in the two first mentioned situations.

Being aware that the chosen excerpt brought upon extra reading difficulties to students, we acknowledge that it would have been important that this reading activity was based on a short text about a content of Social Studies taught in English. Besides, it would have been important to have known the students' reader profile, namely in Portuguese, since the reading skills in different languages are not compartmented.

2.3.4.2. Listening and articulation with the curricular area of Expressions

Listening to a chant on the topic of human body and doing the actions and movements that were being mentioned was a task very successfully accomplished by EBP students. Based on this, these students are in level A1 (Breakthrough) in listening comprehension. NEBP students displayed more difficulties in recognising/understanding the action or movement and consequently in carrying it out. The general trend in this case is level pre-A1.

2.3.4.3. Written comprehension and articulation with the curricular area of Social Studies

The data for this dimension were provided by:

(1) A matching exercise, in which we tried to check on students' written comprehension of simple sentences about the functions of the digestive system organs, in articulation with the knowledge about the digestive system. This exercise also helped to verify students' knowledge about the functions of the digestive system organs in English.

In general, EBP students answered this question successfully. Specifically,

- In AE A, most of the students (85,7%, n=18) could solve this exercise successfully (between satisfactory and very good);
- In AE B, less than half of the students (45,1%, n=23) was able to solve the exercise with success (between satisfactory and very good);
- In AE C, the majority of students (57,1% n=40) could solve this exercise (between satisfactory and very good);
- In AE D, almost all students (92,2% n=107) were able to successfully solve the exercise (between satisfactory and very good);
- In AE E, almost all students (95,5%, n=21) were able to successfully solve the exercise (between satisfactory and very good);
- In AE F, 63,2% (n=12) could solve the exercise successfully (between satisfactory and very good).

The results of the NEBP class groups show the great difficulty students had in understanding the exercise instruction and content, which resulted in a greater failure in the responses.

(2) An ordering sentences exercise, based on the speech balloons of a vignette from a cartoon about a recipe.

Broadly, the EBP students were able to solve this exercise with success. Particularly,

- In AE A, 57,1% (n=12), slightly over half of the students accomplished this exercise successfully (between good and very good);
- In AE B, the majority of the students (74,5%, n=38) was able to understand the given instruction and 64,7% (n=33) could solve the activity successfully (between satisfactory and very good);
- In AE C, almost all students (85,7%, n=60) was able to understand the given instruction and 80% (n=56) could solve the exercise with success (between satisfactory and very good);

- In AE D, a large number of students (80,2%, n=93) could understand the given instruction and 76,7% (n=89) was able to solve the exercise successfully (between satisfactory and very good);
- In AE E, all students (100%, n=22) were able to understand what to do and 95,5% (n=33) could solve the exercise successfully (between satisfactory and very good);
- In AE F, a large number of students (78,9%, n=15) were able to understand what to do and 57,9% (n=11) was able to successfully solve the activity (between satisfactory and very good).

The results of the NEBP class groups show that the students had more difficulty in successfully solving this activity.

(3) An activity of identification of the digestive system diagram and the corresponding designation in English.

Generally, the EBP students answered these questions successfully. Explicitly,

- In AE A, 76,2% (n=16) identified the diagram of the digestive system correctly and was able to name it in English; 9,5% (n=2) named it in Portuguese. 14,3% (n=3) of the students neither answered this question nor identified the diagram correctly;
- In AE B, 27,5% (n=14) either gave no answer to this question or misinterpreted it. Of the respondents (72,5%, n=37), 45% (n=23) was able to correctly identify the digestive system in English, whereas 27,5% (n=14) gave correct answers in Portuguese;
- In AE C, 61,4% (n=43) of students was able to correctly identify the digestive system in English and 10% (n=7) in Portuguese. 28,6% (n=20) did not answer or did it the wrong way;
- In AE D, 74,1% (n=86) was able to successfully identify the digestive system in English and 7,8% (n=9) in Portuguese. 18,1% (n=21) did not answer or did it the wrong way;
- In AE E, all students correctly identified and named the digestive system in English;
- In AE F, 73,7% (n=14) could identify the digestive system in English and 26,3% (n=5) did not answer or responded incorrectly.

