

**A Case Study Policy Analysis of One Bilingual Higher Education Institution: How Are
Bilingual English-Spanish Universities Planning to Remain Viable?**

by

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A Case Study Policy Analysis of One Bilingual Higher Education Institution: How Are Bilingual English-Spanish Universities Planning to Remain Viable?

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University of Pittsburgh, 2022

Hispanic college enrollment in the U.S. will surpass 4.4 million students by 2025, far exceeding the growth rate of any other racial or ethnic group. Hence, the number of Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) identified by the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) increased to nearly 570 in 2020 and is likely to accelerate (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, n.d.).

This qualitative case study took place at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV), one of the largest U.S. HSIs. Located at the South Texas borderland, it claims to be a "highly engaged bilingual university." This qualitative case study describes and interprets UTRGV's bilingual model of higher education through institutional document analysis, supported by semi-structured interviews.

Data were conceptualized using an adaptation of Dafouz and Smit's (2016) ROAD MAPPING of English-Medium Education in Multilingual University Settings (EMEMUS), originally used to study the introduction of English to European universities. Informed by sociolinguistics, critical language and race theory, LangCrit (Cumins, 2014), and bilingual education policy, this study addresses the primary question—how the first public bilingual English-Spanish university plans to remain viable.

Findings suggest UTRGV's bilingual initiative is in its infancy. It is nested in how the community positions itself through language within a broader framework, e.g., language policy, bilingual education, HSIs' research, and meanings associated with personal value, legitimization, and social justice. Indeed, UTRGV has supported the creation of a bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate institute to promote higher education in English and Spanish; however, this strategic plan remains disconnected from institutional language policy.

The success of the UTRGV bilingual initiative symbolizes the beginning of recognizing the linguistic capital of the U.S. Hispanic population and an opportunity for HSIs to capitalize on the wellspring of emerging bilinguals whose cultural heritage and linguistic wealth deserve strengthening, consideration, and relevance. Findings revealed that UTRGV's Hispanic and first-generation college student community is committed to becoming a highly engaged bilingual university and the blueprint for other HSIs to follow.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	xiii
1.0 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Research Background	4
1.1.1 Key Terms.....	4
1.1.2 Focus of Research.....	7
1.2 Research Purpose and Questions	11
1.3 Significance of This Study.....	13
1.4 Positionality	18
1.5 Theoretical Framework	24
1.5.1 Sociolinguistic Theory	24
1.5.2 ROAD-MAPPING	25
1.5.3 Critical Language and Race Theory (LangCrit).....	26
2.0 Literature Review	28
2.1 Bilingual Higher Education	28
2.1.1 Bilingual Higher Education History	30
2.1.2 Benefits and Potential Challenges of Bilingual Universities	33
2.1.2.1 Benefits of Bilingual Education	33
2.1.2.2 Potential Challenges of Bilingual Education	39
2.2 College Enrollment of Hispanic Population in the United States	40
2.3 Educational Research and Policy on Bilingual Education	42
2.3.1 Official Language	46

2.3.2 Theory and Bilingualism Research	47
2.3.3 Educational Research and Higher Education Language Policy	51
2.3.4 Language Policy and Planning.....	56
2.4 Models of Bilingual Education Abroad	57
2.4.1 University of Lleida (UdL) Lleida, Catalonia, Spain	58
2.4.2 University of Freiburg, Switzerland	61
2.4.3 University of Bozen-Bolzano	63
2.5 Models of Bilingual Education in the U.S.	64
2.6 Summary of the Literature Review	66
3.0 Research Design	70
3.1 Introduction	70
3.2 Qualitative Research Tradition	70
3.3 Applying Conceptual Framework.....	74
3.3.1 ROAD-MAPPING	75
3.3.1.1 First Dimension: Roles of Spanish RO	77
3.3.1.2 Second Dimension: Academic Disciplines AD.....	77
3.3.1.3 Third Dimension: (Language) Management M	78
3.3.1.4 Fourth Dimension: Agents A	78
3.3.1.5 Fifth Dimension: Practices & Processes PP	79
3.3.2 Sixth Dimension: Internationalization & Globalization.....	79
3.3.3 LangCrit: Critical Language and Race Theory	80
3.4 Methodological Assumptions.....	81
3.5 Case Study Research Design.....	82

3.5.1 Document Analysis.....	83
3.5.2 Semi-Structured Interviews and Analysis	84
3.5.2.1 Participants	85
3.6 Data Collection Procedures	87
3.7 Data Analysis	88
4.0 Findings.....	91
4.1 Introduction	91
4.1.1 History of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, UTRGV.....	91
4.1.2 Academic Accreditation	93
4.2 Essay 1: Dimensions of Bilingualism at UTRGV.....	94
4.2.1 Introduction.....	94
4.2.2 Roles of Spanish Dimension RO	95
4.2.2.1 Relevant Factors for Roles of Spanish	97
4.2.3 Academic Disciplines (AD)	112
4.2.4 Agents Dimension (A)	115
4.2.5 (Language) Management Dimension (M)	117
4.2.6 Practices and Processes Dimension (PP)	120
4.2.6.1 Linguistic Abilities	120
4.2.6.2 Community Engagement (Service)	122
4.2.7 Internationalization and Globalization Dimension (IG)	123
4.3 Essay 2: Sociolinguistic Context Analysis	126
4.3.1 Introduction.....	126
4.3.2 Rio Grande Valley’s Location and Demographics.....	127

4.3.3 Linguistic Trauma.....	128
4.3.4 Value of Spanish.....	132
4.3.5 Culturally Relevant Pedagogies	134
4.4 Essay 3: Challenges & Parameters of Success	136
4.4.1 Introduction.....	136
4.4.2 Challenges	137
4.4.2.1 Time	137
4.4.2.2 Resistance	137
4.4.2.3 Fear	138
4.4.2.4 Internal Logistics	140
4.4.2.5 COVID-19.....	141
4.4.2.6 Patience: 'It's not a Sprint, It's a Marathon'	143
4.4.3 Parameters of Success.....	145
4.4.3.1 External Markers.....	145
4.4.3.2 Student Achievement.....	147
4.4.3.3 Opportunities	149
4.4.3.4 Community Support Goes Both Ways.....	150
4.5 Work in Progress	152
5.0 Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations	153
5.1 Discussion	153
5.1.1 Is UTRGV the First?.....	153
5.1.2 How Institutionalized is UTRGV's Bilingualism?	154
5.1.3 Identities.....	158

5.1.4 Neoliberal Collusion.....	159
5.1.5 Viability	160
5.2 Recommendations and Future Research.....	162
5.2.1 Students.....	163
5.2.2 Faculty	163
5.2.3 Community	163
5.2.4 The Bilingual Program	164
5.2.5 Language Policy	164
5.3 Conclusion	164
Appendix A Tables.....	168
Appendix B Additional Figures	173
Appendix C Introductory Script	178
Appendix D Semi-Structured Interview Protocol.....	179
Appendix E R-Based Qualitative Data Analysis	181
Appendix F Themes Classified Concerning Research Questions’ Topics	185
Appendix G IRB Documentation	186
Bibliography	188

List of Tables

Table 1. List of Documents.....	168
Table 2. Summary of Participant Zoom Conversations.....	168
Table 3. Bilingual Listings Prestige Category	169
Table 4. UTRGV Institutional Summary 2020-2021	170
Table 5. ROAD MAPPING Dimensions Chart Dimensions	171
Table 6. Factors Relevant for Roles of Spanish R.O. (adapted from Dafouz & Smit, 2017, p. 299, Table 1)	171
Table 7. Bilingual or Additive Programs Strand Models.....	172

List of Figures

Figure 1. Bilingual & Multilingual Programs	9
Figure 2. Bilingual & Multilingual Education Degree Completion by Ethnicity	9
Figure 3. ROAD MAPPING Framework for Spanish/English Universities	77
Figure 4. Distribution Map of Hispanic- Serving Institutions (HSI)	173
Figure 5. ROAD MAPPING Dimensions Graph	174
Figure 6. B3 Institute Strategic Plan	175
Figure 7. Map of Rio Grande Valley	176
Figure 8. Accreditation Milestones.....	177

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1.0 Introduction

This dissertation is a case study, a descriptive research approach to obtain an in-depth analysis on the educational language model and policy at the first self-proclaimed bilingual Spanish/English university in the United States, the University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley. UTRGV is considered one of the nation's largest Hispanic-Serving Institutions (www.utrgv.edu/en-us).

Few educational issues in the United States in recent years have been as volatile or ideologically loaded as bilingual education. Bilingual education has evoked passionate responses from all sectors of society (Cummins & Swain, 2014). Traditionally, the discourse on language policy in the U.S. has been framed as an either-or choice between English and other languages. This framework has resulted in an imposition of the English language and Anglo culture on language minorities, dating back to the deculturation of American Indians through a system of English-only boarding schools (Wiley, 2000).

Conversely, bilingual and multilingual education enjoys a long tradition in many bilingual countries such as Canada, Switzerland, South Africa, India, and Spain (Poissant, 2005), to name a few. To date, 55 countries have two official languages (Compendium of Language Management in Canada (CLMC) | University of Ottawa, 2021). Bilingual education development in monolingual countries, or countries where clusters of different language population minorities exist, such as in the U.S., is much more recent. Unlike the U.S., linguistic diversity is the norm in many countries, as numerous languages coexist, and daily communication occurs through the continuous use of the accessible linguistic repertoire. Educational language policy aligns with this

premise. For instance, the European Council regularly publishes updated language education policy guidelines to promote linguistic diversity and language learning. One of the central principles of the document is that policies should be based on plurilingualism as a value and a competence (Coste, Moore, & Zarate, 2009). When planning and developing bilingual education policies, policymakers ponder the local language environment, pedagogical benefits, residents' preferences, and social and economic development needs (Hannum & Wang 2012). Research links economic growth to linguistic diversity (Hogan-Brun, 2017).

However, in the last decade there has been growth in community schools teaching heritage languages in formal dual-language programs (Lam & Richards, 2020). Changes in curriculum development reflect an awareness of the language diversity of the student body. Research on multilingual education suggests that an approach that normalizes the existence of cultural and linguistic diversity in the classroom and incorporates it into teaching can empower students (Cummins, 2000). Theoretical proposals to change pedagogical practices create an opportunity for students to make use of their linguistic resources in the classroom, which is also beneficial to the students' learning and for their developing multilingual competencies (Cenoz & Gorter, 2014; García, Ibarra Johnson, & Seltzer, 2017; García & Wei, 2014).

The shift to bilingual education not only goes against the tradition of language split¹ but also foregrounds diverse ways to look at language and language learning (Blommaert & Rampton, 2012). Following this progression, Tara Fortune, the immersion program director at the University of Minnesota's Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition, argues:

¹ Language split refers to second language learning as a separate subject or getting language minority students to become proficient in English in a separate setting.

If we can make children feel more whole and more ready and more accepted and welcomed and validate their prior knowledge and prior learning experiences, then we have gone a long way to making them ready to learn over the course of a lifetime. (Lam & Richards, 2020)

According to this perspective, languages are not fixed codes but ideological artifacts that are socially and politically constructed (Makoni & Pennycook, 2007). If this perspective continues to advance, opportunities for developing multilingual competence from an early age will be expanded and continue into higher education. If the previous educational norm was English-only homogenization, it is essential to progress to realize and value bilingualism from the academic perspective. This premise helps contextualize the historical dynamics in which language diversity has become recognized today, which might help in understanding where bilingual education in higher education is going in the 21st century. The relationships between policies and practices surrounding bilingual higher education institutions are at the heart of this study.

Skeptics and critics have always been present in bilingual education (Kloss, 1998). The current time is, of course, no exception (Goldenberg & Wagner, 2015). As discussed in the literature review, in addition to federal policies that were at best unconcerned, if not outright hostile, to bilingual education, anti-foreign-language and anti-immigrant rhetoric has grown during the last few years in the United States. I intend to shed light on the viability of expanding bilingual education in higher education. The intended audiences for this study include higher education policy scholars, bilingual education advocates, and Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), and stakeholders in these institutions.

1.1 Research Background

1.1.1 Key Terms

Bilingualism/multilingualism refers to the coexistence of more than one language system within an individual, as contrasted to monolingualism (Hakuta, 2013). Bilingualism is described as a speaker's ability to use two languages for communication (Schmitt & Verplaetse, 2010). For most, the concept of bilingualism is a basic understanding that two languages are used in major or minor ways. However, the concept of bilingualism is variable, dynamic, and has evolved through time. Many authors from different disciplines have attempted to narrow down this idea (Bermudez Jiménez, & Fandiño Parra, 2012). Bilingualism and multilingualism are simply part of everyday life for the majority of the world's population. Linguists estimate that there are around 6,800 languages in the world, in about 200 nation-states (Romaine, 2006). As globalization expands, more people become bilingual or multilingual as the standard practice (Grosjean & Li, 2013). Therefore, linguists often use the terms bilingualism and multilingualism interchangeably.

Bilingual education: When defining bilingual education in the U.S. context, it is important to understand that unlike in much of the rest of the world, the primary goal of bilingual education in the U.S. has been to teach English rather than to develop bilingualism/biliteracy in the immigrant population. Languages other than English have been (and continue to be) primarily seen as a problem to be remediated by the schools (Ruiz, 1984). Language rights have been framed largely as the right not to be discriminated against, and bilingual educators have routinely been on the defensive about helping students to maintain their native language. In the minds of most

Americans, bilingual education is to teach English rather than educate a student in two languages (Gándara & Escamilla, 2017), in K-12 contexts.

The study of bilingualism focuses on the language behaviors of bilingual speakers and the socio-pragmatic patterns of using two languages. It also foregrounds language development, acquisition, and loss, among other issues (Verplaetse & Schmitt, 2010). Bilingual education, therefore, encompasses teaching academic content in two languages, both native and secondary, with varying amounts of each language used in accordance with the program model.

Translanguaging This label refers to the use of multiple languages in the classroom. While "multilingual" views languages in an additive manner (the use of numerous, distinct languages), "translanguaging" refers to "synergy, treating languages as mutually influencing each other" (Canagarajah, 2013, p. 41). García (as cited in García & Li, 2014) describes translanguaging as "multiple discursive practices in which bilinguals engage to make sense of their bilingual worlds" and states that it is the discursive norm in bilingual families and communities. Translanguaging is a better descriptive label for bilingual practices of discourse that students and teachers use for both academic and non-academic purposes (Sayer, 2013). The bulk of accessible literature regarding classroom translanguaging is recent and has focused on elementary school children's utilization, practices, and effects (e.g., Sayer, 2013).

Hispanic/Latino: The definitions of Hispanic and Latino varies widely. Some refer to "Hispanic" as a race, but this categorization is not adequate. The U.S. government explicitly differentiates Hispanic and Latino as terms to define *regions of origin*, not race. The Census does not classify persons of Portuguese or Brazilian descent as Hispanic, as those are Portuguese-

speaking populations (2020 Census: Race and Hispanic Origin Research Working Group: Final Report, 2020; Tarran, 2018). The majority (51 percent) of Hispanic and Latino Americans prefer to identify with their families' country of origin, while only 24 percent prefer the terms "Hispanic" or "Latino" (Taylor, Lopez, Martínez, & Velasco, 2012). The terms “Latino” and “Hispanic” are used interchangeably in this study. However, I will use Hispanic more often, as it relates more directly to the Spanish language origin.

Hispanic-Serving Institutions, HSIs: Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) are public and private two- and four-year colleges and universities with full-time undergraduate Latino enrollments of 25 percent or more. HSIs emerged in the 1980s, but they were not officially recognized by Congress until 1992, thanks in part to the work of The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) (García & Taylor, 2017). Institutions that meet the criterion to become HSIs can apply for federal grants to support student success (Excelencia in Education, 2019a).

According to the HACU website, in the 2019-20 academic year, **569 institutions** met the federal enrollment criterion, enrolling 2.2 million Hispanic students. The number of HSIs is rapidly growing, from 137 institutions in 1990 to 189 in 1994, 229 in 2000, 245 in 2005, 311 in 2010, 539 in 2018, and 569 in 2019 (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, n.d.). (See Figure 4.)

Unlike Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), which started with the purposeful mission and vision to serve a specific student population, HSI designation is based

exclusively on reaching the 25 percent enrollment criterion, which makes the ‘servingness’² difficult to determine (García, 2019). The present study focuses on the bilingual Spanish/English component of one university identified as one of the largest HSIs in the country.

1.1.2 Focus of Research

This study focuses on the emergence and viability of the first self-proclaimed Spanish/English bilingual public university in the mainland United States.

Regarding policies and implementation of different models of bilingual education, the bulk of the research frequently seems to respond to the needs of K-12 children with limited proficiency in English. The impact of bilingual education at the university level has not been examined with the same vigor. For the same reason, bilingual higher education policies and practices, as they have been implemented in other countries, are also not clearly defined in the literature.

Universities are characterized these days by, among other topics and with different outcomes, their strong commitment to the internationalization of their study programs, research activity, and the increasing cross-border flow of students (Cots, Lasagabaster, & Garrett, 2012). Bilingualism and multilingualism have complex significance in higher education that involves multiple communities and languages in the United States. The Spanish language remains, by far,

²Servingness is a concept that Garcia, Núñez, and Sansone (2019) argue is a multidimensional way to explain that becoming an HSI not just provides access to Latinx students but genuinely serves them.

the most spoken non-English language in the U.S (Carter, 2018). Furthermore, Hispanic³ postsecondary enrollments have dramatically increased in the last 20 years. Between 2000 and 2020, Hispanic enrolment has increased 157 percent, from 1.4 million to 3.6 million students, 18.7 percent of the total student enrollment (COE - Racial/Ethnic Enrollment in Public Schools, 2021). Even though the cultural and racial heterogeneity of this minoritized group should be acknowledged, the sociolinguistic characteristics and habits of the Hispanic population, relevant to the higher education arena, will be the focus of this research.

It is noteworthy that Bilingual-Multilingual Spanish/English programs in colleges and universities are growing in popularity across the country. The most common sector, by number of institutions, that offers Bilingual and Multilingual Education programs are public four-year or above institutions (54 total). The most common sector, by number of degrees awarded, is public four-year or above (606 completions) (Bilingual & Multilingual Education Database, 2020). Figure 1 shows universities that offer Bilingual and Multilingual Education programs, by the total number of degree completions, colored and grouped by their sector.

³ The term Hispanic is used in this study to refer to Latin American population, whose origin is a Spanish-speaking country.

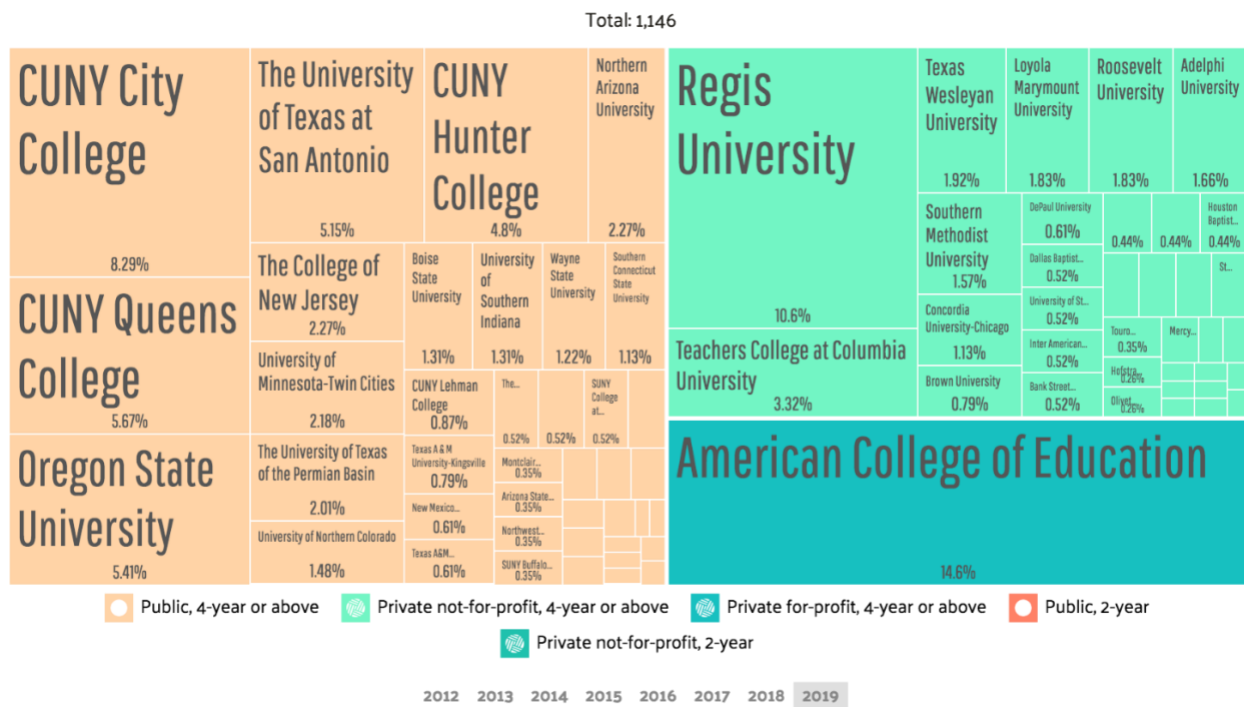


Figure 1. Bilingual & Multilingual Programs

Data from: The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Completions

The following chart (Figure 2) shows the number of degrees awarded in Bilingual & Multilingual Education by race and ethnicity.

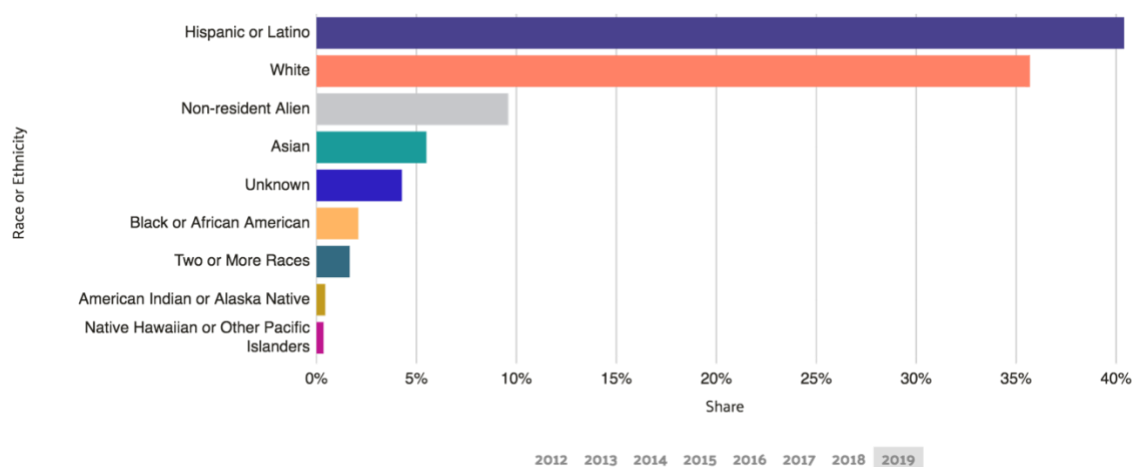


Figure 2. Bilingual & Multilingual Education Degree Completion by Ethnicity

This chart shows that Hispanic students earned the largest share of bilingual and multilingual degrees compared with other ethnicities (Bilingual & Multilingual Education Database, 2020), which suggests that Hispanic or Latino students are taking advantage of their linguistic resources the most.

All the previous data show that the institutions offering bilingual and multilingual programs and degrees across the nation are not necessarily institutionally bilingual universities. However, this study focuses not on individual bilingual programs but on one university that claims to be the first bilingual institution in the United States. This study aims to describe and evaluate the model of bilingual education being implemented in this higher education institution, discussing bilingual and bicultural degrees from an institutional point of view. The institutional bilingual model refers to the language dispensation of the institution itself and not necessarily to the sociolinguistic output of its study programs (Langner & Imbach, 2000, p. 462). The University of Ottawa is an example of an institutionally bilingual university, where students may register for instruction in either English or French (Garigue, 1985, p. 941). Institutional bilingualism, however, also refers to the use of two languages as the medium for conducting other university business (Du Plessis, 2006; Langner & Imbach, 2000, p. 462,).

The present study focuses on the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, UTRGV, which has been named the first bilingual institutional university in the U.S. In its vision statement, UTRGV claims to be a “highly engaged bilingual university; it is also one of the largest Hispanic Serving-Institutions in the nation (UTGV, 2020).

1.2 Research Purpose and Questions

This dissertation explores a university situated in the Borderlands between Mexico and the United States that has expanded its parameters to utilize the language diversity dividend of the students they serve and to offer a bilingual pedagogical model. This university promised to be the first bilingual university to address the increased demand for bilingual professionals (Anderson, 2017; Tyx, 2017). According to its website, the institution addresses the historical legacy of the legitimacy of the Spanish language. A guiding principle of the university calls for building an HSI that echoes the cultural and linguistic heritage of its surrounding community (Trinidad, Guajardo, Kranz, & Guajardo, 2017).

This case study explores this university's bilingual model, its challenges and successes, and how it plans to remain viable. I chose to deepen my understanding of this phenomenon because bilingualism is a resource. As a higher education administrator, I aim to understand how this university responds to the need to prepare more global, multilingual, and multicultural professionals to adapt, react, and mutually benefit from bilingual university programs.

Epistemological and theoretical perspectives on the subject are twofold. First, in the literature review, I examined the pedagogical model of bilingual education in universities abroad, including dual-bilingual and parallel programs. Prior scholarship recognized the cultural and linguistic diversity in most European countries and in Canada due to their racial, cultural, and linguistic composition; therefore, this study's literature review focused on whether the same diversity is exhibited in the fabric of the United States population.

Next, the literature review took a more global perspective and examined the lessons on program viability and projection that bilingual universities have learned so far. Subsequently,

analysis is provided on how bilingual education impacts educational policies in those universities and countries. For example, as more universities in Europe move to internationalization policies, even in a political and ideological charged context like Catalonia,⁴ there is a willingness to include English to move towards a more multilingual university (Llurda, Cots, & Armengol, 2013). The goal was not to compare the degree to which these policies have developed around the world but to explore the sociolinguistic context or series of parameters through which the idiosyncrasies of the borderland can be brought into the model analysis. Additionally, this study analyzed the dimensions of the UTRGV bilingual education model, drawing primarily from document analysis and supplementing with three semi-structured interviews, with an emphasis on its impact on bilingual policy within the institution. In this dissertation, the author explored the roles, challenges, and responses of creating a bilingual university in the United States.

This intrinsic case study focuses on a policy/institutional analysis of one bilingual higher education institution in the United States: The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV), the first comprehensive public bilingual university in the country. The purpose is to highlight the successful experiences that can be applied in specific contexts. Finally, based on the findings of this dissertation, the author hopes to help HSIs, scholars, practitioners, and government planners better serve Hispanic students' access and success, as well as better preserve their culture and language.

⁴ Catalan universities are already bilingual, Spanish/Catalan. Adding English is perceived as both, negative and positive. Positive, as an added resource for employability, and negative because it adds pressure to the sustainability of the Catalan language (Sabaté-Dalmau, 2016).

This research is constructivist in nature. Data generated primarily from policy-relevant documents, institutional archives, and supplemented with semi-structured interviews was described and conceptualized employing intrinsic case-study design. An intrinsic case study is typically undertaken to learn about a unique phenomenon (Stake, 1995). This methodology is exploratory in nature, and therefore focuses on the perceived importance of the case itself rather than on expanding theory or generalizing across cases (Stake, 1995). Data was manually classified and conceptualized using an adaptation of Dafouz and Smit's (2016) ROAD MAPPING of English-Medium Education in Multilingual University Settings (EMEMUS) as a methodological framework to explore the role of Spanish in this higher education institution.

This study received approval from the University of Pittsburgh Institutional Review Board. (Appendix G)

I focused on one primary question: How is the first bilingual English-Spanish university planning to remain viable? To answer that broader question, I structured my study with the following research questions:

1. What are the characteristics of the bilingual education model of this institution?
2. How does this bilingual education institution identify its challenges?
3. How does this bilingual education institution identify its parameters of success?

1.3 Significance of This Study

This section explains the purpose and significance of understanding bilingual higher education innovations.

In the current U.S. political climate, debates about immigration have grown increasingly heated. Beneath this discussion lies a tacit and uncomfortable question about language: whether immigration from Spanish-speaking countries threatens English language supremacy (Carter, 2018). It is crucial to understand the political ramifications surrounding bilingual education and how they might play into the linguistic background of the higher education student body. The goal of this research is to understand how an institution such as UTRGV enhances and cultivates students' linguistic abilities and what types of opportunities a more inclusive campus climate creates for student success.

This dissertation focuses on Spanish as a second language in the United States. A total of 585 million people, or 7.5 percent of the world population, speaks Spanish. Of those, 489 million, 6 million more than last year, are native Spanish speakers. This makes Spanish the second most prevalent language in the world by number of speakers. Furthermore, the Spanish language is studied by 22 million people in 110 countries. Spanish is also the third most used language on the internet, where it has significant growth potential (Instituto Cervantes, 2020).

In the United States, based on analysis of newly released Census Bureau data from 2018, the Center for Immigration Studies found that 67.3 million residents (about twice the population of California) in the U.S. now speak a language other than English at home, a number equal to the entire population of France (Ziegler & Camarota, 2019). The largest numerical increases in those who speak a language other than English at home between 2010 and 2018 were Spanish speakers, representing a 4.5 million increase, 41.5 million in total (Ziegler & Camarota, 2019). Additionally, the U.S. Census Bureau projects that by 2060, the Latino population in the U.S.—the group most likely to speak Spanish—will grow 115 percent to 119 million (Carter, 2019). There are now more Spanish speakers at home in the United States than in any country in Latin America, except

Mexico, Argentina, and Colombia (Ziegler & Camarota, 2019). However, even with this linguistic wealth, Americans are notorious for their monolingualism. What should be a tremendous competitive advantage for Americans, a multilingual workforce, is turned into a disadvantage because of education policies that ignore or discourage the development of second language acquisition (Gandárra & Acevedo, 2016).

In addition, Hispanic college enrollment has increased from 1.9 million in 1996 to over 3.6 million in 2018 and is predicted to exceed 4.4 million students by 2025, far exceeding the growth rate of any other racial or ethnic group. As a result, the number of Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) identified by the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) increased from 172 in 1995 to 569 in 2019 and is expected to continue growing at the rate of 26 to 30 institutions per year (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, n.d.). The exponential growth of the Hispanic population presents significant implications for the United States, to the extent that educating the Hispanic population is essential to meet not only national economic objectives but to maintain global competitiveness. (Contreras & Contreras, 2015; Flores, 2011; Liu & Liu, 2012; Nellum & Valle, 2015; Santiago, 2012).

Regarding Hispanic college students, frequently cited obstacles to postsecondary success include academic challenges, particularly English language proficiency (Cortina, 2006; Fouad & Byars-Winston, 2005; Lopez, 2010; Mount-Cors, 2008). Hispanic students with limited English proficiency were found to experience frustrations and struggles with comprehension, writing assignments, and assessment, which resulted in lower grades (Wolf & Leon, 2009). Numerous programs that provide academic support to students with limited English proficiency skills continue to emerge throughout the country (Cuellar, 2019). These programs claim to help English

learners, thereby facilitating their retention and degree completion (Cuellar 2019; Troche-Rodriguez, 2009).

Many Hispanic students are also heritage speakers—speaking Spanish at home while also being English proficient. This linguistic diversity is an asset from which colleges can create different programs to support Hispanic students (Cuellar, 2019). Acknowledging these linguistic skills as assets and supporting students' language development can help Hispanic students further succeed in the workforce as well as academia, given the economic advantage multilingual skills can create (Gándara & Acevedo 2016). For instance, according to Porras, Ee, and Gándara, (2014), across all sectors of the economy and the business world, employers prefer bilingual applicants. This additional linguistic advantage might not guarantee a higher salary, but it allows workers the opportunity to land jobs sooner and, thus, additional time to ascend to higher pay scales. Arguably, Rumbaut's (2014) 10-year study on 6,000 millennial generation high school immigrants concluded that students who maintained their bilingualism earned more in the labor market than those who had lost their home language either partially or fully. The study also found that balanced bilinguals (literate in both languages) were more likely to graduate from high school and achieve higher occupational status (Rumbaut, 2014). Variables such as prior schooling and socioeconomic background were controlled in Rumbaut's study. Failing to make use of these linguistic resources is not only unfavorable to Hispanic students but also to students of the majority population who might benefit from the linguistic resources of their peers (Busse, Cenoz, Dalmann, & Rogge, 2019).

