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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Texas Association for Bilingual Education
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Editorial Introduction

Dear Colleagues,

The purpose of the Special Edition for the Journal for Bilingual Education Research and Instruction (JBERI) was to showcase the work of six scholars at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley that have used and continue to implement culturally relevant pedagogies and maximining the use of their university students' bilingual assets. The Center for Bilingual Studies is a research center under the B3 Institute Office at UTRGV. CBS provided scholarship support to scholars from across disciples: Engineering, Linguistics, Biology, Philosophy, Education, and University College. The CBS Scholars Series was designed to support the vision of the Center for Bilingual Studies to continue to evolve as a research hub for bilingualism, bilingual education, and bilingual communities. These scholars share experience acknowledging and affirming their students' cultural and linguistic assets by drawing upon their bilingualism in their classes. The scholars, along with the director and associate director, met monthly to learn from each other, discuss relevant scholarship on bilingual pedagogies, and contribute to the scholarship on bilingual education in higher education, specifically in a Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI). Each scholar produced a manuscript that was used for this Special Edition.

Contributors to the Special Edition

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Dr. Patricia Feria, Professor in Biology
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Special thanks are due to Editorial Assistant Dr. Isaac Martinez for his valuable contributions to JBERI Issue #23 as reviewer and technical assistant in the layout and design of the Journal. In addition, this issue would not be possible without the reviewers and the individuals who submitted manuscripts for publication consideration.

Thank you!! Take care and stay well!

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Biographies

Dr. J. Joy Esquierdo was born and raised in the delta area of the Rio Grande Valley in deep south Texas. She is a Professor in the Department of Bilingual and Literacy Studies at the University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley. She is also the Director for the Center for Bilingual Studies with the B3 Institute, and the Interim Director for the School of Art. Dr. Esquierdo's research agenda includes topics that focus on the academic performance of bilingual-dual language students in various areas such as gifted education, content biliteracy development (English and Spanish), and overall best teaching practices for bilingual-dual language learners that focus on academic rigor. She has served the Texas Association for Bilingual Education Executive Board in various positions, including President, Vice-President, and Secretary. She has also served the National Association for Bilingual Education in the local conference planning committee. She has co-authored two books: *Teaching Content to Latino Bilingual-Dual Language Learners: Maximizing Their Learning* and *A Practical Guide for Student Interns: Meeting the Needs of Latino Students and their Communities.*

Dr. Alexander V. Stehn grew up in the rural South Texas town of Aransas Pass (near Corpus Christi) as a monolingual English speaker of mixed "white" heritages (German, English, Scotch-Irish, and Ukrainian Jewish). The child of middle-class professionals who worked all day, he was raised during after-school hours by his *nana,* a bilingual Mexican American woman named Francis, who spoke English with him and his brother and Spanish with her own children. Dr. Stehn did not begin seriously learning Spanish until his senior year at Austin College. While earning a PhD from Penn State, he spent the 2007-2008 academic year in Mexico City studying la filosofía de la liberación latinoamericana, principalmente con el filósofo argentino-mexicano Enrique Dussel en la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM). Dr. Stehn currently serves as Associate Professor of Philosophy, Associate Director of the Center for Bilingual Studies, and Faculty Affiliate in Mexican American Studies at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. His research works to philosophically bridge the Americas, and his articles include "Latin American Philosophy" in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* and "Teaching Gloria Anzaldúa as an American Philosopher*"* in *Teaching Gloria E. Anzaldua.* Along with his wife, Dr. Mariana Alessandri, he is co-founder of RGV PUEDE (Rio Grande Valley Parents United for Excellent Dual-Language Education), whose mission is to support, improve, and extend dual language programs that promote bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism from Pre-K to 12th across the Rio Grande Valley.

El Dr. Hiram Moya es un Profesor Asociado en la Universidad de Texas del Valle del Rio Grande en el departamento de Ingeniería Industrial y de Manufactura. El Dr. Moya tiene mas de 10 años de experiencia en la industria como consultor y empresario. Sus intereses in investigación incluyen Teoría de Filas, Optimización, Simulación, Probabilidad Aplicada, Calidad, y Gestión de la Cadena de Suministro. Algunas de las áreas de aplicación incluyen seguridad nacional, sustentabilidad, eficiencia energética, repartición del cuidado de la salud, herramientas web para el apoyo en toma de decisiones, educación en ingeniería, lenguaje dual, y mejoramiento de sistemas o procesos. EL Dr. Moya ha obtenido más de $1.4 millones de dólares en fondos para investigación con Investigador Principal (IP) o Co-IP, además tiene más de 20 publicaciones arbitradas. Es el asesor del capítulo estudiantil de la Sociedad de ingenieros de Manufactura, y el asesor en jefe de Tau Beta Pi, capitulo Texas-Nu, la Sociedad Honorifica de Ingeniería en UTRGV.

Dr. Katherine (Katie) Christoffersen grew up in southeastern Pennsylvania, in a suburb of 'Philly.' During her undergraduate degree, she studied abroad at the Universidad de las Américas in Cholula, Puebla, México for a year. After graduating with a dual major in Spanish and Elementary Education, she taught English as a Foreign Language for two years in Campo Limpo Paulista, São Paolo, Brazil. She went on to earn an MA in English Language & Linguistics and a PhD in Second Language Acquisition & Teaching from the University of Arizona. Since 2017, she has been an assistant professor of Applied Linguistics at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley where she teaches courses in applied linguistics and sociolinguistics. Her research examines bilingualism in the community and the classroom using discourse analytic and ethnographic research methods. She has published in journals such as the *International Multilingual Research Journal*, and she is the co-creator of the Corpus Bilingüe del Valle (CoBiVa).

Kimberly Regalado was born in California, but moved to the Rio Grande Valley (RGV) as a baby. A Tejana at heart, the RGV is her home. She is a third generation Mexican American, and first-generation college graduate from the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV). In Fall 2020, she participated in Dr. Katherine Christoffersen's 'Intro to Border Languages' course, and she was inspired to continue on as a graduate student in the M.A. English program with a concentration in Linguistics at UTRGV. During Spring and Summer 2021, she held research assistant positions in applied linguistics with Dr. Christoffersen. She is studying patterns of language use, maintenance and shift within the Rio Grande Valley community in her thesis entitled, "Sustaining la Voz del Valle" (Sustaining the Voice of the Valley).

Teresa Patricia Feria-Arroyo: Nací y crecí en el Estado de México en México. Obtuve mi B.S. en Biología con honores (1997) y un M.S. en Biología Animal (2001) en la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM). Completé un doctorado en Biología en la Universidad de Missouri-St. Louis (2007) y dos estancias postdoctorales (Jardín Botánico de Missouri-Centro para la Conservación y el Desarrollo Sostenible y UNAM, México) antes de llegar a UTPA, universidad fundadora de UTRGV. Aquí, en UTRGV, me siento identificada con mis estudiantes. Me encanta la naturaleza, cocinar, investigar y mis alumnos me dan energía cuando doy un curso. Enseño cursos con servicio de aprendizaje, clases bilingües (español/inglés), participación comunitaria, estudio en el extranjero y aprendizaje cooperativo en línea. En todas mis clases uso el aprendizaje activo y la pedagogía culturalmente relevante.

Dr. Jose L. Saldivar is a senior lecturer and the Learning Framework Program Director at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. Dr. Saldivar is a Rio Grande Valley native, having grown up in Elsa, TX. He draws on his experiences growing up along the U.S.-Mexico border to inform his teaching. Dr. Saldivar works primarily with first-year students and enjoys assisting them as they navigate their first year at the university.

Acknowledging and Affirming University Students' Linguistic and Cultural Capital in an Education Course

Dr. J. Joy Esquierdo, Professor and Director for Center for Bilingual Studies at UTRGV

Abstract

In order to effectively prepare K-12 teachers to serve linguistically and culturally diverse students, it is vital to provide opportunities for them to develop their intra- and intercultural understandings. This paper describes how a faculty member designed and delivered a teacher preparation class centered on culturally relevant approaches. Students enrolled in this course completed assignments that were designed to guide them through an intracultural reflection to then expand their understandings to an intercultural context. Considering the students' diverse linguistic and cultural experiences, assignments and projects provided opportunities for them to recognize their linguistic and cultural wealth in order to build their awareness for others' experiences. After each assignment and project, the students reflected on their journey and planned how they could use their understanding when working with K-12 students living in a bilingual, bicultural community.

Keywords: culturally relevant pedagogies, HSIs, teacher preparation

Acknowledging and Affirming University Students' Linguistic and Cultural Capital in an Education Course

There has been a steady increase in the population of Latinx community in the U.S. The significantly growing number of school aged Latinx students enrolled in U.S. public schools. Between 1996 and 2016, the total enrollment of Latinx students in public elementary and secondary schools increased from 14.1% to 25% and is projected to continue to increase to 29% by 2026 (Bauman & Murray, 2017; National Center for Education Statistics, 2017). Data suggests that approximately 75%–79% of students classified as English learners report Spanish as their home language (García, Kleifgen, & Falchi, 2008). With the growth of Latinx, native Spanish speakers in schools, Spanish is noted as the most common language in Texas schools. Additionally, in the ten-year span between the 2007-2008 and 2017-2018 academic school years, the Latinx student enrollment in Texas increased by over 28%. On the other hand, the White, Non-Latinx student enrollment decreased by an estimated 7.5%, resulting in Latinx students accounting for the majority of the overall Texas student enrollment, 52.4% by the 2017-18 academic school year (Texas Education Agency, 2018). In 2020-21, Latinx students represented the largest percentage of total enrollment (52.9%), followed by White (26.5%), African American (12.7%), Asian (4.7%), and multiracial (2.7%) students in Texas public schools (Texas Education Agency, 2021)

With the increase of Latinx students in the K-12 schools, there is a greater demand for schools to hire bilingual teachers, or teachers prepared to work with bilingual learners. Bilingual Learners (BLs)[1], also commonly referred to as English language learners (ELLs), English Learners (ELs), or Emergent Bilinguals represent a steadfast growing school age population in the U.S. school system. In Texas, there was only one qualified ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher for every 46 students who need English support during the 2014-2015 school year (TEA, 2020), this is above the average class size. Additionally, in the 2017-2018 school year, Texas public schools had more than 1 million bilingual learners, that was about 10,000 more from the previous year (TEA, 2020). The challenge with such an increase is if schools want to offer a 22 to 1 student-teacher ratio in the classroom, there is a need to add over 400 bilingual/ESL certified teachers annually. Therefore, there is a substantial need for university teacher-preparation programs to focus on training education students to serve linguistic and culturally diverse students in a way that not only benefits their academic and linguistic needs, but also addresses their cultural and affective development.

The focus of this article is to describe a teaching approach that is centered on culturally relevant approaches in a teacher preparation course called Intercultural Context. This 2000 level course is designed for students to complete before they apply to their teacher preparation program of specialization. The course description from the course catalog was:

This education course introduces students to issues related to equity, diversity, and social justice for culturally and linguistically diverse students and exceptional learners as well as classroom strategies for engaging diverse learners (course syllabus for EDFR 2301).

The expanded course description that was added in the course syllabus was for this class was:

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[1] The term Bilingual Learners is used in this article to acknowledge the linguistic skill sets of all bilingual students, including various levels of bilingualism, and shift to a more affirming label. BL is more inclusive and celebratory of students' bilingualism.