The results of the NEBP class groups evidenced that the students were able to identify the digestive system, but almost all students named it in Portuguese.

(4) An activity in which the students had to identify the organs of the digestive system in a diagram of the human body and name them in English.

In general, the EBP students were successful in this activity. In detail,

- In AE A, a large amount of students (85,7%, n=18) could solve the activity with success (between satisfactory and very good);
- In AE B, less than half of the students (41,9%, n=21) was able to successfully solve the activity (between satisfactory and very good);

- In AE C, 75,7% (n=53) of students could answer this question successfully (between satisfactory and very good);
- In AE D, all students were able to solve the activity with success (between satisfactory and very good);
- In AE E, 85,4% (n=21) of students could successfully answer this question (between satisfactory and very good);
- In AE F, all students could solve the activity with success (between satisfactory and very good).

The results of the NEBP class groups put in evidence that the students were able to identify many of the organs of the digestive system, but mostly in Portuguese.

Generally, regarding written comprehension, EBP students are in **level A2** (Waystage), given that they were able to go beyond the understanding of very simple sentences or isolated words and familiar utterances. Though to a less extent, there are also students that are in **level A1** (Breakthrough). The NEBP class groups are by and large in a lower level, displaying significant difficulties in understanding the utterances and solving the activities.

2.3.4.4. Writing and knowledge of contents of Social Studies

The data for this dimension were gathered by means of:

(1) A simple informative text about how the digestive system works.

The results make clear that,

- In AE A, half of the students (47,6%, n=10) could describe in English how the digestive system works; 19% (n=4) of the students did it successfully in English (between good and very good);
- In AE B, 15,7% (n=8) could describe in English how the digestive system works, among which only 2% (n=1) did it successfully in terms of content and English language integration;
- In AE C, 34,3% (n=24) of the students could describe in English how the digestive system works, among which only 20% (n=14) did it successfully in terms of content and English language integration (between satisfactory and very good);
- In AE D, 38,8% (n=45) was able to describe in English how the digestive system works, among which 28,4% (n=33) did it successfully in terms of content and English language integration (between satisfactory and very good);
- In AE E, 81,8% (n=18) could successfully describe how the digestive system works in terms of content and English language integration (between satisfactory and very good);
- In AEF, 15,8% (n=3) of the students tried to describe in English how the digestive system works, but only 5,3% (n=1) was able to do it successfully in terms of content and English language integration (satisfactory).

(2) A short simple text, in form of a note/message, about personal preferences in terms of food.

According to the results, it is possible to ascertain that:

- In AE A, 85,7% (n=18) did not answer or understand the question. 8% (n=1) was able to write a message based on simple utterances and sentences in English, even though with mistakes in terms of accuracy;

- In AE B, 90% (n=46) did not answer this question;
- In AE C, 61,4% (n=43) of the students did not answer. Of the respondents, and considering the most striking percentages, 12,9% (n=9) could write a message using simple sentences in English and simple connectors, and 11,4% (n=8) resorted to the enumeration of words in Portuguese and English to write their text, but still with an adequate communicative intention;
- In AE D, 64,7% (n=75) did not answer. Of the respondents, and considering the most striking percentages, 9,5% (n=11) wrote their text in Portuguese; 8,6% (n=10) resorted to the enumeration of words in Portuguese and English to write their text, but still the word sequence indicates an adequate communicative intention; and 6% (n=7) wrote simple sentences with words in Portuguese and English, and simple connectors (such as 'and');
- In AE E, only one student did not answer this question. Of the respondents, 50% (n=11) wrote their text using simple sentences with with words in Portuguese and English, and some simple connectors (such as 'and'). 22,7% (n=5) was able to write a message using simple sentences in English and simple connectors, which roughly presented linguistic accuracy. 22,7% (n=5) wrote simple sentences in English despite having accuracy mistakes.
- In AE F, 47,4% (n=9) of the students did not answer this question. Of the respondents, 31,6% (n=6) resorted to the enumeration of words in English to write their note, but still the word sequence indicates an adequate communicative intention; whereas 10,5% (n=2) resorted to the enumeration of words in Portuguese and English. 10,5% (n=2) could write a message using simple sentences in English, despite having accuracy mistakes.