Another important implication of Spanish/English bilingualism in the United States is the political wealth it might provide to someone with political aspirations. A study on Jeb Bush's 2016 presidential campaign television advertisements found that changing the language of

communication to Spanish to talk directly to bilingual constituencies can increase a candidate's appeal in the U.S. context by 6 percent (Flores & Coppock, 2018). This study was not conducted on people with limited English proficiency but targeted those who were proficient in both languages. The authors inferred that constituencies showed more trust in Bush's message because he demonstrated an affinity with the Latino community by speaking Spanish. Respondents were more likely to say, "he cares about people like us" (p.18), which is why they were more favorable to him (Flores & Coppock, 2018). Recently, Hispanic politicians have begun utilizing their bilingualism more frequently, as evidenced in political debates, political forums, advertisements, and television interviews. It is becoming more evident in mainstream politics that politicians are becoming more comfortable with this strategy. Many prominent politicians regularly included Spanish in their campaign speeches (Gomez, 2019), thus, applying language choice to increase political engagement.

According to Gándara and Acevedo (2016), recognizing bilingual and multilingual skills as assets and supporting students' language development can help Hispanic students succeed economically, socially, and even politically. I have corroborated this claim with the implementation of the bilingual model of the first bilingual institution in the United States. This study is also significant because, as previously noted, bilingual higher education is a new construct in the U.S. Although considerable research has been devoted to K-12 bilingual education, less attention has been paid to bilingual higher education. Given that there are very few universities in the United States founded on the principle of serving linguistically diverse students, there is scarce literature about how these spaces and models of bilingualism operate (García, 2019). Shining light on the model of the first U.S. public bilingual higher education institution, and its indicators of success and challenges, will serve as prologue or preliminary background for bilingual policy

projects in the future. Understanding such debates is critical for developing comparative strategies to keep viable and thriving bilingual universities in the United States.

Some findings are, in fact, truly relevant to contemporary discussion in the bilingual educational policy field. For example, stakeholders have connected language policy to global literacy, national identity, and linguistic commodification, among others. As similar policy contexts have also been found in universities where several languages are spoken by the community, I hope the UTRGV case can contribute to understanding the implications of Spanish and English language use in the higher education classrooms.

On a personal level, this interpretive case study provided an opportunity for me to identify and examine these bilingual policies and planning perspectives in higher education institutions, which I always suspected were quietly and inevitably developing across the country.

1.4 Positionality

Every person... has an accent. Your accent carries the story of who you are—who first held you and talked to you when you were a child, where you have lived, your age, the schools you attended, the languages you know, your ethnicity, whom you admire, your loyalties, your profession, your class position: traces of your life and identity are woven into your pronunciation, your phrasing, your choice of words. Your ‘self’ is inseparable from your accent.

Someone who tells you they don’t like the way you speak is quite likely telling you that they don’t like you. (Matsuda, 1991, p. 1329)

The above quote begins Matsuda’s powerful essay denouncing the practice of discrimination based on accent or societal and legal prejudices stemming from people’s judgment

about another person's speech. Although accent discrimination falls outside the scope of this study, which is on the viability of bilingual English/Spanish universities in the United States, Matsuda's description of accent is relevant in terms of expressing my positionality as an advocate of bilingualism as a resource rather than a problem.

Ruíz (1984) first developed the framework of language as a problem, as a right, and as a resource as a way of engaging how we examine language learning policies. These lenses remain useful in examining our national language learning policies (McNelly, 2015). Using this framework, and the realization that our nation is not approaching language as a resource, my positionality is one of advocacy for strong models of bilingual higher education to continue fulfilling the responsibility of language learning policy as a resource. By analyzing an example of a university that supports generating bilingual and bicultural students for the 21st century, my positionality as a researcher strengthened in relation to the social and political context of this study.

I arrived in the United States in my twenties, and, since then, I have spent my adult life learning to navigate in a second language—English – while teaching Spanish to college students. I have seen first-hand the transformation that learning a second language brings to an individual, and the opportunities that open in many of my students' professional lives. Being bilingual and bicultural has shaped my culture, my identity, and that of my children.

DeVos (1975) defined cultural identity as the "subjective symbolic or emblematic use of any aspect of culture [by a group], in order to differentiate themselves from other groups" (p.16). Culture entails a set of blurry and overlapping boundaries of intertwined subsystems, which do not necessarily agree. Many components of ethnic identity (Cameron, 2004; Leach et al., 2008) are transmitted from generation to generation, constantly adapting to the changes in the geographic and social context of the group. Language is but one aspect of culture, interwoven with other

aspects, such as social organization, material technologies, music, dance, and visual and verbal symbolic systems. It should be noted that language is also intrinsically linked to establishing exchange relationships, and the way in which we assume rights and responsibilities (M. McClure, personal communication, October 2021). This issue is extraordinarily complex; however, it comes as no surprise that language and ethnic identity have been intimately linked in the literature. Excluding a handful of exceptions (e.g., Northover & Donnelly, 1996), ethnic groups typically consider language a salient identity symbol (Edwards, 2009; Fought, 2006). Our mother language connotes who we are culturally and linguistically, and this provides the nurturance and stability necessary for a person's healthy development and fulfillment (Benet-Martínez et al., 2006; Fielding, 2015; Padilla & Borsato, 2010). An individual's emotional and social self-concept is closely related to their language group (Fielding, 2015). I recognize an important connection between ethnic identity and language, with the understanding that language is certainly not the only element of ethnicity. However, I, myself, cannot dissociate my language from my ethnic identity. Ethnic identity is seen to be a highly personal dimension in that it corresponds to the individual's subjective standing towards a collective, rather than reflecting externally derived social or political labels (Trofimovich & Turuševa, 2015).

Equally, the terms bilingual and/or bicultural refer to a person who identifies as a member of two linguistic and/or cultural groups. An ethnic group or an individual may adapt in a brief period of time as a reaction to a shifting social and cultural context, and due to internal processes of transformation. In other words, becoming bilingual can be viewed as a powerful life experience of openness to a new culture and its people, history, values, and artistic expressions (Chen & Padilla, 2019). Furthermore, highly motivated language learners may reflect more positive outcomes related to well-being, such as resilience and hope (Oxford, 2014). According to Chen

and Padilla (2019), because language is a vehicle to understand culture, speaking a second language and experiencing its culture allows students to become more appreciative and understanding of other cultures. Research on the social effects of bilingualism has consistently indicated that speaking more than one language increases one's ability to respect linguistic and racial diversity (Dagenais et al., 2008; Little, 2012; Parys, 2015). This awareness of difference and diversity may contribute to decreasing stereotypes and implicit bias between groups of people, while allowing for the development of rich interpersonal relationships that extend beyond social or cultural boundaries (Forsman, 2010). Bilingual and bicultural individuals, therefore, have the capacity to transcend their ethnocentricity, developing an appreciation of the other's ways of living and being. Speaking someone else's language permits one to develop a unique perspective, form deeper personal connections with people from other cultural backgrounds, and gain a healthy recognition of their uniqueness (UNESCO, 2015).

Many times, throughout my higher education academic career, I wished there were a space where I could hold bilingual discussions to even the playing field. Showing only one side of my dual language capability made me feel that I was in a disadvantaged position. From the day I landed in Raleigh, North Carolina, it was obvious that my Spanish was always going to influence my English—in my accent, in my vocabulary, and in my embarrassing false-cognate and phrasal-verb fails. Learning English quickly reshaped the way I spoke Spanish as well. I don't have two monolingual minds operating separately in one head. I have one bilingual brain. It may seem messy and bewildered, yet cognitively strong at the same time.

Language minorities have a right not only to linguistic accommodations but also to the promotion of their languages as a means for developing a positive identification with their languages and cultures (Wiley, Garcia, Danzig, & Stigler, 2014). As an educator who believes in

social justice, it is important to fight for everyone's human and civil rights. I believe that all people should have the right to learn at least one other language, as well as honing their mother tongue (Arroyo, 2020). Throughout the world children become bilingual or multilingual from an early age, which is considered valuable. However, according to Shin (2017), attitudes about bilingualism vary considerably according to who the bilingual is and the circumstances of his/her bilingualism. People regard students' learning a second language as smart and sophisticated, while immigrants might be frowned upon for the use of their native language, as a sign that they have not fully integrated to mainstream America (Shin, 2017). It is apparent to me that the dominant United States culture values being bilingual for the privileged, but not for English learners.

Another layer to my positionality is the practicality and usefulness of bilingualism. As a Modern Languages instructor and administrator, I have seen the evolution of foreign language programs at the university level. I have also witnessed an incongruity between the job market offerings and the programs accessible to students. Despite the increase in demand for foreign language skills, fewer students in the United States are taking language classes (Stein-Smith, 2019).⁵ Intersectionality between language research and policy in the U.S. is essential in the 21st century. The U.S. is undergoing dramatic demographic and economic changes, while, at the same time, the global economy is becoming more competitive, more interconnected, more interdependent, and more integrated (Gambino, Acosta, & Grieco, 2014). Yet, the U.S. lags far behind European countries in bilingualism and will fall further behind given the current attitude

⁵ I need to clarify this assertion: Spanish/English Bilingual & Bicultural programs are increasing, while foreign language departments are seeing a decrease in students' enrollment. The Modern Language Association (MLA) new report states that things have gotten worse. Between fall 2013 and fall 2016, U.S. enrollments in languages other than English fell 9.2 percent. That's the second biggest drop in the history of MLA's enrollment census; the biggest -- 12.6 percent -- was in the few years preceding 1972 (Flaherty, 2018). This trend has continued to the present day.

and approach towards world language education. According to Duncan (2010), the limited level of bilingualism in the American population compromises the nation's global economic competitiveness, its national security, and the ability of its citizens to communicate with each other. Even though English has become the lingua franca for the business world, according to Neeley (2012), adopting a global language policy is difficult, and companies consistently stumble along the way. Many may feel at a disadvantage if their English is not as good compared to others, team dynamics and performance can suffer, and national pride can get in the way (Neeley, 2012). My view is that English as the lingua franca will change over the next 50 years with other language standards, such as Mandarin. In the U.S., Spanish will become more economically and culturally significant and widespread. Independently of the language of choice, the point is that other countries clearly align their educational policies to the value of bilingual and multilingual education. Why don't we?

Possibly my advisor, Dr. McClure, is right in her observation about bilingual education policy: "Perhaps the questions that are being asked can't be answered. The policy world is not kind. It is not generic. It cannot be based on assumptions of certainty through causality. This is not a chess match. Policy worlds are messy and wicked, and will not be tamed, no matter how hard behaviorists try" (M. McClure, personal communication, July 2019).

A quick internet search shows an increasing number of higher education bilingual programs surging throughout the country. This suggests a shift in higher education consciousness. Optimistically, policy will follow. Universities are also aware of these trends. For instance, at one of the universities where I work, has decided that from Fall 2022, Spanish for Healthcare professionals will be a mandatory course for the nursing department. This is a huge undertaking for our department, because it represents nine or 10 new Spanish for Healthcare Professionals

sections each semester. It is clear to me that universities are trying to adapt to the professional demands of globalization and to the multicultural environments in which they serve. I intend to be at the forefront of this discussion.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework guiding this research study is grounded in a two-level positioning framework: (1) ROAD-MAPPING (Dafouz & Smit, 2016) and (2) LangCrit Theory (Crump, 2014), both of which fall under the umbrella of sociolinguistic theory.

As I am using ROAD MAPPING to explain the characteristics of the bilingual model and LangCrit theories to explain how racially charged bilingual education is in the U.S., I will first summarize the sociolinguistic theory from which these two approaches emerged.

1.5.1 Sociolinguistic Theory

As socio-cultural theorists have advocated (Bruner, 1983, 1985; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Vygotsky, 1978, 1997), learning is a cultural, social, and constructive process that is accomplished through interaction. As a result, classrooms are sites for social events in which not only academic content and language competence are achieved, but also learning, cognitive, and social skills are maximized (Sanchez-García, 2010). Therefore, not only the content and nature of the lectures, but the role of language as a tool for articulating interaction among classroom participants, is of great interest from a research standpoint.

Sociolinguistic theory is the study of the way people speak (Habib, 2011). Specifically, sociolinguistics studies how language is incorporated into the human experience, concerning such notions as race, ethnicity, class, sex, and social institutions. Sociolinguistics has had a noteworthy influence on theorizing linguistics in areas such as social change, communicative competence, communicative bases of human interaction, and the linguistic constitution of social contexts, such as social networks and social stereotyping (Coupland, 2003).

Wong-Fillmore (2006) argued that in American society, language became "a source of conflict in education" (p. 340). She considered what position society should take toward educating and preserving the languages of ethnic minorities and immigrant groups. Societal support and understanding contribute to the establishment of bilingual programs and define their quality and organization. Gaarder (1978) suggested that how a school or community establishes a bilingual program will inform the structure the program will take. That assumption underlines the suggestions here for gathering information on this bilingual Spanish-English university, using sociolinguistic lenses as part of the process of deciding whether the university and community have made conscious, explicit decisions on the appropriate bilingual model of their institution. Finally, sociolinguistic theories focus on language policies and politics that affect bilingual education (Wong-Fillmore, 2006). I used sociolinguistic lenses to examine how this new bilingual university is developing and how it is measuring its success.

1.5.2 ROAD-MAPPING

ROAD-MAPPING draws from recent sociolinguistic and language policy research developments to systematically conceptualize, describe, analyze, and evaluate how English as a

medium of instruction has been introduced into European bilingual universities (Dafouz & Smit, 2016). I adapted this framework to Spanish as a medium of instruction in the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, UTRGV bilingual model. The ROAD-MAPPING framework helped me answer the first research question: What are the characteristics of the bilingual education model of this institution? A thorough explanation of this framework is included in Chapter 3.

1.5.3 Critical Language and Race Theory (LangCrit)

Critical Language and Race Theory (LangCrit) has also emerged from sociolinguistic theory. LangCrit helped me to analyze the how, the why, and the challenges that the UTRGV has in implementing a bilingual education model in the Rio Grande Valley (RGV) at the most southern border. Through deeper analysis of documents and interviews, it became obvious that the issue of border identities with respect to "linguistic terrorism" was a crucial point in the analysis. The first essay in Chapter 4 Findings describes and analyzes these intersectionalities of the sociolinguistic context, including national identities, raciolinguistic ideologies, and standard linguistic ideologies.

There is some hesitation in including topics such as race in discussions of bilingual education due to the historical, social, and political stigma associated with race or racialization (Cump, 2014). Race is a term "we have been well taught to ignore or fear" (Tema Okun, 2010, p. xxii). However, the understanding and analysis of these multiple and contradictory border positions is presented as one of the most important implications for the critical awareness of language at UTRGV, as a way in which the university aspires to counteract the "linguistic terrorism" suffered by the UTRGV and their communities in the physical and metaphorical borders of the RGV. LangCrit theory informed my exploration of the second and third questions: How

does this bilingual education institution identify its challenges? How does this bilingual education institution identify its parameters of success?

2.0 Literature Review

The literature review focuses on the four areas that anchor this research study: the concept of bilingual higher education, bilingual higher education as a resource, language policy and planning, and the models of bilingual higher education abroad. First, the author defines bilingual higher education from sociolinguistic and historical points of view. Second is an examination of the benefits and potential challenges of bilingual universities, with emphasis on the saliency of the Spanish language in the United States. Third, this literature review explores higher bilingual education policy and research at home and abroad. Finally, the author conceptualizes the models of bilingual education in U.S. K-12 education⁶ and models of bilingual higher education abroad.

2.1 Bilingual Higher Education

The concept of “bilingual higher education,” as countries with long traditions of bilingual education understand it, differentiates between two types of bilingualism, institutional and individual bilingualism (Beillard, 2000, p. 471; Garigue, 1985, p. 941; Langner & Imbach, 2000, p. 462). Institutional bilingualism refers to the language dispensation of the institution itself and not necessarily to the sociolinguistic output of its study programs. For example, an institution offering instruction in two languages, albeit within two “linguistic streams,” or parallel-medium

⁶ There are no descriptive models of bilingual higher education in U.S. in the literature. The purpose of this study is precisely to understand the practices that have been implemented in the institutions chosen for this study, and how it compares to the models of bilingual universities abroad.

education ⁷(Langner & Imbach 2000, p. 462), could be classified as a bilingual institution. The University of Ottawa is an example thereof, where students may register for instruction in either English or French (Garigue, 1985, p. 941). Institutional bilingualism, however, also refers to the use of two languages as the medium for conducting other university business (Du Plessis, 2006; & Imbach, 2000, p. 462).

On the other hand, individual bilingualism refers to the concept of bilingual studies, specifically, the sociolinguistic outcome of the institutional study programs. An institution offering instruction in two languages to the same student (as opposed to different students within a parallel-medium program) could also be described as a “real” bilingual institution (Du Plessis, 2006). Instruction could be offered with a dual-medium (or so-called “double medium”) model (Torres Guzmán, 2002, pp. 1-3), which represents an integrated approach to bilingualism (Garigue, 1985, p. 941). The University of Fribourg/ Freiburg is considered to be a “model bilingual university” because not only faculty and students are required to be bilingual, but the institutional policy is focused on bilingual programs (Langner & Imbach, 2000, p. 462). Freiburg, a city located by the Sarine River, contains many bridges that link the French-speaking part of Switzerland to the German-speaking part and is known for its cultural plurality ("Tours and excursions in Switzerland | switzerland-tour.com", 2020). In the case of the University of Barcelona in Catalonia-Spain, for example, the choice of instructional medium resides with the lecturer who may offer a course in either Catalan or Spanish (Du Plessis, 2006).

⁷ “practically two universities in one,” as Garigue (1985, p. 943)

2.1.1 Bilingual Higher Education History

Language diversity in the United States has always been present, yet policy or funding has not promoted bilingualism. Throughout the history of bilingual education, administrators, politicians, and policymakers have changed their preferences and practices in response to trends and ideological shifts (Crawford, 2004; Hakuta, 1986).

Understanding of the origins of bilingual higher education institutions will require a broad understanding of the history of bilingual education. Although the literature on the history of bilingual education in the United States mostly refers to models and practices in K-12 institutions, some examples have touched on higher education institutions. Until the beginning of the twentieth century, bilingual education was not only accepted but encouraged (von Maltiz, 1975). Ohio became the first state to adopt a bilingual education law in 1839, allowing German-English education at parents' demand. Louisiana followed for French and English in 1847, and the New Mexico Territory did so for Spanish and English in 1850. About 15 states passed bilingual education laws by the end of the nineteenth century. Many other regions provided bilingual education without state sanction, in languages as diverse as Italian, Polish, Norwegian, Czech, and Cherokee (Rodríguez, Carrasquillo, & Lee, 2014).

German was the most widely used second language of instruction at the turn of the twentieth century. Then, during World War I, everything shifted. Most states passed English-only legislation for fear of disloyalty of non-English speakers in general and German Americans in particular. The imposition of English-only policies coincided with the persecution of German speakers. The goal became to "Americanize" these groups; thus, some states went so far as to ban

the study of foreign languages altogether -- a restriction that was struck down as unconstitutional in 1923 (Rodríguez, Carrasquillo, & Lee, 2014).

By the mid-1920s, bilingual schooling was largely dismantled throughout the country. English-only instruction continued as the norm for Limited English Proficient (LEP) students until its failure could no longer be ignored. LEP students in English-only classrooms were falling behind in their academic studies and dropping out of school at alarming rates (Crawford, 1989).

Bilingual education emerged after the Bilingual Education Act (BEA) was passed in 1968. The goal of these new bilingual education (B.E.) programs in public schools was to better serve the educational needs of the non-English-speaker minority students (and to foster political participation) by finding more effective ways to teach English (Spolsky, 2005). The Bilingual Education Act of 1968 provided federal funding to encourage local school districts to adopt pedagogical strategies that would incorporate native-language instruction. Most states followed the lead of the federal government, enacting bilingual education laws of their own or at least decriminalizing the use of other languages in the classroom (Rodríguez, Carrasquillo, & Lee, 2014).

Even though the legislation -- passed during a period of growing immigration and a revitalized civil rights movement -- was intended to better support linguistic and cultural diversity, there was no real ideological shift compared with the first half of the century. This period still reflected a dominant ideology that considered minority languages and, inherently, speakers of these languages as a problem to be solved (Garcia, 2011). The inability to communicate in English by students who were native speakers of minority languages was considered a deficiency.

Many schools were unable or unwilling to follow the legislation, and LEP students were left to learn on their own. Soon after, the Supreme Court recognized that leaving LEP students to

"sink or swim" in English-only classrooms made "a mockery of public education" -- which must be equally available to all students. The court's decision in the landmark *Lau v. Nichols*⁸ case required schools to take "affirmative steps" to overcome language barriers impeding children's access to the curriculum. Congress immediately endorsed this principle in the Equal Educational Opportunity Act of 1974 (Kolhepp, 1999).

Neither the Bilingual Education Act nor the *Lau* decision required any particular methodology for teaching LEP students. That is, there is no federal mandate for bilingual education (although a few states mandate it under certain circumstances). Furthermore, no provision is made to maintain the student's native language while learning English (Crawford, 1987).

Bilingual higher education, however, has not had a linear trajectory. More recently, shifting demographics and political dynamics have transformed views on multilingual education in many parts of the country, paving the way for a focused examination of educating the nation's 5 million K-12 English-language learners and the role of foreign-language instruction (Mitchell, 2019). More U.S. schools are embracing bilingualism like never before, as previously mentioned. However, the bulk of the literature pertains to models of B.E. in K-12. Colleges and universities adopting a bilingual model of education rely on their own models, policies, and practices. There is not much of a historical account of bilingual education at the university level.

It is worth highlighting that the founding fathers did not address or promote English as a nation's language. According to Crawford (1989), Benjamin Franklin is the only founder who was recorded as critical of the German community in Pennsylvania as a threat to national unity. Still,

⁸ *Lau v. Nichols*, case in which the U.S. Supreme Court on January 21, 1974, ruled (9–0) that, under the Civil Rights Act of 1964, a California school district receiving federal funds must provide non-English-speaking students with instruction in the English language to ensure that they receive an equal education (Bon, 2020).

this intolerant view, which Franklin later lamented, was the exception among our early leaders. His fellow Pennsylvanian Benjamin Rush also hoped to assimilate the Germans but chose a more democratic tactic: bilingual higher education. A federally funded German College, Rush argued, would “open the eyes” of narrow-minded people, fearful of the retention of the German language in Pennsylvania, and would be the only means of spreading knowledge of the English language, consistent with the liberty of German early immigrants (Heath, 1977). Clearly, to Rush, national unity could not be forced. He predicted that Germans, if provided sufficient opportunities, would gradually and voluntarily learn English (Crawford, 1989). The goal of bilingual universities became, as usual, assimilation to the English language rather than preservation of bilingualism.

2.1.2 Benefits and Potential Challenges of Bilingual Universities

To explore the benefits and potential challenges of bilingual higher education, it is important to investigate on the benefits of bilingualism, focusing on the implications for college students. Considerable research has examined the cognitive (Baker, 2006; Bialystok, 2009; Bialystok, Craik, & Luk, 2012; Cho, 2000), psychosocial (Coltazo et al., 2008; Portes & Hao, 2002), academic (Mouw & Xie, 1999; Umanski & Readordon, 2014), and economic value (Callahan & Gándara, 2014; Gándara & Acevedo, 2016) of bilingualism. However, according to Marshall et al. (2011), the dominant U.S. society still resists the notion of bilingualism as a resource.

2.1.2.1 Benefits of Bilingual Education

Cognitive competencies: It is well documented that cognitive ability, as well as many specific intellectual skills, such as critical thinking, writing ability, and computational expertise,

are associated with individual differences in academic college success (Baumgart & Billick, 2018; Bowen et al., 2011; Vars & Bowen, 1998). Although research linking cognitive ability and bilingualism is extensive, there have been debates on whether early foreign language learning is beneficial or detrimental for students (Baker, 2006). Insights into the workings of the bilingual brain have highlighted the myth of what Baker calls the “naïve theory of bilingualism” – that learning a second language somehow results in a reduced capacity for language, or a language deficit (Baker, 2006). According to Baker, “the evidence suggests the opposite – that language attributes are not separated in the cognitive system but transfer readily and are interactive” (pp. 168–169).

Academic benefits studies repeatedly find that foreign language study has the single most significant impact on increasing English *and math* scores on college entrance and Advanced Placement (AP) exams. In the case of both math and English, foreign language study does more to raise scores than merely taking additional math and English classes without also taking language classes. According to annual College Board surveys of achievement on SAT, ACT, and AP exams, data have shown the same results for more than 10 years (Naditz, 2010).

Foreign language learners consistently and frequently significantly outperformed control groups in core subject areas on standardized tests (Andrade, Kretschmer, & Kretschmer, 1989; Armstrong & Rogers, 1997; Masciantonio, 1977; Rafferty, 1986;). A 2007 study on the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) test showed that students who studied a foreign language in an articulated sequence outperformed their non-foreign language-learning peers after two to three years. Furthermore, they significantly outperformed them after seven to eight years of foreign language learning on all MCAS subtests (ACTFL, 2015).

Moreover, Stewart (2005) has produced extensive evidence that foreign language instruction correlates with better test scores and higher achievement in other academic areas, including social studies, science, art, and music. Among the cognitive benefits noted were divergent and creative thinking, adaptability, and problem-solving skills (Stewart, 2005). These research findings support the notion that learning a second language is an exercise in cognitive problem solving and that the effects of dual language education are directly transferable to the area of mathematical skill development.

Inhibitory control is the ability to ignore competing perceptual information and focus on relevant information. Bilingual people often perform better than monolingual people at tasks that demand inhibitory control skills. The bilingual brain relies on executive functions to maintain the relative balance between two languages, a regulatory system of general cognitive abilities that includes processes such as attention and inhibition. A person uses these control mechanisms while speaking and listening; however, a bilingual person needs to keep both language systems active. This continuous practice reinforces the control mechanisms and changes the associated brain regions (Bialystok, Craik, & Luk, 2012; Green, 2011). Bilinguals are better at ignoring or inhibiting misleading information to complete an assignment. Studies have shown this advantage for bilinguals over monolinguals across several domains of thought, including concepts of quantity, spatial concepts, and problem-solving (Bialystok, 2001; Bialystok et al., 2005). Bilingual people also tend to be better at switching between two tasks. For example, according to Prior and Macwhinney (2010), when bilinguals switch from classifying items by color (red or green) to shape (circle or triangle), they do so more rapidly than monolingual people, reflecting those bilingual individuals show better cognitive control when changing strategies spontaneously.

Deliverance and Decision Making: Keysar, Kayakawa, and An (2012) found that people are less susceptible to being influenced by biased questions in making decisions when they use a foreign language. The authors concluded that foreign language use provides greater cognitive and emotional distance than the native language, pressing people to be more deliberate – and therefore more rational – in their decision making (Keysar, Kayakawa, & An, 2012). When using the nonnative language, bilingual people decrease the impact of emotions in their decision making, thereby reducing well-known judgmental biases and non-related behavior (Hadjichristidis, Geipel, & Keysar, 2019). These findings show higher education bilingual students to have an objective advantage in their discussion, argumentation, and deliberation skills.

Cultural Competency: Fernandez (2007) pointed out that helping learners understand other ways of thinking and relating to the world enables them to broaden their empathetic view of human behavior. It is crucial that foreign language teaching be the medium to gain those insights because language encodes and reflects its culture. Without the experience of learning a foreign language, Fernández (2007) concludes that English speakers have fewer means of understanding and engaging with people of different languages and cultures and are therefore at a disadvantage in their ability to participate in an increasingly global society and economy. Nikolov and Mihaljević Djigunović (2006) indicate that, in many instances, goals for early foreign language learning often aim as much to instill positive attitudes towards different languages and cultures as they do to develop far-reaching linguistic skills.

Career Development: In the circumstances of growing international contacts, media, and communication networking, as well as global connectivity, knowledge of foreign languages represents one of the critical competencies that an individual needs to improve opportunities for

education and advancement in the increasingly dynamic world of work. (Filipan-Žignić, Sobo, & Legacy, 2013).

A Modern Language Association survey of American businesses operating overseas found that many companies prefer candidates with foreign language skills when hiring new management personnel, provided other business experience and abilities are equal:

Language proficiency also enhances employment opportunities. With almost any “marketable” skill plus a foreign language, the chances of finding an interesting job are improved considerably. Foreign language training is a critically important skill for careers in business and commerce, secretarial/clerical positions, health care, government service, social services, and agriculture. (MSU Catalog 2010-2012., p. 2).

Four out of five new jobs in the United States result from foreign trade, according to the National Council of State Supervisors of Foreign Language (Naditz, 2010).

There is evidence that monolingualism may come at a cost. Agirdag (2014) found that for young adults in the United States, a lack of proficiency in a second language is associated with annual income losses of between \$2,100 and \$5,000 (after controlling for cognitive ability, educational attainment, and parental socioeconomic status). Bilingualism is also associated with higher high school retention, an increased probability of obtaining a high-status job, and better annual earnings (Rumbaut, 2014). According to Gándara (2015) and Agirdag (2015), Latinos who speak Spanish and English go to four-year colleges at higher rates.

Global Markets: There are opportunities for workers who can communicate, collaborate, and negotiate with people all over the world, as markets have transitioned from agricultural to industrial to global, in what is now the information age. Language fluency gives workers a

competitive advantage over their monolingual coworkers —like many in the American workforce — in their home markets and in markets where their language skills are valued (Gandára & Acevedo, 2016).

Labor Markets: Immigrants who retain their primary language skills have a significant advantage to earn more in their subsequent employment (Agirdag 2015). Therefore, it is difficult to argue why a student's primary language proficiency is not encouraged. Understanding the potential benefits that bilingualism brings, especially in the labor market, may have significant educational and social policy implications (Gándara, 2015). Individuals' ability to advance in the labor market, for instance, will reduce dependency on social services and will, in turn, increase contributions to the local tax base. According to a New American Economy report (2017) regarding the growing importance of foreign language skills in the U.S., the demand for bilingual employees is increasing across all sectors of the economy. Companies that provide services and require human interaction display the most need for bilingual workers. These companies include firms in the banking, healthcare, and telecommunications sectors and a vast portion of the retail industry, e.g., automobile parts, service, and sales. Healthcare is a sector with an exceptionally high demand for bilingual workers. Those jobs include "registered nurses, medical assistants, medical and health services managers, licensed practical and vocational nurses, and medical secretaries" (p.9). This increase represented 7.6 percent of the bilingual jobs listed in 2015. These findings revealed that the demand for bilingual skills is not limited to one end of the skills spectrum but instead is expanding across all sectors of the economy (Not Lost in Translation, 2017).

According to the report, it is essential to note that Spanish is the language that employers have increasingly sought out the most in recent years. Spanish was seen in more than 178,000 job listings in 2015, followed by Chinese with more than 11,000, and then French, Korean, and Arabic

(Not Lost in Translation, 2017). This fact is not surprising as the number of Spanish speakers in the United States has increased quickly in the last decades. See Table 3, Bilingual Listings Prestige Category. It shows that from 2010 to 2015, the "high prestige" category experienced the fastest growth in bilingual listings.

There are now more than 50 million Spanish speakers in the United States, including native speakers, heritage speakers, and second language speakers (Scamman, 2018). Bilingual higher education needs to make use of the rich linguistic resources that this nation already has by adapting education to support academic fluency.

2.1.2.2 Potential Challenges of Bilingual Education

Bilingual education critics claim that the use of the native language delays the learning of English. Thus, it is more effective to place students in all-English programs to receive language support (Baker, 1998). However, further research has shown that it may take up to seven years to master academic English (Hakuta et al., 2000; Krashen, 2004). Providing instruction in the students' native languages facilitates English acquisition and strengthens content knowledge attainment (Cummins, 2000; Krashen, 2004; Thomas & Collier, 1997).

Another potential challenge is that studies have found that bilinguals generally control a smaller vocabulary in each language than monolinguals (Oller & Eilers, 2002; Perani et al., 2003; Portocarrero, Burright, and Donovanick, 2007). These results are particularly relevant to children's development markers because vocabulary size is an essential measure of children's progress in both the oral and literate forms of language development. In adults, however, the standard does not correspond to the richness of the vocabulary but the rapid lexical retrieval in speaking. Bilinguals show slower response at picture naming (Gollan, Montoya, Fennema-Notestine, &

Morris, 2005; Kaushanskaya & Marian, 2007; Roberts, Garcia, Desrochers, & Hernandez, 2002), and confront more “tip of the tongue” occurrences (Gollan & Acenas, 2004). Bilinguals also exhibit more interference in picture naming (lexical decision) (Ransdell & Fischler, 1987). Despite these observable linguistic limitations, studies show a correlation between bilingualism with improved metalinguistic awareness and improved memory, visual-spatial skills, and even creativity (Diaz & Klingler 1991; Marian & Shook 2012).