This course is a reading-, writing-, and research-intensive, discussion-focused seminar, where students are expected to engage critically with course texts (books, articles, films, etc.) and their classmates, in English, Spanish, and/or bilingually, to pursue real-life inquiry into educational settings and problems. Students are also expected to develop analytic and synthetic reasoning skills in speech and writing. This course will be a collaborative, learner-centered experience, where we are ALL learners and play active roles in our own and each other's learning. This course will also require all students to participate in a service-learning project with the Edinburg Housing Authority (EHA). Each student will be required to complete 1.5 hours per week at EHA to meet course requirements.

The instructional approaches used in this course aimed to offer students an opportunity to develop their inter- and intra-cultural awareness. Intercultural awareness is understanding the differences between distinct cultural groups, including religious and sexual orientation; intracultural awareness is studying cultural within the same cultural context (Deardorff, 2008). The students enrolled in this course were mainly Latinx students with bilingual linguistic skills that declared education as a major. About 85% of the students had not yet applied to their teacher preparation program. The majority of the students enrolled in the class during the collection of reflections were specializing, or intending to specialize, in bilingual education. The others varied between social studies composite (2 students), special education (2), and math (3 students) specializations. This is to say that grew up in a bilingual community and many also grew up in a Spanish-speaking home. Students enrolled in this course completed assignments that were designed to guide them through an intra- and inter-cultural reflection to then expand their experiences to their own classroom one day.

Context of the Region and University

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) is located in deep South Texas, also referred to as the Rio Grande Valley. The region has an estimated population of 1.35 million people of which around 90% are Latinx (US Census, 2012). There is much diversity within the Latinx group that resides in the area. Most are from Mexican decent; some are immigrants, and other vary from first to fifth+ generation immigrants, while others have had family reside in the region for generations and the transboundary region US-Mexico border crossed their land. Many are bilingual, with an estimated 78.05% of the population choosing Spanish as their home language (US Census, 2018). With such a unique regional cultural and linguistic richness, teachers in the schools need to be prepared to maximize their learning opportunities by using culturally relevant (CR) pedagogies in the classroom. Therefore, it is critical to model using CR pedagogies in a teacher preparation program.

UTRGV is one of the largest *Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI)* in the U.S (Excelencia in Education, 2020). The University's Vision states:

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 (UTRGV Strategic Plan, 2015).

Part of the values that UTRGV lists in its Strategic Plan is to establish an accessible educational environment that will "cultivate and enhance the diverse, multicultural, and linguistic assets of our university" (UTRGV Strategic Plan, 2015). The multi-campus University is spread across the RGV. The University aims to influence and empower its students, and also enrich the daily lives of those in the region. It also aims to have international influence and impact on higher

education, bilingual education, health education, biomedical research, and emerging technology that motivates progressive change. One of its seven values, *Diversity, Access, and Inclusion*, centers on establishing an accessible educational environment that "cultivates and enhance the diverse, multicultural, and linguistic assets of our university and the Rio Grande Valley" (UTRGV Strategic Plan, 2015). This is a vital core value of the University and should be used as a model for other universities, especially other HSIs. Valuing the cultural and linguistic values of its students and the region they are from is critical. As UTRGV evolves and develops into the higher education institution it describes in the Strategic Plan, faculty must also find creative ways to infuse culturally relevant pedagogies in the classrooms in order to more effectively support the goals and vision of the University.

Proposed Framework for Maximizing Linguistic and Cultural Capital in the University Classroom

Aligning the instruction of a teacher education course to the University's vision and values led to designing and delivering the instruction in a more culturally relevant approach. Thinking of ways to capitalize on the university students' linguistic and cultural assets was a priority for me, the professor. There is much literature in the field of teaching and learning that claim connecting the students' experiences to the new content they need to acquire is essential (González, Moll & Amanti, 2005). This is true for students in K-12 classrooms as it is for those at the university. It is also very important to note that when working with education students, it is a prime opportunity to model effective instructional models that they are expected to use once they become professional educators.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogies in Higher Education

The integration of culturally relevant pedagogies is critical for all university-level students, especially those that will become professional educators. Some of the culturally relevant pedagogies used in this undergraduate course, Intercultural Context of Schooling, framework included understanding funds of knowledge (recognizing and valuing community wealth), place-based learning, tapping into linguistic assets through the use of translanguaging and allowing students in the course to select the language for the assignment, and analyzing authentic cultural-representative literature. These instructional approaches celebrate the cultural richness and linguistic diversity that the education students bring to the university classroom, just as their future K-12 students will bring to their schools.

Using Culturally Relevant (CR) Pedagogies supports the effectiveness of instruction in K-12 and university classrooms. Part of CR Pedagogies is using funds of knowledge. Students of all levels carry their experiences from home and their community that can be used to build and cultivate new knowledge in the formal setting of a classroom. These home experiences are referred to as the *funds of knowledge* (Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005). The funds of knowledge are students' everyday life experiences (interactions with family and community members, watching parents work, going to the grocery store, cooking at home, etc.) that should be used as bridges to school practices. This helps validates the students' home experiences at school.

Translanguaging as a Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Another form of CR Pedagogies is allowing and validating translanguaging in the classroom. Translanguaging is when students use their linguistic and cognitive resources to make sense of the academic content being delivered in a formal setting (Garcia & Wei, 2014).

Translanguaging is a strategy educators can use to help students draw on all their linguistic capital as they read, write, and discuss school content in a new language. Through translanguaging, students' home language serves as a scaffold in the process of acquiring additional languages and academic content in the classroom. Therefore, students can leverage their linguistic capital to acquire the school content delivered in the classroom.

Place-based Education as a Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Place-based education (PBE) is generally defined as an educational approach that actively connects schools and their local communities (Smith, 2007; Smith & Sobel, 2010; Sobel, 2005). While this definition is broad, PBE may be explained by specific elements, such as concentrating the specificity of a place within the community, the integrated approach of the place with curriculum, and experiential and investigative learning (Gruenewald, 2003). Therefore, PBE positions the lives of students and the stories of their communities at the epicenter of curricular lessons. Additionally, PBE builds the teaching and learning process of the classroom in the local community in which students live. Sobel (2004) describes PBE as a process that helps students cultivate deeper connections to their community and amplify their commitment to serving as responsible citizens. These connections between the students' lives, their community, and school helps strengthen the effectiveness of the content lessons in the classroom.

Course Background and Specialized Assignments

The specific course was call Intercultural Context of Schooling. Education students are advised to enroll in this course before they officially apply to the education certification program of their choice. However, due to schedule conflicts, change of majors, and other factors, university students sometimes enroll in this course once they are accepted to the teacher certification program. At the time the course was offered, the University was encouraging the integration of service-learning; therefore, the course asked students to provide at least 1.5 hours weekly to the local housing authority.

A service-learning enriched course is defined by as offering opportunities for the professor to combine learning goals in the course with related service to the community. This is accomplished by finding a community service project that will have a communal benefit to both the university students and the community. This type of course supplementation offers the university students an opportunity to connect community service to the course objectives and goals. This also combines service with course content learning.

The course objectives focused on asking students to explore of what diversity means in formal educational contexts. This process begins with reflecting on, and analyzing, our own experiences as learners who have embodied (and continue to embody) different dimensions of diversity in the classrooms and schools we have attended. The goal of this course was to equip the students to become compassionate critics of educational inequality and effective advocates for the success of diverse learners. This involved: working to overcome biases and assumptions that may have led us to develop simplistic understandings of educational challenges; keeping an open mind as we read and write toward more profound understandings of those challenges; accepting that differences of opinion, priorities, and values really do exist; and taking real people's lives and struggles seriously. This can be accomplished by asking students to experience a journey of developing their intercultural and intracultural awareness through selected readings and assignments.

6

The specialized assignments that supported the course description, objectives and goals centered on offering education students the opportunity to have an intracultural reflection and then an intercultural application. At the beginning of the students are asked to introduce themselves by sharing their definition of culture. This helps establish a baseline of understanding the complexities of what culture means in an educational context for education majors before the selected readings and discussions are completed. As part of the overall experience, students were asked to keep a course journal that included guided notes from the readings, reflection questions based on the readings, and overall weekly reflections that asked students to connect personal experiences to the content learned that week.

The first official assignment students worked on was to create an illustration and video of their personal *Journey Line* to the university. This journey line is focused on their schooling from early childhood to post-secondary. They made a list of their educational experiences, as far back as they remember. They were then asked to include one memorable event of that point. Most students organized the Journey Line by 3-5 years sections. The last section of the Journey Line was them at the University. Students were asked to be creative with the illustration. Once they illustrated the Journey Line, they recorded themselves explaining the Journey Line in a video. They were also asked to view three classmates' videos and include that experience in their weekly reflections. They were asked to observe their classmates' video and make note of the uniqueness, without judgement or comparison. The Journal Line was designed to help students take a introspection on their own schooling experience. Then they were asked to interview at least two family members to collect information to write their *Educational Auto-ethnography*.

The Educational Auto-ethnography assignment guided students through a deep introspection of their family's educational experience. The selected course readings were related to auto-ethnographies of educators with diverse backgrounds. These readings were selected to provide students models for their own auto-ethnography. Once they gather family experiences related to schooling, wrote their educational auto-ethnography using terminology from the readings.

The third major assignment transitioned the students from the introspection to the extrospection of culture; now that they have explored their views and examined their experience of their own culture, they will study other cultures. They first read several articles on culturally relevant pedagogies, such as the funds of knowledge, the use of linguistic assets, storytelling, and incorporating translanguaging for bilingual learners. They first inventoried their own funds of knowledge by thinking of the community assets and family capital they acquired throughout their lives. Then, students selected a school community to study that they would like to teach at once they complete their teacher preparation program. They needed to first physically drive around at least a mile radius from the school campus, and make note of all the resources available, for example, types of businesses, restaurants, medical care, employment opportunities, etc. As they observed the community around the selected school, they were asked to make note of the language usage and cultural references. They then created a photovoice presentation with the information they gathered. This photovoice presentation also included a written assignment where they reflected on what they learned about the community wealth and family capital that they can use once they become teachers to enrich their lessons.

The next significant assignment was a book report on five culturally relevant (CR) literature, called *CR Book Reviews*. Before the assignment, students were asked to write down ten Latinx authors. In the five semesters I have taught this class since 2015, two students named at least three authors. Most of the time, students could not think of any Latinx authors. Then, there were asked to name any author of color. This was activity was designed to show students the need

to include authentic culturally relevant literature in the curriculum. After the pre-assignment exercise of writing a Latinx author list, I showed them several books from Latinx authors from various grade levels, ranging from early childhood to young adult. For their own book report, students could select any cultural background. Some students opted to read five books from the same author. In their book report they included a book summary, significance of the book, and a description of how they could use that book in the classroom. The books selected by the students varied by culture, language, and focus (some focused on social-emotional needs like bullying).

Once they are familiar with authentic culturally relevant literature, the education students are asked to create a children's book with the elements they have studied, like place-based learning and funds of knowledge. The *Children's Intercultural Literature Book* is the culminating project. They have the option to write the book in English, Spanish, or a mix of both. They are also required to create a short content-based activity that aligns to the story. The purpose of the children's book is to integrate the elements of culturally relevant pedagogies into one project that start their own collection of authentic children literature.