To sum up, in the domain of writing, the EBP students show traits of both **level A1** (Breakthrough) and **level A2** (Waystage). This is particularly evident in the results of activity 1 (which articulates English and Social Studies). In the context of activity 2, students showed more difficulties, except for one AE.

In general, the NEBP students were not able to solve these activities successfully, which means they cannot be placed in the same proficiency level as the EBP students.

SHORTCOMINGS

Before moving on to the conclusions and recommendations of the study, this section mentions the study's shortcomings. Thus, we underline the acknowledgement that the case study design does not allow for any generalisation of the conclusions. Indeed,

(i) The selection of the cases to the implementation of the EBP Project was done on the basis of a feasibility study, which ensured the minimal conditions for such implementation. These conditions may however be gathered in other AE at a national level.

(ii) The analysed cases are affected by contextual and organisational variables that may interfere with the implementation of the EBP Project. Given the impossibility to control such variables, this study chose to characterise each of the cases, stressing their idiosyncrasies.

(iii) Given that no control variables and conditions were established, it was not possible to carry out a *quasi experimental* study. With this in mind, any comparisons between the EBP and NEBP

class groups should be seen merely as possible trends. Also, time and logistical constraints hindered the establishment of representative samples for the NEBP class groups of the AE under analysis.

(iv) Finally, we underline the impossibility of making an effective evaluation of the Project's effects on the students' learning in the curricular areas of Portuguese and Matemáticas, given that the processes and instruments for the formative and summative assessment are used differently either in each AE (in some cases), or between AE. Perhaps, and despite the limitations that are always inherent to an individual test as an exam, the results of the 4th grade national exams may be helpful in informing, in a more reliable way, whether the performance of the EBP and NEBP class groups, within a same AE, follow or not the national trend.

To conclude, the data collection instruments used in this study do not cover all the curriculum contents dealt with over the past three years of the EBP Project. Yet, we trust that the selected instruments allow for the display of students' different levels of proficiency in English, as well as knowledge of the contents in the areas of Expressions and Social Studies.

CONCLUSIONS

This final section begins with the study's objectives, which will organise how the conclusions are presented. The former are:

- A.** To evaluate the effectiveness of the EBP Project's implementation in the 1st Cycle of Basic Education, specifically:
 - The student's proficiency level in English, in bilingual curricular context, through their performance in English classes of OC and/or AEC;
 - Students' knowledge and skills in curricular contents of Social Studies and Expressions;
 - Students' learning in Portuguese (students' mother tongue) and Mathematics;
 - Representations, attitudes and motivations, and behaviours of stakeholders (students, parents/guardians, teachers and management of school clusters) in view of a bilingual school and a bilingual learning context;
 - The degree of coverage, participation and awareness of the project in the educational community and the level of inclusion;
 - Stakeholders' opinion on the effect of continuous training in bilingual methodology, for professional development and pedagogical change/innovation.

- B.** To make recommendations that may have a positive impact on public policies on English learning and bilingual teacher education.

C. To put forward Project's enlargement criteria.

These objectives unveil three diverse but complementary concerns. The first objective results from the need to understand and monitor where the EBP Project's implementation stands, namely by making an evaluation of its results. The second objective follows the first, since it should support the issuing of suggestions for the Project's improvement, particularly directed to English language learning and bilingual teacher education. The third objective corresponds to the effectiveness criteria that should be taken into account at the macro, meso and micro levels of public policies, this considering the perspective of the Project's enlargement.

About the students' proficiency in English in bilingual curricular context considering the performance in the English classes of OC and/or AEC.

Due to reasons that derived from the impossibility of a previous assessment of the students' proficiency level in English in relation to their performance in the English classes of OC and/or AEC, – given that the (i) development conditions of the OC and/or AEC were not the same in every AE; and that (ii) *a priori* assessment instruments and registers were not created for those subjects –, we chose to assess the proficiency level in English of students whose class groups were part of the EBP Project. Whenever possible we also assessed the proficiency level in English of the class groups of the same AE that solely enjoyed of teaching/learning processes in English in the modalities of OC and/or AEC.