Funding challenges: Tight budgetary constraints make bilingual education goals hard to attain. In a speech published by the U.S. Department of Education, Secretary Arne Duncan said that this was a “high stakes issue” and that “for too long Americans had relied on other countries to speak their language.” They would no longer be able to do so, he continued, in “an increasingly complex and interconnected world.” Once again, the rationale was on “supporting America’s economic and strategic interests as diplomats, foreign policy analysts, and leaders in the military, with the need to start at the earliest grades (U.S. Department of Education, 2010).

2.2 College Enrollment of Hispanic Population in the United States

The focus of this study is on bilingual English-Spanish higher education institutions in the United States. The Spanish language has become more noticeable in the United States over the past decades. Yet, it is essential to remember that Spanish has quietly been used by Hispanics for nearly four centuries in the U.S., not only by immigrants but also by Hispanics born within U.S. borders. Whatever role Spanish may have in the linguistic fabric of the United States’ future, we should honor its unique place in American linguistic history (PBS.org & Carter, 2020). Even though many immigrants tend to lose their home language around the third generation (Alba,

Logan, Lutz, & Stults, 2002), Latinos comprise the overwhelming majority of other-than-English speakers in the U.S. (Callahan & Gándara, 2014).

The National Center of Education Statistics reported a rise in college enrollment of Hispanics from 3.17 million in 2016 to 3.27 million in 2017. Hispanic and Black students are two demographic groups that showed an increase in college attendance (Quintana, 2021). Both underrepresented groups made progress in catching up to non-Hispanic whites, and today the attendance gap stands at only five percentage points, the lowest it has been in the past four decades (Grawe, 2018). That is nearly double the 1.4 million Hispanic students who attended college in 2000 (de Brey, Musu, McFarland, Wilkinson-Flicker, Diliberti, Zhang, & Wang, 2019). Meanwhile, college enrollment has declined for years, from 19.2 million for the fall 2015 semester to 17.5 million in spring 2019 (Dynarski, Hemelt, & Hyman, 2015).

Hispanic student enrollment has increased dramatically, yet retention rates continue to be less than desirable. These changes in demographics should represent a shift in Hispanic students' access to programs to foster student success, because it is not just a matter of recruiting and enrolling more Hispanic students. It is necessary to improve retention rates (Quintana, 2020). Neglecting Hispanic students has become "bad business" for colleges and universities. According to Quintana (2020), more colleges and universities will be requesting federal funds as they become Hispanic-Serving Institutions, which means less federal money will go around.

According to Garcia (2017), effectively serving Hispanic students should not simply provide access but also enhance, appreciate, and improve the racial and cultural forms of knowledge that characterize Latino students. A fundamental aspect is the recognition of the importance of the Spanish language.

2.3 Educational Research and Policy on Bilingual Education

The mutual influence of policymaking and the development of educational research varies according to context. Husén & Kogan (2014) state that administrators, politicians, and other stakeholders influence research to further their agenda since several research projects and related frameworks represent their interests. “Research and policy-making is mainly used as partisan analysis or political ammunition” (p. 54). In the U.S., there has been a considerable amount of research because of the size of the academic and governmental enterprise in education and response to a gigantic, if irregular, efforts at the political level to cause social change through education (Husén & Kogan, 2014; Limbdlon & Cohen, 1979). Many administrators are involved in research-type activities by engaging in focus groups, surveys, and other data-gathering activities and funding projects, which exemplifies the maximum interaction of policy and research (Husén & Kogan, 2014).

This section of the literature review will explore how new research findings and ideas related to language policy in higher education enter the policy bloodstream.

McCarty (2014) describes language policy as:

a complex sociocultural process [and as] modes of human interaction, negotiation, and production mediated by relations of power. The 'policy' in these processes resides in their language-regulating power; that is, how they express normative claims about legitimate and illegitimate language forms and uses, thereby governing language statuses and uses (p. 8).

Policies generate implementation opportunities for multilingual or multicultural practices (Hornberger, 2003). Yet, in the U.S., language-in-education planning, paradoxically, lacks

overarching explicit national educational language policy that supports it (Wiley & García, 2016). This absence of language policy planning becomes more pronounced in higher education institutions.

Establishing an official language for literacy, teaching a foreign language, or creating and implementing bilingual programs are frequent responses to social, political, and cognitive understanding, tolerance, and internationalization – all characteristics of the global citizen (Harrison, 2013). Conversely, the standing of bilingualism is imbalanced across the board. While foreign languages acquisition is a desirable trait for many, speaking a language other than English is often shunned in the mouth of heritage speakers. This indicates a hidden agenda: multilingualism for the elites is encouraged, yet multilingualism of the poor is inadmissible (Kubota, 2010). Generally, political, social, and economic goals lead to implicit or explicit language-in-education policies. These internationalized, inter-, and multicultural issues fuel policy and ideologies while, at the same time, the ideology inspires the discussion (Bakhtin, 1981). For instance, the melting pot policy (ideology) changed at the end of the 1960s to a novel approach, referred to as “the integration policy” or “the policy of cultural pluralism”. This policy acknowledged the existence of diverse cultural groups in one political/social body and “even” considered it normal (Gaynor, 2011; Lamme, 1996).⁹ However, recognizing the existence of distinct cultures and groups in the national education framework does not automatically mean that this policy reflects the higher education institutional vision. The belief that multilingualism

⁹ The melting pot continues to be used as an assimilation model in vernacular and political discourse. The desirability of assimilation and the melting pot model has been rejected by proponents of multiculturalism (Von Meien, 2006; Kolb, 2009).

represents a problem in society instead of a natural and desirable occurrence has often influenced the objectives of language planning (Wiley & García, 2016).

Since the 1950s, there have been some significant developments in the language policy field and language planning studies. A fundamental decision of language education policy involves the choice of medium of instruction (Tollefson, 2008), which determines the language(s) to be learned and the duration of the instruction, among other pedagogical issues. These concerns also involve LEP students, faculty development and training, curriculum, syllabi writing, instruction methodology and materials, funding, and assessment. (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997). Language policy influences curriculum implementation and aims to put in place a measure of the curriculum implementation assessment. The assessment results can influence changes in language policy, thus starting a new cycle.

Language policy has recently amplified its scope from a practical approach to solving language-planning problems in elementary education in independent states. The weight was on determining the corpus and status of a new official standard language to be taught in schools. Language policy has expanded to include almost any issue related to language. Johnson (2013) noted the risk of overextending language policy definitions, adding that all sociolinguistic research that observes language attitudes and practices will be considered language policy research.

As mentioned previously, in the U.S. bilingual education context, Ruiz (1984) presented three frameworks for language planning policy: language as a right, language as a problem, and language as a resource. Unlike other countries, minority languages and language diversity in the U.S. are often considered a "problem to be solved," therefore requiring a practical approach (teaching English to non-English speakers) (Gorter & Cenoz, 2017). This approach highlights the

legal rights of language speakers, which calls, for instance, to provide instruction in the student's minority language (May, 2001).

Twenty-first-century language education in the U.S. continues to experience a strange paradox. According to Christian (2007), while the Departments of Education and Defense continue to argue for the need to increase Americans' linguistic capabilities, English learners' first language is not seen as a resource to be maintained. "Students who enter our schools with native-like proficiency in a language other than English (their heritage language) often suffer academic setbacks because they receive instruction only in English" (Christian, 2007, p.271).

Researchers agree on promoting bilingualism as a resource rather than a disadvantage and propose that national language educational policy should incorporate incentives to achieve heritage speakers' bilingualism and academic biliteracy (Blake & Kramsch, 2007; Donato & Tucker, 2007; Wiley, 2007). Furthermore, researchers call for governmental and non-governmental organizations to support curriculum planning, assessment design, materials development, and teacher training so that U.S. children can begin studying foreign languages at an early age and continue through the university level and beyond (Donato & Tucker, 2007); Brecht, 2007).

The literature on bilingual policy in the United States exclusively focuses on the use of two languages as languages of instruction with the sole purpose of eventually transitioning fully to English. There is a clear hierarchy of languages, and English literacy seems to be more valuable than literacy in other languages. According to Gorter and Cenoz (2017), since no universities are teaching through the medium of Spanish in the U.S., it makes sense that achieving literacy in English becomes a priority for students to access higher education. They acknowledged that Puerto Rico is an exception for its unique legal status. This assertion makes me wonder how the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, focused on this study, has slipped under the radar.

Many Hispanic students are opting for bilingual and multicultural programs. In 2017, Hispanic or Latino students earned the largest share of bilingual and multicultural degrees at 42 percent, followed by 35 percent Whites (Bilingual & Multilingual Education Database, 2020). Data from 2017 shows that the most common degree types awarded to students graduating in Bilingual & Multilingual Education are master's degrees, postbaccalaureate certificates, and bachelor's degrees. There is a salient gender imbalance, with 85.4 percent female students graduating with bilingual degrees (Bilingual & Multilingual Education Database, 2020).

Bilingual Spanish-English programs might offer an alternative venue to serve Spanish-speaking students. Companies value professionals able to communicate and interact with the growing number of Hispanics in the United States. Thus, bilingual higher education programs might bridge this disconnection and build upon the experiences and knowledge of culturally and linguistically diverse students (Piasente, 2013).

2.3.1 Official Language

The United States, unlike many other countries, does not have an official national language policy. Educational language policy in the country is the result of widely held beliefs and values about immigrants and patriotism (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2019). Language policies, implicit or explicit, influence and control social behavior, and the U.S. is no different. States are at liberty to declare one or more official languages, and most U.S. states have designed English as their official language. The Commonwealths of Puerto Rico and New Mexico have nominated both English and Spanish as co-official languages. In Hawaii, the two official languages are English and Hawaiian (‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i) (CAL, 2019).

2.3.2 Theory and Bilingualism Research

There have never been comprehensive national language policies and implementation in U.S. schools, so there is no infrastructure to monitor its realization. Thus, educational institutions' beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge of the benefits of multilingualism, and the role of maintaining linguistic and cultural heritages and language learning and instruction, become paramount to enhancing or hindering language development among American students. Although federal law seemingly protects minority language students' rights to an equitable education, research findings and language policy have historically found very few points of intersection (Crawford, 2004).

Bilingualism research did not enter the planning and designing of educational programs until the latter half of the last century.¹⁰ Evidence-based policymaking, a disciplined method to develop policy driven by data and experience, did not appear to significantly influence bilingual education policy until the mid-1970s (Crawford, 2004). Instead, some literature suggests that bilingual education policymaking came into existence from an incipient blending of philosophy and opinion. In essence, political views, intuition, and ethical principles encouraged program design in place of theory and research (Baker, 2011; Crawford, 2004). Educational policy originating from "evidence" carried a relatively simple concept that demonstrated evidence contributions are a more applicable knowledge base for emerging good policy than are ideology or politics (Grooms, 2012).

¹⁰ The Bilingual Education Act of 1968 is noted as the first official federal recognition of the needs of students with limited English-speaking ability (LESA) (Stewner-Manzanares, 1988).

Scholars identify four types of "knowledge" (Crawford, 2004; Cummins, 2001; Shaxon, 2005; Walt, 2006). Walt (2006) categorizes "knowledge" as factual knowledge, experience, information-based, and theory to analyze the relations between events and outcomes. About language learning, approaches concerning language transfer to cognitive learning include three paradigms and their fundamental principles: these language acquisition understanding theories range from behaviorism (i.e., Behaviorism-Skinner) to conditioning (i.e., Gestalt theory) to constructivism (i.e., socio-constructivism-Vygotsky) (McLeod, 2019). Behaviorism is the notion of operant conditioning as a basis of language acquisition; cognitivism refers to the concept of inherent factors as a determinant of one's ability to learn a language (Bélanger, 2011); and social constructivism offers the idea that social interaction serves as a prerequisite for first and second language acquisition (Vygotsky, 1978). Learning a language is a collaborative process, and knowledge develops from individuals' interactions with their society and culture. According to Brown (2000, 2007), these schools of thought have impacted bilingual education instructional practices. They have evolved into an overview of the context of language acquisition theories and the bilingual education programs they molded. In the 1970s, with the sole intention of tackling policymakers' needs to understand bilingual education, basic and applied research started. Many other disciplines, like sociology, psychology, and language acquisition theory, and linguistics, began to intersect in the field of bilingual education (Grooms, 2012). However, English versus the native language as means of instruction continued to be a crucial point of political debate and policy push (Bale, 2011; Crawford, 2004; Krashen, 1999).

According to Crawford (2004), in the 1980s and 1990s, bilingual education was considered expensive, and the effectiveness of the bilingual program was difficult to verify.¹¹ This pushback served as the incentive for further methodological research on programs' efficiency for bilingual education (August & Hakuta, 1998). Many theories and findings have emerged in the last three decades, and controversies over those findings and methodology have also proliferated. Consequently, practice and policy continued to vary across the board. One common consensus – minority language as a problem- has emerged in the past 50 years of developing theories and research. This consensus centers on the idea that minority language students require some type of language support to become effective communicators in the English language and productive citizens in a predominantly English-speaking U.S. economy (Grooms, 2012). The 1980s and 1990s also brought a growing group of critical researchers who openly described language planning as a hegemonic mechanism, potentially infused with dominant and marginalizing discourses (e.g., Ruiz 1984; Tollefson 1991). By introducing class, power, and ideology issues, asking new research questions, and using different research methodology, Tollefson (1991) succeeded in pointing to new avenues for researchers and policymakers. A strategy for reducing hegemonic domination by privileged groups is asserting language rights (p.167).

Hence, two different orientations have directed bilingual education research, one that has to do with politics and funding, while the other is linked to research methodology findings. The

¹¹ 'Complaints began to arise from citizens that bilingual education was not bilingual at all, since many Spanish-speaking teachers hired for the program were found not to be able to speak English. Despite the ministrations of the Department of Education, or perhaps because of them, Hispanic students, to a shocking degree, drop out of school, educated neither in Hispanic nor in American language and culture' (Hayakawa 1985, in Crawford 1992: 94). For further information about the results of these programs, see Morris 2011, chapter 5, pp. 105-198 'About bilingual educational research 1970s-2000s'

first orientation is framed around studies lacking a theoretical foundation. It suggests that minority language students need limited additional language support in the classroom – "sink or swim" English-only classrooms. This argument guided policies setting subjective expectations, such as arbitrary timeframes, for students to be proficient in English (Crawford, 2004). The inability of language minorities to converse proficiently in English is frequently perceived as a deficiency in the U.S. Accordingly, English-only methods of instruction present themselves as the standard means for fast assimilation. Yet, few satisfactory research studies support this claim (Crawford, 2004; Cummins, 1999, 1991).

On the contrary, second language acquisition theories, suggest that bilingual methods are the best way to produce English proficiency skills in LEP students. Language acquisition theories of the latter half of the twentieth century have converged on the understanding that foreign language learners require support in their native language to become effective communicators (Crawford, 2004; Cummins, 1979, 1981b, 2001; Krashen, 1982). Ganschow and Sparks (2001) summarize the results of studies on the topic by stating that "native language skills in the phonological/orthographic, syntactic, and semantic codes form the basic foundation for FL learning" (p. 87). Students who have difficulties learning a foreign language are likely to have overt or subtle challenges in their native language, which suggests that many problems learners have with a foreign language spring from deficits in the native language. For a century, a large part of the language teaching profession has ignored the very foundations on which foreign language learning is built (Butzkamm & Caldwell, 2009). Many researchers have claimed that this delineation minimizes the significance of qualitative experimental designs. "Evidence" defined as the product of only "scientific" methodology might diminish the importance of qualitative research that could have produced positive outcomes (Crawford, 2004; Cummins, 2000; Slavin, 2008).

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) brought methodology to the forefront of educational research in 2001. Scientific standards, providing solid evidence corroborated across other studies, became crucial to research methodology (Crawford, 2004; Cummins, "Educational research," Slavin, 2008). However, over time, NCLB's prescriptive requirements became increasingly unworkable for schools and educators. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2015) update, which came into effect in 2016, seems to have afforded more flexibility and improvement to bilingual education programs. This law returned responsibility to the states and local school districts (TESOL, 2015). The priority under the ESSA 2015 is that schools demonstrate that their English-language learners are improving their English language proficiency as a crucial indicator in every state's school accountability system. If schools show a lack of progress, these students get the right kind of support (Sargrad, 2016). Once again, the emphasis is purely on teaching English to LEP students and not on maintaining their native language.

2.3.3 Educational Research and Higher Education Language Policy

Despite the growing number of bilingual education programs at colleges and universities in the United States, no literature is available on their effectiveness. However, there is a plethora of literature on K-12 bilingual education typologies and success. By exploring findings on K-12 bilingual education programs, I intend to gain an understanding of bilingual education research that will be useful to analyze the first bilingual university in the United States.

After the initial welcoming of the Bilingual Education Act of 1968, the federal government commissioned the first evaluation of BE from the American Institutes for Research in the late 1970s (Danoff, 1978). Most research on bilingual education effectiveness has focused closely on

short-term outcomes for reading in English and math. Less attention has been paid to longer-term, more complex effects and other potential outcomes (Gándara & Escamilla, 2017), like the fact that students are becoming proficient in two languages. Moreover, many studies have found no difference or less positive effects for bilingual instruction based on very short-term analyses (Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, & Christian, 2006). In addition, most of the less favorable studies have been conducted in the early years, K-3. In contrast, almost all the studies of elementary, middle, and high school learners show that the educational outcomes of bilingually educated students, especially those in late exit and two-way programs, were at least comparable to and generally higher than their comparison peers (p. 201).

Research on BE continues to advance despite a period of attack for its perceived ineffectiveness and accusations of being financially wasteful. The research base for bilingual education shows a lack of consensus among proponents and opponents of such programs. Many studies that have found bilingual education superior, or comparable, to English-only programs provide evidence that English proficiency requires three to five years of instruction supported in the native language (August & Shanahan, 2006; Greene, 1998; Ramirez et al., 1991; Slavin et al., 2011; Willig, 1985). These findings indicate that Latino students who received sustained Spanish instruction throughout elementary school have better academic prospects than those who received most or all their instruction in English. Furthermore, bilingual instruction reinforced students' conceptual Spanish language baseline and cultural identity (Cummins, 1992). These data

contradict the three theoretical positions¹² upon which the opposition to bilingual education is constructed.

More than 50 years later, bilingual education researchers and policymakers are still no closer to agreeing on whether bilingual education works. While the more significant share of research suggests bilingual education is superior to English-only programs, it does not conclusively point to one type of instructional model, leaving room for debate and diversity in policy and instructional practices.

The focus on these studies calls attention to the necessity to be more explicit about the goals of bilingual education. It may not matter which program is provided if the goal is simply oral English proficiency. However, suppose educators value bilingualism and are concerned about cognitive growth, reading ability, social adaptation, dropout, college-going, or eventual earnings. In that case, the research should focus on strengthening models of bilingual instruction. Through the use of Ruíz's (1984) language as a problem, as a right, and as a resource framework, I realize that our nation's bilingual education programs are generating primarily monolingual and limited bilingual students.

Most recent studies have focused not on the effectiveness of the language programs but on examining the cognitive correlates of bilingualism and the associated effect scopes. A 2010 systematic review and meta-analysis of bilingualism was based on 63 studies involving 6,022 participants. The authors concluded that there are bilingual benefits regarding attentional control,

¹² Opponents of bilingual education argue that: first, there is an inverse relation between exposure to English and English academic development; second, students immersed in English do not pick-up sufficient English to transfer to a regular program; and third, early intensive exposure to English is more effective (Cummins, 1992).

working memory, metalinguistic awareness, and abstract and symbolic representational skills (Adesope, Lavin, Thompson, & Ungerleider, 2010).

A 2014 study in one large school district followed thousands of transitional bilingual, dual-language bilingual, and English-only programs, beginning in kindergarten and following them into high school. The study found that the students who had remained in bilingual instruction, especially dual language bilingual programs, outperformed those in English-only instruction. Bilingual students ultimately reclassified to English-proficient (not considered English learners anymore) at higher rates, scoring higher on English Language Arts and measures of English proficiency (Umansky & Reardon, 2014). Regarding outcomes other than test scores or English proficiency, there is now a large growing body of research on many outcomes (Gándara & Escamilla, 2017). There have been many positive research findings on individuals who have become/remain bilingual: a) better and more cohesive family relations and fewer behavioral problems (Portes & Hao, 2002); b) superior cognitive flexibility, working memory, and executive functioning (Bialystock, 2001); c) for Latinos, maintaining their bilingualism into high school, and greater likelihood of going to four-year colleges (Santibañez & Zárate, 2014). Other studies found that bilingually educated students are less likely to drop out of high school and are more likely to secure higher-level positions in the workforce (Rumbaut, 2014). These young bilinguals will earn significantly more in the labor market than their monolingual peers "with immigrant roots." (Agirdag, 2014).

Higher education has been responding to the demands of bilingual professionals in many fields. Examples include business studies, nursing, and education. After several decades of experimentation and development, interdisciplinary language and bilingual programs have become more established in U.S. higher education. Voght and Schaub (1992) predicted that globalizing

business education at colleges and universities combined with the liberal arts would reach considerable proportions. It is worth noting that Bilingual-Multilingual Spanish/English programs in colleges and universities designed to provide extensive bilingual and bicultural instruction are growing in popularity across the country. Examples of these areas are teachers, nurses, hospital employees, social workers, court employees, police officers, and human resources professionals. Bachelor's degree program numbers grew from 75 in 2012 to 139 in 2019 (Bilingual & Multilingual Education Database, 2020).

Conversely, according to a recent report from the Modern Language Association, comprehensive internationalization efforts and foreign language teaching has been on a steep decline in America's colleges and universities. The same report found that colleges lost 651 foreign language programs from 2013 to 2016 (Stein-Smith, 2019), possibly because more colleges have dropped foreign language requirements. The decline in programs coincides with a decrease in the number of students signing up for foreign-language courses. According to MLA's "short report" of its findings, the 9.2 percent drop in enrollments from 2013 to 2016 was the second largest on record. If measured since 2009, the decline is 15.3 percent (Looney & Lusin, 2018)

This report is based on the courses offered, and it reflects institutional decisions based on perceptions of students' interests but can also reflect other forces. Administrators may view the second-language acquisition as less important than they once did because, as observed in other countries' higher education, English is increasingly the world's lingua franca (Alexander, 2019). Students do not seem to see the potential career benefits of studying a foreign language. Another general concern is that administrators' actions are part of a general strategy of reducing support for humanities. It is important to note that Spanish saw a decline of about 10 percent but still claims about half of all foreign language enrollments, at 712,240 seats (Jaschik, 2019). On this basis, U.S.

colleges and universities need to compete and cooperate much more effectively, not only at home, in bilingual America, but the new global community.

2.3.4 Language Policy and Planning

Choices and decisions about language policies, requirements, and practices have significant effects in all contexts of society. Language planning indicates the "deliberate efforts to influence the behavior of others concerning the acquisition, structure, or functional allocation of their language codes" (Cooper, 1989, p. 45). It may be enforced with a formal, official governmental sanction or reflected in unofficial and informal practices. Language planning frequently starts for solving communication problems. Ill-conceived, poorly informed policies can result in negative impacts on those affected by them. Traditionally, language planning has two dimensions: "Corpus planning deals with rules and codification choosing, as in the writing rules, grammar, and spelling standardizations. Status planning deals with the original choice of language, including attitudes toward alternative languages, and the political implications of various choices" (Bright, 1992, p. 311). The third type of planning that is particularly important for education is language acquisition planning (Cooper, 1989). Choosing which languages will be the medium for instruction is particularly important in acquisition planning, as one must learn the language and use it to learn. For this study, I suspect that this latest dimension, language acquisition planning, has to do with the sociolinguistic context of this university's location. Ethnic Enrollment University of Texas Rio Grande Valley in Fall 2021 is 93 percent Hispanic (www.utrgv.edu/sair/data-reports/index.htm).

Decisions about language policy and planning both formally by governments and informally by scholars and community leaders are made daily worldwide. These decisions involve the right to use languages, affect language prestige, and determine which languages to preserve. Language policy and planning decisions significantly impact language vitality and, ultimately, the individual's rights (CAL, 2019).

2.4 Models of Bilingual Education Abroad

Another reason for the flourishing of bilingual studies and of initiatives to promote languages other than the first language is the prospect of attracting international students (Ramos, 2013). The aspiration to enrich the international profile of universities worldwide has become one of the most frequently pursued objectives in the higher education context. The need is to prepare students with specific professional competencies for the international market (Coleman, 2006) and a more significant presence in a global information society (Sachdev & McPake, 2008). Moreover, promoting minority language education is fundamental to fulfilling the need for multilingual workforces as well as enjoying intellectual and cultural benefits. The European Convention grants access to education in a minority language as a human right, as granted by Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, and the UN Human Rights Committee (de Varennes, 2004; Hult, 2004).

European bilingual universities have increased as a result of the political context in which they are situated. Many polyglot societies have been forced to shift their language due to political reasons, loss of land and traditional institutions, and increasingly standardized education (Cots, Lasagabaster, & Garrett, 2012). Many European regions have attempted to reverse the language

shift and regain language autonomy (Spolsky, 2005, p. 195). That was the case with universities in Catalonia and the Basque country, where Franco's regime imposed the Spanish language while forbidding Catalan and Euskara. Higher education institutions in these regions acknowledged and developed policies in their institutional practices to adopt the minority language in distinctive ways and various degrees (Cots et al., 2012). These areas of Spain bear a sociolinguistic sensibility. They continue to develop multilingual policies that mirror the multilingualization process in which many European higher institutions are already involved (Cots et al., 2012).

2.4.1 University of Lleida (UdL) Lleida, Catalonia, Spain

Catalan is the unmarked/default language of the University of Lleida (UdL), located in Lleida, the capital of the western most of the four provinces into which Catalonia is divided. The population of the province of Lleida is 434,930, which is 0.9 percent of the total Spanish population¹³ and 5.6 percent of Catalonia's population (Idescat, 2020). The university student body in the 2019-2020 academic year comprised 13,356 students, a figure representing 4 percent of the total university student population for Catalonia (Idescat, 2020).

The Spanish and Catalan languages have a similar presence at the university, although Spanish and English seem to be gaining ground. According to the website, UdL represents its sociolinguistic environment as Catalan is the unmarked linguistic choice because it represents a symbol of identity. Catalan appears consistently in the university's social and academic environment, as it does for the whole of Catalonia. UdL's general academic policy documents

¹³ The current population of Spain is 46,754,778 as of Thursday, May 15, 2020, based on the latest United Nations estimates.

appear in Catalan as well. However, Catalan's unmarked/default nature disappears in practice in UdL's official language policy, approved in 2008, leaving the university without a clear default language (Cots, Lasagabaster, & Garrett, 2012). This trend is consistent with Heller's (2000) assessment of the changes brought about by globalization, in which multilingualism is associated with economic advantage and progress.

Following the implementation of the Bologna process,¹⁴ English has taken a principal role in European education. Institutions offer a more internationalized student body the opportunity to cater to their needs and increase their competitiveness (Tatsioka, Seidlhofer, Sifakis, & Ferguson, 2018). The widespread usage of English as the lingua franca and the proliferation of minority languages due to immigration have an increasing exchange value in the labor and culture markets of the region. Proficiency in several languages tends to facilitate the upward social mobility of its speakers (Cots, Lasagabaster, & Garrett, 2012).

In contrast to universities in most urban areas of Catalonia, where English is taking a most prominent role, such as Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona, language use in the UdL context shows most instructors teaching in Catalan. The percentage of Catalan instruction has increased over Spanish. Demographic data from UdL shows a gradual rise from 53.1 percent in academic year 2007–2008 to 67.6 percent in 2018–2019. In this comparison, we see that these two universities show a similar sociolinguistic situation: both universities are located where Catalan and Castilian (Spanish) are spoken by most of the population, Catalan being the linguistic choice.

¹⁴ The **Bologna Process** is a series of ministerial meetings and agreements between European countries to ensure comparability in the standards and quality of higher-education qualifications. The **process** has created the European Higher Education Area under the Lisbon Recognition Convention (Council of Europe, 2020)

However, in contrast with UdL, UPF (Universitat Pompeu Fabra, 2020) shows a progressive decline in Catalan use.

Furthermore, European countries recognize their multilingual capital as an economic advantage (Hardach, 2018). For example, Switzerland attributes 10 percent of its GDP to its multilingual heritage. Switzerland has four official languages: German, French, Italian, and an ancient Latin-based language called Romansh (Bradley, 2008; Hardach, 2018). Despite this enormous linguistic resource, language has largely been ignored by economic experts (Grin, 2008).

Colleges and universities worldwide are adopting a bilingual model of education, yet they exhibit unique models, policies, and practices. There is scarce literature on the existing models of BE in HEIs. It is essential to learn what bilingual colleges and universities are doing abroad as part of this literature review. For that purpose, I have selected three well-established bilingual universities in Europe: The University of Lleida (UdL), in Catalonia, Spain; the University of Freiburg, Switzerland; and The University of Bozen-Bolzano in Italy.

UdL's website for international students says:

In Catalan universities, Catalan and Spanish coexist in a natural way. Catalan is a language of the University of Lleida, which in its policy of linguistic policy establishes that the working languages in the university are Catalan, Spanish and English. In accordance with the principle of linguistic safety, the teaching of each subject is done in the language chosen by the teaching staff and must be previously announced in the file of each subject. In the case that teachers and students share knowledge of a language other than the one programmed in the file, they can use it, as long as they agree. The fact that a subject is taught in Catalan or Spanish, does not imply that the student must use it in any academic

activity related to the subject (exams, presentations, practices, jobs ...). (Universitat de Lleida. Dades lingüístiques, 2020)

According to this statement, the law for Catalan Universities requires that all the instructors be proficient in both languages. The statutes of UdL go a step further by (i) promoting and guaranteeing the use of Catalan (article 4, epigraphs 2, 4) and (ii) extending to students the obligation to know the two languages. (Cots, Lasagabaster, & Garrett, 2012).

2.4.2 University of Freiburg, Switzerland ¹⁵

The University of Freiburg is a research bilingual public university founded in 1889, located in Freiburg, Switzerland. Three administrative languages (German, French, and Italian) have achieved equal rights in Switzerland since 1848. In 1939, Rhaeto-Romanic was acknowledged as the fourth official language. In the present European context, it is essential to remember that the term "nation" does not refer to a particular language (Langner & Imbach, 2000). This institution was designed to be bilingual and a convergent place for the French- and German-speaking communities. Many international scholars have taught in this high-level academic institution.

According to The University of Freiburg's website, the university encompasses five faculties: Arts and Humanities, Science and Medicine, Economics and Social Sciences, Law, and Theology. The university hosts numerous interdisciplinary institutes and centers of excellence.

¹⁵The name Freiburg appears in most of the literature, but on the website the name appears as Freiberg.

According to the university website, there are approximately 10,000 students in the Bachelor, Master's, and Ph.D. programs and over 800 professors, lecturers, and research assistants (University of Freiburg, 2019).

The University of Freiburg was founded as a bilingual institution in the nineteenth century. However, the concept of bilingual studies, which refers to instruction in the two principal languages, is recent. The university followed the double-monolingual model for a long time (students can take courses in either German or in French), and recently, after an institutional evaluation, changed its regulations for the award of a bilingual degree by the introduction of a credit system (Langner & Imbach, 2000).

In 2008 The University of Freiburg went through a restructuring, and as a result, a Language Centre was created. The Language Centre's mission is to design and deliver free of charge courses and other opportunities to learn languages for the development of academic language skills in selected foreign languages (German, English, French, and Italian). Advanced levels focus on specific language skills and competencies to enable students to speak confidently and competently within the scope of the university's academic environment (University of Freiburg, 2020). In addition, The Language Center offers two to three-week intensive courses in the two main university languages (German and French) shortly before the start of the semester to help prepare new students for their studies at the university.

The uniqueness of The University of Freiburg model consists of the "bilingual plus" program offered to Law students. "Bilingual plus" is a well-founded study and job-related language training in the second language study. The oral and written expression in the target language is promoted (University of Freiburg, 2020). Legal jargon is not always easy to comprehend. Therefore, students are required to take courses in the second languages of German and French to

help them develop and improve their understanding of language and knowledge of legal terminology at intermediate and advanced levels (University of Freiburg, 2020).

Prospective students must undergo a language competency check-in in both German and French. Prospective graduate students from another country must also be proficient in German or French. Students can achieve language certificates through the Language Center to add to their diplomas (University of Freiburg, 2020).