Students' Reaction to the Course

The education students in the class reflected weekly on the assigned reading, activities, and the progress on the projects. At the end of the semester, as part of their final exam, they were given the opportunity to offer a *Final Reflection*. Here the expectation was for them to write a reflective essay that elaborated on one specific historical, political, cultural, or sociological issue from the readings, and how it related to the setting, students, and/or events of their service-learning experience and other projects of the class. Some of their comments centered on three themes: deeper understanding of their own cultural experiences, the importance of learning and valuing their future students' community context and funds of knowledge, and the potential impact their understanding of cultural and linguistic assets can have on their future students.

Students that felt the course readings, assignments/projects, and discussions helped them better understand and appreciate their own cultural experiences. Overall, the feeling was that they felt more connected to their family's experiences on cultural and language use. Student 1 wrote, "*At the beginning of the course I learned more about myself and my motivations, about why I want this, what made me feel that I wanted to be a teacher and how I ended up here.*" The student went on to explain the significance of learning about her own educational experience so that when she has her own students, she will be better equipped to understand and value her students' home experiences.

Another student commented how she did not value her Spanish language and cultural experiences growing up, but after reading the course readings, participating in the discussions, and completing the service-learning project, she felt differently. Student 2 wrote, "*This course also showed me how important language and culture is in the classroom. The assigned readings, important projects and service learning at [the local housing authority] can be connected by historical, cultural, and sociological issues.*" She described how she learned about her local community wealth by talking to her family members and gaining a better understanding of how the community contributes to students' education. She stated that before the class, she had not recognized community wealth and family capital, and how that influenced her through her schooling. Student 3 elaborated this point when he wrote, "*The autoethnography assignment brought the reading together because if I don't know where I came from and how my past teachers and community have molded me to who I am today, then I can't expect to do the same for my future students.*"

The other theme found in the *Final Reflection* was the importance of learning and valuing their future students' community wealth and funds of knowledge. In general, the students described how important it was for them to learning about the school community and the resources it offers the families. Many students also commented how the community offers experiences that teachers can use to support content learning. Student 7 wrote, "*I have also learned how to be an effect teacher by using the funds of knowledge from my students to help them succeed. The family of my future students can help me understand how to connect with my students and using their experiences in the classroom.*"

The last theme that formed from the *Final Reflection* was the potential impact the university students' understanding of cultural and linguistic assets can have on their future K-12 students. Student 3 wrote in his reflection, "I could see and understand how authors are tapping into culture and familial capital so that students can enjoy and learn from literature. One of the books I used was *I like Making Tamales*, this book taught mathematical components like measuring and counting and the funds of knowledge used were making tamales, which many Latino children are familiar with." Student 5 wrote, "When students are familiar with literature or with something during the lesson, they are more likely to be engaged and understanding of the subject that is being taught. I saw this in EHA (Edinburg Housing Authority), when some students wanted me to read Spanish books to them because of the familiarity they had with it."

Implications

Using language as an asset in Intercultural Context of Schooling. Education contributed to the shift in language perception on students that is very critical in today's society, especially in a region that has a large portion of the population as native Spanish speakers and/or bilingual with English and Spanish. Developing and recognizing linguistic and cultural wealth is critical for future teachers, especially those of linguistically (bilingual) and culturally diverse students. It is essential to help future educators understand the value of community wealth and family capital by modeling how those skills sets can be treasured tools in the classroom. Course assignments can be designed within a cultural relevant context that can assist university students in better understanding their own cultural experiences and in turn respecting others' cultural diversity. Additionally, allowing students to use their language of strength while also developing both languages (indirectly) provides a more comprehensive understanding of the course content.

Conclusion

In support of the University's vision, and reaction the bilingual teacher shortage, this proposed framework will support the development of future teachers, some bilingual education teachers, that are prepared to not only address the academic needs of mostly Latinx students in the local region, but also prepared to incorporate the cultural and linguistic assets students bring to the schools. As the education field continues to develop more effective instructional methods to better equip our K-12 students for a more global society, the proposed framework offers ideas on how university faculty can guide university students through an introspective and extrospective cultural and linguistic process while learning the course content.

Providing university students an opportunity to submit coursework in their native language or English, so that they can maximize their learning outcomes, models how to value the bilingual skill sets many university students bring to the classroom. As the K-12 student population continues to become more diverse, so should the student population at the university level. This

means that university faculty may need support on how to incorporate culturally relevant pedagogies to more effectively support culturally and linguistically diverse students. Modifying a course, like tapping into students' funds of knowledge, can enhance students' understanding of the coursework at a much higher level. This becomes very critical as we look towards the future demographics of the U.S. schools.

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Philosophizing in Tongues: Cultivating Bilingualism, Biculturalism, and Biliteracy in an Introduction to Latin American Philosophy Course

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Abstract

This article describes my ongoing attempts to more successfully engage the full linguistic repertoires and cultural identities of undergraduate students at a "Hispanic Serving Institution" (HSI) in South Texas by teaching a bilingual Introduction to Latin American Philosophy course in the "Language, Philosophy, and Culture" area of Texas' General Education Core Curriculum. By uncovering the diverse identities, worldviews, and languages of those who were historically excluded from the Eurocentric discipline of philosophy through the conquest and colonization of the Americas, Latin American philosophers offer us new ways of thinking and living by challenging Anglocentric language, philosophy, and culture. As part of the new B3 (Bilingual, Bicultural, and Biliterate) vision of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, the course is designed to draw upon the richly varied bilingualisms and biliteracies of predominantly Latinx students in order to help them honor, theorize, and cultivate their bicultural identities by "philosophizing in tongues" rather than being forced to assimilate to the monolingual ideology that prevails across both mainstream Anglophone philosophy and the system of higher education in the United States of America.

Keywords: Flexible bilingual pedagogy, translanguaging, culturally sustaining pedagogy, Latin American philosophy, Hispanic-serving institution (HSI), dual language bilingual education, bicultural students, biliteracy

"La universidad europea ha de ceder a la universidad americana. La historia de América, de los incas acá, ha de enseñarse al dedillo, aunque no se enseñe la de los arcontes de Grecia. Nuestra Grecia es preferible a la Grecia que no es nuestra. Nos es más necesaria."
—José Martí, "Nuestra América"[2]

"The European university must bow to the American university. The history of America, from the Incas to the present, must be taught in clear detail and to the letter, even if the archons of Greece are overlooked. Our Greece must take priority over the Greece which is not ours. We need it more."
—José Martí, "Our America"[3]

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[2] Originalmente publicado en *La Revista Ilustrada de Nueva York*, Estados Unidos, el 10 de enero de 1891, y en *El Partido Liberal*, México, el 30 de enero de 1891.
[3] English translation by Elinor Randall (Gracia & Millán-Zaibert, 2004).

Philosophizing in Tongues: Cultivating Bilingualism, Biculturalism, and Biliteracy in an Introduction to Latin American Philosophy Course

Introduction and Overview

Imagine yourself teaching the English translation of the Cuban philosopher José Martí's "Nuestra América" to a classroom full of undergraduates in a general education course. Imagine further that the *majority* of your students spoke Spanish before they spoke English and still speak Spanish much of the time, but that the existing system of "bilingual" education in Texas schools "successfully" transitioned them to English-only classes early in their academic careers. Would teaching Martí's essay to them monolingually in English further their academic success? Or would it effectively fail to communicate Martí's famous identification of "Nuestra América" with what we now call "Latin America," fail to engage the Spanish-speaking reality of your students, fail to explore the Americanness of their "Hispanic" or "Latinx" identities,[4] and fail to challenge the widespread assumption among English speakers that "America" is a country rather than a whole continent? When I was hired in 2010 as an Assistant Professor of Philosophy at the University of Texas-Pan American, which became part of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley in 2015, I began teaching philosophy courses monolingually in English to bilingual students like the ones I just asked you to imagine teaching. It took me a few years to realize how bilingual my students were, in part because I am not from the Rio Grande Valley, but also because I was simply doing what was expected of me.

This article describes why I used to teach Introduction to Latin American Philosophy monolingually in English, why I stopped, and how I am now teaching it using a flexible bilingual pedagogy (Creese & Blackledge, 2010), also sometimes called a translanguaging pedagogy (García & Lin, 2017), that has been transformative for my students and for me. By drawing upon the ventajas/assets y conocimientos/knowledge (Rendón, Nora, & Kanagala, 2014) of our richly varied bilingualisms and biliteracies, the revised course contributes to the B3 (bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate) vision of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV). Students have the opportunity to honor, theorize, and cultivate their bicultural identities by "philosophizing in tongues"[5] rather than being forced to assimilate to the monolingual ideology that prevails across both mainstream Anglophone philosophy and the system of higher education in the United States of America.

Historical Framework: Whose University? Whose Philosophy, Language, and Culture?

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[4] I place the federally-recognized term "Hispanic" and the neologism "Latinx" in quotes because their appropriateness is frequently contested by people who prefer other ethnic labels (e.g., Latino/a, Mexican American, Mexican, Chicano/a, Chicanx, etc.) or reject ethnic labels altogether. Throughout the remainder of the article, I typically use "Latinx" for the reasons outlined by (Sanchez, 2019).

[5] The phrase "philosophizing in tongues" honors the philosophical legacy of Gloria Anzaldúa, especially her "Speaking In Tongues: A Letter To 3rd World Women Writers" (Anzaldúa & Moraga, 1983).

José Martí argued for the need to create a university that would truly serve the diverse peoples of "Nuestra América" by teaching the indigenous histories and philosophies of the Incas, Maya, and Aztecs (to name only the most well-known "archons" of what we now call "Latin America"), even if that meant displacing the Greeks or what we now call "the Western canon". Martí's philosophy of education is deeply relevant to contemporary scholarly debates about what it means for today's institutions of higher education to become true *Hispanic-serving* institutions rather than mere *Hispanic-enrolling* institutions (Garcia, 2019). Any institution of higher education in the United States that has at least 25% Hispanic undergraduate enrollment will be designated by the federal government as an HSI, but this is not enough. A designation comes from the outside; an identity must be assumed from within. Administrators, faculty, staff, and students must work together to build a Latinx-serving organizational culture and institutional identity that: 1) helps Latinx students experience a sense of belonging on campus, 2) develops and reinforces a positive ethnic identity among Latinx students, 3) connects Latinx students with faculty and staff on campus who speak Spanish; 4) offers ethnic studies curricula and other courses with culturally-sustaining pedagogies, and 5) supports faculty, staff, and administrators who both serve as role models and agents of change who "disrupt barriers to success for Latinx students" (Garcia, 2017, pp. 113S-114S).

As a faculty member at UTRGV, where our vision is to become an authentic HSI by becoming a bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate (B3) university, I am deeply committed to this work. The question I have asked myself repeatedly while redesigning "PHIL 1305: Introduction to Latin American Philosophy" as a bilingual course is: *Que es nuestra América*?, especially as it appears from the perspective of the Rio Grande Valley, where more people speak Spanish than English. But before we get to the Rio Grande Valley, we must consider the system of higher education across Texas, where Introduction to Latin American Philosophy is rarely or never offered.[6] In contrast, "Introduction to Philosophy" is listed as PHIL 1301 in the Texas Common Course Numbering System and offered across Texas as part of the "Language, Philosophy, and Culture" area of the General Education Core Curriculum—i.e., the 42 Semester Credit Hours in "liberal arts, humanities, and sciences and political, social, and cultural history that all undergraduate students of an institution of higher education are required to complete before receiving an academic undergraduate degree" (Texas Education Code 61.821-822). In our pluralistic world of languages, philosophies, and cultures, the singular nouns that name the Foundational Component Area "Language, Philosophy, and Culture" hint at the Anglocentric ideology pervading the history of higher education in Texas: the Language is English, the Philosophy is European, and the culture is Anglo. Rarely is the point put so flatly today, but it would have certainly been clear to the authors of the Texas Constitution of 1876 who called for the establishment of "a university of the first class" to serve "the people of Texas" ("History of The University of Texas System").