In this section in particular, we highlight the most evident results about the spoken interaction and speaking, and reading aloud activities of the EBP and NEBP class groups. In the following sections we will refer to the analysis of the learning outcomes in the areas of Social Studies, Expressions, Portuguese and Mathematics.

Thus, in summary, it can be seen that in terms of:

a) Spoken interaction and speaking

The EBP students are placed, mostly, in level A1 (Breakthrough) and level A2 (Waystage) (Council of Europe, 2001), depending on the AE. In general, the students are able to:

- Interact in a simple way, keeping a conversation based on answers to simple and direct questions, mainly about everyday familiar topics;
- Use simple phrases or sentences and drilled/memorised expressions, either with syntactic accuracy (less frequent) or with a (sometimes, very) limited control of grammatical structures (more frequent).
- Understand the questions posed by the interlocutor, although, with some frequency, there is the need to resort to Portuguese to ensure comprehension.

Overall, the NEBP class groups revealed more difficulties in taking part in a conversation about topics that should be familiar to them; in these cases, there was a more reduced lexical repertoire and the discourse time of the interlocutor ruled. These class groups are predominantly placed in the third above-mentioned situation, thus unveiling significant difficulties in speaking in English.

b) Reading aloud

In the case of the reading aloud activity of a storybook excerpt, the results of the EBP class groups disclose that students mainly placed in level A1 (Breakthrough) are able to:

- read sentences both with familiar and unknown words, with (very) good expressive reading and pronunciation;
- do an expressive reading, mostly of sentences with familiar vocabulary, displaying some difficulties (pauses, hesitations) when reading sentences with more complex or unknown vocabulary (usually, the help of the interlocutor was not needed).

Some students revealed substantial difficulties during reading, which became evident in a sometimes spelled reading and with many pauses. In these cases, the help of the interlocutor was often needed. Regarding the NEBP class groups, in spite of some students showing satisfying results, the trend is for students to express more difficulties in reading the excerpt.

About the students' knowledge and skills in curriculum contents of Social Studies and Expressions.

Regarding listening, and the articulation with the curricular area of Expressions, there is evidence that the EBP students were very successful in carrying out the proposed activity (listening to a chant and doing the actions according to the instructions). This allows us to say that these students are placed in **level A1** (Breakthrough), whereas the NEBP students showed greater difficulties in recognising/understanding the actions or movements mentioned and consequently in performing them.

Considering written comprehension and knowledge of the syllabus contents of Social Studies, we verify that:

- a) In the matching activity based on the functions of some organs of the digestive system, the majority of EBP students was able to fully answer this question. The NEBP students revealed great difficulty in understanding the given instruction and the content of the activity, thus having had a higher lack of success in the answers.
- b) In the activity in which students were asked to order simple sentences (of a recipe, according to the speech balloons of a cartoon vignette), the EBP students were generally successful. The results of the NEBP class groups confirm that the students showed more difficulty in solving this activity.

c) In the activity of identification of the digestive system diagram in English, the EBP students could largely answer this question correctly. The results of the NEBP students show that these were able to identify the digestive system, but almost all students named it in Portuguese. This reveals that they know the content to be assessed in this question.

d) In the activity in which the students were asked to locate and name in English the organs of the digestive system, the EBP students were overall successful. The results of the NEBP class groups unveiled that the students were able to answer accordingly, but with a large predominance of answers in Portuguese.

Overall, the EBP students can be placed in **level A2** (Waystage) in terms of written comprehension, with a less significant amount of students being in **level A1** (Breakthrough). The NEBP class groups are generally in a lower stage, disclosing substantial difficulties in understanding the sentences and solving the activities.