2.4.3 University of Bozen-Bolzano

The Free University of Bozen-Bolzano (UNIBZ) in Italy is a trilingual university with three official languages of instruction: Italian, German, and English. According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)¹⁶, undergraduate students must reach the C1 level in their first and second languages and B2 in their third language. By the end of their second year, students must reach B1 in their third language. Students get support from the Language Centre in meeting these requirements. They might take the non-credit elective language curriculum and alternate between intensive and extensive courses throughout the academic year. The first encounter with UNIBZ for most students is a 120-hour three-week intensive course before the first semester. An additional 160 hours of intensive instruction courses are available in February and July during the semester breaks (Centro Linguistico Sprachenzentrum Language Centre, 2020).

¹⁶ The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages CEFR is a guideline used to describe achievements of learners of foreign languages across Europe and, increasingly, in other countries (Council of Europe 2011).

2.5 Models of Bilingual Education in the U.S.

As previously mentioned, colleges and universities adopting a bilingual education model appear to follow their own models, policies, and practices. The literature related to models of bilingualism in the United States pertains to K-12 education institutions. To analyze the first bilingual university in the U.S. chosen for this study, I included a summary of the models, classification, and categories of bilingual education in K-12. The models of bilingual education can be classified into three categories: Transitional, Dual Language, and Language Immersion Models.

The transitional model is the most common bilingual educational model. In the transitional model, described as a transitional bilingual program, the student's primary language is used as a vehicle to develop English acquisition only (Hutchinson, 2013). The goal is to help students transition to mainstream English-only classrooms as quickly as possible. The linguistic goal of such programs is only English acquisition, thus becoming part of the dominant culture (García, 2011).

Dual Language Models differ in design and implementation but share three common goals for students: (1) to foster bilingualism and biliteracy, reaching for high levels of proficiency in both languages (English and a partner language); (2) to succeed academically at grade level or better in both languages; and (3) to enhance awareness and appreciation of linguistic and cultural diversity, by cultivating positive attitudes toward fellow students, their families, and the community (Alanís & Rodriguez, 2008; Block, 2011; Gomez & Freeman, 2005; Howard et al., 2007; Lindholm-Leary, 2007; Paciotto & Delany-Barmann, 2011; Parkes & Ruth, 2011; Rodriguez & Alanís, 2011; Torres-Guzman et al., 2005;).

Dual language in elementary school programs uses the non-English language for, at minimum, half of the instructional day. These programs extend in some cases from kindergarten to middle school or even high school. Most dual-language programs are located in neighborhood schools, although many are charter, magnet, or private schools (May, 2013). Most dual-language programs in the U.S. teach in English and Spanish. However, many programs use a partner language other than Spanish, such as Arabic, French, Hawaiian, Japanese, Korean, or Mandarin (Shrum & Glisan, 2000).

Other more effective Language Immersion Models have been associated with the ideological orientation of bilingualism as a resource (Ruiz, 1984) for English speakers, which informs the framework of this study. Bilingualism as a resource framework allows the addition of another language as a supplement to the prestigious native language (Hutchinson, 2013). These programs are designed to help both native and non-native English speakers become bilingual and biliterate. Using the ideological orientation of minority languages as an ideological evolution, in which bilingual education is an asset to all students, new pedagogical models emerged. One of these models was the Language Immersion Program.

Although bilingual and dual language immersion programs share common viewpoints, they emerge from dissimilar learning environments and respond to varying student populations' needs. Dual language programs target English Learners through immersion programs and transitional programs. They use English as the only instructional language and promote the transition from the minority language to English. Bilingual programs embrace the maintenance and enrichment of multiple languages simultaneously and employ multiple languages (May, 2008). For this research, this literature review only examines bilingual education programs.

Canada, during the 1960s, started the Dual Language Immersion (DLI) approach, as it is known today, and has been implemented in the U.S. and other countries (Di Stefano, 2017). In contrast, bilingual education has improved and grown in the number of programs available in the U.S. and variations to the original models during the past 50 years. Student populations constitute one of the significant variations (Tedick, Christian, & Fortune, 2011).

Table 3 shows different bilingual programs, including the type of learners, the language of instruction, and the time of language instruction as summarized in Di Stefano (2017). All these bilingual additive programs use two languages as means of instruction.

2.6 Summary of the Literature Review

In many countries, bilingual universities play a significant role in serving linguistically diverse communities in preserving their languages, cultures, and identities (Tatsioka, Seidlhofer, Sifakis, & Ferguson, 2018). The goal of bilingual education research is to inform and influence policies and programs for millions of students in the U.S. Research in education plays a vital role in educational language policies, promoting education as a human right, educational equity, achievement, and students' sense of identity.

The body of research on bilingual education has increased in scope and rigor in the last two decades. However, most research pertains to bilingualism as a general construct and bilingual education for school children. Given the amount of research that has identified positive outcomes and lessons learned from abroad, language policy should be shifting the conversation into the higher education realm, accordingly. Students who speak a language other than English have a right not only to linguistic accommodations but also to promote their languages as a means for

developing identification with their languages and cultures and using their language wealth to their advantage. Educators who view students with deficits in their ability to think and learn are generally proponents of monolingual or all-English education programs. Monolingual policy programs favor learning the dominant language at the expense of losing the home language and promoting an assimilationist agenda (Ochoa, 1995). Bilingual programs in higher education are on the rise, yet it is a neglected topic in the literature. It is not yet clear if the bilingual education research findings have shaped national language policy related to the implementation and funding of bilingual programs.

Dramatic demographic and economic changes happen as the world becomes more interconnected, interdependent, integrated, yet more competitive (Gambino, Acosta, & Grieco, 2014). The U.S. needs to renovate its current attitude towards world language education and catch up with the rest of the world. According to Duncan (2010), the limited level of bilingualism in the American population compromises the nation's global economic competitiveness, its national security, and the ability of its citizens to communicate with each other.

Applied linguistics and educational research have been unable to explain or turn around the attacks on bilingual education since the 1960s. Transitional models of bilingual education aimed to teach English to immigrant students continue to be the norm (Herrera-Rocha & De la Piedra, 2019). Educational policies generally do not include any discussions surrounding the history and culture of emerging bilinguals. These education policies discontinue the maintenance of the native language when it is presumed that a student has achieved sufficient proficiency in the school's language of instruction (Ruíz, 1984). Satisfying the linguistic and educational needs of emergent bilinguals at all levels of education is a political question that requires political clarity.

As long as emerging bilinguals continue to be seen as a “problem,” students learning a new language experience that their first language does not hold the same value as the dominant language. Assimilation is a monolingual form of bilingual education's underlying aim (McNelly, 2015; Ruiz, 1984). Monolingual education programs represent the most successful assimilation strategy, herding groups to a shared culture through language (Baker 2011; Cummins, 2001).

Universities are trying to adapt to the professional demands of globalization and multicultural environments. Increased attention to other languages in higher education institutions (HEIs) is not unique to the European context. Sociolinguistic contexts and funding challenges affect educational policies, yet language diversity seems to be one main factor in universities' internationalization (Cots, Lasagabaster, & Garrett 2012).

Models of bilingual higher education varied at each university considered in this literature review, according to the country, languages involved, and the linguistic history of the regions they operate. More often than not, the robust version of the parallel-medium model of BHE is not realized in practice (Van der Walt, 2004, p. 144). Nevertheless, a university may still be classified as a parallel-medium or bilingual institution because of its overall policy on parallel-medium education, i.e., bilingual universities in Europe that have centuries of history and development. At the same time, in the U.S., BHE seems to be in a more initial phase. Today, students who are not fluent in English—legal and illegal immigrants, refugees, and native-born—are the fastest-growing population, accounting for more than half the students, children, and young adults in classrooms in the U.S. (Porter, 2017). Estimating levels of bilingualism in the U.S. is more complex than even most researchers may be willing to acknowledge. Nevertheless, the European attitude toward bilingualism is distinctly different from the attitude in the United States.

Purser (2000, p. 453) predicts that bilingual (or even multilingual) universities will increase, primarily as a result of the growth of languages such as English in academia (Schaller-Schwaner, 2004; Treanor, 2005), and in part as a result of the internationalization of universities. The management of bilingual policies in higher education is a complex challenge. It most certainly requires "legal will" and institutional commitment (Beillard, 2000, p. 474) and, obviously, appropriate funding (Brink, 2004, p. 14).

In the United States, bilingual education faces many challenges such as institutional identity, financial constraints, preparing graduates for the mainstream English dominant culture, and the competitive job market. Similarly, immigration have an increasing exchange value in the labor and culture markets; therefore, proficiency in several languages tends to facilitate the upward social and mobility of its speakers (Cots, Lasagabaster, & Garrett, 2012). In addition, Spanish has become the non-declared second language of the United States, and many Hispanic-Serving Institutions are implementing bilingual programs to reflect the value of bilingual education and its promotion of social justice and equity for all. Because of this demographic reality, recent studies of HSIs call for a new mission to provide Latina/o students with an equitable education that acknowledges and nurtures their cultural and linguistic wealth to promote academic success and college-completion rates (de los Santos & Cuamea, 2010; Greene et al., 2012; Lara & Lara, 2012; Núñez & Bowers, 2011). Language diversity is not a "problem" that minority students must overcome to participate in society (Ruiz, 1984). This study describes one unique bilingual higher education institution that proves that assertion and how it is planning to remain viable.

3.0 Research Design

3.1 Introduction

This case study explores the bilingual higher education phenomenon in the United States by examining the policies, pedagogies, and models of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, UTRG, which is considered the first public bilingual English/Spanish university in the U.S.

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV). Founded in 2015 by merging the previous University of Texas-Pan American (UTPA) and the University of Texas Brownsville (UTB), UTRGV offers the most opportunities in higher education in Southwestern Texas. Both UTPA and UTB were officially Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), given that over 90 percent of the student population are Hispanic; therefore, the more recently formed UTRGV is also an HSI (N. Pereyra, personal communication, 4/18/2019).

UTRGV is a public research university with multiple campuses throughout the Rio Grande Valley region of Texas. It is the southernmost member of the University of Texas System (UTRGV, 2021). The large Hispanic population and the closeness to the border with Mexico are determinant factors in incorporating bilingual English/Spanish pedagogies at the University.

3.2 Qualitative Research Tradition

This case study is a descriptive research approach on the educational language model at the University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley focuses on one primary question: How is the first

bilingual English-Spanish University planning to remain viable? To answer that question, I focus on the following research questions:

1. What are the primary characteristics of the bilingual education model of this institution?
2. How does this bilingual education institution identify its challenges?
3. How does this bilingual education institution identify its parameters of success?

This research is constructivist. I described and interpreted data generated from policy-relevant document analysis and supported by semi-structured interviews through an intrinsic case-study approach. The intrinsic case-study design fits the descriptive nature of this study. It allows me to focus on the perceived interest in the case itself rather than on extending theory or generalizing across cases (Stake, 1995). Data were classified and conceptualized using an adaptation of Dafouz and Smit's (2016) ROAD MAPPING of English-Medium Education in Multilingual University Settings (EMEMUS). This methodology has been used in Europe to study the introduction of English to colleges and universities. I adapted this framework to explore the role of Spanish at UTRGV. This framework enabled my analysis to "zoom in" and "out" without losing sight of either micro- or macro-level phenomena. Anchored theoretically in sociolinguistic approaches and language policy research, I attempted to co-construct descriptive knowledge about this emerging bilingual Spanish/English university in the United States, its policy goals, model, and rationales. ROAD MAPPING (further explained in this chapter) helped me answer the first question in my research. These findings shed light on planning, decision-making, and specific strategies to implement innovative programs and practices.

This study hinges on three concepts: sociolinguistic theory, critical language and race theory, and bilingual education policy. The research design was developed by carefully critiquing the multiple methodological perspectives available through different research traditions. These

affected the main goals of my study, my conceptual framework, and the implications of my epistemological standpoint. Crotty (1998) proposes four questions to help researchers create and design a research project:

- a) What methods will be used and how are they linked to institutional viability?
- b) What methodology will be employed?
- c) What theoretical perspective will support the research?
- d) What epistemology will inform the research and how is it linked to the study?

I acknowledge that there are many disagreements over the use of terminology associated with research methods and design. Crotty's questions helped me gain a more comprehensive starting point for my design.

Crotty (1998) defines methods as “the techniques or procedures used to gather and analyze data related to some research question or hypothesis” (p.3). For this case study, I began with document analysis, which provided appropriate descriptive data to support my conceptual framework and questions. The documents selected for analysis span seven years and provided detailed data and longitudinal perspective. In addition, I conducted three interviews with UTRGV individual faculty and administrators. The interviews enhanced the document analysis by allowing me to understand and explore research subjects' opinions, behavior, and experiences with the bilingual model of the university.

The second question responded to the methodologies employed, “the strategy, plan of action, process, or design” (Crotty, 1998, p. 3). My approach for this institutional analysis is case study. I gained a deep understanding of UTRGV through multiple types of data. This case study is explanatory, exploratory, and descriptive. It focused on one unique institution and did not intend on constructing extensive generalizations. However, viability could be predictive by seeking out

what is particular about this case, which involves thorough and in-depth examination of the nature of the UTRGV's historical background, physical setting, and other institutional and political contextual factors.

The third question addressed the theoretical perspective and refers to “the philosophical stance informing the methodology and thus providing a context for the process and grounding its logic and criteria” (Crotty, 1998, p. 3). This study is grounded in a constructivist theoretical perspective. Based on the assumption that we live in a social world characterized by opportunities for multiple interpretations, I acknowledge that researching language policy in the U.S. requires me to address multiple dimensions and positionalities. Nevertheless, the combination of document analysis and semi-structured interviews allowed me to co-construct existing knowledge.

The fourth and final question, according to Crotty (1998), is what epistemology will inform a research proposal or what is “the theory of knowledge embedded in the theoretical perspective and thereby the methodology” (p. 3). I draw from sociolinguistic orientations and discursive approaches (e.g., Blommaert 2010; Crump, 2014; Hult 2010; Scollon & Scollon, 2004; Shohamy, 2006). I examine these epistemological standpoints in contrast with my experience and personal beliefs about how reality is shaped. (I explain anticipated bias further on in this chapter.) This theoretical perspective gave me a framework that allowed for my assessment and advocacy for bilingual higher education and has motivated the pursuit of this case study on the viability of the first public bilingual Spanish/English university. This foundation permeates the entire research process, from the problem formulation to the drawing of conclusions and the use of results (Mertens, 2003, p. 159).

This study was designed to be constructivist in approach. However, upon completing this dissertation, I now recognize that I assumed a more transformative approach as a researcher, which

has allowed me to adopt an explicit goal for my future research, i.e., to help create a more just and democratic society. The Spanish language should be viewed as a resource and a right in HSIs. As stated in the literature review, the U.S. has become an overly sensitive sociolinguistic environment (Crawford, 2004; Hakuta, 1986) in which language learning and use are likely to become objects of explicit reflection (Blommaert 2010; Heller 2007), and conflict (Fillmore 2006). Furthermore, it will involve the development of particular language policies (Crawford, 2004; Hakuta, 1986; Mitchell, 2019).

3.3 Applying Conceptual Framework

Following is a detailed explanation and the rationale for choosing the conceptual frameworks that I utilized to guide my study and how they addressed my research questions.

Within this language policy context, a ROAD MAPPING framework was recently developed to offer a holistic and dynamic theoretical account of the core operating dimensions. This conceptual framework, provided by Dafouz and Smit (2016) and aimed at analyzing the distinct roles and status of languages at a university level, is particularly fitting for this study. Although this model is thought to theoretically tackle the position of English within internationalizing universities in Europe and Latin America, I believe it can also be adapted to analyze the same context from the bilingual English-Spanish perspective in the United States.

As noted in Chapter 1, I adapted ROAD MAPPING for Spanish/English universities (Dafouz & Smit, 2016). I also framed this study through the lens of Critical Language and Race Theory (LangCrit). Both frameworks, ROAD MAPPING and LangCrit, emerged from sociolinguistic theory. The first one helped me determine the dimensions of bilingualism and the

language policies in this institution. It became the tool to conceptualize, analyze, and evaluate this unique bilingual educational model (Dafouz & Smit, 2020). The latter was fundamental to help me question how race, racism, and racialization intersected with issues of language, belonging, and identity (Crump, 2014).

The ROAD MAPPING framework offered a basis for informing various iterations of my data analysis, such as the academic offerings in Spanish or bilingually and how they have expanded over the years. At the same time, sociolinguistic theory and Critical Language and Race Theory reflected the ideological belief that cultural and linguistic diversity is a resource that individuals have the right to develop and nurture. Language diversity is not a “problem” that minority students must overcome to participate in society (Ruiz, 1984). The results of this study describe one unique bilingual higher education institution that intends to prove that assertion. One key issue emerging from this study is the institution's strategies to recruit and retain students.

3.3.1 ROAD-MAPPING

The rapid proliferation of multilingual universities abroad, particularly the homogenization of English as the lingua-franca in many international colleges and universities, has turned out to be more complex and multifaceted than expected (Dafouz & Smit, 2012). As mentioned, I have adapted a recently developed framework, known by the acronym ROAD MAPPING, to describe and study how English-medium education (or EMEMUS) has been incorporated in multilingual university settings worldwide (Dafouz & Smit, 2016). This framework has been used to inform the phases of conceptualization, study design, methodology, data analysis, and interpretation of

findings of several bilingual and multilingual universities in Europe and Asia (Dafouz & Smit, 2020).

Instead of English as a medium of education, I switched the focus to Spanish as a medium of education, using ROAD-MAPPING. This tool was valuable to systematically conceptualize, describe, analyze, and evaluate how Spanish as a medium of instruction, hereafter referred to as SMI, has been introduced in the bilingual model of UTRGV. The ROAD-MAPPING framework helped me answer the first research question: What are the primary characteristics of the bilingual education model of this institution?

Conceptually, ROAD MAPPING draws from recent sociolinguistics and language policy research developments, which will be described here (for a more detailed discussion, see Dafouz & Smit, 2016, pp. 399–402). ROAD MAPPING reflects the processes and postmodern sociolinguistics today and focuses on the dynamics and variability of communication practices and the diverse social identities they co-construct (e.g., Blommaert, 2010; Pennycook, 2007; Rampton, 2017). The six dimensions Dafouz & Smit (2016) proposed to evaluate the bilingualism of a university are Roles of Spanish, Academic Disciplines, (language) Management, Agents, Practices and Processes, and Internationalization & Globalization. Fig. 3-1 presents a bubble graph representation of the six dimensions. It highlights the relevance and interconnectivity of each dimension with each other. The '“discourses” bubble, placed in the middle, illustrates the centrally discursive nature of the social practices and the relationships that construct and are constructed dynamically in the UTRGV bilingual university model, and “is seen as the intersecting access point through which all six dimensions can be examined” (Dafouz & Smit, 2016, p. 403). Below, a more detailed explanation of what each dimension entails will follow.

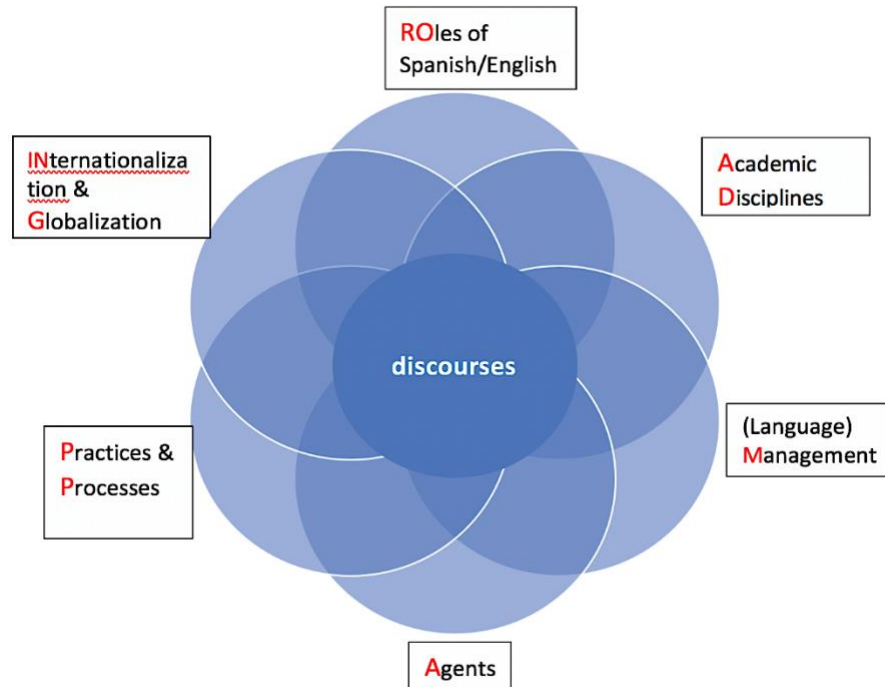


Figure 3. ROAD MAPPING Framework for Spanish/English Universities

Source: Adapted from ROAD MAPPING framework for EMEMUS (Dafouz & Smit, 2016)

3.3.1.1 First Dimension: Roles of Spanish RO

In the first dimension, *Roles of Spanish*, I examined the functional breadth of Spanish as the complete linguistic repertoire of this bilingual university (Dafouz & Smit, 2016). It helped me to understand the pace in which the implementation of Spanish as a medium of instruction (SMI), has taken place at UTRGV and its role concerning English. For instance, whether Spanish has been explicitly included in curriculum or implicitly expected by stakeholders.

3.3.1.2 Second Dimension: Academic Disciplines AD

The dimension of *Academic Disciplines* relates to "the different teaching and learning genres, curricular design, and assessment methods used in the academic setting" (Dafouz, 2018, p.

175). This dimension is concerned with the development of disciplinary literacy in the target language (Spanish, in this case), specifically "appropriate participation in communicative disciplinary practices within the academy" but also "in society at large" (Airey, 2011b). This dimension allowed me to examine some of the challenges of the institution's bilingual and bicultural learning spaces.

3.3.1.3 Third Dimension: (Language) Management M

Dafouz and Smit (2016) describe the third dimension, *language (in) management*, as "concerned with L[anguage] P[olicy] statements and declarations" (p. 406). These refer to "efforts to manipulate the language situation" (Spolsky 2004, p. 8), whether strategic, legal, binding, or implicit. Within this dimension, they underline tensions between the official policy of the institution and enacted practice. Moreover, this dimension examines the influence of agents at a range of levels (national, institutional, etc.). This dimension allowed me to evaluate whether the university proposed explicit language policies for written, spoken, or internet-based communications (Dafouz & Smit 2016, p. 406).

3.3.1.4 Fourth Dimension: Agents A

The *Agents* (stakeholders and forces of change) dimension "describes the social players engaged in Spanish as a means of instruction, SMI, whether viewed as individuals (teachers, students, administrators or researchers) or as collective entities (faculty, administration, student unions, etc.)" (Dafouz, 2018, p. 177). It examines how stakeholders respond to the implementation of Spanish as the medium of instruction and the interplay of structures and actors in the international HE landscape across micro-, meso- and macro-levels.

3.3.1.5 Fifth Dimension: Practices & Processes PP

Practices & Processes, PP, refers to bilingual teamwork and communities of practice. This dimension reflects on sociolinguistic perspectives that center on language-in-use (e.g., Blommaert, 2010; Heller, 2007), in this case, Spanish. While the PP dimension has the potential to be extremely extensive, Dafouz & Smit (2016) have narrowed it down. They focus on the teaching and learning activities that construct and are constructed by specific bilingual practices. These processes continue developing at UTRGV and reveal a shared repertoire appropriate to the academic and social-communicative purposes of the institution, which is to expand the bilingual model.

3.3.2 Sixth Dimension: Internationalization & Globalization

Internationalization & Globalization, perhaps to an even greater extent, pull all the other dimensions together in a combination of local and global. The upsurge of globalization has blurred the preference for one “standard” nation-state linguistic identity in favor of more pluralist ideologies (de Jong, 2013). Consequently, there has been an increase in support for additive language policy goals and programs in higher education (Zuniga, Henderson, & Palmer, 2018). This trend has resulted in English taking on an unprecedented role as a lingua franca in the classroom and the corporate world. I am, of course, referring to universities in Europe, Asia, and Latin America. However, this study focuses on the internationalization and globalization dimension of introducing Spanish in this borderlands’ university.

Another critical issue to take into consideration, and in which the sociolinguistic approach is needed, involves U.S. demographics. Given the diversity and multiplicity of higher education

institutions across the U.S, the implementation of bilingual programs is inevitably multilayered and, thus, its conceptualization becomes challenging (Nikula, Dafouz, Moore, & Smit, 2016).

3.3.3 LangCrit: Critical Language and Race Theory

Critical Language and Race Theory, LangCrit, is a lens that allows for an examination of how individual social practices and identity performances connect to a more extensive ecosocial system of discourses, policies, and practices (Crump, 2014). LangCrit looks for ways in which race, racism, and racialization intersect with issues of language, belonging, and identity (Crump, 2014). Given the contentious history of bilingual education in the U.S., the LangCrit lens allows researchers to question how national and institutional language policies might strengthen, produce, or resist racial hierarchies (e.g., Haque, 2012, Crump, 2014). Making explicit assertions about these issues challenges assumptions about language such as (1) the weight of proficiency in English as an indicator of national loyalty, (2) the apparent “neutrality” of Standard English, and (3) the sufficiency of willpower to achieve it (McGroarty, 2002). Much research has denounced the notion that American identity, as articulated by white supremacists, associates bilingualism with inferior intelligence and absence of loyalty in the United States (Shin, 2017; Spolsky, 2004; Tollefson, 2002b). According to Muro (2016), becoming bilingual means increasing one’s human capital for a White person compared to a Hispanic person.

The literature review highlighted the benefits and advantages of bilingual education. However, according to Crump (2014), emphasis on such “rich promise” (Lindholm-Leary, 2005b) and “astounding” effects of bilingual education (Collier & Thomas, 2004) is not enough. It fails to

acknowledge the hegemonic agenda that continues to shape bilingual education and the educational experience of immigrant youth in the United States (Flores, 2016).

Even though this study is constructivist, using the LangCrit framework adds another dimension to the analysis of the viability of bilingual universities in the United States. It allowed this study to investigate the intersection of racialized positionings, such as the need to preserve certain socially constructed racial hierarchies (Crump, 2014), with the policies associated with an investment in and affiliation with the Spanish language.

In the bilingual education context in the U.S., Ruiz (1984) presents three frameworks for language planning policy: language as a right, language as a problem, and language as a resource. Unlike other countries, minority languages and language diversity in the U.S. are often considered a problem to be solved, therefore requiring a technical approach. The legal rights of language speakers are highlighted in this approach, which seeks, for instance, to plan to provide instruction in the student's minority language (May 2001).

Ruiz (1984) envisions language as a resource framework for policy, as the least contentious approach and as an answer for integration of bilingual education into U.S. language policy. In literature on multilingualism and multilingual education, the language as a resource approach is always more present. Language as a "resource" is the framework for policy that I have adopted for my research.

3.4 Methodological Assumptions

A constructivist approach to sociolinguistics in bilingual higher education is the critical perspective I used to conceptualize this study. As a researcher, I understand constructivism is an

epistemology, a learning or meaning-making theory in which fundamental understanding is only constructed based on previous experiences and knowledge. It states that individuals build their new insights or knowledge by interacting with what they already believe and the ideas, events, and activities with which they have come into contact. The power and value of personal and collective experiences and interpretations reflect the researcher's positionality (e.g., education, involvements, affiliations, social backgrounds, etc.) in making sense of their realities (Ültanır, 2012). My aim was to co-construct knowledge of the model of this emerging bilingual Spanish/English university in the United States, and its policy goals, rationales, and parameters of success. I drew from document analysis and semi-structured interviews for my data collection strategies, explained in detail in an upcoming section.

3.5 Case Study Research Design

The methodology for this dissertation is an intrinsic case study of the UTRGV bilingual model. Institutional policy documents provided the primary data source for this study to describe the sociolinguistic environment of this institution to establish an understanding of the bilingual model. The multitude of archives and documentation available provided an ample resource. Furthermore, documents can corroborate, refute, elucidate, or expand on findings across other data sources, which helped me guard against bias. Document analysis provided answers to the questions of policy, past events, sociolinguistic and historical contexts, organizations, activities, groups, and much more. Secondly, I completed three semi-structured interviews with three faculty/administrative individuals directly involved in implementing the institution's bilingual

model. Multiple data sources are important for this case study. Triangulation affords a confluence of evidence that breeds credibility (Bowen, 2009).

3.5.1 Document Analysis

Document analysis is a social research method and is a crucial research tool and an invaluable component of most triangulation schemes (Bowen, 2009). Bowen (2009) suggested that a wide array of documents is best, although the question should be more about the quality rather than quantity. Bowen described document analysis as a process of evaluating documents to produce empirical knowledge and develop understanding (Bowen, 2009).

The documents I reviewed in this study provide an accessible and reliable source of data. According to Bowen (2009), attaining and analyzing documents is often far more cost-efficient and time-efficient than conducting research or experiments (Bowen, 2009). In addition, documents are “non-reactive” data sources, meaning that the researcher can return to the document multiple times without influencing the content and compromising the process (Bowen, 2009, p. 31). Document analysis allowed me to gather background information, and broad coverage of the data to contextualize the research. I sought, selected, and verified the collected documents based on the significance of the documents, and the explicit content relevance. All the documents were gathered from the university website. Some articles listed in the references were published also on the university website. All documents were written in English. No documents in Spanish were found on the website. Details of the nine collected documents are listed in Table 1 in Appendix A.

To conduct this document analysis, I explored the content of the documents manually using O’Leary’s (2014) techniques.) They include:

1. The interview technique consists of using the text as a respondent or informant and asking questions to gather relevant information (O’Leary, 2014).

2. Content analysis, which consists of noting occurrences and quantifying the use of particular words, phrases, or concepts (O’Leary, 2014).

Using these techniques, I determined, searched, and organized the information from the mission and vision statements, strategic plan, and all the other documents mentioned above. Bowen (2009) calls the initial step a “first-pass document review” (p. 32) to identify meaningful and relevant information. Subsequently, I organized the information into “related to central questions of the research” (Bowen, 2009, p. 32). All the documents analyzed for this study were in English.

Next, I transferred and analyzed the document’s relevant information using the abovementioned six ROAD-MAPPING dimensions framework (Dafouz & Smit, 2020). For instance, document analysis helped me determine the *Academic Disciplines*, which is the second dimension. All information from this document analysis is presented in three essays that address one by one the research questions. I will explain these essays further in this chapter. LangCrit theory framed my analysis, allowing me to investigate the intersection of racialized positionings, such as the need to preserve certain socially constructed racial hierarchies (Crump, 2014), with the policies associated with an investment in and affiliation with the Spanish language.

3.5.2 Semi-Structured Interviews and Analysis

To seek convergence and convergence for my document analysis I also conducted a semi-structured interview of three key constituents (faculty and administrators). I used document

analysis as the primary data source of this study and, in the interest of triangulating data, I conducted three semi-structured interviews to support and enhance my understanding of the history and the perceived challenges and parameters of the success of UTRGV's bilingual initiative.

According to Bernard (1988), semi-structured interviewing is appropriate when there is only one chance to interview someone. The main objective of these interviews was to supplement the document analysis particularly regarding the second and third research questions: How does this bilingual education institution identify its challenges and parameters of success? The interview guide reflects that goal (See Appendix D). According to Lanvers and Hultgren (2018a, 2018b), stakeholders' perceptions of bilingual and multilingual European universities become a central source for analyzing ongoing processes of implementation in their respective settings.

3.5.2.1 Participants

To support my document analysis, I interviewed three key participants in the UTRGV's bilingual initiative. These three faculty/administrators have been involved in the bilingual initiative from the onset.

Participant 1 is an Associate Professor of Science who worked in one of the legacy institutions before the merger. This faculty member is originally from a South American country and studied and taught for over 30 years in the U.S. Participant 1 had implemented bilingual practices before the merger and now, after the university "officially became a bilingual institution," expressed his commitment to continue offering his classes in a bilingual model. Participant 1's department now offers a sequence of bilingual science classes to the 400 level.

Participant 2 was an Associate Professor from the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Texas-Pan American. Participant 2 now holds an administrative leading position in the B3 institute and has authored numerous articles and books on bilingual education. Participant 2 is originally from the Rio Grande Valley region and feels committed to expanding dual-language education, teacher training, and academic rigor in bilingual classrooms throughout the region. Participant 2 asserts that the positive long-term outcomes of dual language programs offer evidence of closing the current academic achievement gap between bilingual Hispanic students and American mainstream students.

Participant 3 is an Associate Professor in the Department of Writing and Language Studies, who holds an administrative-leading position in the B3 institute, and whose areas of research are related to bilingualism and heritage language ideologies. Participant 3 has also been involved in implementing the bilingual initiative from the onset of UTRGV. All three participants identify as Hispanic, one first-generation immigrant and two born and raised in the United States.