But what would "a university of the first class" look like today if it was deliberately built to serve "the [Hispanic] people of Texas"? When UTRGV was founded in 2015 it became the largest HSI university in Texas and the second largest nationwide, with 29,370 Hispanic or Latinx students constituting 90.5% of the student body enrolled in Fall 2020 ("Fall 2020 Fast Facts").

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[6] There is no master catalog of courses across institutions of higher education in Texas, but UTRGV is certainly the only institution to offer an Introduction to Latin American Philosophy as part of the general education core curriculum. A few other Texas institutions—e.g., University of Texas at El Paso, Texas A&M University, and Texas State University—offer advanced courses in Latin American philosophy.

HSIs do not collect data on the linguistic abilities of students, but consider the bilingual language profiles that I gathered from my students just before the COVID-19 pandemic.[7] On average, my students started learning Spanish 1.3 years before they started learning English and thus reported that they felt comfortable speaking Spanish before they felt comfortable speaking English. Yet they reported very little instruction (less than 4 years) in Spanish from elementary school to college, whereas they reported an average of 12 years of schooling in English. In a normal week with friends, students reported speaking Spanish roughly 30% of the time and English roughly 70% of the time. This also matches the level at which they reported thinking in Spanish (30% of the time) and English (70% of the time). However, in an average week with their families, they reported speaking more Spanish (60% of the time) than English (40% of the time). On average, students rated their ability to understand English as 10% higher than their ability to understand Spanish, rated their English-speaking ability as 20% higher than their Spanish-speaking ability, and rated their ability to write in English an average of 35% higher than their ability to write in Spanish. Most students also reported that they felt more like themselves when speaking English. But they nevertheless identified more with Spanish-speaking culture, and they were slightly more desirous of being perceived as native Spanish-speakers than as native English-speakers. Although a more extensive university-wide survey is still needed, my smaller survey clearly represents the bilingualism, biculturalism, and biliteracy of students that my original English monolingual course was failing to recognize, honor, and engage.

Tragically, it took higher education in the Rio Grande Valley almost a full century to stop denigrating Spanish—the predominant local language as well as the dominant language of Latin American philosophy—and begin treating it as a valuable academic language. Edinburg College was founded in 1927, became Pan American College in 1952, Pan American University in 1971, University of Texas-Pan American in 1989, and merged with The University of Texas-Brownsville to form the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley in 2015. Part of UTRGV's new vision was to become a bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate (B3) university by offering courses across the entire university curriculum in English, in Spanish, and bilingually (Dávila-Montes, González Núñez, & Guajardo, 2019). This represented a major attempt to institutionally reverse course from what the philosopher and Pan American University alumna Gloria Anzaldúa analyzed in her groundbreaking "How to Tame a Wild Tongue" (Anzaldúa, 2012). Anzaldúa and other Mexican American students were forced to take a "speech test" and "speech classes" at Pan American College/University from the 1950s to the 1970s to get rid of their Mexican accents and underscore Anglo-accented English as the only acceptable academic language (Cole & Johnson, 2015). Anzaldúa powerfully summarized these attempts to academically enshrine an Anglocentric monolingualism as follows: "*El Anglo con cara de inocente nos arrancó la lengua*" (Anzaldúa, 2012, p. 76; italics in original).

This is precisely what was and still is happening across Texas and nationwide insofar as we fail to academically respect and engage the varieties of Spanish spoken by so many students and their families. When I first offered Introduction to Latin American Philosophy at the University of Texas-Pan American in 2011, I did what was expected of me by teaching it exclusively in English. So even though I was doing something rare and good by introducing

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[7] In Fall 2019, I administered a Spanish-English Bilingual Language Profile to 62 students enrolled in PHIL 1305: Introduction to Latin American Philosophy across two course sections with a response rate of 92% (57 responses). I adapted the original instrument from (Birdsong, Gertken, & Amengual, 2012) by simplifying it for teaching rather than research purposes.

Latinx students to Latin American philosophy, I was still unintentionally contributing to the ongoing minoritization of bilingual students in the RGV. Far from being a neutral language of instruction, English is effectively weaponized when it functions as the *only* acceptable academic language, an act of "linguistic terrorism" that Anzaldúa illustrates by quoting Ray Gwyn Smith: "Who is to say that robbing a people of its language is less violent than war?" (Anzaldúa, 2012, p. 75). Inspired by the discursive shift toward the term *emergent bilinguals* and away from deficit-model terms like *Limited English Proficient*, Kip Austin Hinton proposed the more accurate label of *monolingual education* to describe non-bilingual programs and classrooms and highlight their subtractive nature in bilingual contexts (2016). From the perspective of the dominant raciolinguistic ideology of Anglocentric monolingualism that structures most educational institutions in the USA, the Rio Grande Valley is full of *minorities*. But from a more critical, historical, and place-based perspective, the Mexican and/or Mexican American people in the RGV who speak Spanish are the overwhelming *majority*, even though they have been *minoritized* for over a century, making them a "historically minoritized population" (Dávila-Montes, González Núñez, & Guajardo, 2019). Data from the American Community Survey across the RGV for the 2014-2018 period shows that a *minority* (21.1%) of the 5 years and over population speaks only English at home, whereas the vast *majority* (80.7%) speaks Spanish at home. Since 92.6% of UTRGV's student body in 2020-2021 enrolled from the RGV—where, again, 80% of households regularly speak Spanish—our bilingual students do not constitute anything close to a numerical minority, but they have been unfairly *minoritized* by monolingual educational programs and schools.

96% of the 438,396 students enrolled in the Region One Education Service Center area that contains the Rio Grande Valley are classified by the state of Texas as Hispanic ("Region One Demographic Profile 2020"), which means that 96% of students and their families can reasonably claim a right to a B3 heritage and future. And yet only 7.5% of students in Region One are enrolled in a dual language bilingual program that can be said to serve B3 goals. Even if we focus exclusively on the 38% of students in Region One who are formally classified as English Learners (ELs) and thus entitled by law to a bilingual program, a mere 16.5% of them are enrolled in a dual language program. The overwhelming majority of English Learners are thus in "bilingual" and ESL programs with "transitional" (read: *monolingual*) academic goals. And even reporting that 16.5% of all English Learners in Region One participate in a dual language program is potentially misleading for three reasons: 1) two-thirds of these dual language students are from just two of the thirty-eight independent school districts in Region One;[8] 2) IDEA, the major charter that serves over 50,000 students in Region One does not offer dual language; and 3) only one district (Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD) currently has a dual language program that adequately prepares students for a B3 college experience by going all the way from Pre-K to 12th.

If we include former English Learners and students reclassified from English Learner status, then well over 85% of Region One students who have entered the school system from a Spanish-dominant position are being systematically placed in transitional "bilingual" programs with monolingual English aims. It has been more than twenty years since Angela Valenzuela incisively criticized the process of "subtractive schooling" by which US-Mexican youth progress through schools designed to make them less rather than more bilingual (1999), but it is still the

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[8] Approximately 35% of all dual language students in Region One are enrolled in Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD. Roughly 32% are enrolled in La Joya ISD ("IDRA School Finance Dashboard"). The two largest districts in Region One, Brownsville ISD and Edinburg CISD, do not offer any dual language programs.

dominant paradigm in the Rio Grande Valley today. As a result of the Chicano/a or Mexican American Civil Rights movement, experimental additive bilingual education programs were demanded by the local community and began to receive some support in a handful of local schools and at our university in the early 1970s. But the overall legacy of the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 and its subsequent development was subtractive and assimilationist so that "thousands of teachers and school leaders have been trained to implement bilingual education not as a means to raise bilingual or biliterate children, but rather to create English-speaking and English-literate children" (Dávila-Montes, González Núñez, & Guajardo, 2019, p. 45). Contrast this with the exciting B3 alternative envisioned by UTRGV:

> After decades of submitting to the assimilationist impulses of the Bilingual Education Act, the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley has committed itself to a sustained analysis of the history of bilingualism in this region. During the past decade, faculty and administrators have gradually built a Center for Bilingual Studies, a Center for Mexican American Studies, and an Office of Translation and Interpreting, all of which are overseen by a B3 (Bilingual, Bicultural, Biliterate) Institute. The B3 Institute's broad goal is to create a bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate institution (see De La Trinidad et al., 2017). This falls in line with UTRGV's inaugural strategic plan, which calls for the development of a bilingual university that also values biculturalism and biliteracy. From a historical standpoint, the explicit call for bilingualism directly counters the spirit and purpose s of the speech test and the intentional work to "tame the wild tongue" of Mexican-American students (Dávila-Montes, González Núñez, & Guajardo, 2019).

From a historical standpoint, UTRGV's B3 vision should be understood as organically related to some of the most important demands made by local high school and college students participating in the Chicano/a movement. For example, the Edcouch-Elsa High School Walkout of 1968 took place less than 15 miles east of UTRGV's Edinburg campus. Some of the estimated 192 students who participated in the walkouts had been in conversation with members of Pan American College's chapter of the Mexican American Youth Organization (MAYO). Two of the fifteen demands they shared with the Edcouch-Elsa school board on November 7, 1968 are especially resonant with UTRGV's B3 vision:

> 8. That, as Chicano students, we be allowed to speak our mother tongue, Spanish, on school premises without being subjected to humiliating or unjust penalties,

> 9. That courses be introduced, as a regular part of the curriculum, to show the contributions of Mexicans and Mexican Americans to this state and region. For instance, factual accounts of the history of the Southwest and Texas, courses in Mexican history and culture. Also, that qualified, certified teachers be hired to teach these courses (Senate, 1971, p. 2485).

For our purposes, it is important to note that these two demands are practically and conceptually separate. The right to speak Spanish without being punished is presented alongside the demand for courses in Mexican and Mexican American history and culture, but there does not seem to be any explicit demand that these courses be taught in Spanish or bilingually. In an educational context where students were routinely humiliated and punished for merely *speaking* Spanish, it would have certainly been difficult to even imagine much less demand that these courses be *taught* in Spanish or bilingually.

This same lack of imagination, which I suffered from the first time that I taught Introduction to Latin American Philosophy, pervades the subdiscipline of Latin American philosophy in the United States. Consider, for instance, the American Philosophical Association's *Newsletter on Hispanic/Latino Issues in Philosophy*, which has been published twice a year since 2001. Many issues feature articles on how to teach Latin American philosophy at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. There are outstanding discussions of course design, including possibilities for course content (books, articles, films, artworks, etc.), innovative assignments, alternative grading structures, high-impact pedagogies, and more. There is also a consistent stream of laments that more materials are not available in English translation, but never once has the possibility been explicitly raised that Latin American philosophy courses in the USA could be taught bilingually or in Spanish. Only two articles, one by Cynthia Paccacerqua and the other by Mariana Alessandri—both of whom are also Associate Professors of Philosophy at UTRGV— explicitly characterize some of the college students being taught Latin American philosophy as bilingual.[9] Consider Paccacerqua's description:

> This syllabus was designed with a particular student population in mind; as a professor of philosophy at UTPA, my students are predominantly Mexican-American and are mostly from the Río Grande Valley. This means, among other things, that my students are to a large extent bilingual (in varying degrees); have a good understanding of the history of U.S.-Mexico relations; are aware of the nature of generational differences among members of the Mexican-American community (i.e., among the Mexican people who have always resided in Texas and the subsequent arrival of Mexican peoples by crossing the later established border); have the lived experience of the political, cultural, and social dynamics of border life; live in what is perceived as a relatively culturally homogeneous Mexican-American community; have a rather strong identity attachment to the idea of *mestizaje* (Paccacerqua, 2011, p. 18).