With regard to writing and the knowledge of the syllabus contents of Social Studies – to be assessed in the writing of a simple informative text, about how the digestive system works, and a simple short text, as a message, about the personal preferences in terms of food -, the results disclose a great diversity between the several AE. Yet, it is possible to affirm that the EBP students show characteristics of **levels A1 and A2** in writing, which is apparent especially in activity 1 (which integrates English and Social Studies). In activity 2, except for an AE in particular, students revealed more difficulty. In general, the NEBP students were not able to carry out these activities successfully.

The students' learning outcomes reinforce the relevance of writing in English to learn English (in this case, to build and express knowledge about a syllabus content of Social Studies) to the development of students' writing skills. Simultaneously, the results unveil the knowledge students have of the content at stake and their ability to express it in English. Moreover, the results of activity 2 seem to underpin the added-value of the work carried out by teachers regarding writing about overall topics (at level A1 of CERF), which may take place in a close dialogue with the English language (AEC and/or curricular English).

These results disclose the potential of the project at stake and its approach to the development of students' proficiency in English, since that being at the beginning of the 4th grade of the 1st Cycle (1st term), students already show the proficiency level of a basic user, which varies between level A1 (Breakthrough) and level A2 (Waystage), depending on the *skills*. Thus, the results outdo the proficiency level to be accomplished at the end of 4th grade of 1st Cycle, namely, level A1 (Breakthrough) (see Metas Curriculares de Inglês Ensino Básico: 1.º CEB, 2014).

About students' learning in core curricular areas – Portuguese (mother tongue) and Mathematics

In terms of the students' performance in curricular areas such as Portuguese and Mathematics, the process of external evaluation was focused on the assessment register sheets of the study's EBP and NEBP class groups, so as to identify potentially preoccupying situations or disclose apparently regular situations. The absence of common testing to all class groups makes it impossible to understand if the obtained results may be compared, given the fact that we do not have any control procedure over the assessment processes carried out in each class, particularly, in terms of scope and depth of the knowledge and skills at stake.

On the whole, it was possible to verify that by large the EBP and NEBP students are well-succeeded in terms of learning outcomes in the areas of Portuguese and Mathematics, and that there are students that show more difficulties in all class groups.

About the representations, attitudes and motivations, and behaviours of students, parents/guardians and school board of the AE in view of a bilingual school and a bilingual learning context.

Motivation and learning

Students, parents/guardians and teachers are unanimous in their opinion about the benefits of the EBP Project, underlining students' pleasure in having classes in two languages: Portuguese and English. In fact, the students themselves affirm to enjoy learning and speaking in English, and that this experience has motivated them to want to know other languages and cultures. This opinion is confirmed by parents/guardians, who also consider that bilingual teaching facilitates the learning of the English language. The motivation for bilingual learning is recognised by all as an asset. Considering the teachers' perspective, there is the perception that the EBP fosters students' cognitive capacities and stimulates their work capacity/pace, which has an impact on the classroom behaviour.

Changes in teacher professional development

The existence of collaborative work, which promotes curricular articulation between teachers of different teaching cycles and levels, is a point valued. The work carried out in most of the AE / schools highlights collaboration dynamics that favour teachers' professional development. Relationships between teachers based on empathy, the involvement of the school management in the Project, the role played by the coordinator, as well as the profile of the assistant teachers have revealed to be determining factors to the degree of cooperation between teachers. But the participation in the Project also brought about changes at other levels. The assistant teachers (teachers of English of the 2nd/3rd Cycles and Secondary school), which gave support to the 1st Cycle teachers, unveiled a change in their conceptions about teaching in the 1st Cycle, namely in terms of: (i) the exigency in supporting students and families, (ii) the closeness to students, and (iii) the demands and specificities of the teaching/learning process.

Concerns

The most problematic aspect, which is shared by all, has to do with the difficulty in going deeper when teaching the contents of Social Studies, and in managing the syllabus. This is aggravated by the fact that the topics/contents chosen to be taught in English aren't always considered adequate. Similarly, there is some apprehension with respect to Portuguese and Mathematics, as a result of the amount of hours foreseen to the classes in English. This concern was emphasized by some head teachers and teachers, and stems from the results of the final exams of the 1st Cycle (*Are we taking time away from Portuguese and Mathematics? – wonder both head teachers and teachers; Or should we bet on and invest also in other dimensions of the curriculum?*).