Participants agreed to participate in the study using a Zoom conference tool because of COVID restrictions. I sent a formal invitation to participants to schedule a date for their interviews. After confirming the dates, I created the Zoom meetings and sent the invitation links. The interviews took place in May 2021.

Recent studies confirm that educational policies and practices hinge on what stakeholders think of them (Dafouz & Smit, 2020). Some questions for the interviews emerged while the document analysis took place. According to Bowen (2009), the information contained in documents can suggest some needed questions to ask as part of the research. For example, in Goldstein and Reiboldt's (2004) ethnographic study of service use among families living in poor urban communities, document analysis research was the basis to create new interview questions.

Their research demonstrated how one method could interactively complement the other (Bowen, 2009).

All interviews were conducted in English. Spanish was relegated to pleasantries at the beginning and the end of the interview.

3.6 Data Collection Procedures

Procedures for this inquiry followed the University of Pittsburgh IRB protocol. First, I contacted five UTRGV faculty and administrative members involved in the bilingual model's institutional development strategies. I found their names with the help of a colleague who works at UTRGV and information from the university website. I exchanged an average of three emails with the participants explaining the nature of the study and asking them questions about the university to determine if these participants were available to talk about the bilingual model of the university.

I uploaded the pre-recorded audio files and then transcribed the recordings using Office 365. When transcriptions were complete, I verified them carefully by reading them in full while listening to the interviews to ensure that written transcripts matched the data in the video files (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). I created “clean copies” of the transcripts by removing the repeated words and catchphrases that might interfere with the analysis process. Both documents are available in a folder on my personal computer. The files do not contain any reference to the individuals I have interviewed.

This research focused on what Stake (2000) refers to as an intrinsic case study within the case study framework. This methodology is unique since

It is undertaken because...the researcher wants a better understanding of this particular case. [I]t is not undertaken primarily because the case represents other cases or because it illustrates a particular trait or problem, but because, in all its particularity and ordinariness, the case itself is of interest. (p. 437)

Again, while generalizability is not the goal of this research, this study informs and educates other universities' administrators and policymakers regarding the viability of bilingual higher education programs. To this end, Stake (2000) believes that case study methodology can be utilized to translate experiences from one situation to the next. However, his main concern is if the researcher spends too much time trying to apply the case to other situations, "their attention is drawn away from features important for understanding the case itself" (p. 439).

3.7 Data Analysis

Thematic analysis is the process of interpreting the data by identifying patterns and themes within the data (Evans & Lewis, 2018). I began reading and re-reading the interview transcripts, constantly reminding myself to consider the overarching research questions. To identify recurring themes, I used a Rainbow Spreadsheet. According to Sharon (2013), a Rainbow Spreadsheet consists of a spreadsheet document on which researchers can record behavioral patterns presented by research participants. A Rainbow Spreadsheet, which takes its name from the assorted colors used to represent the study's participants, is a spreadsheet with which all the data collected during a study is centrally and simultaneously documented (Cabrera-Mieles, 2019; Wu, 2019). Each participant was assigned a color and a label (P1, P2 & P3, which stand for participants 1 to 3). If

a participant manifested one of the identified themes, the participants' cell is filled with the participant's assigned color. The visual representation of observations helped the researcher quickly understand what is important (Wu, 2019). Research questions guided my thinking about the data and what to consider to be worthy of a theme. Braun and Clarke (2006) maintained that a theme should highlight an important word, sentence, or idea about the data related to the research questions and represent some pattern within the dataset. According to Braun & Clarke (2006), in qualitative analysis, the importance or significance of a theme is reflected in the extent to which it “speaks to” one’s theoretical stance or research questions.

The themes were identified using R-based Qualitative Data Analysis software, also known as RQDA. Each interview was converted to a Microsoft Word document using Notepad. The Notepad interviews were uploaded to RQDA. Using RQDA, the themes for Interview One were identified, then for Interview Two and finally for Interview Three. The themes were color-coded within each interview using RQDA. The color-coded interviews were then exported to HTML and copied and pasted into a table in a Microsoft Word document. The themes were then added to an Excel sheet and coded by color for each interview. Participant One was coded in yellow, Participant Two in blue, and Participant Three in red. Color coding the theme by participant allowed for a visual of the themes that emerged for each interview question and all interviews combined. The themes with one color became the outliers, or the least common themes that emerged within each interview. R-Console was used to count the number of times the themes appeared in all interviews. To capture the frequency number, *Summary Codings ()* command was written in the R-Console. The numbers were then added to an Excel sheet and displayed using Pivot tables.

I organized and analyzed the findings drawn from the document analysis and the semi-structured interviews in three subset essays: (1) Dimensions of Bilingualism at UTRGV, (2). Sociolinguistic Context Analysis, and (3) Challenges and Parameters of Success.

The first essay, “Dimensions of Bilingualism at UTRGV,” presents a descriptive analysis of the institution's dimensions of bilingualism, ROAD MAPPING (Dafouz & Smit, 2014). Using an adapted version, I investigated the Roles of the Spanish language in the institution: (RO), Academic Disciplines (AD), (language) Management (M), Agents (A), Practices and Processes (PP), and Internationalization (I). The first essay responds to the first research question: What are the characteristics of the bilingual education model of this institution? This essay is based predominantly on document analysis and explains how these six dimensions have shaped this unique model of bilingual university and the projection to future expansion.

The second essay, “Sociolinguistic Context Analysis,” draws from the document analysis, supported by interviews, and the literature review to analyze the sociolinguistic context of UTRGV. Geographical location, socio-historical contexts, demographics, and linguistic trauma have shaped the bilingual model of UTRGV and always affect the institution's policies and viability.

Finally, the third essay, “Challenges and Parameters of Success,” involves the second and third questions of this case study about challenges and parameters of success. This essay draws primarily by analyzing the themes captured by the semi-structured interviews with the help of the document analysis.

The goal of these three essays is to move beyond traditional accountability metrics and provide more comprehensive insight into the value of the bilingual model of this university and to tie these findings to the broader operational viability of this university and its students’ success.

4.0 Findings

4.1 Introduction

The essays in this chapter respond to the research questions focusing on (1) dimensions of bilingualism in the instruction, (2) sociolinguistic context analysis, and (3) reported challenges and parameters of success.

The policy document analysis, supported by interview transcripts, revealed 31 dominant themes about the issues of bilingual university goals, implementations, and consequences. I divided these themes according to the three research questions. (See Appendix F). They show distinctive preferences, priorities, success, and challenges all grouped, analyzed, and explained in three essays.

Before beginning in-depth data analysis, the need to visit the historical context of the institution became clear. One of the recurrent themes in the data was the solid foundation of the bilingual initiative.

4.1.1 History of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, UTRGV

The Texas Legislature created the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) in 2013 after merging the University of Texas at Brownsville/Texas Southmost College and the University of Texas-Pan American (LaCoste-Caputo, & Adler, 2013). The merger proposal was initially approved on December 6, 2012, by the Board of Regents of The University of Texas System. This expansion provided educational opportunities in the Rio Grande Valley, including a

new School of Medicine. It made the Permanent Public University Fund, a \$17.5-billion fund historically built on oil and gas (Tyx, 2017) that supports the University of Texas System and other institutions, available to the people of the region.

On August 31, 2015, the University officially opened. In the inaugural speech, U.T. System Chancellor McRaven said that this University's creation would change Texas a hundred years from now. This merger was widely supported and celebrated by the educational and private sectors. For example, UTRGV received a donation of \$15 million from the CEO of Bert Ogden Auto Group. This endowment is considered the largest in the history of higher education in this region (Reyes, 2015).

From the moment UTRGV was founded – and even previously, when there were two different universities, the University of Texas at Brownsville/Texas Southmost College and the University of Texas-Pan American – bilingual initiatives were always present. One of the themes from the interviews was the *strong foundations* that allowed introducing Spanish as a means of classroom instruction, which has become a dynamic and multi-faceted process.

...before we became UTRGV, at the legacy institutions, this work was happening already, it was happening a little differently in UTB, and it was happening a little differently in UTPA. But the goals were similar, and we were just approaching it a little differently. So, when we came together, that became much more powerful, because now we're one University with this type of goals in mind. [Participant 3, 25448:26162]

We've had medical Spanish for quite a while. In fact, even before we became officially bilingual, on the health side of university, it's been one of the strong areas of the University even before we had the College of Medicine. [Participant 1, 23933:25110]

At the onset of the merger between UTB and UTPA, a group of faculty and university deans from both institutions volunteered to create a Center to foster bilingualism through partnerships with public schools' dual-language programs, community organizations, and leaders in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas (Weimer, Esquierdo, & Guajardo, 2014). This group's vision to create a bilingual university comes from the appreciation and commitment to bilingualism that surfaced from their firsthand experiences and family and community environments.

We said: let's dream as big as we can dream and really say, OK, well, we want to be the first bilingual university in the United States of being Spanish English, right? ...But if we want to become that, how do we become that? And so, then that's how kind of this was born. And so, we've had, we've been fortunate to have a rock-solid foundation. [Participant 2, 16851:17269]

UTRGV has six campuses and off-campus research and teaching sites throughout the Rio Grande Valley, including in Boca Chica Beach, Brownsville (formerly The University of Texas at Brownsville campus), Edinburg (formerly The University of Texas-Pan American campus), Harlingen, McAllen, Port Isabel, Rio Grande City, and South Padre Island. UTRGV, a comprehensive academic institution, enrolled its first class in the fall of 2015, and the School of Medicine welcomed its first class in the summer of 2016 (UTRGV www.utrgv.edu).

4.1.2 Academic Accreditation

Due to the complexities of the merging process, in 2016 UTRGV went through a 12-month probation period imposed by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on

Colleges (SACSCOC). This probation was lifted in December 2017 after successfully addressing the Statewide Single Audit for F.Y. 2017 conducted by the Texas State Auditor's Office. The University is now fully accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

The School of Medicine received accreditation from the Liaison Committee on Medical Education in October 2016 (Accreditation Updates, UTRGV, 2021). In May 2016, the UTRGV School of Medicine received accreditation from the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) to offer a medical residency program in psychiatry. See Figure 8, UTRGV Accreditation Milestones (UTRGV. www.utrgv.edu).

4.2 Essay 1: Dimensions of Bilingualism at UTRGV

4.2.1 Introduction

The introduction of the Spanish language at the UTRGV exhibits, in this instance, a change in public higher education linguistic policy in a southernmost public university. This unique and innovative model cannot be examined from a limited perspective. As previously noted, I used Dafouz and Smit's (2020) ROAD-MAPPING framework to analyze how the bilingual model is playing out in this institution.

The ROAD-MAPPING framework has allowed this research to identify this bilingual university's diverse and complex model by drawing from policy document analysis and supporting the data with interviews. The findings revealed that UTRGV's model of bilingual education is a Dual-Language Model, not only to serve as a Transitional Model to facilitate or accommodate

English learners, but rather reaching for high levels of proficiency in both languages. In this context, proficiency is not limited to oral proficiency but also to bicultural and biliterate proficiency.

The six dimensions of the UTRGV bilingual model discussed in this chapter break down the different dimension of the implementation of this Dual-Language model. The dimensions are Roles of Spanish, (R.O.), Academic Disciplines (A.D.), Management (M), Agents (A), Policies and Practices (P.P.) and Internationalization and Globalization (I.G.) while highlighting the challenges, concerns, and opportunities for success shared across contexts.

4.2.2 Roles of Spanish Dimension RO

The first dimension, *Roles of Spanish (RO)*, examines the functional breadth of Spanish in relation to the complete linguistic repertoire of UTRGV. It applies to the Spanish implementation as the medium of instruction (SMI). The findings reflect a paradigm shift on the RO dimension: Spanish was traditionally considered the 'mother tongue', associated with lower-income wage earners and working-class members of society, relegated to private and less-valued domains or family situations only (Achugar and Pessoa, 2009; Galindo, 1991; Hidalgo, 1988)) to recognize the need to introduce the Spanish language in pedagogical contexts.

Language in the strategic plan highlights the roles of Spanish to include linguistic functionality, regional socio-cultural heritage, an academic tool, a community service vehicle, and an identity marker.

Establishing UTRGV as a bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate University enhances opportunities for student success, builds upon the cultural and linguistic strategic

advantages of the region, and cultivates leadership manifest in culturally and historically respectful ways. By building curricula and programming that reflect these strategic advantages, UTRGV embraces the historical and cultural heritage of the region it serves. (*Becoming a B3 Institution: Bilingual, Bicultural & Biliterate*, 2021)

One goal of the University's strategic plan is the commitment to becoming a bilingual and bicultural University (www.utrgv.edu/en-us). However, the website and all the university documents examined in this study are all in English. This choice contrasts with websites from bilingual universities in Canada or Europe in two or three languages to give prospective students and parents the option to switch languages.¹⁷

Furthermore, the role of Spanish is not reflected in the institutional policies. There is no reference to language policies in any of the documents studied. The B3 institute, which is the organization responsible to advance the bilingual initiative, is the only place where the Dual-Language model of the institution is noticeably stated and operationalized.

Establishing UTRGV as a bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate University enhances opportunities for student success, builds upon the cultural and linguistic strategic advantages of the region, and cultivates leadership manifest in culturally and historically respectful ways. By building curricula and programming that reflect these strategic advantages, UTRGV embraces the historical and cultural heritage of the region it serves. (*Becoming a B3 Institution: Bilingual, Bicultural & Biliterate*, 2021)

¹⁷ According to the website, The Translation and Interpreting Office, is working to translate UTRGV materials such as the official university website, faculty research, and documentation.

The following section breaks down the first dimension, Roles of Spanish (R.O.), into the individual factors in the language usage at UTRGV. This first dimension, (R.O.) is presented in a larger section than the other five dimensions because the aim of this study was to understand how the Spanish language interrelates with all the aspects of the UTRGV's community.

4.2.2.1 Relevant Factors for Roles of Spanish

Based on the ROAD-MAPPING framework, and adjusting it to our case study, Table 6 presents four factors and functions (societal, institutional, pedagogical, and communicational) connected to the research site, including additional examples for the role of the Spanish language in the university setting. For a complete account, see Dafouz and Smit (2017).

Societal: This section involves the function of Spanish in the areas surrounding the university. The unique social environment of the Rio Grande Valley is critical for the development of the bilingual model at UTRGV. According to the ethnic enrollment report for Fall 2020, 90.5 percent of the students identify as Hispanic (Institutional Summary, 2020). Spanish is the language that most of the population in the Rio Grande Valley speak at home, and 92.5 percent of the students are from the area (Bussert-Webb, Yanez, & Díaz, 2017). The metropolitan area surrounding the Rio Grande Valley comprises rural, mainly agricultural communities known as "colonias." These communities are generally bilingual in Spanish and English, often mixing into variations called TexSpanish, depending on demographics and context (Anderson, Carlson, & Mejías, 2002).

One theme that emerged from the interviews was the positive *community perception* that the use of Spanish in university events, such as the cultural activities promoted by the University,

brings an element of comfort and validation to the families. Interviewees mentioned how family support is one of the positive aspects and incentives to encourage the University's bilingual model.

And a lot of the parents, for example, when they walk up with the kids and speak Spanish, feel comfortable having somebody there that can speak with them in Spanish, and then the cultural element is also especially important. I think that's something that's going to be a plus. [Participant 1, 4136:4454]

That was a wonderful thing, and it was really nice to see that it was overall embraced by the community. I mean, there's been nobody that I've seen, that had been openly opposed. Not! [Participant 1, 29783:29978]

The institution's vision statement includes a reference to the word "catalyst," which also appears in other documents such as the strategic plan and several articles published through the website in relation to community service initiatives. The vision statement reads:

To be one of the nation's leaders in higher education, its premier Hispanic-Serving Institution, and a highly engaged bilingual university, with exceptional educational, research, and creative opportunities that serve as catalysts for transformation in the Rio Grande Valley and beyond.

Interviewees expanded on the meaning of the word "catalyst," not only concerning the RGV community but also as a model for other higher education institutions to follow; bilingualism at a college level would catalyze to dissolve fear and distrust for people who do not speak one's language. It would be an agent of positive change.

... there's this fear of, what are they saying? What are they thinking? How do they... It's a fear, but when you understand what it is to be a little different. It just makes a world of a difference of how our society could really be. So, I hope that this type of university could be a model for others. Suppose we were to have these universities across the country that are practicing these culturally relevant pedagogies and value what our students bring to the classroom. In that case, I think it would be very powerful for our country. [24701:25306]

The population of the Rio Grande Valley is 1,315,420 people (about the population of New Hampshire), of which 93.79 percent are Latino/Hispanic (U.S. Census, 2021). The 2017 United States Census American Community Survey corroborated previous studies on language maintenance attitudes. It revealed that people in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of South Texas prefer to speak Spanish to communicate in all aspects of life, including business, government, and home (U.S. Census, 2019). Due to immigration issues, government statistics are often underreported (Anderson, Carlson, & Mejías, 2002), therefore, the percentage of Spanish speaking population could be higher.

Another example of the R.O. in the Rio Grande Valley's society is the partnership with the local school district. UTRGV created the P-16 Outreach and Testing Services office dedicated to supporting students, educators, and the community to prepare students to success in the transition to higher education settings.

B3 institute, the organism in charge of the bilingual initiative at UTRGV, works through the P-16 outreach office to improve and make dual-language programs in K-12 more academically rigorous. P-16 works to develop college-going culture in the Rio Grande Valley. In one of the legacy institutions, "the Center for Bilingual Studies were doing that Pre-K through 16th-grade.

[That was] kind of that preparation of the pipeline and dual language and bilingual education to get us where we are right now” [Participant 2].

Institutional: As Table 6 indicates, the second factor examined in this the Role of Spanish is the institutional level. In analyzing the vision and mission statements, it becomes apparent that the bilingual emphasis of the university is not clearly stated on the mission statement:

To transform the Rio Grande Valley, the Americas, and the world through an innovative and accessible educational environment that promotes student success, research, creative works, health and well-being, community engagement, sustainable development, and commercialization of university discoveries. (www.utrgv.edu/en-us).

On the mission statement there is no reference to the Spanish language, and all the statements are solely in English. However, the vision statement presents the university as a “highly engaged bilingual university”. The role of Spanish within the institution appears complex and fluid as I explored further. According to the vision statement:

To be one of the nation's leaders in higher education, its premier Hispanic-Serving Institution, and a highly engaged bilingual university, with exceptional educational, research, and creative opportunities that serve as catalysts for transformation in the Rio Grande Valley and beyond. (www.utrgv.edu/en-us).

UTRGV was founded as a new HSI. Acknowledging that a bilingual university is different from an HSI, and bilingualism is only one indicator of servingness, not the defining factor (G.A. Garcia, personal communication, December 2021), the founders saw an opportunity to create a “more intentional” “Latina/o-enhancing” institution by serving students through culturally

relevant pedagogies. The innovative aspect of UTRGV was the inception of the B3 institute to deliver coursework in Spanish or bilingually (De la Trinidad, Guajardo, Kranz, & Guajardo, 2017).

In the strategic plan, bilingualism is only vaguely referenced. From the six core values, only the second one, Diversity, Access, and Inclusion, alludes to bilingualism in its goal to "cultivate and enhance the diverse, multicultural, and linguistic assets of our university and the Rio Grande Valley" while "promoting access, inclusion, and lifelong learning." The word "linguistic" infers Spanish by default, but it is not by any means explicit.

Additionally, none of the five core initiatives – student success, educational opportunities, research impacting The Rio Grande Valley & beyond, health and medical education, and community engagement – incorporate bilingual proposals whatsoever. Finally, when moving into “Other Key Areas of Focus” in the strategic plan, the B3 institute appears as the program in charge of advancing the bilingual initiative.

The B3 institute is the one that wields the baton in the University's bilingual efforts. B3 stands for Bilingual, Bicultural, and Biliterate. This institute was founded in 2016 with the following goal:

The B3 Institute works to fulfill the mission of UTRGV as a bilingual university and a leading Hispanic-Serving Institution by pursuing the following goals: (1) building Spanish and bilingual coursework, (2) incentivizing research and publishing, and (3) engaging the community to promote the development of the bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate university. (www.utrgv.edu/en-us).

Its vision statement is to establish and promote partnerships with schools and communities through thoughtful, culturally sustaining interactions. UTRGV's B3 institute also states that their work is in response to a growing bilingual and biliterate population in the Valley. The B3 Institute engages all Colleges in course development. It works strategically with the Center for Bilingual Studies (CBS), the Center for Mexican American Studies (CMAS), and the Translation and Interpreting Office (T&iO) to pursue UTRGV's mission, vision, and core priorities.

The Center for Bilingual Studies promotes interdisciplinary collaboration from faculty across all colleges on research and other learning initiatives concerning the bilingual community in the region. The Center for Mexican American Studies focuses on historical and contemporary research and other community-based learning initiatives related to the Mexican community.

Finally, the Translation and Interpreting Office works to translate UTRGV materials, such as the official university website, faculty research, and documentation. The office also provides public events interpreting services.

One of the factors that appear to have played a role in the creation of the bilingual initiative after the merger was the HSI label. The acronym HSI is mentioned in several documents, including the university vision statement, strategic plan and the B3 goal. In the Division of Academic Affairs, there is a Hispanic Serving College of Education Special Interest Research Group Initiative, begun in Spring 2017, designed to support faculty efforts to explore aspects of the overarching question: What does it mean to be an HSCOE and how do we make this term meaningful for post-secondary education and teacher preparation?

According to De la Trinidad, Guajardo, Kranz, and Guajardo (2017), UTRGV was founded as a new HSI. The founders saw an opportunity to create a "more intentional" "Latina/o-enhancing" institution by serving students through culturally relevant pedagogies. The innovative aspect of

UTRGV was the inception of the B3 institute to deliver coursework in Spanish or bilingually (De la Trinidad, Guajardo, Kranz, & Guajardo, 2017). According to Garcia (2017), the HSI designation is fluid and malleable and can mean different things from campus to campus. Additionally, institutions must begin to engage in conversations that cover what the HSI designation means to them, in all its complexities (Garcia, 2017).

With that thought in mind, one of the interviewees stated:

A lot of the conversation started with what it really means to be a Hispanic-Serving Institution, HSI? Is it just really the percentage of students that we have attending our university? What does it really mean to be an HSI? [Participant 2, 11955:12205]

Before the merger of the two legacy universities, some instructors allowed students to turn in assignments in Spanish or speak in their native languages if needed. After UTRGV opened its doors and founded the B3 institute, “it then became official policy and is even encouraged.” P1.¹⁸ This interviewee added, "There is more structure, so if you do want to offer your class bilingually, you can, and this could be in any discipline across the university" [Participant 3, 1534:1891].

The B3 institute is also in charge of evaluating and approving new bilingual or Spanish courses. B3 assists faculty with issues, such as culturally relevant curriculum development, document translations, or pedagogical practices.

¹⁸ Contrary to that comment about “official policy”, I examined all the documents mentioned on Table. 3-5, and there is no trace of a language policy in the institution.

B3 overseas and keeps track of it. We have a system in place where if you're going to teach in either one of these fashions, you have to be filtered through B3. There is a process by which we have to make sure folks are credentialed appropriately to be able to teach the courses. We do have a process for that, and we do that, but ultimately, it's up to the department [to decide] what they want to do, if they wanted to offer it bilingually or in Spanish. [Participant 2, 11955:12210]

If you want to offer the class bilingually, there's a process. You inform the B3 office, and then they designate your class with an X at the end of the class number. So, students are aware that when they enroll in that class, it is going to be taught bilingually. And that was again adding that structure. [Participant 2, 11955:12210]

There are no specific disciplines that have more Spanish or bilingual courses than others. Some instructors introduced Spanish in their courses before the university policies officially encouraged them to do so. All classes were in English, but depending on their comfort level and students' needs, some instructors allowed class discussions in Spanish. Some allowed students to turn in assignments in Spanish if they preferred. After the University officially became bilingual, those courses were publicly designated as bilingual.

There are courses across campus. I know the math department has offered bilingual classes. Both Astronomy 1401 and 1402, for instance, those two courses are bilingual, and so far, the classes have been filling, so it's been really a positive experience. [Participant 1, 26973:27246]

Understandably, courses that prepare bilingual education teachers, translation specialists, Spanish literature majors, and Mexican American Studies have a solid Spanish component. Another example is the teacher certification curriculum program that the College of Education and P-16¹⁹ Integrations offers. This rigorous program produces teacher leaders for the Rio Grande Valley and beyond (UTRGV, 2021). While all students take core courses, the program features three specializations. Each student decides the area of concentration: Dual Language Education, ESL, or Educational Leadership. The Dual Language Specialization coursework is in Spanish and concentrates on dual-language Spanish/English settings.

The ESL Specialization coursework is in English and prepares ESL teachers to gain a strong understanding of bilingualism across PreK-12 settings. The Educational Leadership Specialization coursework is in English and focuses on building expertise about emergent bilinguals among campus and district administrators.

A growing number of classes is offered in Spanish or Bilingual format every semester. There is also a bilingual Spanish/English program for healthcare professionals.

We definitely do have medical Spanish. We've had that for quite a while. In fact, even before we became officially bilingual. In the health side of university, it's been one of the strong areas of the University even before we had the College of Medicine. [Participant 1, 23933:25110]

In 2015 The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley School of Medicine welcomed its first 42 medical residents in six hospital-based training programs. By Fall 2021, there were over 200

¹⁹ The P-16 Outreach and Testing Services office is dedicated to supporting students, educators and the community with access to rigorous academic programs, relevant professional development, and a state-of-the-art testing environment (UTRGV, 2021).

medical students and the same number of residents. The health department also includes a nursing program and a pre-medicine program.

That was one of the reasons why they moved the College of Medicine down to the Valley because we had a really strong pre-medicine program. It was a bit frustrating for our students back then because if they did pre-medicine here, they had to go upstate to study medicine. After all, we didn't have it. [Participant 1, 23933:25110]

These programs that include Spanish are already there, and definitely, they're being encouraged, especially for those who want to serve in their professions here in the Valley. Having Spanish is a definite plus. [Participant 1, 23933:25110]

As the School of Medicine grows, the B3 institute is aware of the possibilities to expand and provide medical students with skills to communicate with Spanish-speaking patients and families in clinic and community settings.

The Spanish for bilingual health professions program could be even bigger, and we could definitely grow that program into nursing in medical school. Our medical school is very new as well as our university. Our hope is to be able to grow in every aspect as a university to be able to offer this as an experience for everybody, if they choose to take it, right? [Participant 2, 28128:28619]

The process of certifying a course migrating to Spanish or bilingual instruction guarantees the same rigor as a course delivered in English.

Administration, business, emails, website, and communications within the University are all conducted in English; however, there are always Spanish-speaking faculty and staff available.

Pedagogical (language as a learning aim and assessment criterion). This section presents the findings on the role of Spanish (RO) in the classroom for faculty, staff, and students. The B3 institute offers all Spanish classes, from beginning through conversation, to faculty and staff who desire to advance their linguistic skills. Moreover, for students who need help in writing, there are support systems to improve students' language and writing skills in both English and Spanish. Biliteracy is different from bilingualism, but this issue is often misconstrued. At the top of the B3 concerns, there is a determination to advance the bilingual initiative balanced in both languages. Good biliteracy is vital in the same ways as good literacy.

Because some people think that biliteracy is something that [it's given when you speak Spanish] Of course, you're going to be biliterate if you're bilingual! or bicultural. It's like, if you're bilingual, how can you not be biliterate? Some people don't understand that some folks really aren't. Maybe they have more limited knowledge or a more limited ability to read entirely in two languages. [Participant 2, 6275:7696]

In addition to daily pedagogical concerns, instructors consistently noted the critical aspect of ensuring that all the materials are bilingual. The syllabus, calendars, lecture slides, class notes, and assessment tools are to be provided in Spanish and English. The interviewees emphasized that professors need to present a clear structure about class materials and assessments to reassure the students.

Exams are twice the work because you've got to prepare the English version and Spanish version and check the consistency between the two versions. You can't make an exam different or, you know, even the skill assessed. They have to be the same exams. So, it does

add a lot more work. But I think the increase in effectiveness in teaching is definitely worthwhile. [Participant 1, 9240:9647]

Instructors expressed that accommodating students' linguistic abilities creates opportunities for success that were not possible before.

You get amazing results, especially in writing. When I taught the course that I typically teach bilingually, I noticed that when I would give a student the option, you can write in English or write in Spanish. I never had one student who was... then I could tell that most of his schooling was Spanish. Uh, he had, like maybe high school and at the University in English, so he would still try to write in English. And so, then I pulled him aside and told him: Why don't you give me your following paper in Spanish? I just encourage you to do it in Spanish. Let me read your Spanish writing. And when I read his papers in Spanish, I was like, wow! It went from like a C paper to an A paper. [Participant 3, 19239:19955]

Students enrolled in bilingual classes present various levels of proficiency in one language or the other. Therefore, there is a demand for flexibility on the part of instructors.

Communicational. This section presents the RO in communication practices at UTRGV and the codes used, Spanish/English or translingual. The model is a Dual-Language model relying on the notion of translanguaging. For instance, students chat in English and Spanish throughout campus, and they continue speaking in that fashion as they enter and settle in class. Class discussions are in the speakers' language of choice, and readings, handouts, and assessment

materials are available in both languages. One of the interviewees whose class is bilingual shared that the format is very flexible.

What I have done with a few students, even though you need to be patient, is to encourage them, I have encouraged them, and some of them actually stayed on. I think it's been a plus, especially here in the Valley where there are many bilingual people, and it's kind of a bilingual culture, just off the bat. And so, what I have done is I've gone for the bilingual classes about 50/50 percent, 50 percent English, 50 percent Spanish. [Participant 1, 5838:6264]

Using translanguaging in class settings indicates that a paradigm shift may be occurring in the way we think about language teaching and language use. The B3 institute assists faculty in translating materials, providing bilingual methodologies, and training them on using culturally relevant pedagogies.

Regular communication in leadership is a critical factor for the development and sustainability of the bilingual initiative. B3 shows considerable advocacy efforts by working closely with faculty and staff members who are committed and enthusiastic to ensure that the right people in positions of leadership attend the meetings in each department. Promoting open communications is essential for advancing bilingual programs and supporting the B3 institute and its initiatives.

We try to plant advocates in each college, so when they're in their own department meetings or college meetings, they bring up these issues of the B3 initiative, and that's been, you know, some work as well that it takes. Everything has to have a purpose, right? So, when

they're in faculty Senate meetings, you know, do we have some advocates that are faculty senators that they can also be bringing it up, reminding the university community of these initiatives. [Participant 3, 16769:17238]

As to the B3 mission and vision, what resonated with UTRGV's interviewees was that the B3 institute was created with the idea of capitalizing on students' language abilities. Language learning, as well as talented emerging bilingual students, do not receive enough recognition from society. Before the merger, some professors experimented with introducing bilingual elements in their classes and used their student's abilities. These initiatives were always discussed with the students once the class was running. If a student asked to speak in Spanish, these professors allowed it. In other instances, professors suggested that students presented assignments in Spanish if they wanted to. However, one interviewee added that these efforts were “unofficial” and contingent on everyone’s agreement. "If anybody had said, English only! I would have had no choice; I would have had to go that route because we were The Texas University" [Participant 1, 12779:13249]

Nonetheless, as mentioned in the previous segment, not all heritage speakers (students, faculty, and staff) are the same. Some students come from high school dual English/Spanish programs and bring the seal of biliteracy²⁰ in their diplomas, while other students know Spanish from home and social interactions. The strategic plan focuses on creating a bilingual infrastructure

²⁰ The Seal of Biliteracy is an award that recognizes students who demonstrate proficiency in both English and a world language. The seal of biliteracy is affixed to their high school diploma or transcript (Davin & Heineke, 2017).

that involves developing programming options that will assist students, faculty, and staff in growing their Spanish linguistic abilities.

And the other thing is the linguistic ability continues to develop. It's one thing to be bilingual, and there are so many diverse levels of bilingualism, and that would be a totally different discussion. And I want us to value all of them. We validate all of them because some people like, well, your Spanish is what? We call it Butcher, right? So, it's like a local language, which is looked down upon, but then that's a starting point to develop. Even that's how people communicate here, and it's just like social language than any other group uses, every group has, so it's like English have social languages, right? [Participant 3, 12257:12900]

The Spanish-language and bilingual courses give students the ability to expand their Spanish linguistic skills and grow their academic registers in both Spanish and English. These skills will have a positive impact on their marketability once they have graduated.

Students can identify classes delivered bilingually in Spanish with a code system. The designation process is as follows: "You inform the B3 office, and then they designate your class with an X at the end of the class number. If the class is offered in Spanish, the code is E, for *Español*" [Participant 3, 2172:2480]. That way, students are aware of the course format when they enroll. These codes add to the structure of communication.