Paccacerqua's characterization of our students is refreshingly focused upon their experience, upon who they are and what they know rather than upon merely what they lack.[10] But only very recently did our university begin the process of systematically building upon our students' bilingual experiences, identities, conocimientos, and ventajas (Rendón, Nora, & Kanagala, 2014). As a Rio Grande Valley native, alumna of Pan American College, and participant in the Chicano/a movement, Anzaldúa beautifully expressed the linkage between bilingualism, biculturalism, and

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[9] One other article (Leyva & Reed-Sandoval, 2016) thoughtfully discusses the importance of teaching bilingual students bilingually, but it is focused upon a program designed for children The article's conclusion would nevertheless apply equally well to college students: "Importantly, engaging in philosophical dialogue with children and youth in *both* Spanish and English (that is, using both languages in a single session) not only responds to local historical resistance to anti-Mexican linguistic discrimination, it also expands kids' opportunities to engage philosophically" (21).

[10] The more typical "deficit view" of Latinx students is explored by Jose Saldivar in the present volume and well-summarized here: "Low-income, first-generation students are typically presumed to have a very limited ability to engage in a collegiate experience and successfully complete college. Educators who work with Latin@ and other underserved students under the premise of incompetence are often guided by an unchallenged discourse fueled with deficit language such as: "incapable of learning," "not college material," "speaking with accents," "high risk," "high maintenance," "disadvantaged," "remedial," "underprepared," or "culturally deprived" (Rendón, Nora, & Kanagala, 2014, p. 4).

biliteracy and imagined a future in which she and other bilingual students could more fully and proudly participate in the educational system:

> Ethnic identity is twin skin to linguistic identity—I am my language. Until I can take pride in my language, I cannot take pride in myself. Until I can accept as legitimate Chicano Texas Spanish, Tex-Mex, and all the other languages I speak, I cannot accept the legitimacy of myself. Until I am free to write bilingually and to switch codes without having always to translate, while I still have to speak English or Spanish when I would rather speak Spanglish, and as long as I have to accommodate the English speakers rather than having them accommodate me, my tongue will be illegitimate (Anzaldúa, 2012, p. 81).

Anzaldúa pushed me to redesign my course to affirm Spanish as philosophically, linguistically, and culturally valuable in order to contribute to the "Language, Philosophy, and Culture" section of our undergraduate core curriculum in a way that decolonizes the Anglocentric ideology that frames higher education in the United States.[11] I am still wrestling with how best to do it, but I am at least prepared to give a preliminary report based on teaching increasingly B3 versions of PHIL 1305: Introduction to Latin American Philosophy over the last three academic years.

A Decolonizing Bilingual Introduction to Latin American Philosophy for UTRGV Students

When my children were born in 2012 and 2014, I began to experience the difficulty of raising them to be bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate in an Anglocentric educational context. Without this lived experience, which Anzaldúa theorized as *conocimiento,*[12] I probably would not have realized how wrongheaded it was to teach Introduction to Latin American as a monolingual English class to predominantly bilingual students. Fortunately, the birth of UTRGV and the first formulations of its B3 vision followed directly upon the early joys and problems of raising my children in Spanish along with my wife and colleague Mariana Alessandri. In her article thinking through what kind of world we should be building for our children and our students, she wrote:

> Whether Anzaldúa meant her speaking Spanish in the classroom to be a political act, it was likely *taken* as one. Chicano Spanish, Spanglish, code-switching, bilingualism, diglossia—however one wants to refer to the multilingualism that is present here in the form of English and Spanish—is still considered dangerous today; Spanish and Spanglish are contentious in and outside of the classroom. I suggest that we can use this to our

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[11] Perhaps there is a case to be made that *ethnic/racial* Anglocentrism is challenged by many college courses in the USA, but *linguistic* Anglocentrism remains almost entirely unquestioned.
[12] Anzaldúa ambitious philosophical attempt to present *conocimiento* as "an overarching theory of consciousness" that "tries to encompass all the dimensions of life" and to "connect the inner life of the mind and spirit to the outer worlds of action" is developed in many places, including (Anzaldúa & Keating, 2000, pp. 177-178). Her reflections on *conocimiento* as "suddenly just knowing" as "a consequence of specific experiences" is summarized here: "'Conocimiento' is just a good old-fashioned word that means knowledge, or learning, or lo que conoces. When you're about to change, when something in your life is transforming itself, you get this 'Aha! So this is what it's about.' That to me is conocimiento" (Lara, 2005, p. 44).

advantage; since using a border tongue is already read as a political act, we should use it for political purposes. Speaking a border tongue says that *atravesados* are legitimate, that the tongue spoken here— the otherwise "secret language"—is to be made public rather than kept private, affirmed instead of denied (Alessandri, 2015).

I have thus designed subsequent iterations of my course (2018-2021) to be progressively more bilingual.

If we momentarily pretend that "course content" is language-neutral, my redesigned course remains similar to the small number of other Latin American philosophy courses offered by institutions of higher education in the USA. This is true for at least two reasons: 1) I have followed the longstanding practice of designing my course by borrowing from my professional peers: trying to ascertain what materials are working well for professors who teach similar classes and whose syllabi are online or whose courses are more carefully presented in the *APA Newsletter on Hispanic/Latino Issues in Philosphy* (see for example Fall 2017, Vol. 7, no. 1); 2) a major limitation of teaching Introduction to Latin American Philosophy in an English-dominant context is the relative lack of texts available in English translation.[13]

So, in one sense, redesigning my course to be bilingual was as simple as providing the Spanish originals of the texts I was already assigning as English translations. In a few cases, I also needed to provide Spanish translations of the Nahautl, Latin, and Portuguese originals. Here is the resulting list of Spanish-language texts along with their original dates of publication (as well as the original languages of publication when they are translations):

1. Julio Cortázar, "Axolotl" (1956)
2. Enrique Dussel, *1492. El encubrimiento del otro: Hacia el origen del mito de la modernidad* (1992)
3. Miguel León-Portilla, *La filosofía náhuatl estudiada en sus fuentes* (1956)
4. Bernardino de Sahagún, Alonso Vegerano de Cuauhitlán, Martín Jacobita, y Andreés Leonardo de Tlatelolco, *Los diálogos de 1524: Coloquios y doctrina Cristiana con que los doce frailes de San Francisco, enviados por el papa Adriano VI y por el emperador Carlos V, convirtieron a los indios de la Nueva España. En lengua mexicano y española* (facsimile edition published in 1986 from the 1564 Nahuatl and Spanish original)
5. Bartolomé de las Casas, *Apología o declaración y defensa universal de los derechos del hombre y de los pueblos* (Spanish translation of the 1550 Latin original)
6. Bernardino de Sahagún y sus colaboradores indígenas, *El Códice Florentino* o *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España* (Spanish portion of the 1577 Nahautl and Spanish original)
7. Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, "Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz" (1691)
8. Simón Bolívar, "Carta de Jamaica" y "El Discurso de Angostura" (1819)
9. Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, *Facundo, o civilización y barbari*e (1845)
10. Juan Bautista Alberdi, *Bases y puntos de partida para la organización política de la República Argentina* (1852)
11. José Martí, "Nuestra América" (1891) y "Mi raza" (1893)

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[13] As a scholar, much of my work has been dedicated to improving this textual situation by publishing two philosophical translations of essays written in Spanish by Mexican philosophers (Enrique Dussel and Antonio Caso), publishing a 10,000-word overview of "Latin American Philosophy" in *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, and contributing a chapter on Mexican and Mexican American Philosophy to (Sanchez, 2019)

12. José Carlos Mariátegui, "El problema primario del Perú" (1924) y "El problema del indio" (1928)
13. Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Hacia una teología de la liberación" (1968)
14. Enrique Dussel, *Filosofía de la liberación* (1971)
15. Paulo Freire, *Pedagogía del oprimido* (Spanish translation of the 1968 Portuguese original)
16. Rigoberto Menchú, *Me llamo Rigoberta Menchú y así me nació la conciencia* (1982)
17. Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional, "Ley Revolucionaria de Mujeres" (1993) y "Primera Declaración de la Selva Lacandona" (1994)
18. Gloria Anzaldúa, "La Prieta" (1981) and *Borderlands/La Frontera*: *The New Mestiza* (1987)

This reading list points to the plurality of places and languages—and thus the plurality of philosophies and cultures—throughout Latin America. In my previous monolingual English Introduction to Latin American Philosophy course, it was easier to miss the significance of the fact that the philosophies we study were originally published in Nahautl, Latin, Spanish, Portuguese, and Tex-Mex. The philosophies, languages, and cultures covered in an introductory course can never hope to be exhaustive or even comprehensive, but I aim to make them representative. Nahautl represents Indigenous Philosophy, Latin represents the importance of the Medieval Christian worldview and its impact on the Americas through European conquest and colonization, and Spanish represents the bulk of the Latin American philosophical tradition, with the major exception of Portuguese, which represents Brazilian Philosophy. The language of Gloria Anzaldúa's work is contentious to name, but it is the closest to the bilingual tongues and bicultural identities of my students, and she invites her readers to approach it with an open heart and mind in the last paragraph of her preface to *Borderlands/La Frontera*:

> The switching of "codes" in this book from English to Castillian Spanish to the North Mexican dialect to Tex-Mex to a sprinkling of Nahuatl to a mixture of all of these, reflects my language, a new language—the language of the Borderlands. There, at the juncture of cultures, languages cross-pollinate and are revitalized; they die and are born. Presently this infant language, this bastard language, Chicano Spanish, is not approved by any society. But we Chicanos no longer feel that we need to beg entrance, that we need always to make the first overture—to translate to Anglos, Mexicans and Latinos, apology blurting out of our mouths with every step. Today we ask to be met halfway. This book is our invitation to you—from the new *mestizas* (2012, p. 20).

I am not Hispanic or Latinx by birth, but I am a cultural and linguistic *mestizo* by choice in the sense that Anzaldúa develops in "*La conciencia de la mestiza:* Towards a New Consciousness" (2012). My course tries to meet Anzaldúa and my students—most of whom are Mexican, Mexican American, Latinx, or Hispanic by birth—halfway by making our classroom a place where we philosophize in tongues, discovering and/or uncovering the Spanish (and the Nahautl in the Spanish) that lies just underneath or outside the monolingual English classrooms that have colonized the RGV. In the process, we can discover and/or uncover more than five centuries of indigenous, Spanish, Mexican, and Pan American roots that make us who we are and our campus in Edinburg, TX what it is.