Another concern made evident by some teachers and head teachers is the possible discontinuance of the Project to students that will pass to the 2nd cycle. Parents/Guardians are concerned that their children may not keep on profiting from the bilingual education in the 2nd Cycle.

Different perceptions about the enlargement of the EBP Project

The possible enlargement of the project is considered in different ways by the several stakeholders, as we pinpoint next.

- Most of the parents/guardians (90%) is in favour of the national enlargement of the EBP, which is a result of the positive perceptions they reveal of their children's: (i) motivation to learn in different ways; and (ii) greater mastery of English, and the advantages they see associated to this in the future.
- Most students (92%) is supportive of the project's enlargement to other children. In spite of considering the EBP classes more difficult and hard-working, students (i) highlight these classes' importance to English language learning, and (ii) underline the dynamic classes and the most used methodologies in English (songs, films, games and plays, group work). This playful component is extremely valued.
- The AE/School management and the teachers are less receptive to the possible national enlargement of the EBP. This derives from the obstacles they have faced, which can be placed at two levels: national and local (see next section 'Effectiveness conditions').

Effectiveness conditions

Taking into account the difficulties faced by the stakeholders, it was possible to delineate, at the macro level, factors that emerge from constraints imposed by the legal entity and, at the meso/micro level, factors that derive from the EBP Project's local reception in schools and classrooms, and the way schools get hold of the Project and integrate it in their school policy.

At the macro level, issues of *human resources management policy* are to be highlighted (to ensure the continuity/permanence of the teaching staff, making sure that the investment in CLIL teacher training is capitalised on in favour of the AE/school students' learning improvement; to timely secure the AE/School about the hour credits, thus allowing for an effective management of the project) and issues regarding *the education of 1st Cycle teachers* (to integrate English learning in their pre-service education).

At the local level, there is the *strength and breadth of the school management's commitment* to the running of the EBP Project, regarding the Educational Project and the management of a territory policy of the AE/school (e.g. there is the case of a school management that established the widening of English as OC to all 1st Cycle schools of the AE, in order to meet the parents/guardians expectations, given that their children did not benefit from EBP; the public promotion of the Project in the community [one school advertised the Project by means of a large outdoor in an external wall]; open activities involving the community [there are several examples of ceremonies, celebrations, events directed to parents, among others, which concur to the Project's prominence and the attained learning outcomes]; the establishment of partnerships with local entities to the development of joint activities, etc.).

Still at the local level, there is the *organisational dimension* linked to the intermediate structures, namely the selection process of local coordinators and other stakeholders. This recruitment is a result of personal and institutional stories, thus reflecting the difficulties faced by the AE/school management in view of the available human resources. The coordinators have very diverse profiles: 1st Cycle teachers/2nd and 3rd Cycle teachers; teachers with training in CLIL methodology/teachers with no training in CLIL methodology; teachers with training in English/teachers with no training in English; teachers with functions in the school management/teachers with no functions in the school management. Notwithstanding, we verify that a committed and participative Project's leadership [in the case of the AE whose local coordinators belong to the AE management] brings about differences at the level of the school culture. In addition, the selection of the Project's coordinator and of the bilingual school coordinator should consider their motivation, considering that coordinators with such profile instil more enriching dynamics, with more positive repercussions to the school atmosphere.

About the level of coverage, participation and awareness of the Project in the educational community and its level of inclusion

Despite the differences between each AE/School, the dataset indicates that the AE/school were well-succeeded in how they managed to involve the educational communities in the Bilingual Project. This is due to the leading role of school managements and teachers.