4.2.3 Academic Disciplines (AD)

Academic Disciplines. The overreaching strategic planning goals show an agreement with the premise that the role of language in higher education is of enormous relevance at UTRGV. Developing different teaching and learning genres, curricular design, and assessment methods used in the academic settings (Dafouz, 2018, p. 175) in Spanish courses or bilingual ones, seems to be a fluid process at UTRGV.

...a student of biology, or a student of engineering, or a student of nursing, or a philosophy major. Look at how much more you could achieve if you were able to make your career in two languages. Imagine how much more you would know. [Participant 3, 20552:20952]

In addition, the B3 institute is tasked with assisting and supporting the development of Spanish-language and bilingual courses by working with faculty members who demonstrate an interest in teaching such courses or who are proficient in the Spanish-language.

...because nothing is enforced, right? So, right now, it's... if you feel like it.

We would like to spread it, right? We want more classes offered that way; that's what we're working on too. And having faculty feel confident that, even if you want to speak in English only, but if you understand enough Spanish and allow the students to do so, that's one step, right? You can kind of get one step, take steps closer to offering it this way. [Participant 3, 20552:20952]

According to the strategic plan, the number of bilingual or Spanish-language classes, and the number of students taking those classes, has increased. Several programs are currently working on getting certified as dual-language programs.

We are growing. We have, like, 90 sections. I think this semester (Fall 2021), we have like 92 bilingual English/Spanish sections. We definitely have more bilingual sections than we do in Spanish. P.2

So far, our department has asked me to continue with the bilingual, so they're happy with that, and hopefully, we will get some of the faculty coming on board as well in our department and throughout campus. So, right now, it's not that we're offering all classes in English, Spanish or bilingual mode. No, that's the ideal. [Participant 1, 10311:10639]

One of the sub-goals of the B3 institute is to increase research and scholarship opportunities on bilingualism, biculturalism, and biliteracy for faculty and students. As an HSI, UTRGV is placed in a privileged position to access grants, create and support professional development programs, and advance linguistic and communication skills. For instance, on September 2021 the National Science Foundation awarded UTRGV a five-year, \$3 million grant for research focused on enhancing the success of undergraduate Hispanic students in STEM disciplines. Therefore, a strong emphasis on supporting and promoting research brings enormous opportunities for students, and for investigators to identify and dismantle deficit-thinking policies, and practices and one-size-fits-all pedagogies that continue to marginalize Latinx students from STEM fields (utrgv.newsroom, 2022).

Based on Howard, Sugarman, Christian, Lindholm-Leary, & Rogers, (2007), one of the guiding principles for Dual-language education is to build on existing knowledge to incorporate new knowledge and skill sets (utrgv.strategicplan). Therefore, instead of separating language learning programs, language and content teaching must be addressed holistically and integrated (Dafouz & Smit, 2020). At UTRGV, registering to take a core class in Spanish or bilingually is a personal choice for students. Every class is offered in English, and students are not required to take any Spanish or bilingual courses.

...all [classes are] in English. So, we are not enforcing that by any means, manner, or form. But we have found the students are incredibly positive. We got a very positive reception, and the classes are filling up, meaning, students are enthusiastic about that approach. The program, the content is exactly the same that those in the English classes.

For faculty, switching the class to be bilingual or in Spanish is also a choice pending B3 approval.

It's all on a volunteer basis right now. So, if you know that this is an option and feel you would like to take on this challenge to teach the philosophy course in Spanish or bilingually. Because it's on a volunteer basis, we haven't had that resistance yet. [Participant 1, 18416:18900]

According to the B3 strategic plan, the number of students enrolled in E-(Español) & X (Bilingual) courses has increased from 6,125 UG, and 389 GR in 2017-2018 to 6,750 UG, and 450 GR in 2020-2021. However, the number of academic programs approved by the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee to offer Dual Language Certificates remains at one. Still, at least a dozen

other academic programs have expressed interest in pursuing a DLC designation, and the B3 Institute is actively working with them toward acquiring this status.

We offer classes that are bilingual. We offer classes that are in Spanish outside of the normal department that handles classes, and we offer our foreign languages. So, for example, college algebra in Spanish, and we offer intro to philosophy in Spanish, and we offer biology in Spanish. We offer engineering in Spanish or bilingual. [Participant 1, 10083:11607]

There are also bachelors, masters, and doctoral programs in education that specialize in Bilingual Studies. These programs require proficiency in Spanish. They are designed to prepare knowledgeable and skilled bilingual and ESL/EFL educators, supervisors, administrators, and curriculum developers to serve as leaders in bilingual and ESL education. The emphasis is on understanding the value of bilingualism and biliteracy and appreciating other languages and cultures. The program emphasizes research in bilingualism, biliteracy, curriculum development of ESL and dual-language programs, and teaching for social justice in linguistically and culturally diverse communities. The undergraduate bilingual degree is conferred by the College of Education in conjunction with P-16 Integration. (UTRGV, 2021).

4.2.4 Agents Dimension (A)

Agents are those who “take part in the planning, implementation, and assessment of language policies in higher education institutions” (Dafouz & Smit, 2016, p. 406). At UTRGV,

many teachers, administrators, and collective entities serve as agents of change. The document analysis centralizes the actors responsible for implementing and promoting the bilingual initiative in the B3 institute.

The B3 institute works closely with community leaders, education professionals, and advocates to challenge the status quo and serve as promoters of social justice, embracing diversity in its broadest definition. The specific role of the B3's faculty and staff is to serve as institutional agents in accomplishing three main goals to utilize and expand the linguistic abilities of Hispanic heritage speakers — (1) to help faculty develop coursework to be taught bilingually or in Spanish that is relevant and appropriate, (2) to encourage research and scholarships that promote bilingualism and biculturalism, and (3) to engage the community in the institute's mission.

The B3 Institute, Division of Academic Affairs at UTRGV “facilitates the process through which the university becomes a bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate institution.” The structure of the B3 consists of three branches that work strategically to pursue UTRGV's mission, vision, and core priorities. The three units include the Center for Bilingual Studies (CBS), the Center for Mexican American Studies (CMAS), and the Translation and Interpreting Office (T&iO). Each center has a director, assistant director, program coordinator, two graduate assistants, and four or five affiliated faculty and translators.

On the B3 Action Plan, students are identified as the most prominent agents of the growth of bilingual education initiatives. The first student organization is The Bilingual Education Student Organization (BESO), created in 1990. BESO's mission is to advocate bilingualism and biculturalism throughout the Rio Grande Valley's communities and schools. The second student association, The Graduate Association of Bilingual Educators (GABE), shares the same mission and also advocates “to expand the bilingual paradigms by connecting individual ideas and values,

and to provide an avenue for graduate students to expand their knowledge” (UTRGV Student Organizations GABE, 2021)

It is not clear the number of faculty who speak Spanish. A survey is currently under way. The university policy encourages professors to offer Spanish or bilingual classes if they feel comfortable doing so. The B3 institute encourages faculty and staff to participate in more courses/programs and see this as an opportunity to continue adding to their linguistic skills that enhance their job and responsibilities to the students and community (UTRGV, 2021).

In summary, students are the primary beneficiaries of the bilingual initiative. They also serve as agents in creating bridges with the community for the preservation of their culture and language. Their dedication and the dedication of the B3 leaders and faculty members have been an important facilitating factor for UTRGV to realize its mission.

4.2.5 (Language) Management Dimension (M)

UTRGV's official policy on the bilingual initiative includes a set of guiding principles that drew heavily on UTB 2.0. The bilingual program was principle number five (Blue Tyx, 2017). After the State of Texas passed legislation to create the new University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, the U.T. System Board of Regents declared a set of principles to guide the establishment of the UTRGV. Among the principles, Regents called on the new University to explore biculturalism, bilingualism, and biliteracy as part of its new fabric. The B3 Institute was created to respond to this principle articulated by the Board of Regents.

Considering the makeup of all the Regents appointed by very conservative governors, B3 institute's founders in charge of creating and implementing the bilingual model moved quickly in

transferring those principles to the newly merged University. As seen in the previous section, language policy in bilingual university settings can be complex, not to mention highly charged. However, it is worth noting that there are no reports of underlying tensions between the official policy of the institution and enacted practice.

In institutional vision and mission statements, terms such as "transformative" and "Hispanic-Serving Institutions" reflect and seemingly point toward bilingual educational policies, yet those policies are not stipulated. The terms "language," "Spanish," and "bilingual" do not appear in the document. While the UTRGV2020 vision contains no direct statements on how language should be addressed at the University, leaving it primarily up to agents, many have interpreted bilingualism as the path forward.

The Language Management (L.M.) dimension examines the influence of agents in explicit or implicit language policies at a range of levels (Dafouz & Smit, 2016, p. 406). B3 institute plays an integral part in assisting instructors in developing curricula and giving approval to offer a course bilingually or in Spanish. Still, the responsibility for its implementation lies in each department. There is not an official language policy at UTRGV; therefore, among the governing administration (i.e., president, provost, deans, etc.) there does not seem to be any hierarchy that influences or enhances B3's initiatives and efforts. Once a department decides to offer a class bilingually or in Spanish, B3 faculty reviews the petitions and determine if and when the class can be offered.

There is a process by which they/we have to make sure folks are credentialed appropriately to be able to teach the courses, and so we do have a process for that, and so we do that, but ultimately, it's up to the department what they want to do. [Participant 2, 11955:12210]

We offer classes in education, bilingual, and in Spanish. What do we do with those courses, and how do we develop them? Who will teach them? [Enrollment] Can we do it? Can we not? So, those kinds of everyday decisions have to be made by the department. [Participant 2, 10083:11607]

The interviewees reported that there are no national policies to guide bilingual universities in the U.S. Therefore, they looked for models in Canada and Puerto Rico when the initiative emerged. They found that the model used in Puerto Rico at Ana G. Mendez University was not applicable because this university is ” “for profit” and because Spanish is the official language of the island. They also looked at the University of Ottawa, the largest and oldest (150-year-old) bilingual university in North America and in a bilingual zone, as a model of public policy. The University of Ottawa's commitment to bilingual education reads:

The enabling legislation of the University of Ottawa bestows upon the institution the mandate to foster the development of bilingualism and biculturalism and preserve and develop French culture in Ontario. Therefore, all our services are provided in both French and English, and all our official communications are conducted in both official languages or are provided in the recipient's language of choice (*Policies and Regulations.*, 2021).

Some faculty members traveled to Canada to get “inspiration” and learn how to enact these bilingual policies into practice. One of the interviewees added:

A team of faculty went to Ottawa, which is in Canada, and they're one of the Bilingual universities that we're trying to model after. [Did it help?] Uh, yes and no. In a way, it becomes its own thing when you start implementing in your own area. [Participant 3]

The B3 institute publishes yearly upgraded objectives, goals, and metrics to facilitate the process of becoming a bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate university. See the strategic plan in Appendix B (Additional Figures). UTRGV is creating a unique bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate education model and hopes to become the road map for other bilingual initiatives to develop around the county.

4.2.6 Practices and Processes Dimension (PP)

In this section, I examine the teaching and learning activities that construct this innovative model. These practices and processes reveal "the localized process of developing a shared repertoire appropriate to the academic and social-communicative purposes" of the UTRGV bilingual model (Dafouz & Smit, 2016, p. 407).

One of the objectives of this case study is to present the strategies and practices to ascertain the viability of this kind of bilingual higher education institution in the U.S. Specifically, this case study focuses on the processes and practices of UTRGV focusing on the community partnerships, community engagement programs, and the sociolinguistic context of the Borderlands. The interviewees' explanation of strategies and practices did not focus on national policies because none exist; instead, they underlined effective programs that serve their students and communities well. This realization can add to the depth of understanding of how to best serve Hispanic heritage speaker students.

4.2.6.1 Linguistic Abilities

Spanish as a medium of instruction takes many forms at UTRGV. They range from classes offered in Spanish to bilingual courses. Bilingual implementation, which does not emphasize

language skills, seems to be left to the discretion and autonomy of faculty members. Both types of Spanish-only or bilingual classes function as practices and processes in the UTRGV model. Those students transitioning to bilingualism, such as bilingual education majors, experience rigorous Spanish programs that enhance their language ability, culture, and literacy. According to their linguistic abilities, those who take content classes bilingually use both languages, English and Spanish.

...all the evaluations would be done in both languages; all the classes will be done in both languages; all the assignments will be done in both languages. In doing that, the kids that feel more comfortable in English [will be at ease.] [Participant 1, 6451:6838]

Some faculty often report utilizing translanguaging, or a natural switching between the first language (L1) and second language (L2) during instruction, in alignment with the guidelines from the B3 institute's action plan: "By respecting everyone's language of choice, we contribute to seamless communication between UTRGV and community members." [Participant 3]

Some of your lectures, may be in Spanish or delivered bilingually and respecting the whole idea of translanguaging, tapping into our students' linguistic repertoire, things like that. [Participant 3]

Teachers tend not to be critical of the level of Spanish or the variations that are proper to the Borderlands, often seen as not good Spanish or "TexSpanish." One faculty member said: [As a bilingual instructor] I develop their Spanish while also continuing to validate their English because sometimes our students feel very insecure about speaking English. You know because their native language is Spanish. [Participant 3, 12927:13606]

Regardless of the strategies, UTRGV is adopting a student-centered approach because, as one interviewee said, "we are here for the people that we serve" [Participant 1, 4339:4447].

4.2.6.2 Community Engagement (Service)

The needs-based strategy in community service and outreach is highlighted by interviewees and aligned with best practice community engagement in higher education strategies (Jacob et al., 2015). This strategy reflects the close relationship between UTRGV and the community of the Borderlands. Moreover, document analysis reveals the length and breadth of the meaningful and collaborative research activities, sustainability enterprises, and local social issues.

UTRGV is engaged in networks, organizations, and communities on shared interest and problem solving collectively. These exchanges involve essential issues for the community, such as [K-12] bilingual education (Weimer, Esquierdo, & Guajardo, 2014).

Interviewees also repeatedly expressed their strong commitment to serve the community, inferring not just to the community within the university campuses, but the community of the Borderlands at large.

We're a university; we're a community. The first group of people that we serve is our community, and so, as much as we love to have students from all over the nation, and we'd love for them to come and study with us... Especially, I'm having this dynamic that you really can't find at other universities, and there are international students, [we do have them]. But really, our focus is the community that we serve directly. [Participant 2, 5147:5579]

Unity. And so, I think the University has done an excellent job organically working with the community. Not just going and talking to the community, not just going, and giving speeches, but actually working with the community and understanding how they react, how they feel, why they feel that way. [Participant 3, 14860:15183]

Also, it is notable that UTRGV appears at the forefront of bilingual education research. Its outstanding performance is the product of years of deliberate practice and coaching. One example of innovative research in linguistics is the project Corpus Bilingüe del Valle (CoBiVa). This is a comprehensive digital documentation, description, and analysis of sociolinguistic interviews aiming to foster respect and appreciation of local language varieties of the border region of Rio Grande Valley.

4.2.7 Internationalization and Globalization Dimension (IG)

Internationalization & Globalization, perhaps to an even greater extent, pull all the other dimensions together in a combination of local and regional. The surge of Globalization has blurred the preference for one “standard” nation-state linguistic identity in favor of more pluralist ideologies (de Jong, 2013). At UTRGV, globalization is a conscious commitment, reflected in the mission statement and confirmed through action "to infuse global and comparative perspectives throughout the teaching, research, and service missions of the university" (*Mission & Vision*, n.d.).

For our society as you know, we're becoming way more global, and I know we tried to deny that, but we are becoming very global, and it is so critical that not only we're able that we should all be... I think every American should be bilingual, like from the beginning. That should

be a given, at least bilingual like other countries, at least bilingual or if not multilingual.
[Participant 3]

In contrast with the regional and community-oriented goals that interviewees highlighted, the strategic plan (a live document that is updated every six months) contains a considerable number of terms related to internationalization and globalization in its Guiding Principles. From its title “Transforming Our World” (University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, 2017a), the strategic plan emphasizes the role of UTRGV as a bridge with Latin America. For example, the document includes phrases such as “help solve local, state, national and global problems,” “become a global leader in higher education,” “improve the quality of life for the region, the state, the nation, and our world,” and, ultimately the end goal to serve as the “Gateway to the Americas.”

Given the geographic locations of UTRGV, being able to function in both languages adds value in international contexts personally and professionally. The proximity to Mexico permits many students from Mexico and other Central or South American countries to find UTRGV a fitting choice for their higher education goals. According to the university Facts, in Fall 2021, there were 674 international students, 461, or 68 percent, are from Mexico and South America. One interviewee noted:

We've definitely attracted students from Mexico. We do have students that literally live in Mexico, and they cross the border every day to come to class literally. And so, and for them taking classes in Spanish, I'm sure it's a plus. It gives a bit of breathing room as they adapt to the other classes, most of which would be in English. I think it's been an incentive to attract students, and yes, we do have students coming from Mexico.

If you're coming from Venezuela, Colombia, Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, to name a few, we would be an obvious option, and it will probably be a bit smoother for them [students] to come with Spanish already built into the University. [Participant 1]

Pursuing a bilingual higher education gives students a broader view of the world, aside from all the opportunities of studying abroad. The Office of Global Engagement reinforces global competences as vital for individuals to thrive in a rapidly changing world. There are long- and short-term programs available in Spanish-speaking countries such as Spain, El Salvador, and Mexico. Other programs available before 2020 are expected to restart in 2022.

So, if you want to be an engineer, you could be a bilingual engineer that you could go to Spain, and you feel better. You could go to Mexico. You could have those conversations in the native language of those countries and...and be able to produce those types of...of professionals. [Participant 2, 2426:2711]

Students have a richer experience when they can effectively communicate, and a positive experience could lead to a more permanent change and even professional mobility.

In summary, influenced by the prevailing internationalization, global and political, marketing, and educational trends, and given the closeness to the border with Mexico, UTRGV placed internationalization as the fourth function of the institution, in addition to talent training, scientific research, and social service. Surely, these trends have dramatically influenced UTRGV's policies. Moreover, the geographic location along the border positions the university with strategic value in international contexts.

4.3 Essay 2: Sociolinguistic Context Analysis

4.3.1 Introduction

This essay is an essential part in the presentation of my findings and focuses on the sociolinguistic context of the Borderlands between the state of Texas and Mexico, where the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley is located. According to Wolfram (2021), language is one of the most influential symbols of social behavior. Sociolinguistics is the strand of language study that concentrates on the role of language in a society or community (Wolfram, 2021).

The rationale for this framing resulted from the fact that this theme frequently appeared during the interviews and document analysis. The high Hispanic population and the closeness to the border with Mexico are determinant factors in incorporating bilingual English/Spanish pedagogies at the University. Therefore, the sociolinguistic lens sheds light on how people manage and use their language with their cultural backgrounds, interactions, and goals.

Sociolinguistics encompasses a wide range of social interactions, and it can be complex and subtle. For instance, sociolinguists might investigate language variations, language innuendos, historical changes, or language structures. Similarly, it might focus on the language attitudes among large populations on a domestic level, such as those exhibited in the U.S. concerning the English-only amendment²¹ (Wolfram, 2021). Themes such as language and nationalism, language and ethnicity, and language and gender have corresponded with the current rise of related issues in society at large. Emerging studies are interested in applying their findings to the broad range of

²¹ The legislative proposal to make English the 'official' language of the U.S. (Wolfram, 2021).

social, political, and educational problems that probably gave rise to the appearance of sociolinguistic themes in the first place.

Gaining an understanding of the values and viewpoints of the Borderland community helps explain the behaviors and social attitudes of its members towards English and Spanish and how it affects the incorporation of the bilingual model of this University and its viability moving forward. Such understanding offered a unique opportunity to bring together theory, description, and application in this case study.

4.3.2 Rio Grande Valley's Location and Demographics

The Valley, as it is locally known, is a socio-cultural region spanning the floodplain of El Rio Grande, which forms a national border between Texas and the United States (Vignes & Odintz, 2015). The 2012 U.S. Census estimated 1,055,214 (89 percent) of the Rio Grande Valley demographics is Hispanic. An estimated 78.05 percent of the population in the Rio Grande Valley chooses to speak primarily Spanish in their homes (U.S. Census Bureau). Additionally, the region is further characterized by recurrent interaction between newly arrived immigrants, and individuals who have lived in the community for decades (Zentella, 2013), who frequently travel between Mexico and the United States. Some interviewees shared that the bilingual nature of the region itself is so prevalent that promoting bilingual instruction was the natural way to go.

There are other states that are bordered with Mexico, but we have a very privileged kind of existence, if you will, of simultaneously living in kind of two worlds, two communities, two languages all the time” [Participant 2, 21944:22328]

We have Mexico literally a block away. We're right on the border and we do get many Mexican students coming in, and so it just makes sense to, you know, go that route... So, in fact, we have a lot of families here in our region that half the family lives in US. and the other half lives a block away in Mexico, and they're currently crossing the bridge back and forth. [Participant 1, 599:840]

UTRGV geographic location is extremally significant and places it in a unique position to convene the cultures of its community, foster an appreciation of the distinctive heritage of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, and encourage the development and application of bilingual abilities in its students.

4.3.3 Linguistic Trauma

Using LangCrit as the lens for my inquiry helped me appreciate not only the ways in which the community of Rio Grande Valley has experienced racism or has been racialized, but I further believe this lens is a necessary reflection of the social discourses, ideologies, and inspirations that drive the bilingual initiative of UTRGV.

Indigenous peoples occupied this territory until it was overrun by the Spanish Empire and, eventually, the United States. In the interim, there were also claims to the land involving Mexico, the Republic of Texas, and the United States (Lozano, 2018; Menchaca, 2011). This territory has undoubtedly been under duress for centuries.

After the Mexican-American War in 1848, Mexican-Americans in the Valley lost most of their property and fell victim to racism and violence (Richardson & Pisani, 2017). Speaking Spanish was discouraged and punished (Christoffersen, 2019; Hurtado & Rodríguez, 1989).

Queer Chicana theorist Gloria Anzaldúa, a Valley native, calls "linguistic terrorism" the frequent discrimination and delegitimization against Spanish border speakers denied the rightfulness of their native tongue (Christoffersen, 2019; Tyx, 2017).

The findings of this inquiry suggest the creation of UTRGV's bilingual initiative, which is nested in a broader framework (e.g., language policy, bilingual education, HSI research) that includes meanings associated with personal value, legitimization, and social justice, "subject-as-heard" as well as the "subject-as-seen" (Cumins, 2014), and these meanings influence how the community positions itself through language.

One of the far-reaching goals of UTRGV is "to produce bilingual professionals that are in high demand along the Texas-Mexico border and to begin a process of reparation of the historical legacy of centuries of language racialization" (B3 Institute UTRGV). Remarkably, the words "bilingual" and "bilingualism" are not listed as a "core priority" in the strategic plan. A separate section called "Other Key Areas of Focus" is where these objectives are listed.

Anzaldúa's linguistic terrorism theory may be informed by her experience as a student in one of the legacy institutions, the Pan American College, from 1965 through 1968. In her frequently anthologized chapter "How to Tame a Wild Tongue," Anzaldúa bravely recounts the discrimination and aggression the borderland community endured for speaking Spanish, including required speech classes to get rid of their accents (Cole & Johnson, 2013). Her work is cited by some founders of UTRGV's initiative. (See Weimer, Esquiedo, & Guajardo, 2014).

A theme that emerged from the interviews was how sociohistorical and political factors had shaped perceptions of borderland people's identity. One interviewee described having an encounter with someone who had an English name but spelled it with Spanish phonetics, perhaps

to respond to the need to blend in with an Anglo-speaking society. This interviewee also shared a similar personal experience.

The ecosocial perspective of LangCrit helped me to appreciate how the focus should be on individuals and their local linguistic practices instead of the popular language policy and bilingual education scholarship that places the emphasis on the languages themselves instead of the people. One of the interviewees explained how local people's names are written or pronounced in English, revealing a deeper intention of acceptance and avoidance of discrimination:

My name is (English name), right? And my parents were from here, and my grandparents are from here. And it was my mom's intent, my parents' intent, to give us English names to help us hopefully escape some of the discrimination, right? So, it's a quite common approach, but that also tells us there, [about] the eagerness to try to fit in, right? [Participant 3]

This historical context is prevalent in the consciousness of the faculty and administrators who responded to the interviews. Our discussion highlighted the institutional biases Mexican American students faced at the border.

A LangCrit framework helped me understand that the agents in charge of advancing the bilingual initiative at UTRGV are not only challenging fixed assumptions related to language policy in higher education, but identity, race, and historical trauma:

There is a lot of linguistic trauma, historical trauma, and so I really feel that part of the drive of the University is to heal that. It's to help people and families come to terms with all that trauma that's happened for being Latino for being Spanish speaking even in an area like ours that's, you know, on in by the border; it's still very prevalent. [Participant 3, 3985:4548]

I think every American should be bilingual, like from the beginning, that should be a given at least bilingual like other countries, at least bilingual or if not multilingual. And not only just for language skills, but for the “affective” part, so that we can become much more accepting of others that are different and different in many different areas. I really feel that when you're bilingual, bicultural biliterate, it opens up your understanding and your acceptance of people that they may be different than you. [Participant 3, 23981:24700]

UTRGV seems to be infused with an identity question about becoming a bilingual and bicultural institution. One of the primary motivators is to correct the historic travesty of oppression and racism reflected in the suppression of the Spanish language. "We want to make things right for our children, their families, and communities. We want to nurture and participate in an environment that values a child's native language, whatever that language may be" (Weimer, Esquierdo, & Guajardo, 2014, p. 21).

Anzaldúa's words empower, motivate, and become the basis for the LangCrit analysis. LangCrit recognizes that defending border languages (Spanish, English, Tex-Mex) that was their heritage (Cole & Johnson, 2013), plays a role in shaping identity possibilities, in setting the tone for becoming a bilingual institution.

4.3.4 Value of Spanish

According to one of the documents analyzed, *UTRGV Transforming Our World Strategic Plan Action Planning Template for Institutional Goals* (2020), students' stories of transformation exemplify how Spanish-language and bilingual courses have given students the ability to expand their Spanish linguistic skills and grow their academic registers in Spanish and English. A student enrolled in a Spanish Biology course stated in an evaluation form:

"I'm glad I took this class because I need to improve my Spanish proficiency. Because of this course, I've been able to communicate more with my grandmother, who only speaks Spanish."

For a student in a Spanish History course quoted on the Plan Action for Institutional Goals, it has been a way to go back to their roots and find validation for their heritage:

This course helped me understand things about my community history that I did not know. That happened because I conducted oral histories with Hispanic elders who only spoke Spanish. I'm happy I had a chance to listen to those stories."(utrgv.B3planof action).

Pride was also a recurring theme that emerged from the interviews. Becoming a bilingual university and recognizing the linguistic capital of the community has become a point of self-worth. One of the interviewees said, "A point of pride, a point of pride. This is who we are. This is our flag" [Participant 2, 28858:28936].

Now it wasn't just something that you know, many encouraged, or something that someone feels more enthusiastic about or some less. Now, it's a university mission goal. [Participant 1, 14996:15159]

For minoritized groups, there's a quite different concept of what or how they value bilingualism for people out in society. [Participant 3, 28858:28936]

This community is unique in that there is an acceptance of both spoken English and Spanish in daily life. One interviewee shared how media portrays Spanish speaking people as creating a language barrier and a rift which is not at all true, especially in this area. Interviewees acknowledge that it is not difficult to introduce bilingualism because it is so widely accepted.

I think that you think of the Borderlands and the border specifically. Many people who don't live here believe and see what is on the news and what is maybe in movies, and that's our perception, what it's like to live down here. Uh, and what the reality of this is that this community in the Borderlands is quite different when you're here, right? It's not like you see it in in the movies or... and then, especially, I really speak to the negative connotations of what it might be. It's very much the opposite of that, and I know you know, and I think that's true of any really bilingual community. [Participant 2, 21164:21815]

Another added value was the functionality of bilingual education. Participating in more bilingual courses and programs and producing bilingual professionals was perceived as having a *positive impact* on their marketability once they have graduated. Some interviewees were specific as to the professions that would benefit the most from bilingual professionals, for instance the medical professions and any profession that requires a direct interaction with the community.

These are some quotes that reflect this sentiment about being a bilingual professional and having a better understanding and interaction with the community:

Then become you know, an accountant, or an engineer that can professionally function very highly in both English and Spanish, not just linguistically, but professionally in two languages. [Participant 3, 5358:5841]

Actually, you know that they can function in two languages, and any other crew that they may take that they have the option (people under their supervision). So, our long-term goal is that any student who enrolls at the university can opt to take everything in Spanish, right? [Participant 3, 5358:5841]

And so, I hope that one of our goals with this, at least definitely as a faculty member for me, is that they leave valuing their biculturalism, their biliteracy, in a very personal and professional way, but more so, personally. [Participant 3, 7809:8069]

4.3.5 Culturally Relevant Pedagogies

The mission statement of UTRGV is enormous, "to transform the Rio Grande Valley, the Americas, and the world" by promoting access, student success, research, and the commercialization of discoveries. The vision statement stresses a commitment to be a highly engaged bilingual university and a national Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI) leader.

In the mission and vision statements of UTRGV, the words "creativity," "inclusion," and "community" appear the most times to describe the University's values. However, in the interviews, all three participants used the phrase "culturally relevant" to describe the type of education UTRGV offers. The culturally relevant label emphasizes creating a learning environment that perpetuates and strengthens Hispanic culture, language, values, and traditions.

...there has been a slight shift towards being more relevant culturally in our local region; towards embracing a bit more the Hispanic culture and seeing how we can get that into the classrooms, to communicate more effectively with our students". [Participant 1, 25712:26006]

These professors were trained for culturally relevant pedagogy, so this shows my foot in biculturalism. So, there are ways that they [professors] can explain that right now. [Participant 3, 6654:6936]

Being culturally relevant means that there will be a much stronger connection with our community, with the students. That'll gear you more for success. So, in our case of being culturally relevant actually means largely, you know, going towards Hispanic culture, by going that we have gotten you to know, a lot of students who identify more with the courses enrolling in, we're getting a bit more communication with the community, which is it's valuable because that's what we serve. [Participant 1, 36212:36717]

To fulfill the role of being a bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate institution, in addition to setting up bilingual and Spanish classes, UTRGV is establishing an accessible educational

environment. This requires that "we cultivate and enhance the diverse, multicultural, and linguistic assets of our university and the Rio Grande Valley." UTRGV also promotes access, inclusion, and lifelong learning to ensure that all university community members have opportunities to succeed.

In conclusion, UTRGV has played a significant role in providing easy access, affordability, and, more importantly, culturally relevant post-secondary education, including academic, vocational, and lifelong learning programs to the Rio Grande Valley community. The sociolinguistic context of UTRGV provides perspective of this uniquely valuable laboratory to expand bilingual higher education because of its location, demographic makeup, historical trauma, and migration patterns.

4.4 Essay 3: Challenges & Parameters of Success

4.4.1 Introduction

Essay 3 synthesizes the themes that answer research questions (2), how does this bilingual education institution identify its challenges? And (3), how does this bilingual education institution identify its parameters of success? Data analysis from the documents and interviews reveal that the parameters of success outnumber the challenges they face.

This essay also covers the analysis process, which provided insights on the central question of this dissertation: How is this University planning to remain viable

4.4.2 Challenges

The initiative to transform UTRGV into a bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate University has been relatively easy to start given the passionate commitment of the people who created this bold undertaking. As a legacy institution, it was founded with this goal in mind. The findings suggest that the main challenges the bilingual initiative has encountered are related to time, resistance, fear, internal logistics and organization, COVID-19, and patience.

4.4.2.1 Time

Interviewees point out the difficulty of keeping the initiative at the top of the list. Often, other concerns, such as compliance and budget, take precedence. However, it is notable how the faculty and staff members always manage to keep optimistic. The challenges they face are often related to not achieving their goals at a fast enough pace.

Things are getting better. In our meetings, we talk about how you can change, especially at the university. It takes a while, especially in academia. It takes a while to make a change; you know it does not happen overnight. It's just years of investing. [Participant 3, 15625:16203]

4.4.2.2 Resistance

Interviewees expressed that one of the difficulties is the perception that English is more relevant than Spanish because people from the Valley believe that not being proficient in English represents a significant barrier to participating in the social, economic, and political spheres. Interviewees said that they encourage faculty and students to recognize that the Spanish language is a right, not a problem (Ruiz, 1984).

That is one of the challenges that we have in particular, here in America with bilingual education, especially for minoritized groups.