Ordinarily, a philosophy course taught in the USA would provide all the course readings in English, covering over the roots of any ideas, concepts, or texts that have their origins in other languages. But when I provide all the course readings in a Spanish course pack (as well as an

English course pack), students can plainly see that almost all of the readings were originally published in Spanish. With three types of exceptions—students who are Mexican nationals, or who were educated at least partially in Mexico, or who were fortunate enough to have participated in a dual language program that ran all the way through high school—most students have never been encouraged to read difficult academic texts in Spanish. Many are surprised and excited to discover that they can do so. If they report back that they have trouble reading the Spanish, I explain to them that they will most likely have trouble reading the English as well because philosophy is hard to read in any language, especially at first! But I also explain that they are better prepared to understand the course readings given their degrees of bilingualism and borderlands experiences than the students I used to teach at Penn State.

My larger aim is to encourage students to go from being *ambivalent* about their bilingualism and bicultural identities to being *proud* of their bilingualism and bicultural identities. The path to achieve this is theorized best by Anzaldúa in the readings we discuss near the end of the course, but the whole course is structured historically to explore how our identities and worldviews have been shaped by European colonization and indigenous resistance across the Americas. The course develops the basic thesis that most Americans (North Americans and Latin Americans) are in fact *mestizos*—complex mixtures of the languages, philosophies, and cultures that have mixed in the Americas since 1492—but that our diverse heritages have been systematically covered over by the Eurocentric and Anglocentric education system so that we have trouble recognizing the "Latin American" side of "American" history and identity.

This "covering over" is theorized by Enrique Dussel as *el encubrimiento del otro* as part of what he calls *la invención de America* (1992). Challenging the simplistic narrative that Christopher Columbus *discovered* America in 1492, Dussel argues that Columbus *invented* the Indians by projecting an Asiatic character onto them because he wrongly believed that he had arrived in the West Indies. The Spanish *conquistadores y colonizadores* who came after him followed suit by violently "covering over" the indigenous peoples rather than truly encountering them as human beings. In an analogous way, the Spanish-speaking and Mexican or Latinx cultural characteristics of our students are typically "covered over" by Anglocentric educational ideology and practices. In other words, our students been academically taught to disassociate themselves from Spanish and their Mexican, Latin American, and/or Latinx identities.

To help students begin to reflect on the history of this *encubrimiento* and how it might still haunt us, I have them prepare for our discussion of Dussel's work by conducting a self-quiz. I ask them to take out a blank sheet of paper and list the names of as many Latin American countries as they can think of. I also ask them to list as many Latin American languages as they can. Emphasizing that this activity is not for a grade, I have students report how many countries and languages they were able to name. The following pattern consistently emerges: the vast majority of students cannot name more than two or three Latin American countries (besides Mexico, no country shows up consistently on their lists). At most 5%-10% of the students can successfully name more than five Latin American (or Caribbean) countries. There is usually some discussion about whether Puerto Rico is a country, which leads to a broader conversation about whether Latin American includes the Caribbean. I then show students the list of 33 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean according to the United Nations, and I ask them to brainstorm reasons that might explain why we as a class can name so few of them. Inevitably, someone will point out that they have been taught nothing (or almost nothing) about Latin America in

school.[14] As for Latin American languages, students can only consistently name Spanish. One or two might name Portuguese. Most semesters, no one names an indigenous language like Quechua, Mayan, Guarani, Aymara, or Nahautl (to name only the top five language groups among approximately 30 million speakers of indigenous languages in Latin America). At this point, I think students expect me to shame them for their ignorance following the deficit model, but I instead point out how these results illustrate Dussel's thesis that the indigenous languages, philosophies, and cultures of the Americas have ironically been "covered over" rather than encountered in the "discovery" of America. As we proceed to further discuss how America was invented (rather than discovered) by Columbus and other Europeans, I ask students to consider the possibility that Latin America—and by extension their Latinx heritage—has been "covered over" by the fact that they are not taught about it in school. In other words, their "ignorance" does not reflect their identity; it is rather something they have been taught! The very same public school system that has labeled them as "Hispanic" or "Latinx" or "English Learner" was carefully designed to prevent their encounter with the ongoing history of colonization and resistance in the Americas that makes them who they are.

In fact, most Latinx students have been taught that assimilating to an "American" way of being and doing things is the only way to succeed, but this "American" identity has been invented in a way that covers over many Americans. In contrast, my course highlights *multiple* ways of being American, including bilingual and bicultural ways, so that students gain a philosophical perspective that enables them to embrace *both* the U.S.-American aspects of their culture and identity *and* the Mexican or Latin American aspects of their culture and identity. I frame this by saying that the course will offer them the opportunity to discover Latin American philosophy and reflect upon how it is related to their past, present, and future.

Examples of Flexible Bilingual Teaching Strategies

I am always nervous on the first day of class, and speaking Spanish with anyone besides my own children makes me even more nervous. So I begin introducing myself and then the course in English. Here is the first paragraph of the course description from the English version of my syllabus:

> To get an idea of how this historical Introduction to Latin American Philosophy will work, let's think critically about what people mean when they say that Christopher Columbus *discovered* America. Could Columbus truly discover a "New World" if roughly 50 million people already lived there (about the same number of people who lived in Europe at the time)? Instead of speaking about the "discovery" of "America," should we conceptualize these events and their legacies as: 1) the European *invention* of America, 2) the European *conquest* of millions of native peoples, and/or 3) the European *colonization* of more than one quarter of the Earth's lands (none of which were called "America" by the various peoples who had lived there for at least 15,000 years)? What then is America (or Latin America)? Who are the Americans (or the Latin Americans or Amerindians)? What are their philosophies? Is the story of America (or Latin America) a story of civilization and progress, a story of colonialism and violence? What does Latin American Philosophy have

[14] There are usually at least a few students who received all, most, or much of their schooling in Mexico or another Latin American country. These students can typically name dozens of Latin American countries, which just proves the point.

to teach us here today in the South Texas-Northern Mexico borderlands? These are the kinds of questions that we'll think through carefully as we study over 500 years of Latin American Philosophy.

When I get to the end of the first page of the syllabus, I switch to Spanish. I explain (in Spanish) how it makes me uncomfortable to speak Spanish, but that I also think it is a beautiful language, that I had to learn it in order to become an expert in Latin American philosophy, and that I am so dedicated to my children growing up bilingually that I spoke with them exclusively in Spanish until my first child, Santiago, was five years old and his brother, Sebastián, was three. Después de contar esa historia personal, explico un poco de la visión B3 de UTRGV, e invito los estudiantes hablar English, Español, o Espanglish como quieran. Entonces empiezo a filosofar en español, preguntando a los estudiantes: *¿Quién descubrió América?* A veces alguien contesta que era los vikingos, pero normalmente me contestan: *Cristóbal Colón descubrió América.* Entonces sigo con otra pregunta*: ¿Se puede descubrir un lugar donde ya viven 50 millones de personas?* If everything goes well, students begin to argue with me and each other about the philosophical definition of *discover*. If everything goes *really* well, the discussion takes place in Spanish, English, and Tex-Mex. For the rest of the semester, we use the bilingual course readings to explore core issues of Latin American philosophy, especially as they pertain to language and identity.

Getting each student to use their full language repertoire can be challenging. Many find it difficult to speak Spanish in the classroom, even though they might find it perfectly normal to speak Spanish with friends or at home. But that just gives us more to talk about as we explore why and how this happens. The linguistic foundation of the course is the fact that all readings are provided in both Spanish and English, and I refer to both versions of the text in every class, using mostly Spanish when discussing the Spanish text and mostly English when discussing the English. Some days, when I am feeling brave, I try to challenge myself by teaching more in Spanish than in English, but I rarely succeed. In any case, I try to respond to students in whichever language they address me in, or to translanguage with them if they translanguage with me. I like to think that being open and vulnerable about my own linguistic abilities, limitations, and desire for growth helps encourage students to step outside their own linguistic comfort zones, or perhaps more accurately, to expand their sense of where they feel *en casa* to our classroom and the university.

Of course, some students never choose to read, speak, or write in more than one language, and I make it clear that they will not be penalized. They can earn an A in the course using just one language. Instead of trying to force a language policy on them using some kind of stick in the tradition of linguistic terrorism, I offer them carrots by continuously incentivizing the use of more than one language with bonus points. For example, if they choose to take their first quiz in English, they can earn bonus points for writing even one of their answers on the second quiz in Spanish or for taking the Spanish version of the quiz but writing their answers in English. I use the same basic incentive structure for the course's three major essay assignments: a student who writes their first essay in English can receive points for writing their second essay in Spanish or even for writing a paragraph in Spanish or Spanglish if writing their whole 1500-word essay that way is too daunting. Students have multiple options for their final exam, but one of them includes producing a 3-5 minute digital testimonio that relates one of the topics discussed in class to their

own experiences or those of their family (Benmayor, 2012).[15] I often find that students who did not feel comfortable with texts in Spanish nevertheless find it natural to narrate their testimonios in Spanish or by translanguaging. Regardless of what we are doing inside or outside of class, my aim throughout the course is twofold: to encourage bilingual and biliterate practices and, in doing so, to help students recognize these bicultural aspects of their identities as valuable and worth cultivating even though most have been trained *not* to do so in academic settings.

An anonymous written comment in response to the question "How has this class changed the way you see yourself?" illustrates the best of what I can hope for, and what I am always trying to redesign the course to achieve more fully:

> Mi perspectiva cambió. Ahora veo al mundo con otros ojos. Pienso más al fondo las cosas, recapacite, encuentro estrategia para solucionarlo y ya no sentir esa pena como con my native language dónde no quería ni hablar en español por el miedo de ser avergonzada por mis compañeros, pero ya no, porque Texas era antes territorio mexicano, so why feel pena?

In the words of another student:

> I had always been ashamed of the Mexican part of me. At a young age I witnessed how my kind of people were treated and it just made me want to hide my Spanish, but now I see myself as unique for being able to have two languages, or even three.

Building Institutional Support for Bilingual and Spanish Course Sections

The first two times I offered this course bilingually, in Spring 2018 and Fall 2019, there was no official "X" designation for bilingual course sections. When UTRGV first began piloting sections of formally designated bilingual course sections in Fall 2016, bilingual or translanguaging sections were labeled with the letter "E" for *español*. Spanish-only or at least Spanish-dominant courses did not have their own designation.[16] Then, to more clearly mark which sections were Spanish-only or Spanish-dominant, the Registrar decided to designate these Spanish sections with an "E," temporarily leaving translanguaging or bilingual sections like mine unmarked. But in Fall 2020, the Registrar implemented the current arrangement of "E" for e*español* and "X" for bilingual courses, and my course sections received a formal bilingual designation for the first time.

I mention this transition in labeling course sections to illustrate the challenges UTRGV has faced even in establishing the basic infrastructure for bilingual courses. Another major hurdle, especially for my colleagues who teach Spanish-only or Spanish-dominant "E" sections, was getting UTRGV's Center for Online Learning and Teaching Technology to create a fully Spanish user interface and course shell to use on Blackboard, or getting UTRGV's Office of Faculty Success and Diversity to update and distribute a Spanish syllabus template each semester. To this day, the software used by the Registrar's office cannot handle accent marks, so a student whose

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[15] For this assignment, I remain grateful to a 2013 Faculty Development Program Grant that enabled me to participate in a 2-day workshop called "Incorporating Digital *Testimonios* as Critical Pedagogy" along with four other faculty affiliates of Mexican American Studies.