Regarding the school managements, if one excludes the problems resulting of the constraints imposed on by the legal entity, the following aspects need to be considered:

- The (high/low) commitment in the EBP Project from the operational and organisational perspective.
- The strategic dimension that is (or not) granted to the EBP Project in the Educational Project (see the example of an AE that resorted to the EBP Project to reinforce the prestige of one of its schools of 1st Cycle, whose closing was announced and expected. We underline the mutual alignment work of the school with the local partners - the Municipality - and the capacity to attract new students, which made the school more appealing to the local community. Currently, the school is in full action and holds the distinctive mark of being a Bilingual School).
- The (greater/lower) capacity to bet on intermediate leaderships (coordinators of the EBP Project; school coordinators; teachers of AEC involved in the Project) which are motivating and foster operational and organisational changes.
- The (greater/lower) capacity to select assistant teachers with the adequate profile to the Project's demands (motivation, proficiency in English, openness to the 1st Cycle/CLIL methodologies).

Concerning the teachers, two aspects need to be emphasized:

- The capacity to enlighten students, preparing them to the particularities of the EBP Project and clarifying the questions they posed.
- The availability to get the parents/guardians involved. A common strategy that is evident from the study is the involvement of the educational community through the development of bilingual events (parties, celebrations and events for the community, among others).

About the effect of the continuous training in the scope of bilingual methodology to professional development and pedagogical change/innovation, from the teachers' own perspective.

The gains of the training in bilingual methodology offered by the BC are seen in the:

- Variety of teaching/learning strategies/activities: increase of the playful component (recourse to songs, plays, games, among others) and group work.
- Improvement of the classroom organisation/management in the 1st Cycle, namely in terms of time management, establishment of routines and work rhythms, and behaviour management.
- Quality improvement of planning and didactic intervention.
- Diversification of/innovation in the materials and activities.
- Recourse to active methodologies which can be transferred to other curricular areas and circulated to other teachers (e.g. the activities carried out in English are similar to those carried out in Portuguese, which was evident in the analysis done to the file cases of some AE).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Next, we put forward recommendations to the development of public policies on English language learning and bilingual teacher education. With no intention of taking on a prescriptive stance, the following points are indicative:

Implementation conditions

- To include the English language in initial teacher education for the 1st Cycle, as well as foreign language didactics and integrated didactics.
- To ensure the permanence/continuity of the teaching staff involved in the EBP Project.
- To give (more) hour credits to schools.
- To create an EBP team that includes the teachers of all teaching cycles of the AE and the AEC teachers.
- To involve a person of the AE management in the EBP Project's team.
- To select Project coordinators that master the English language and know of English didactics.
- To select school coordinators that are in favour of EBP.
- To select assistant teachers motivated to bilingual teaching and the 1st Cycle methodologies, guaranteeing training whenever necessary to the cooperating teachers in the scope of early year's pedagogy.
- To ensure that the teachers of 1st Cycle have favourable conditions to bilingual learning (e.g. common meeting hours; timetables that allow teachers to rotate for the teaching of specific contents...).
- To foster cooperation (joint work between the class teacher and the assistant teacher).
- To involve the AE/teachers in the curricular structuring/management.
- To pay for the teachers' training travelling expenses.
- To promote the participation in the EBP team of native teachers or teachers with English proficiency, even if coming from different disciplinary areas.

Training and Monitoring

- To reinforce the training in CLIL methodology and integrated didactics.
- To timely plan the monitoring visits.
- To increase the frequency of monitoring.
- To jointly work with teachers in the planning, development and evaluation of the Project (content selection, joint analysis of the rationale underlying the options taken by teachers in the observed classes, etc.).
- To bestow a supervision dimension to the monitoring process, rather than a control one.

- To implement mechanisms to monitor learning in the several curricular areas (Portuguese, Mathematics, Social Studies) and English both in EBP and NEBP classes.

Dissemination and Recognition

- To disseminate the work developed by bilingual schools.
- To value, in the External Evaluation (IGEC), the effort of the AE/school in the scope of the EBP.
- To value in the Teacher Performance Evaluation the work carried out in the Project EBP.