We shouldn't necessarily have trouble because I think if you ask anyone, they'll agree that being bilingual is great. But if you ask them, should Latino Spanish-speaking students be educated in Spanish? Their response typically would be: No, they need English, right? [Participant 3, 8483:8899]

4.4.2.3 Fear

Some students feel fearful of participating in a bilingual class because they consider their Spanish proficiency to be defective and insufficient. If they had not attended a Dual Bilingual Program in high school, Spanish would have probably been relegated to social and family interactions.

I've only had a couple of students that have walked away. They kind of fear that if they go bilingual, they might have more difficulty with the class. I emphasize no, that is not the intention, and that should not be the case, but a few still feel more comfortable going to the English-only version. [Participant 1, 13325:13669]

Unfortunately, *fear* is not a sentiment exclusive to students. Faculty also feel that they might not have the level of Spanish necessary to teach a class in Spanish or bilingually that they have always taught in English.

To teach a class in Spanish, even when you're a native Spanish speaker, doesn't always come easy. It's still a challenge within because of the resources and terminology and things like that. So, it's all on a volunteer basis right now. [Interview 3, 18416:18900]

Not all faculty speak Spanish. After the merge, the announcement that the university would become bilingual led to concerns that English-only speakers' jobs would be in jeopardy. Interviewees stated that that is not the case. Everyone is aware that this process will take many years to come to fruition. However, bilingualism is encouraged in new job offerings.

We have increased [the bilingual courses at the university,] and we're going in that direction. We have included that element [being bilingual in search for new faculty, not as a strict requirement, but a definite plus. Everybody is on board with that idea, that thought. So, it'll take time, but we are shifting. We are shifting. [Participant 1, 26122:26552]

Another fear that faculty expresses is the amount of work necessary to teach in Spanish or bilingually. It is challenging to find suitable textbooks, articles, and materials in a bilingual format. Frequently, publishers provide syllabus, PowerPoints, lectures, activities, and testing already included with the particular program. When changing the language delivery, faculty need to translate everything. The amount of work involved is one of the main reasons faculty are hesitant to make the switch.

If you decide to go Spanish, you have to create and translate your materials into Spanish. Some of our faculty kind of shy away from that extra load. [Participant 1, 9240:9647]

They have to redo everything there. They have to redo their canvas or their blackboard. They have to rethink if the book works or they need to get another book...Completely flipping it, and you're doing it in another language. And although the problem isn't the

language, the problem... is or not the problem, but the added level of difficulty is you have to prepare all those materials. [Participant 2, 12211:13562]

B3 institute responds to these challenges by providing support. One of the objectives of the B3 institute is to increase the Spanish language fluency of faculty and staff. B3 institute is always available to help any faculty member who manifests a desire to teach their class in Spanish or bilingually. They do so by facilitating "professional development opportunities for faculty every semester to teach in Spanish, bilingually (Spanish/English) and through culturally relevant methods."

These policies are not enforced, yet faculty are encouraged to introduce bilingual elements in their lectures gradually. For instance, if they understand Spanish well but do not feel confident enough to teach the class, they might allow students to participate in Spanish.

It is optional if you feel you would like to take on this challenge to teach the philosophy course in Spanish or bilingually. Because it's a volunteer basis, we haven't had that resistance yet. [Participant 3, 18416:18900]

The bilingual initiative helps faculty and students overcome their fear by remaining visible within the campus and the community, stating clear goals, and offering support.

4.4.2.4 Internal Logistics

The execution and control process are complex enough, and sometimes internal changes in command disrupt the program implementation.

...for instance, there's a change in the president, a change in the provost, a change in the dean, a change in the department chair, and that changes the dynamic positively or negatively. [Participant 3, 16385:16769]

The coping mechanism to face this challenge is to keep communication open and always make the B3 initiatives visible. "Planting" advocates in all departments is a strategy that is working. Interviewees said that "some of the faculty are coming on board as well in our department and all throughout campus" [Participant 1, 10311:10639]

4.4.2.5 COVID-19

COVID-19's impact on colleges and universities is multifaceted and complex. Whether in applications and admissions, tuition, student loans, or teaching, COVID-19 is making a substantial, and perhaps, lasting impression on colleges and universities. UTRGV was not an exception. Interviewees expressed that the pandemic slowed everything down and prompted programs and practices' reevaluation. As with any other challenge, B3 faculty and staff remain hopeful that changes and adjustments bring new challenges, like adopting and incorporating technology.

Hopefully, now in the fall we will be able to take things up again and be able to do more things that we had envisioned we would have done by now by no fault of anybody. People safety has to come first and educate our students and make sure they have access to everything they need to be successful with online learning. [Participant 2, 19650:19803]

Another challenge the Spanish and bilingual courses face is to balance enrollment. Departments manage class sizes to achieve and maintain the optimum recruitment, retention, and

graduation rates. They also need to assign who teaches those classes and how to develop the courses.

...for example, we offer [courses such as] college algebra, intro to philosophy, biology in Spanish, and we offer engineering and classes in education in Spanish or bilingual. If you have a section, for example, of criminal justice, just an example, a section that normally has 150 students and that section is taught in English, but you want to teach a section bilingually or in Spanish, and maybe that section is going to have 75 students. Well, what would you do as a department: rather have another 150 numbered class? Or would you have 75? [Who will teach the class then?] [Participant 2, 10083:11607]

Logistic discussions such as the previous ones are challenging and happen often. The B3 institute makes sure the instructor is appropriately credentialed to teach the courses, but inventively it is the department's decision to run the course. "Every department functions differently." [Participant 2, 10083:11607]

The B3 institute is responding to these challenges by enhancing communication channels with the colleges, including an informal internal board with representatives of each college. One interviewee added:

...we could have something more formalized that is constantly communicating so they're always on their college agenda to talk about something, report back something, and keep faculty in the loop. [Participant 3, 21161:22093]

B3 faculty hopes that, besides creating better communication with all colleges, this restructuring will retain the faculty that have been committed and involved with the process from the beginning.

We need to provide services at various levels. B3 internal board is considered a university committee; because, you know, as faculty, we're trying to get tenure or promotion.
[Participant 3, 21161:22093]

4.4.2.6 Patience: 'It's not a Sprint, It's a Marathon'

Interviewees reported a growth in the path the university has undertaken. More sections have been added in different colleges over time, except for 2020, in which public four-year universities, in particular, were down 6 percent because of the pandemic (Nietzel, 2021). This phenomenon has not lowered the positive expectations of the people involved in the B3 institute.

I think we are going in the right direction [Participant 1, 28963:29440].

We've had to slow down a little bit ... sometimes you want to do it all at the same time...
[Participant 2, 19927:20183]

Years of investing and putting in, and putting in, and having those little steps: one step forward and three steps back sometimes. [Participant 3, 16205:16360]

The faculty and administrators I interviewed agreed that becoming a B3 institute is a monumental enterprise, and as such, it moves slowly but with steady steps. To move the initiative forward takes time, they said. To gain momentum, hiring the right people, besides supporting, and encouraging faculty to try bilingual pedagogical practices into their classes, is a slow process.

We would like to spread it. We want more classes to be offered that way, and that's what we're working on too. And [also] having faculty feel confident even if you want to speak in English only, but if you understand enough Spanish and allow the students, that's one step. You can get one step and then take steps closer to offering it this way. [Participant 3, 20552:20952]

The consensus in all three interviewees is to remain positive and patient that after a few years, they will be able to gather "enough evidence to show that this [model] works."

Creating a university, merging in the university is not an easy thing, and... It takes some time to get used to the new university. [Participant 2, 17792:18256]

There has been a slow process to become what we would call a B3 university, a bilingual university. [Participant 3, 317:422]

We are in the process of becoming what we are, what our goal is. It's something that you have to be very patient with and something that takes a long time. But we're slowly getting there, and we've done remarkable things to try to get to where we are, but there's still a lot of work to do. [Participant 2, 1890:2216]

A faculty member revealed how passionate and committed they feel about the process to continue to bring this initiative to the next level, which in their words, will be to become the blueprint for other universities to model.

We just want to give people history and an understanding of what it took to get us where we are now, and hopefully where we'll be in a few years as we continue. [26493:26660]

This is groundbreaking, and it shouldn't be right at this point in time because, you know, the Bilingual Education Act happened back in 1968. So, I think we would have made so much more progress by now, but ... it's exciting! It's happening now, though, and I really hope that other universities look to see how they can model something after what we're doing. [Participant 3, 28876:29294]

In summary, the challenges involved in implementing the bilingual model at UTRG are linked to misunderstandings and fear of the unknown. Having clear goals, providing support at various levels, and strengthening open communication and dialogue are crucial to success. B3 faculty and staff certainly recognize the "power" of communication and advocacy and are aware that it takes time to make transformative changes last. "It's a sprint, not a marathon;" "We're in this for the long haul." [Participant 2, 31610:31643]

4.4.3 Parameters of Success

Analyzing the findings related to the parameters of success of this institution is twofold. First, document analysis reveals the data, rankings, awards, and other quantifiable markers for the university's influence on the students and community. Second, the interviews reveal themes, more subjective, about the perceptions of the success of the bilingual model within the university.

4.4.3.1 External Markers

Ranking. UTRGV is the second-largest Hispanic-Serving Institution. Ranking places this university as one of the top four Texas schools and the 86th on the National Universities' list on influence on the community, social mobility, and public service opportunities (Alaniz, 2020).

In addition, UTRGV is one level away from the highest classification of Doctoral Universities – Very High Research Activity (R1), often referred to as Carnegie Tier One. These rankings show a steady growth of the university's reputation.

UTRGV is first among Texas institutions for awarding the most undergraduate and graduate degrees to Hispanics (second and fourth respectively in the nation). First place in the number of doctoral degrees among Hispanics in the country, and first place for the institution's performance of first-generation Hispanic students nationally (HACU, 2021).

Nationally, according to the Washington Monthly Rankings report, UTRGV classifies in second place on Pell grants and third in the South for Best Bang for the Buck²² (Alaniz, 2020).

Accessibility and affordability were two of the themes that emanated from the interviews as a parameter of success.

[... it's important] for us, I would say, to be accessible and affordable. You want students to be able to have access, especially in our community, right? [Participant 2, 4981:5145]
They can easily come [to this university]. It is accessible for their needs, affordable, and getting a high-quality higher education experience. [Participant 2, 5587:5807]

The new rankings hold significant value for the university, especially considering COVID-19 and the challenges facing the UTRGV community.

²² Best Bang for the Buck ranks universities according to how they help students affordably attain marketable degrees. There are more than 200 universities on the list for the South (*Washington Monthly's 2021 College Guide and Rankings*, 2021).

4.4.3.2 Student Achievement

Student success represents one of the core priorities in UTRGV's mission. As one of the largest Hispanic-Serving Institutions in the United States, UTRGV is uniquely positioned to create models of higher education that best serve Hispanic students.

Degree completion: Many students also come from bilingual or Spanish-speaking households and lower-income families. Approximately 62 percent of undergraduate students are Pell-eligible. From 2016 to 2020, the One-year Persistence Rate (Fall to Fall) has increased from 80 percent to 81 percent, and the four-year graduation rate, from 19 percent in 2016 to 24 percent in 2020 (IPEDS Graduation Rate Survey). It is not clear from the document analysis that the bilingual model has directly impacted persistence and retention rates. Still, faculty and staff believe that this is one of the goals they are striving to accomplish, showing positive results.

[A parameter of success is] would be to achieve is that we provide an environment in which a student if they would like to track through these classes that we are creating and ultimately, completing and achieving their degrees in a kind of a timely fashion; that they're learning what they need to know for their degrees in such a manner that takes them to be successful. [Participant 2, 3767:3949]

[They can] have a traditional degree, as they would anywhere else. They can have an option to take some of their coursework in Spanish, and I believe there's, I think it's 15- or 18-hours upper division of their major. [Participant 3, 5842:6056]

After one year of completion, the graduate employment rate is 79 percent for undergraduates and 91 percent for graduate students. Interviewees reported that professionals who stay in the area are at an advantage if they are bilingual, given the sociolinguistic context of the Valley. I could not find any data supporting that claim. Research on the benefits of bilingual alumni in the job market could be an excellent resource to advocate for expanding the UTRGV bilingual initiative. A quick search on Salary.com found that jobs with pay differentials based on bilingualism usually pay 5 to 20 percent more (*Bilingual Salary Rates*, 2021).

And so, these programs that include Spanish are definitely already there. They're being encouraged, especially for those who want to serve in their professions here in the Valley; having Spanish is a definite plus. We definitely encourage it, and the programs are there, definitely there. [Participant 1, 24794:25109]

I asked whether the diploma would have the Bilingual Seal as it exists on high school diplomas. UTRGV B3 institute's mission is to facilitate becoming a bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate university. Being able to speak Spanish does not necessarily mean one is able to practice one's profession in that language. The answer was:

That's what we're hoping for, that and their degree plan will have it, in their degree and their transcript. It will say that these courses were taken. Right now, they have an "E" so, they're designated so, what the person can do is explain to a company or whoever is hiring them that those courses were delivered in Spanish. [Participant 3, 6308:6653]

Successful Enrollment. Another parameter of success reported by the interviewees was that instructors migrating their classes into bilingual or Spanish delivery classes demonstrate an ability to attract and retain students.

So, one of the things of a measure of success is that we are actually having those kinds of activities. We are opening courses that are bilingual or part of Spanish. We have students in bilingual programs, so those are clear measurements of whether we're succeeding.

[Participant 1, 3554:3840]

4.4.3.3 Opportunities

Interviewees pointed out how the UTRGV bilingual initiative is gaining support from all sectors, including federal support as an HSI; therefore, "we need to show proof of success." This visibility has created new opportunities. For instance, there are initiatives to interact with Mexican universities that might mimic the bilingual model introducing English as means of instruction.

Other opportunities surfaced in the form of grants coming from the different organizations and foundations interested in attracting more Hispanic students into sciences. One of the interviewees explained that the National Science Foundation (NASA) is offering the resources necessary for the obtainment of a STEM degree, and for work force readiness for Hispanic students ("NASA to Award Funds Activating Science for Americas' Learners," 2021). NASA and the aerospace industry's grants are tailored "specifically to promote the Hispanics and other minorities into science." The bilingual component is not explicitly mentioned, but this faculty member speculates that the current climate of promoting Hispanic students in science indicates that "[having Spanish on your application] is definitely a plus, that increases your chances of getting approved and getting more funds."

Moreover, a significant opportunity that will show the university's success is that students will be able to seek bilingual or Spanish internships in other Latin American countries [Participant 2, 27245:27319].

Finally, attracting students from different linguistic backgrounds and allowing them to expand their bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate capital within their departments and programs would be an excellent opportunity to show that this bilingual higher education model works. One of the interviewees expressed that the goal is that this model:

... is not limited to who is already bilingual. This is for everybody. We want it to be an experience in which there is an understanding and a value and raise the importance of Spanish in the United States and the world. A recognition of its value. And so, you can get that regardless of what your background is. [Participant 2, 2915:3283]

4.4.3.4 Community Support Goes Both Ways

This university model would not be possible if it were not for the sociolinguistic context in which it is located. Community support, therefore, emerged as a very salient theme from the interviews. Maintaining and strengthening cooperation *with* the community is vital for the better development of the programs and the community's well-being on many levels.

Unity, right? I think the university has done an excellent job in organically working with the community, not just going, and talking to the community, or giving speeches, but actually working with the community and understanding how they react, how they feel, why they feel that way. [Participant 3, 14860:15183]

[The university aims to] impact our community, and the educational process we have here is for the people we serve. [Participant 2, 4339:4447]

Positive feedback from the community has been encouraging to faculty and staff, who consider it a vital parameter of success. Being "culturally relevant" and proposing "culturally relevant pedagogies" are concepts this university's faculty and staff have at the forefront of their discourse. Responding to the community's needs involves considering the cultural and linguistic history of the Texas-Mexico border. UTRGV shows a sincere commitment to creating an educational system that would strengthen the people of Rio Grande Valley politically, economically, socially, and culturally.

And so, there's already a lot of bicultural components, so I think it's really being welcomed by our students and by the community. [Participant 1, 2378:2517]

The B3 office has been working with faculty on culturally relevant pedagogy because it's one thing to teach it in Spanish and another to be culturally respectful. So, acknowledging that we're bilingual but also presenting the bicultural element. And so, celebrating that because many of our students... Spanish can be very politically charged; Spanish-speaking people, they've been marginalized. [Participant 3, 3496:3984]

The other very important thing is feedback from the community that we serve, and so do we get more effective responses from the family, from the communities in going bilingual. I've gone to several activities and local communities. [Participant 1, 22677:23084]

4.5 Work in Progress

Summarizing what the interviewees argued, the consensus is that the dual model is slowly but steadily expanding with support from the community and most of the constituencies at the university. In addition to the student-centered strategies and practices, UTRGV emphasizes that culturally grounded pedagogies begin with the grassroots support of bilingual education in K-12 institutions. Starting from this groundwork, historical trauma in the community can be minimized. That will be the main proof of their success.

There is a lot of work to be done in that area, and if we can't start until we decide if we want to work with others and try to convince others. But I think if we start with ourselves within our own community, beginning to address this historical trauma, this linguistic trauma... I really see the future as very bright. I think of K12 schools, and if they could implement dual language for all kids, particularly for areas with a lot of Latino native Spanish speakers, it needs to be there. For their academic support, it needs to be there. To help validate [their heritage and language]. But especially within a system that's already built for them, I think that's extremely critical. [Participant 3, 22585:23428]

Increasing the visibility of the B3 initiative, gathering evidence of their successes, and development of an internal board will provide additional support and attract more attention to their current status.

5.0 Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

5.1 Discussion

This chapter presents my concluding remarks on the viability of the first bilingual university in the United States. As part of the conclusion, I offer several recommendations for policy and practice considerations to improve the development of bilingual initiatives in higher education settings. Additionally, the last section of this chapter identifies areas for future research.

5.1.1 Is UTRGV the First?

Bilingual programs in colleges and universities have grown exponentially in the past 20 years in the United States; however, at a glance, there are very few universities that identify bilingualism as an institutional goal.

Throughout this dissertation, I have categorized UTRGV as the first bilingual university in the United States because that label is the one the professors and staff use to refer to their institution. However, it is worth noting that other universities in the country also consider themselves bilingual universities, founded to serve a linguistically diverse population. For instance, Ana G. Mendez University is originally from Puerto Rico with several Florida, Texas, and Maryland campuses. This institution primarily serves unconventional, returning, and older students who use their language skills to earn a college degree that enables them to practice in their bilingual communities. Saint Augustine College in Chicago, is another example of an institution that serves linguistically diverse students to obtain a higher education degree. According to Garcia

(2019), this private college offers a transitional bilingual education program to post-traditional and immigrant students as they learn English, gain self-worth and confidence in their linguistic abilities, and merge into English classes to attain their degree. St. Augustine was founded in 1980 as the first bilingual higher education institution in the Midwest.

Like UTRGV, both institutions focus on recognizing their students' linguistic abilities and encouraging them to see Spanish-English bilingualism as a resource, not a deficit. All three universities were founded on the same transformative framework: to serve the Latino communities. In Garcia's (2019) counterstory about Saint Augustine College, one of the interviewees said: “We believe in the value of education as a transformation tool. We also believe in the value of being bilingual in today's society” (p.80).

However, the two universities mentioned here differ from UTRGV. These two institutions are private universities and have been in operation for several decades, while UTRGV is a large public university, part of the Texas State University System. It has been in operation for under six years. Furthermore, UTRGV does not aim to be a transitional bilingual model. It aspires to become the Dual-Language university model for others to follow.

A most appropriate label for UTRGV would be “in the process of becoming” the first public-bilingual university in the United States may be appropriate in the UTRGV case.

5.1.2 How Institutionalized is UTRGV’s Bilingualism?

The document analysis reveals a thriving, well-founded university with a growing prestige that has understood and assumed the transformative role of the sociocultural and historical environment of the RGV communities. Phrases such as “changing the world,” “catalyst,”

“innovation,” and “purpose” are present in all documents, from the vision and mission statements to the latest 2017 Strategic Plan. However, the specific focus of this study was elusive to the naked eye when browsing the university website. Based on the document analysis and semi-structured interviews, one would think there were two different universities.

This case study aimed to explore and dissect the bilingual university model UTRGV promised to be and to evaluate the strategies that would ratify its viability. Astonishingly, the bilingual initiative was not blatantly portrayed at first glance of the institution's documents. Also, in contrast to the bilingual universities studied for my literature review, the website and all documents are only in English, and there are no Spanish translations available. That led me to believe that this University had possibly abandoned the intention of becoming the first bilingual university in the United States. The general academic policy documents by which the University must abide all appear in English.

The vision statement contains words such as “Hispanic-Serving Institution” and “highly engaged bilingual university,” but none of the Core Priorities explicitly mentions the bilingual aspect of the university. The only reference to language appears on the second core priority, *Diversity, Access, and Inclusion*. It reads: “We cultivate and enhance the diverse, multicultural, and linguistic assets of our university and the Rio Grande Valley,” but the word bilingualism is not explicitly mentioned. Upon exploring the documents further, the body in charge of the bilingual model for the UTRGV to become a bilingual university eventually appears under an unremarkable label: Other Areas of Focus.

The B3 institute documents, such as the mission statement and the detailed layout of the three main initiatives, are at the core of the bilingual initiative examined in this case study. The semi-structured interviews confirmed that this University has indeed been founded with the end

goal of becoming the first bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural University in the United States. As themes from the interviews were coded, it was clear that the B3 institute's goals, strategic plan, and emerging policies appear to be disconnected from the University's institutional policies.

The B3 mission statement includes terms such as "facilitating," "process," and "becoming bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural," which implies approval and recognition of the Spanish language as a means of instruction but are not reinforced by any clear language policies at the institutional level. This acknowledgment is not an official language policy, but it is nevertheless an enormous step forward for this University's long-term goals. With the UTRGV's encouragement, B3 is taking profound strides towards instituting these policies, unlike other higher education institutions in the United States. One can only wonder why the first bilingual University's bilingualism is not clearly stated on the university website. The answer to that question seems evident to me. This University is attempting to change the paradigm in one of the most politically conservative states of the union, Texas, where frequent discrimination and delegitimization against Spanish border speakers has been the norm (Christoffersen, 2019; Tyx, 2017).

We need not look farther than the recent conversation about Critical Race Theory (CRT) in education. CRT has become the umbrella phrase for any perspective, knowledge, or framework that shows the roots of racism and how deeply it is embedded in our society. Texas is one of a few states that have approved legislation regulating how teachers discuss current events and prohibits students from receiving credit for participating in civic activities (McGee, 2021).

It seems, from reading the documents, that this bilingual initiative originated from the lessons learned from centuries of a state historically structured by violent economic and political disenfranchisement and a racially segregated education system (Blanton, 2004); and linguistic

terrorism (Anzaldúa, 1999). However, the end goal is so large that proceeding with caution, assertiveness, and advocacy seems to be the way to advance their agenda without “upsetting the apple cart” and potentially losing what they have accomplished so far. The first step to ensure the viability of this innovative University is to secure its survival.

In the interviews, I asked, “Have you observed any tensions between the bilingual policies of the institution as you understood them and the enacted practice? And if so, could you describe them?” Interviewees responded thoughtfully and cautiously at sharing any pushback from legislators or anyone in university governance. None of them complained whatsoever about lack of support. Instead, they took responsibility for clarifying and communicating their goals more efficiently and creating opportunities for advocacy. The focus seems to be serving the community as well as helping graduates leave the University with a personal and professional appreciation for their bilingualism, biculturalism, and biliteracy. These end goals appear to outweigh the push to fight socio-political struggles.

This University originated as a merger of two institutions. One of the guiding principles from the onset of the merger was foregrounding of the humanities. Continuing what the legacy institutions were already quietly doing, which was introducing bilingualism in their practices, the UTRGV founders saw an opportunity to expand the reach of humanities to bilingualism. One of the interviewees said, “When else do you get the opportunity to try to do this? If we want to do this, let's think as big as we can think.” The merger was, in part, the institutional strategy to make that happen.

That might explain why the bilingual objectives clearly stated on the B3 initiatives contrast with the ambiguity of the overall university goals. This disconnect is likely to be an attempt to shield the University from being attacked and defunded. Let us remember what the political

climate during the 2016 Presidential campaign, when this university was opening its doors was. In my opinion, openly presenting themselves as an upstart bilingual university could have been institutional suicide.

5.1.3 Identities

Bilingual higher education for this University is the natural next step to take, considering the sociolinguistic context of the Valley. For the whole community of UTRGV, a switch in the way they perceived their bilingualism is developing as a result of the bilingual initiative. Based on the language as a resource framework (Ruiz, 1984), the bilingual model at UTRGV has allowed an organic form of re-examining the boundaries around English and Spanish that have been maintained for centuries in the Valley. The power of one language over the other, the value attached, the usage, and the identities resulting from this struggle are examples of these boundaries.

To understand how individuals negotiate their identities, we cannot ignore that fixed categories do exist, problematic as they are. Moreover, because they are problematic, they need to be examined. Through LangCrit's theory, it is possible to capture the full range of identity possibilities, whether imposed, assumed, or negotiated (Crump, 2014).

With LangCrit lenses, I can appreciate that efforts to create and develop the first bilingual university have allowed a safe space of acceptance, appreciation, and pride in its students' language and cultural heritage. The word “bilingual” appears often in a positive context, free from stigma. Interviewees mentioned how “excited” they felt to witness this paradigm change. One of them added, "This is one of the areas that makes our university unique. You can't find this anywhere else in the system" [Texas Universities System].

Likewise, the rhetoric of deficit due to not having the linguistic tools has shifted. For example, the ability to write academic papers in Spanish or English is now evaluated in a more balanced way. Writing well is no longer the consequence of language proficiency but rather a skill that any university student must develop. "Writing is just hard for everyone," whether bilingual or monolingual. The racialized categorization of a linguistically "deficient" student, embedded in institutional and social practices, appears to be in the process of being deconstructed to give way to a healthier, more just identity.

5.1.4 Neoliberal Collusion

There has been much discussion since Petrovic (2005) warned of the perils of adopting the language of the "Conservative Restoration" by justifying pedagogical and language policy on Ruiz's (1984) language as a resource frame. Some scholars argue that these trends put social, historical, and racialized struggles on the back burner and respond to political and economic interests that might be contradictory to social justice causes. These scholars claim that bilingual proficiency has become a profitable commodity to acquiesce to a neoliberal agenda that fits the global education movement. According to Varghese and Park (2010), it is crucial to be mindful of the effects that framing dual-language programs within the global education movement might have on Latino/a students' experiences and opportunities.

More recent publications have gone further, arguing that in the particular case of the "language as a resource" framework on which the UTRGV bilingual model is based, it is worth noting a reverse process of racialization (Mena & García, 2020). In other words, the process of unmarking Spanish produces erroneous recognition as a social and political norm that maintains

the dominance of minority groups. These scholars add that furthering the neoliberal mindset hinders the fight of Spanish speakers against stigmatization in the United States, which must continue to be brought to the forefront (Mena & García, 2020).

Indeed, I consider it appropriate to be mindful of the warnings regarding neoliberal collusion in the context of bilingual programs. However, it is essential not to underestimate the work of bilingual education advocates such as the B3 faculty and their struggle to continue articulating reasons to support and expand access to language opportunities in the university and to keep the bilingual initiative viable. The "language as a resource" framework remains relevant to advocates of bilingual education as one of many sources of justification. It keeps the worth of bilingualism in the public consciousness (McGroarty, 2006). This framework could be a valuable strategy, although it requires constant weighing and adjusting of local sociopolitical and ethical dimensions with policies and practices.

5.1.5 Viability

Given the conditions in which this University operates, it is accurate to state that UTRGV is a viable and growing institution. The following are the reasons why I give such an assessment:

As a public university with multiple campuses throughout the Rio Grande Valley area and as a member of the University of Texas System, its foundation has secured billions in funds as a legacy institution. UTRGV is the recipient of generous private endowments and, having been designated the second-largest Hispanic-Serving Institution in the country, is eligible to receive additional grants funding. These grants are not restricted solely for Hispanics; instead, the funds can be used as another source of financial help to benefit the entire university population.

Moreover, in recent years, UTRGV has managed to meet the criteria established by the Texas state legislature in the National Research University Fund; enrollment grew by 3,905 students (14 percent), research expenditures grew by \$ 89.9 million (170 percent), and graduation rates increased by five percentage points (Office of the President, 2020).

However, the bilingual model of the University appears to be an organism independent of the mother university. As such, its viability will depend on its ability to demonstrate that it is being successful quantitatively.

During the interviews, the participants expressed their faith and confidence in the promising future of the B3 institute. A detailed strategic plan has been developed to achieve its objectives, including long- and short-term goals and clear quantitative metrics to assess the fulfillment of these key initiatives:

- Support the development of coursework and programs that incorporate bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate (henceforth, "B3") initiatives.
- Incentivize research, scholarship, creative work, and performance that address B3 initiatives.
- Engage faculty in community-based initiatives, including pre-K to 12, to build B3 programs and elevate the value and presence of biculturalism, the Spanish language, and bilingualism by nurturing a robust public discourse.

As part of the blueprint for B3, all participants agreed that it is crucial to increase the visibility of B3 not only among the campus population but with the community in general. To increase visibility, they have planned to propose the creation of an internal committee that will

serve as a bridge to all university bodies to promote and advocate for more faculty to continue expanding bilingual classes across all colleges.

Finally, the participants stressed the meaning of improving the quality of the programs offered because the end goal of all their efforts, as one of the interviewees stated: "the most important thing is the student success."

This institution's viability as a bilingual university is linked to the commitment, dedication, and passion for the work of the people who run this initiative. "Passion inspires others to join and identify with our vision." The people interviewed, and the other faculty whose research I read for this study, certainly displayed these attributes and more. As long as they do not lose sight that each student success and each transformative life-changing story they can record has the potential to break the dominant schemes and make this experiment what the interviewees want it to be: the model that other universities follow, starting with the Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and then, who knows? "Being bilingual is worth two! *¡Ser bilingüe vale por dos!*" (Participant 2)

5.2 Recommendations and Future Research

The focus of this dissertation was the viability of this bilingual institution. It involved document analysis and three faculty and staff interviews. Many other essential stakeholders, administrators, and content area experts' voices need to be included for further research.

5.2.1 Students

For students, additional research should focus on students' success and satisfaction. Also, students' perceptions of the efficacy of practices would be fundamental in informing future interventions. In addition, future research could also consider alumni who participated in bilingual instruction and the influence on their professional performance, and how their experiences could benefit and further improve their programs for the students and community service.

5.2.2 Faculty

For faculty, studying their experiences and perspectives, successes, and challenges in direct reference to their involvement with the Spanish of bilingual classes will bring clarity on areas in which B3 institute should grow its support. Furthermore, future research could focus on faculty training in bilingual education and the expectations and experiences from the faculty and different stakeholder groups on campus and in the community.

5.2.3 Community

For the community, I recommend continuous evaluation of community engagement and outreach partnerships programs. The University's involvement in community service is vital, given the significant role of the RGV's community's sociocultural and sociohistorical context.

5.2.4 The Bilingual Program

For the bilingual program itself, appropriate assessment of program quality is crucial to creating development and growth paths. These evaluations should include theoretical exploration of bilingual processes and practices, bilingual teaching model, international comparison of bilingual education higher institutions, curriculum design in bilingual education, teaching materials for bilingual education, and evaluation of bilingual education classroom teaching.

5.2.5 Language Policy

Finally, it would be beneficial for *language policy* to study the internal and external pressures that influence institutional policy decisions. For the viability of this institution, I recommend focusing on the translation of the effectiveness of bilingual education research into policy.

5.3 Conclusion

Undoubtedly, UTRGV has taken on a pioneering challenge to create the first bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural University in the United States. The sociolinguistic context of where this University is located is conducive to both positive and negative implications simultaneously.

One of the factors that positively contributed to the flourishing of this initiative is the demographics of the area. Texas holds the second-largest Spanish-Speaking population in the United States, 11.52 million (2019) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021). The projection is that this

population will exceed 20 million by 2050 (*Projections of the Population of Texas and Counties in Texas by Age, Sex, and Race/Ethnicity for 2010–2050*, 2018). In the Valley's 92 percent Hispanic community, Spanish is the unmarked/default language in practice. UTRGV is responding to and adapting to the increasing demand for bilingual professionals.

The negative factors that might hinder the expansion of this initiative concern the long history of linguistic hegemony and xenophobia. Perhaps, as explored in the literature review, Ruiz's (1984) 's language as a resource framework for policy is the least contentious answer for integrating bilingual education into language policy in the U.S. Language as a resource is the framework UTRGV has adopted. Leaning on marketability and recognizing the economic benefits of bilingualism is the strategy used to get this model off the ground.