[16] For more on the institutional history and context surrounding bilingual or translanguaging course sections at UTRGV, see (Ramirez & Saldívar, 2020).

last name is Peña will appear on my course roster as Pena, a microaggression that completely changes the meaning of their name. But at least anecdotally, I noticed a considerable shift in how much Spanish my students were using after my course was formally designated by the Registrar as bilingual. The "X" designation effectively conveys UTRGV's formal academic recognition of the equal legitimacy of Spanish for course purposes, and I think it emboldened more students to speak, read, and/or write in Spanish or Spanglish. At the end of the semester, students anonymously completed their standard course evaluations, but I also added these optional questions:

This X course section was taught bilingually (English and Spanish). Do you think UTRGV should offer more bilingual classes?
        98% of respondents (50 out of 51) answered "Yes"

What recommendations would you give Dr. Stehn to improve the bilingual aspects of the course?

        The responses varied, but every single one cast the bilingual aspects of the course in a positive light. A few students mentioned that keeping up with our Spanish conversations was difficult but worth it. Others pointed out ways that the course still had more English than Spanish and made helpful suggestions about how I could incorporate more Spanish. Many expressed appreciation that they could use both languages, e.g., "I loved that I was able to show both my American and Mexican side […] I was able to type my essays in English and switch to Spanish to really show the emphasis of what I believed."
        Student comments also suggest that they found the bilingual classroom environment to be *both* academically more challenging *and* more comfortable, which strikes me as the perfect winning combination. Here is a student response that clearly articulates this sense of comfort:

> I think the course itself and Dr. Stehn give the students a sense of freedom or comfort of being who we are, therefore it's not so much the quantity of how many times we speak in Spanish or English, but rather that we feel comfortable enough to talk with whichever we feel most comfortable in that moment/day. Anxiety or nervousness can increase the accent of a non-english speaker, so when speaking in large crowds, it helps to know that we are not forced to talk in either. We won't be reprimanded because we all understand what the other person is saying, and eventually by the end of the course, I noticed how people who were shy to speak in Spanish were trying it out, and vice versa with Spanish speakers who were shy to speak in English. People came out of their shell.

Conclusion and Implications

        Introducing my students, roughly 90% of whom are Hispanic or Latinx, to Latin American Philosophy rather than only offering the standard "Introduction to [Anglo-European] Philosophy" makes sense, but the radical idea of offering PHIL 1305X: Introduction to Latin American Philosophy as a bilingual course makes even more sense. Unfortunately, the educational system in the Rio Grande Valley, Texas, and the United Sates of America is still designed to encase students, including emergent bilinguals, in an English monolingual shell. For some, this eventually becomes academically comfortable, and speaking Spanish in academic contexts becomes strange, undesirable, or even unthinkable. A miniscule number of these students will

enroll in PHIL 1305X: Introduction to Latin American Philosophy. Those who do will learn to differentiate between the monolingual academic shell that was imposed upon them and the bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate identity that they might choose to cultivate academically in order to push back against the hegemonic monolingual, monocultural, and monoliterate ideology that has structured their schooling.

       As a university, we need to continue increasing the number of courses and course sections being offered bilingually or in Spanish. But if UTRGV's B3 vision is to become a reality, we will need far more feeder schools with dual language programs from Pre-K to 12th throughout Region One with the broader support of the Texas Association for Bilingual Education and the Texas Education Agency. UTRGV will also need cultivate more partnerships with local parents, community organizations, and school districts; improve our bilingual teacher education program, especially the portions designed to facilitate teaching in Spanish for dual language programs (Guerrero et al., 2017); and offer more professional development opportunities for UTRGV faculty who would like to teach their courses bilingually or in Spanish. There is much work to be done, pero como dice Gloria Anzaldúa, vale la pena (2015, p. 22).

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El Español en Estados Unidos como Recurso para la Educación de Hispanos en Ingeniería

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Abstracto

Los Hispanos representan la más grande minoría en Estados Unidos. Sin embargo, el número de estudiantes hispanos en las carreras de ciencias y en particular en ingeniería ha estado subrepresentada por muchos años. Esta falta de representación ha hecho que se estudie de muchas formas los métodos de reclutar y retener y graduar estudiantes hispanos en ingeniería. Sin embargo, la urgencia continúa. Existen muchos retos para mejorar la participación de hispanos en ingeniería, incluyendo la falta costumbre en preguntar o solicitar ayuda, los retos económicos, y la falta de ejemplos a seguir en la facultad. Dado los retos, este artículo presenta las experiencias de un miembro de la facultad al usar el español como herramienta en la educación de estudiantes en ingeniería en una institución que mayormente sirve a la comunidad hispana. El objetivo no es forzar el uso de otro idioma. Al contrario, es buscar métodos innovadores para conectar con el estudiante y poder ayudarlos a conseguir los resultados deseados.

Usando el español para ayudar a los estudiantes hispanos a que tengan la posibilidad de hacer preguntas, entiendan, y resuelvan los problemas de ingeniería, hace que mejore su autoestima y aprecio por su cultura. La incorporación del uso del español dentro y fuera del salón de clase como herramienta educativa en ingeniería ha tenido resultados positivos para los estudiantes. Se menciona también que el impacto es también significativo para la comunidad, y que, mejorando la participación hispana en los estudiantes, se puede también mejorar la participación hispana de la facultad en la academia.

Palabras claves: hispanos en ingeniería, español como herramienta, HSI

El Español en Estados Unidos como Recurso para la Educación de Hispanos en Ingeniería

   Según el U.S. Census, el censo en Estados Unidos (EE. UU.), la gente que se identifica como hispana, latina, o española, pueden ser de cualquier raza. Los datos también indican que los hispanos son la minoría más grande, con más de 60 millones de personas en el 2019. De ese número, aproximadamente el 73% hablan español. A los grupos de personas que tienen muy baja representación en los salones de clase, en áreas profesionales, o en diferentes puestos de alto nivel en diferentes compañías, se les identifica como 'underrepresented minorites' o URM por sus siglas en inglés. Estos grupos incluyen afroamericanos, norteamericanos nativos, hispanos o latinos, y hasta mujeres en ciertas áreas. Esta falta de representación ha sido un llamado a la nación a corregir esas discrepancias en las oportunidades para todos. Eventos recientes que iniciaron movimientos comunitarios como "Dreamers", "Me too" y "Black lives matter" han puesto el foco de atención a muchas de esas desigualdades. Sin embargo, la desigualdad de oportunidades educativas continua, y sigue siendo un área de oportunidad para proveer oportunidades para todos.

Antecedentes

   El reto en la educación de URMs, o estudiantes que son minorías o con poca representación, ha sido área de estudio por muchos investigadores. En particular los retos de los hispanos en educación universitaria y sus instituciones ha sido el campo de estudio de muchos investigadores, incluyendo Crisp & Cruz (2019), Estrada et al. (2016), Garcia (2017a), y Núñez et al. (2016). Sin embargo, los retos en la comunidad hispana son varios y montan desde cuando César Chávez luchaba por los derechos de los trabajadores en agricultura, o más aún atrás cuando California estaba siendo establecida o Texas declaraba su independencia. Desde sus inicios en esta nación, los hispanos en Estados unidos (EE. UU.) han tenido que estar luchando para sobreponer los retos de los cambios en la comunidad.

   Sin embrago, los resultados siguen dejando mucho que desear. En el 2010 en Estados unidos, de acuerdo con el departamento de educación, el porcentaje de títulos de bachillerato que fueron otorgados a los hispanos comparado con el resto de la población estudiantil, en las áreas de ciencia, tecnología, ingeniería, y matemáticas o STEM por sus siglas en inglés, fue solamente del 8%. Los títulos de posgrado o maestría resultaron ser sólo el 4%. En el doctorado, o PhD, sólo se les otorgo el 3%. La Tabla 1 muestra la comparación de los estudiantes hispanos en STEM con el resto de la población.

Número de títulos y certificados entregados a Hispanos en comparación con todos los estudiantes en las áreas de STEM, por nivel académico: 2009-2010		
Nivel académico	**Número de estudiantes**	**Número de Hispanos**	**% de Hispanos**
Certificados	14,936	3,655	24
Carrera corta "Associates"	43,292	5,016	12
Universidad "Bachelors"	246,732	18,613	8
Maestría	75,872	2,822	4

Doctorado	23,644	695	3
TOTAL	404,476	30,801	8

Tabla 1: comparación de títulos y certificados de estudiantes hispanos con el resto de la población.

Necesidad estudiantil

En el sur de Texas, la mayoría de los estudiantes se clasifican como hispanos. Sin embargo, también la mayoría califica para asistencia financiera o "financial aid" por su situación económica familiar. Aunque son mayoría en números, los retos aún existen para poder terminar carreras. Los estudios en las áreas de ciencia, tecnología, ingeniería, y matemáticas son de por sí, con mayor desafío. Por eso, la lista de retos crece para los estudiantes hispanos que quieren estudiar en STEM:

- Reto académico
- Necesidad económica
- Falta de buena asesoría y consejería ("advising & mentorship" en inglés)
- Falta de ejemplos a seguir ("role models" en inglés)
- Limitado sistema de apoyo para los estudiantes

Entonces, vemos el reto eminente para poder producir el número de estudiantes en STEM que la nación necesita. Muchas compañías y agencias de Gobierno reconocen la necesidad de aumentar el número de estudiantes hispanos en las áreas de ingeniería, pero fallan en conectar con la población general estudiantil hispana cuando se buscan reclutar. Todos buscan un ambiente enriquecedor, donde puede el estudiante crecer profesionalmente, y desarrollar su carrera. Por eso es muy importante que los estudiantes se sientan en un ambiente invitante donde quieran permanecer y crecer. Mas, si como se muestra en la figura 1, el crecimiento en trabajos en STEM va al alza.
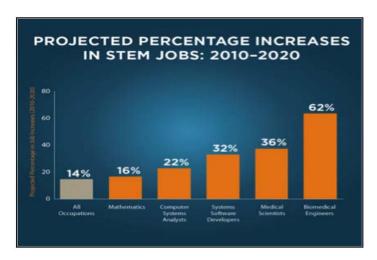

Figura 1. Proyectado incremento en trabajos. Fuente: Depto. de Educación EE. UU.

Este artículo describe los métodos que se han utilizado en el departamento de ingeniería industrial y de manufactura de UTRGV por el único miembro permanente e hispano de la facultad para mejorar la conexión con los estudiantes. El objetivo no es forzar el uso de otro idioma. Al

contrario, es buscar métodos innovadores para conectar con el estudiante y poder ayudarlos a conseguir los resultados deseados, ya sea en la clase, con las organizaciones estudiantiles, o en las entrevistas de trabajo. Los ejemplos y experiencias presentadas aquí resultan de casi 10 años impartiendo clase a nivel universitario. Estos métodos también se implementaron por el miembro de la facultad en una institución considerada "Research 1", o R1 al menos tres años, y ahora siete años en UTRGV. UTRGV es identificada con "Hispanic Serving Institution" o HSI por sus siglas en inglés, donde la mayoría estudiantes son de origen hispano. Una situación común en las asignaturas a los miembros de facultad hispanos es que sirvan de consejeros. Pero, el objetivo del departamento es de reclutar, retener, y graduar estudiantes. Dada la situación, que en este caso la mayoría son hispanos en ingeniería y otras áreas de STEM. El enfoque se las actividades y experiencias se da en 3 componentes principales:

- Reclutando
- Asesorando
- Apoyando

Estas funciones se hacen para que los estudiantes y sus organizaciones, tengan sistemas de soporte académicos y profesionales para el éxito en sus carreras.