Learning improvement

- To invest in linguistic activities (after the CERFL) that foster, in Speaking, the situated use of phrases and memorised expressions, so as to surpass linguistic activities focused on drill. The results attained in some AE (students that are placed in level A1 and A2) put in evidence that it is possible, through a more integrated and challenging work, to promote the enlargement of students' lexical and syntactic repertoire – going beyond a memorised vocabulary – and abilities at the spoken interaction level. This will support students' increasing self-confidence and greater communicative spontaneity. In this context, a greater articulation with the English class (AEC or as curricular area from 2015/2016 on).
- To foster reading moments in English, both in the perspective of reading for learning and also reading to enjoy diversified texts, which justifies the articulation of the work to be developed in Social Studies and English (AEC and/or curricular English). Besides safeguarding the development of the linguistic competence, reading moments may help students overcome some of the linguistic insecurity seen in the study's activities.
- To reinforce the writing activities to learn using English; this work may occur in a dialogue with English (AEC and or curricular English).

ENLARGEMENT CRITERIA OF THE EBP PROJECT

The implementation of the EBP Project depends on the fulfilment of a diverse set of conditions that the interviewed stakeholders signalled to be crucial to the success of the Project. Such conditions were brought forward in this report and, in more detail, in the appendices reporting each case study.

Overall, the motivation of the several stakeholders not only to the early English language learning, but also to doing that in a bilingual context, is seen as a vital condition to the success of EBP. Yet, regardless of this positive attitude towards EBP, the Project's enlargement possibility to all AE, to other school cycles or at national level, even though by large perceived as desirable, is seen as premature. The conditions

considered indispensable to its effectiveness are not secured both at the level of the AE and nationally. Thus,

- a) The obtained results that supported the recommendations previously signalled, draw attention to the need to guarantee (i) the adequate human resources (in terms of qualifications/training and hour credits), as well as (ii) the teams' permanence (of class teachers and assistant teachers).
- b) It is also possible to point out the existing perception that the Project's enlargement will be a way to ensure equity in the access to the early learning of English, and for this reason the widening should propensively and progressively reach out all class groups of an AE.
- c) It is also essential that *curricula* be adjusted to the reality of learning in a bilingual context. Firstly, there is the curricular adjustment at the level of the 1st Cycle, this allowing for a cross-disciplinary approach to contents and (ii) the progressive learning of the language structures. Secondly, the articulation between the 1st Cycle and the *curricula* of the subsequent cycles, in order to ensure the continuity of the teaching/learning processes.

References

- Conselho da Europa (2001). *Quadro Europeu Comum de Referência para as Línguas. Aprendizagem, Ensino, Avaliação*. Porto: Edições Asa.
- Bardin, L. (2009). *Análise de conteúdo*. Lisboa: Edições 70.
- Shulman, L. (1986). Paradigms and research programs in the study of teaching. In M. Wittrock, *Handbook of research on teaching* (pp.3-36). New York: McMillan Publishing Company.
- Yin, R. (1994). *Case study research. Design and methods*. London: Sage.

Consulted documents

- Avaliação Externa das Escolas: Relatório - Agrupamento de Escolas da n.º 4 de Évora* (2008). Consultado em 24-09-2014 em: http://www.ige.min-edu.pt/upload/AEE_2008_DRA/AEE_08_Agr_Evora4_R.pdf
- Avaliação Externa das Escolas: Relatório de Escola - Agrupamento de Escolas da Senhora da Hora* (2010). Consultado em 24-09-2014 em http://www.ige.min-edu.pt/upload/AEE_2011_DRN/AEE_11_Ag_Senhora_Hora_R.pdf
- Projeto Educativo Agrupamento de Escolas António Nobre* (2012-2013). Consultado em 26-09-2014 em : <http://en.calameo.com/read/0015639711dcbf47bddf2>
- Projeto Educativo Agrupamento de Escolas Eça de Queirós* (2011-2014). Consultado em 22-09-2014 em: <http://www.esqxlx.net/queirosbeta/images/PEA.pdf>.
- Projeto Educativo Agrupamento de Escolas Gardunha e Xisto* (2013-2016). Consultado em 22-09-2014 em: http://www.aesg.edu.pt/portal/index.php?option=com_phocadownload&view=category&id=3&Itemid=71.
- Projeto Educativo Agrupamento de Escolas José Estevão* (2008) consultado em 24-09-2014 em: <http://www.aeje.pt/PressReleases/Paginas/default.asp>