The U.S. Census (2021) projects a marked increase in the Hispanic population in Texas and all across the country. Therefore, it stands to reason that the use of the Spanish language will expand. For this reason, the viability of the first bilingual University is key to the future not only of Texas but of the whole of the United States.

For this bilingual University to be viable and become the blueprint from which other universities will follow, it needs to count on the unquestionable support of the University as to language policy. At the UTRGV, the B3 institute has made enormous efforts to promote bilingualism. Still, the job has been assumed only by this academic unit alone from the institutional view. UTRGV has supported the foundation of the B3 institute to promote higher education in both English and Spanish; however, it does not complement their efforts with an institutional language policy beyond the establishment of this institute. Therefore, an unconditional institutional commitment to support and promote these initiatives is imperative to ensure the

continued success of B3. Assertion of the bilingual nature of the University is indispensable to achieving this two-fold objective.

The quality conditions for successful bilingual programs involve a comprehensive curricular articulation, appropriate resources, and the availability of qualified faculty and staff in both English and Spanish. Moreover, it is necessary to conduct a systematic assessment of the accomplishments and the participation of the whole community: administrative staff, faculty, and students (McGroarty, 2001).

UTRGV is in its infancy, but the B3 institute's enthusiasm, persistence, and commitment to serve the students and community is an ongoing pledge to safeguard the tangible and intangible cultural Hispanic heritage of the Borderlands. This promise will necessarily help them calibrate and redirect their efforts to face the formidable challenges ahead.

The success of the UTRGV bilingual initiative symbolizes the beginning of recognizing the linguistic capital of the U.S. Hispanic population and an opportunity for HSIs to capitalize on the wellspring of emerging bilinguals whose cultural heritage and linguistic wealth deserve strengthening, consideration, and relevance. I look forward to witnessing this University become the cornerstone of a successful bilingual, bicultural and biliterate university in the United States and the blueprint for other HSIs to follow.

Appendix A Tables

Table 1. List of Documents

No	Document Descriptions	Types	Year	Relevance
	From the University Website			
1.	Vision and Mission Statement	Purpose & priorities of the university	2021	Essay 1, 3
2.	Annual Report	Corporate document	2020	Essay 1, 3
3.	Policy Manuals	University policy	2019	Essay 3
4.	Strategic Plan	Governing document	2017	Essay 1-3
5.	Rankings	Perceived measures of quality	2020	Essay 1-3
6.	B3 Institute Action Plan	B3 governing document	2021	Essay 1-3
7.	Historical References	Archives	2021	Essay 2
8.	Newspaper articles and other publications.	Archives	2016-2020	Essay 2
9.	External Reviews	Periodic evaluations	2020-2021	Essay 1-3

Table 2. Summary of Participant Zoom Conversations

Participant 1	May 13, 2021	41 minutes
Participant 2	May 17, 2021	33 minutes
Participant 3	May 18, 2021	37 minutes

Table 3. Bilingual Listings Prestige Category

Prestige Category	Percentage of all Online Listings in Prestige Category for Bilingual Workers, 2010	Percentage of all Online Listings in Prestige Category for Bilingual Workers, 2015	Increase in Share, 2010-2015	Examples of Occupations in the Prestige Level
Lowest Prestige (16-32)	1.4%	1.7%	21.6%	Cashiers, Janitors, Maids
Low Prestige (33-42)	3.1%	3.6%	15.0%	Parts Salespersons, Food Service Managers, Nursing Assistants, Home Health Aids
Middle Prestige (43-53)	4.0%	4.5%	12.3%	Health Educators, Secretaries, Social Workers, Sales Agents
High Prestige (54-65)	1.9%	2.5%	27.0%	Financial Managers, Editors, Industrial Engineers, Physical Therapists
Highest Prestige (66-85)	1.3%	1.5%	18.2%	Web Developers, Software Developers, Lawyers, Physicians and Surgeons

Source: Burning Glass Technologies, Labor Insight. Data pulled on April 13, 2016

Table 4. UTRGV Institutional Summary 2020-2021

Background	Established 2015		General academic institution with a medical school Component of The University of Texas System		
Primary Service Region	Rio Grande Valley (Cameron, Hidalgo, Starr & Willacy Counties) Population 1,377,861 as of July 2019		(92.6% students from Rio Grande Valley)		
Presence in the Rio Grande Valley	Brownsville, Edinburg, Weslaco, Harlingen, McAllen, Starr County, and the Coastal Studies Lab at South Padre Island.		Medical School started in Fall 2016		
Current Enrollment	32,441 (Fall 2020)		(Undergraduate students 84%) (Full-time 71.3%; Female 59.7%)		
Ethnic Enrollment	90.5% Hispanic (Fall 2020)				
Financial Aid	Pell Grants 61.9% Undergraduates				
Degree Programs	Bachelor's 68	Master's 61	Doctoral 6	Prof'l Doctorate 3	
Number of Colleges and Schools	10 colleges 3 schools				
Total Faculty	1,591 (Fall 2019)		77.9% full-time faculty		
Annual Budget	\$633,145,784 (FY 2021)				
Area	665.04 Acres		4,411,740 gross square feet		
Buildings in Progress	Harlingen Early College High School		60,000 gross square feet		
	Harlingen: Institute of Neurosciences		34,337 gross square feet		

12/1/2020

Prepared by the Office of Strategic Analysis & Institutional Reporting (SAIR). The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley.

Table 5. ROAD MAPPING Dimensions Chart Dimensions



1st	Roles of Spanish (RO)
2nd	Academic Disciplines (AD)
3rd	Management (M)
4th	Agents (A)
5th	Policies and Practices, (PP)
6th	Internationalization and Globalization (IG)

Table 6. Factors Relevant for Roles of Spanish R.O. (adapted from Dafouz & Smit, 2017, p. 299, Table 1)

Factor type	Specification	Exemplification
Societal	Functions of Spanish and English outside the institution	Parents, immigrants, students coming from K-12 bilingual education, the language of the environment, P-16 outreach office
Institutional	Hispanic-Serving Institution status Teaching	Language as subject (such as Spanish for healthcare professionals, Spanish for business, Mexican American studies, bilingual education)
	Research	Discipline-specific (such as engineering, astronomy, or philosophy, community engagement, bilingual education, linguistics)
	Administration	Internal or external communication (such as websites, emails, or press releases)
Pedagogical	Language as learning aim and assessment criterion	Explicitly included in curriculum or implicitly expected by stakeholders.
	Teaching formats and materials	Lecturing vs. group work; printed or online resources
Communicational	Codes used	English as only shared medium or in combination with Spanish, Translanguaging, TexSpanish
	Purposes pursued	Institutional, instructional, research
	Language skills	Writing, listening

Table 7. Bilingual or Additive Programs Strand Models

Bilingual or Additive Programs Strand Models

Name of program	Type of learners	Languages used for contents instructions	Time for instruction
Developmental Bilingual Program	All students are native speakers of the minority language.	English + minority language.	90/10 In the early grades, students spend 90% of their instructional time in the minority language (variations of this model are the 80/20 and the 70/30 models, in which students spend 70-80% of instructional time in the minority language to gradually shift to English).
Indigenous language immersion	All students are from the language minority community but have little or no proficiency.	English + a heritage/indigenous language.	
Foreign language immersion or <i>one-way</i> immersion	English native speaker students who wanted to learn a foreign language.	English + a foreign language.	50/50 Throughout the program, students spend 50% of their instructional time in the minority language and 50% of their instructional time in English.
	English  Foreign Language		
	All students move toward the same direction (<i>one-way</i>).		
Two-way model or <i>dual language</i> immersion model	Approximately one third of native speakers of the minority language and half English native speakers.	English + the language spoken by the minority group.	
	English  Minority Language		
	Students move toward two directions (<i>two-way</i>): acquire another language, while reinforcing their first language.		

(DiStefano, 2017)

Appendix B Additional Figures

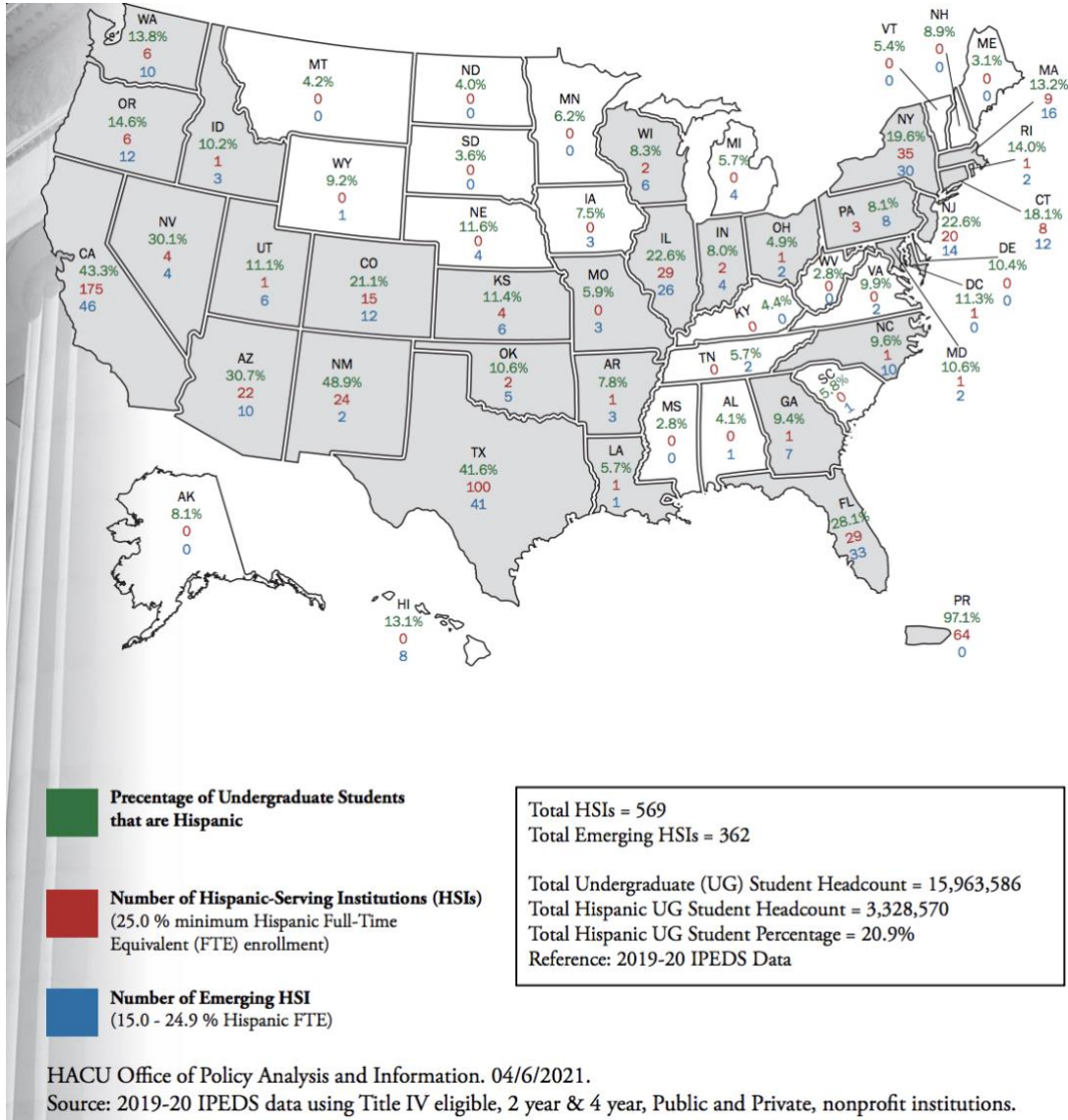


Figure 4. Distribution Map of Hispanic- Serving Institutions (HSI)

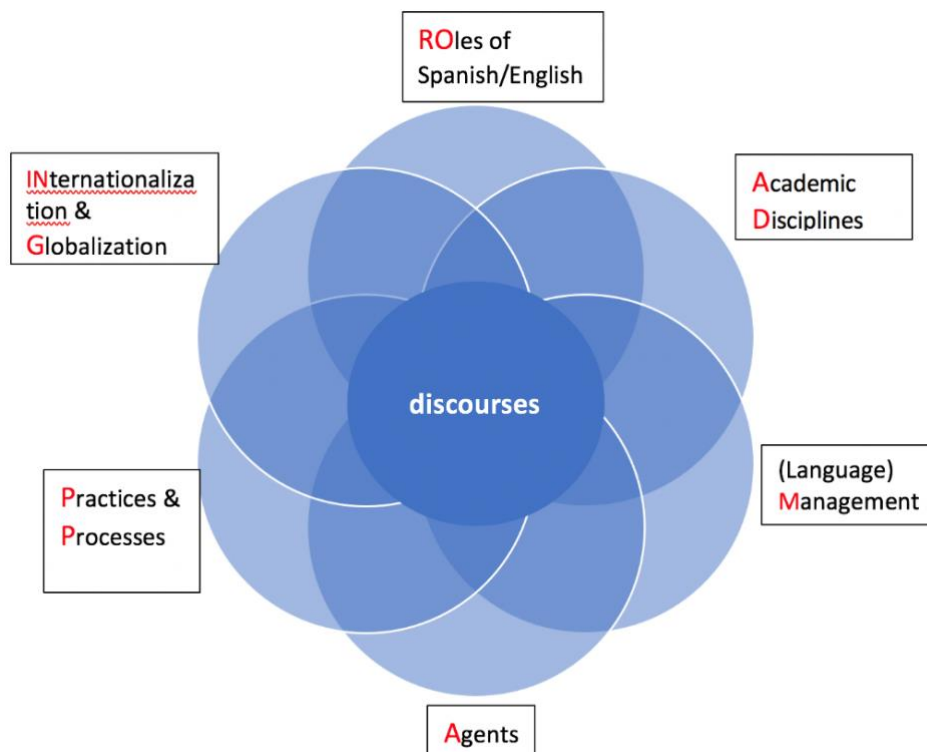


Figure 5. ROAD MAPPING Dimensions Graph

B3 Institute Strategic Plan

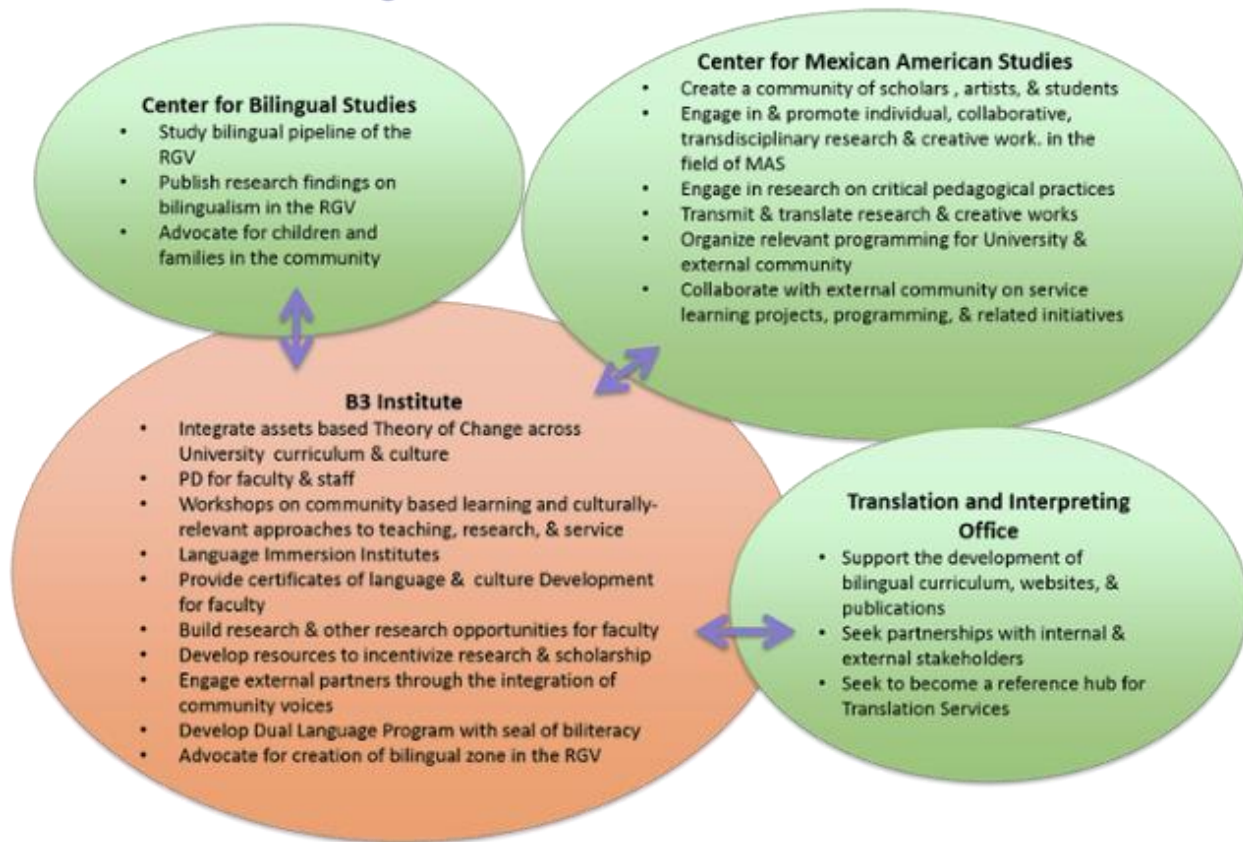


Figure 6. B3 Institute Strategic Plan

Source: utrgv.edu/b3-institute/

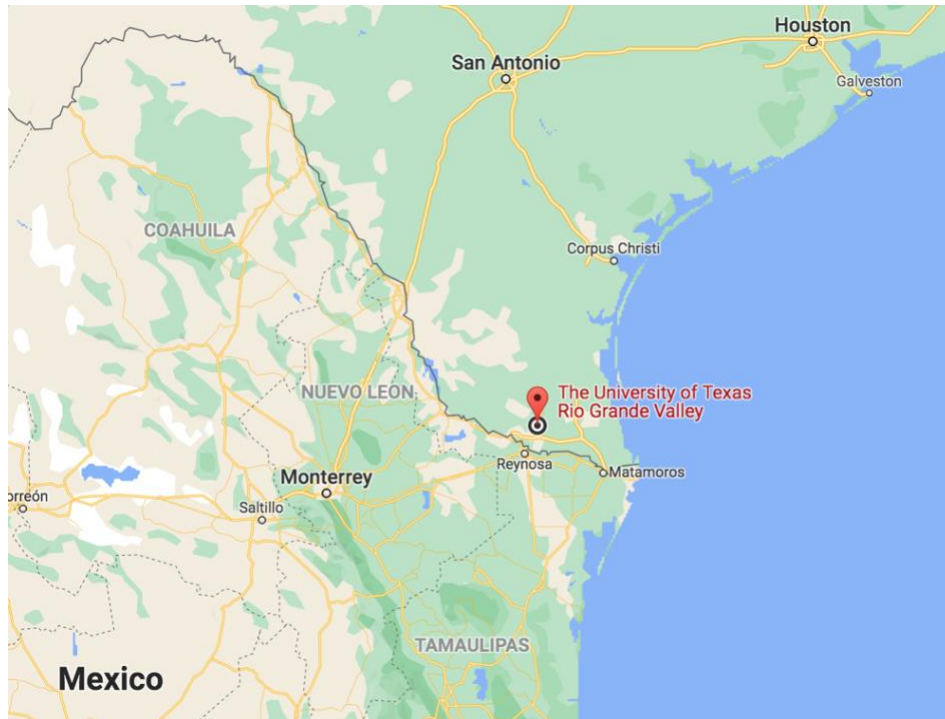


Figure 7. Map of Rio Grande Valley

(Map data ©2021 Google)

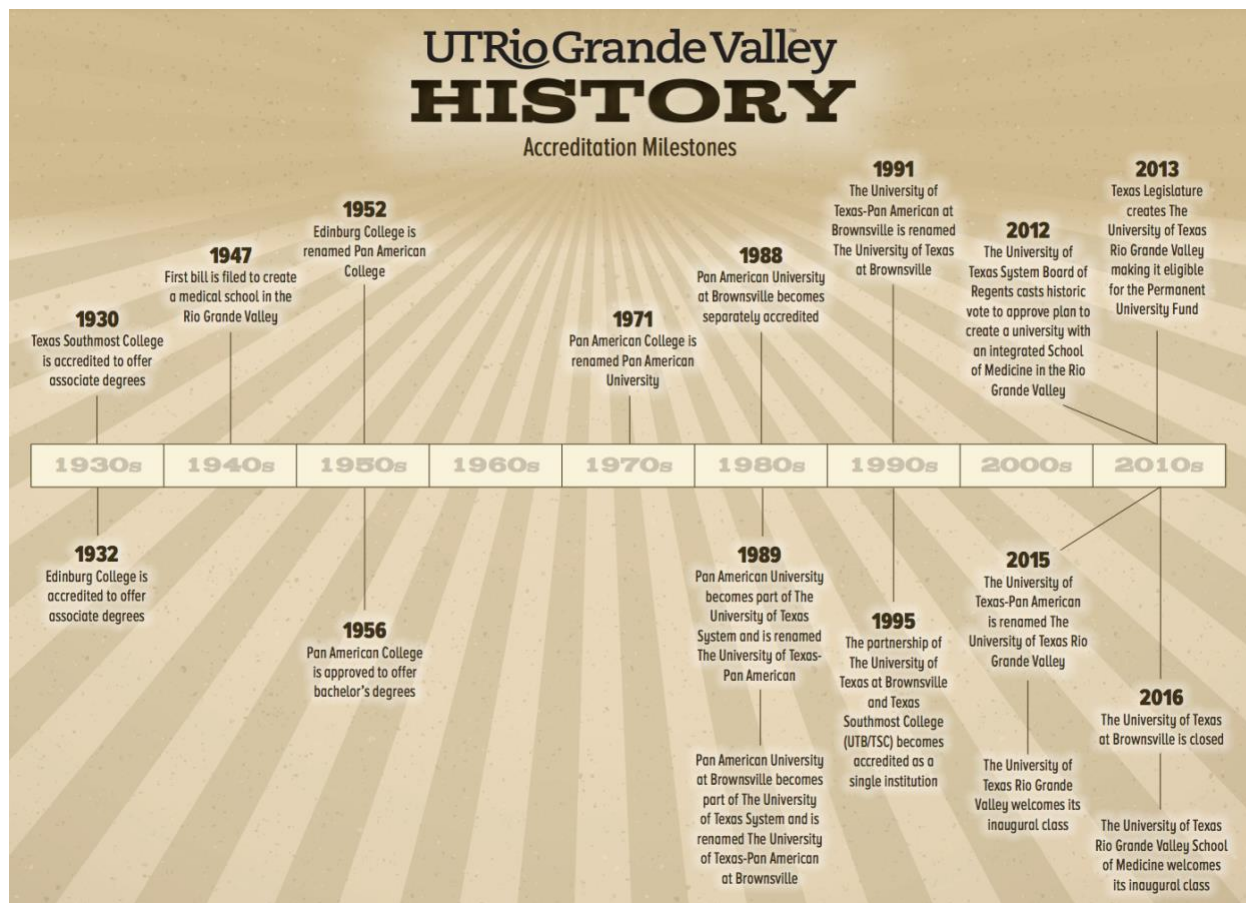


Figure 8. Accreditation Milestones

Source: UTRGV. www.utrgv.edu

Appendix C Introductory Script

Good morning (afternoon). My name is Carmen Alicia Martinez. Thank you very much for taking the time to talk with me today. As the email mentioned, the purpose of this research study this U.S. bilingual Spanish/English university' pedagogical models, academic offerings, and institutional policies.

I prepared a questionnaire related to the challenges and successes your institution has experienced, in relation to the use of Spanish/English bilingual model.

Your insights into this issue will help me to better understand the real-world constraints facing bilingual higher education initiatives. For the questions I am about to ask you, please answer in as much detail as possible, and share any associations or connections that may occur to you while you are speaking.

There are no right or wrong or desirable or undesirable answers. I would like you to feel comfortable with saying what you really think and how you really feel.

If you agree, I will record this conversation. The purpose of this is so that I can get all the details but at the same time be able to carry on an attentive conversation with you. I assure you that all your comments will remain confidential. I will be compiling a report which will not contain any reference to the individuals I have interviewed.

Your participation is voluntary, and you may withdraw from this project at any time. All data collected prior to the date of withdrawal will continue to be used unless you request it to be destroyed.

Appendix D Semi-Structured Interview Protocol

Primary question: How is the first bilingual English-Spanish university planning to remain viable? To answer that question, I will focus on the following research questions:

1. What are the characteristics of the bilingual education model of this institution?
2. How does this bilingual education institution identify their challenges?
3. How does this bilingual education institution identify parameters of success?

Research question #1 will be resolved for the most part with the help of the document analysis methodology. This semi-structured interview of key constituencies (faculty and administrators) of the institution, will seek convergence and corroboration for this qualitative study.

The main objective of these interviews will be, in addition to filling in the gaps from the information gathered from document analysis, to focus on the second research question: How does this bilingual education institution identify their challenges and parameters of success?

Initial trust with the interviewees has been established prior to the time of these interviews. All the interviewee's questions about the research have been resolved via email. Interviews took approximately 30 minutes and were recorded using Zoom.

The questions were organized targeting the institutional first, and the personal second. I recognized that some subjects might intertwined the personal and institutional in a given answer. I made sure to ask directly if the answer responds to the institution policies and practices or personal opinions.

1. As for your institution, what does it mean when it claims to be a bilingual and bicultural university?
2. As a bilingual institution, what are the three most important parameters of success?
3. What are the most common recurring challenges for students and faculty as a bilingual institution?
4. Have you observed any tensions between the bilingual policies of the institution, as you understood them, and the enacted practice? If so, can you describe them?
5. Has your institution needed to revise any aspects of the original bilingual model?

6. How do you envision the future of the university considering a century of language and ethnic discrimination that has muffled the Spanish language?
7. What other avenues are you planning for the expansion of the bilingual scope of the university?
8. Have you experienced a shift in the way the university perceives itself as to matters of identity?
9. In the spring 2016, you announced that the university was expanding the bilingual pilot from one to five sections. How has the expansion worked out for university and the students?

Appendix E R-Based Qualitative Data Analysis

Themes: The themes were identified using R-based Qualitative Data Analysis also known as RQDA. Each interview was converted to a word document using Notepad. The Notepad interviews were uploaded to RQDA. Using RQDA, the themes for Interview One were identified, then for Interview two and finally for Interview Three. The themes were color coded within each interview using RQDA.

#	Questions	Themes	P1	P2	P3		
1	As for your institution, what does it mean to be a bilingual and bicultural university?	biliterate					
		produce biligual, bicultureal, and bileteral professional					
		linguistic abilities					
		work in progress				outlier or not common	
		success				outlier or not common	
		serve community					
		community perception					
		defining a bilingual university					
		positive experience				outlier or not common	
		support				outlier or not common	
		time					
		category				outlier or not common	
		challenging				outlier or not common	
		culturally relevant					
		degree completion				outlier or not common	
		opportunities					
		biculturalism					
		university logistics				outlier or not common	
2	As a bilingual institution, what are the three most important parameters of success?	degree completion					
		serve community				outlier or not common	
		accesssible and affordable				outlier or not common	
		community perception					
		culturally relevant					
		time					
		guiding principals					
		family oriented					
		success					
		challenging				outlier or not common	
		historical trauma				outlier or not common	
		linguistic abilities				outlier or not common	
		produce bilingual, bicultural, and biliteral professionals				outlier or not common	
3	What are the most common recurring challenges for students and faculty as a bilingual institution?	defining a bilingual university				outlier or not common	
		guiding principals				outlier or not common	
		university logistics					
		challenging					
		culturally relevant				outlier or not common	
		expand				outlier or not common	
		exposure to Hispanic culture				outlier or not common	
		linguistic abilities				outlier or not common	
		positive experience				outlier or not common	
		success				outlier or not common	
		Covid				outlier or not common	
		fear				outlier or not common	
		serve community				outlier or not common	
		support					
		time					
Themes by question		Themes by interview	Themes by number appeared	Themes appeared graph			

4	Have you observed any tensions between the bilingual policies of the institution, as you understood them, and the enacted practice? If so, can you describe them.	guiding principals				outlier or not common
		support				
		time				
		work in progress				
		challenging				
		positive experience				outlier or not common
		opportunities				outlier or not common
5	Has your institution needed to revise any aspects of the original bilingual model?	Covid				outlier or not common
		expand				
		success				outlier or not common
		time				
		guiding principals				outlier or not common
		pride				outlier or not common
		work in progress				
		university logistics				outlier or not common
		support				outlier or not common
6	How do you envision the future of the university in light of a century of language and ethnic discrimination that has muffled the Spanish language?	assimilate				outlier or not common
		challenging				
		community perception				outlier or not common
		guiding principals				outlier or not common
		living in two worlds				outlier or not common
		produce biligual, bicultureal, and bileteral professional				outlier or not common
		success				
		culturally relevant				
		opportunities				outlier or not common
		time				outlier or not common
		biculturalism				
		biliterate				outlier or not common
		degree completion				outlier or not common
		historical trauma				outlier or not common
		support				outlier or not common
		work in progress				outlier or not common

Themes by question
Themes by interview
Themes by number appeared
Themes appeared graph

7	What other avenues are you planning for the expansion of the bilingual scope of the university?	expand					
		opportunities					
		solid foundation					
		success					
		guiding principals					outlier or not common
		time					outlier or not common
		unique					outlier or not common
8	Have you experienced a shift in the way the university perceives itself as to matters of identity?	pride					outlier or not common
		unique					outlier or not common
		exposure to Hispanic culture					outlier or not common
		time					outlier or not common
		university logistics					outlier or not common
		work in progress					outlier or not common
		challenging					outlier or not common
		community perception					outlier or not common
9	At the University of Texas: In the spring 2016, you announced that the university was expanding the bilingual pilot from one to five sections. How has the expansion worked out for university and the students?	expand					
		positive experience					outlier or not common
		success					outlier or not common
		time					
		support					outlier or not common
		guiding principals					outlier or not common
10	Is there anything that you would like to me to like me to add in my in my analysis?	guiding principals					
		success					
		support					
		work in progress					
		community perception					outlier or not common
		culturally relevant					outlier or not common
		expand					outlier or not common
		opportunities					outlier or not common
		positive experience					outlier or not common
		time					outlier or not common
		university logistics					outlier or not common
No question 10 for P3							
Themes by question Themes by interview Themes by number appeared Themes appeared graph							

Appendix F Themes Classified Concerning Research Questions' Topics

Characteristics of the Bilingual Model
1. category
2. culturally relevant
3. defining a bilingual university
4. guiding principals
5. historical trauma
6. living in two words
7. linguistic abilities
Parameters of Success
1. accessible and affordable
2. biculturalism
3. biliterate
4. community perceptions
5. culturally relevant
6. serve community
7. degree completion
8. expand
9. exposure to the Hispanic culture
10. family-oriented
11. opportunities
12. positive experience
13. pride
14. produce bilingual, bicultural, and biliteral professionals
15. solid foundation
16. success
17. support
Challenges
1. assimilate
2. challenging
3. COVID-19
4. fear
5. time
6. university logistics
7. work in progress

Appendix G IRB Documentation

Please see the following page for the University of Pittsburgh Institutional Review Board determination of exempt status for this study.



EXEMPT DETERMINATION

Date:	April 27, 2021
IRB:	STUDY20120158
PI:	Carmen Martinez
Title:	A CASE STUDY-COMPARATIVE POLICY ANALYSIS OF TWO BILINGUAL HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: HOW ARE BILINGUAL ENGLISH-SPANISH UNIVERSITIES PLANNING TO REMAIN VIABLE?
Funding:	None
Grant Title:	None

The Institutional Review Board reviewed and determined the above referenced study meets the regulatory requirements for exempt research under 45 CFR 46.104.

Determination Documentation

Determination Date:	4/27/2021
Exempt Category:	(2)(iii) Tests, surveys, interviews, or observation (identifiable); and for which limited IRB review was conducted via expedited review

Determinations:	None
Approved Documents:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Updated Protocol Rev.Jan.10.21.docx, Category: Data Collection;• HRP-722- WORKSHEET - Exemption_Benign Behavioral Interventions_Version_0.01.docx, Category: IRB Protocol;• Introductory Script_Martinez_Version_0.02.docx, Category: Recruitment Materials;• Letter Participants_rev.docx, Category: Recruitment Materials

If you have any questions, please contact the University of Pittsburgh IRB Coordinator, [Dana DiVirgilio](#).

Please take a moment to complete our [Satisfaction Survey](#) as we appreciate your feedback.

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