El Español como Recurso Educativo

Según datos del Pew Research Center, el 73% de los latinos hablan español (PRC, 2017). En muchos de estos casos, el idioma se habla dentro del núcleo familiar y es el que los estudiantes escuchan y entienden desde chicos. Por eso, al poder comunicarse con esos estudiantes hispanos que hablen español en ingeniería y otras áreas STEM ayuda a incrementar el nivel de confort durante la conversación. Adicionalmente, el usar su idioma de la familia o español para contestar preguntas de la clase sirve como recurso para conectar con el estudiante y facilita que los estudiantes pueden estar seguros de que entienden los conceptos o métodos para resolver los problemas. Mas aun, cuando los estudiantes pueden percibir que el profesor habla el idioma familiar, establece indirectamente un modelo de ejemplo para que los estudiantes se visualicen asimismo y puedan sonar ser posibles futuros miembros de la facultad y abran sus opciones de carrera.

En las próximas tres subsecciones, se presentará la experiencia personal donde el español se utiliza como herramienta para la educación universitaria en ingeniería.

En el aula

El salón de clase es el primer lugar donde, en la mayoría de los casos, se conocen los estudiantes y sus profesores. Durante el primer día, yo, como profesor, me presento y establezco las expectativas de la clase. Es ahí donde puedo aprovechar la oportunidad para establecer que la comunicación en español, dentro de una institución de educación superior en Estados Unidos es una forma de comunicación adecuada y fomentada.

En todas clases tradicionales, en línea, o hibridas, el primer día de clase es común presentar el programa de estudios o syllabus en inglés. Aprovecho también para presentarme y platico un poco de mi historia como profesor y los pasos que tome para llegar a UTRGV. Mi historia revela que, como la mayoría de los estudiantes en UTRGV, nací y crecí en frontera de Estados Unidos utilizando dos idiomas. Además, también me quedé en casa para la ir a la

universidad porque mi familia no era de muchos recursos, por ende, era elegible a ayuda financiera o "Financial Aid / Pell Grant" para poder solventar los gastos universitarios. Aunque empecé en un colegio comunitario, después me pude transferir a una buena universidad en el estado. Al terminar mis estudios, conseguí un trabajo en una firma de consultoría, pero después decidí regresar a continuar mis estudios de maestría al mismo tiempo que trabajaba. Después de la maestría tuve la opción de trabajar en otra empresa de tecnología, pero decidí estudiar el doctorado. Finalmente, al terminar llegué a UTRGV donde quiero hacer un impacto.

En clases impartidas en ingles con opción de preguntas en español

Las clases en UTRGV son impartidas en inglés casi en su totalidad. Pero esto no significa que no se pueda utilizar el español como herramienta educativa. Recientemente, la universidad ha facilitado que el programa de estudios, o syllabus, se publique también en español. Yo tomo esa opción para que los estudiantes se sientan cómodos en preguntar en español. Además, a los estudiantes les platico mi historia académica porque busco conectar con ellos en un diferente plano, y que se den cuenta que este miembro de la facultad pasó por cosas muy similares a las que ellos pasan. Esa conexión ayuda a que el estudiante haga preguntas, y quizás algunas en español. Normalmente les platico que crecí hablando en español en mi casa. Así, naturalmente me siento cómodo comunicándome en español con ellos.

Sin embargo, hay estudiantes que no saben español. Por eso, durante las clases normales que imparto en inglés, si un estudiante hace una pregunta en español, normalmente la traduzco al inglés para que todos entiendan la pregunta, y luego la respondo en español y la reiteró en inglés. Esto permite que el estudiante que hizo la pregunta en español pueda recibir la respuesta en el idioma nativo, pero también aseguro el entendimiento de aquellos estudiantes que no dominan el español cuando repito y reitero la respuesta en inglés.

Así pues, varios estudiantes se sienten cómodos en hacer preguntas de la clase en español y esto ha ayudado significativamente a entender conceptos que vemos en ingeniería, ya que la mayoría de los problemas son difíciles de resolver. En ciertos casos, para que el estudiante pueda entender un concepto, es importante tratar de explicar el problema de diferentes maneras, o escucharlo de diferentes formas, o tratar de resolver el problema de una forma diferente.

En clases impartidas en español en una institución de EE. UU.

En el 2015, el Rector de UTRGV declaró que la institución sería una "bilingual, bi-cultural, and bi-literate university", y establece la formación del Instituto B³ (Rio Grande Guardian, 2016). Esto significa que UTRGV es una institución que se considera bilingüe, bicultural, y bi-letrada, donde se valora el uso de español como recurso académico para la impartición de clases. Cuando una clase se designa así, significa que la instrucción puede ser en español, o el instructor puede hablar en español, o hay un componente de español en la clase. Una de esas clases que solicitó la designación ha sido MANE 3101, Internships (Pasantías). Esta es una clase de 1 crédito que tiene enfoque especial según lo determine el trabajo del estudiante, el profesor, o el proyecto especial. Cuando doy la clase, esta se enfoca en el desarrollo profesional estudiantil. Los estudiantes de ingeniería normalmente tienen 3 opciones después de terminar la carrera: trabajar para una compañía, continuar estudiando en un postgrado, o empezar su propia empresa. La clase explora las 3 opciones y ayuda a los estudiantes a escoger la mejor opción para ellos. Este concepto de clase la he impartido varias veces, primero en inglés, y en dos ocasiones completamente en español. Para verificar que todos entienden español, al iniciar la clase les

informo a los estudiantes que la intención es dar los conceptos completamente en español. También hago una encuesta para saber qué porcentaje de español entienden, hablan y escriben. No todos los estudiantes están en el mismo nivel, así es que la encuesta la hago pre y post clase. Al inicio se les pregunta que se autoevalúen determinando el porcentaje de español que pueden hablar, leer, y escribir. Cuando terminamos la clase, volvemos a repasar la autoevaluación. En todas las clases impartidas en español, el porcentaje de autoevaluación con respecto a hablar, leer, y escribir aumenta. En algunos casos por más de doble dígitos. Por ejemplo, si un estudiante al inicio consideraba que nomás podía leer o hablar un 60 por ciento, al final se evaluaba en un 70 o 80 por ciento.

La retroalimentación de los estudiantes y mi propia evaluación indican que esta clase utiliza exitosamente el español como herramienta educativa. También fortalece el orgullo cultural, y destaca el beneficio de poder hablar, leer, y escribir en español en un ambiente académico y de alto nivel, permitiendo que el estudiante vea el español como un medio de comunicación profesional. No todos los estudiantes de UTRGV son hispanos nacidos en EE. UU. Algunos estudiantes son mexicanos, y también ellos participan en estas clases. Aunque la mayoría ya tienen fluidez en español, fortalecen a la comunidad de estudiantes estadounidenses que están utilizando ambos idiomas, o que no tienen una fuerte base en español.

En clases impartidas en ingles con colaboración de universidades internacionales

En el 2020, UTRGV empezó a usar un modelo de aprendizaje en línea con colaboración internacional. El programa se llama "Collaborative Online International Learning" o COIL por sus siglas en ingles. El modelo promueve oportunidades transculturales a través del desarrollo de entornos de enseñanzas multiculturales que unen clases universitarias en diferentes países. La idea es enlazar clases de dos o más universidades, con proyectos o trabajos diseñados y manejados por sus profesores. De manera que, los estudiantes tengan que interactuar entre sí mismos, y aprender de diferentes culturas, intereses, y modos de pensar. El proyecto se realiza con reuniones opcionales en línea y el trabajo se realiza completamente a distancia (UTRGV, 2019).

En el otoño del 2021, se implementará este programa con la clase de MANE 4333, Planeación y Control de Manufactura. La clase será conectada con dos universidades mexicanas al mismo tiempo, y las tres instituciones tendrán estudiantes usando COIL. Las instituciones que colaboran son, El Tecnológico Nacional de México campus Mérida, y El Tecnológico Nacional de México campus Reynosa. Geográficamente, el Tecnológico de Reynosa esta solo a el otro lado del Rio Bravo (Rio Grande en EE. UU.), pero el Tecnológico de Mérida está en la península de Yucatán. En este proyecto, se espera que los estudiantes colaboren en un equipo con miembros de cada campus para completar el proyecto.

Mi intención es aplicar este programa para darles experiencias internacionales a los estudiantes de UTRGV, y al mismo tiempo, utilizar el español como herramienta para la educación en ingeniería. Esta colaboración y aprendizaje se da en línea y en diferentes partes del mundo para darles a todos los estudiantes una experiencia académica única. El proyecto tiene que ver con la cadena de suministros o el "supply chain" en inglés. Los estudiantes identifican un producto o subproducto que tenga que cruzar la frontera una o varias veces. Esto no solo es transporte o logística, sino que se debe procesar o manufacturar en una región para ser transportado a la otra. Por ejemplo, se inicia la manufactura en México y se lleva a Estados Unidos, o viceversa. Los estudiantes tienen que hacer una serie de investigaciones para poder

calcular las proyecciones de uso o producción del articulo (forecast en inglés), para luego analizar los niveles de inventarios según el consumo y después identificar la cantidad optima de producción o procuración. Esto se le llama obtener el "Economic Order Quantity" o EOQ. Sin entrar a muchos más detalles técnicos, los estudiantes van a desarrollar un modelo del sistema completo. Después, introducen procesos estocásticos, o incertidumbre, en el sistema para evaluar el impacto de la variabilidad. Al final los estudiantes deben presentar sus resultados en una breve presentación.

Todo este material de ingeniería se cubre en la clase en UTRGV y en los tecnológicos. El material estará disponible para todos los estudiantes y el beneficio es la colaboración internacional. Esta colaboración internacional se hace con el fin de abrir más experiencias a los estudiantes, y como estamos trabajando con instituciones en México el idioma principal de colaboración va a fluctuar entre inglés y español. En este proyecto, los profesores de las tres instituciones vamos a fomentar el uso de diferentes idiomas para poder entregar estos proyectos. Al final del semestre, el estudiante presenta su proyecto en su propia clase, pero la colaboración y la experiencia que tuvo con los otros estudiantes es un extra que brinda una mayor exposición al campo de trabajo en el futuro donde cada vez más, las colaboraciones internacionales son comunes.

Alcance comunitario

La comunidad es una parte muy importante para los estudiantes de UTRGV, ya que la mayoría son estudiantes que crecieron en el área. Sin embargo, la realidad del valle del sur de Texas es que es una de las áreas con mayores retos económicos en EE. UU. De hecho, según el Texas Tribune en el 2016, la figura 2 muestra que los cinco condados más pobres del estado están en el valle del sur de Texas, y UTRGV sirve a la comunidad en esos condados.
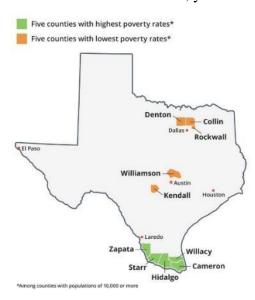

Figura 2: Los condados con mayor (verde) y menor (naranja) pobreza en Texas. Fuente: Ben Hasson, Texas Tribune, 2016.

Por eso la necesidad que tiene la comunidad y los estudiantes ahí es clara. Aunque muchas instituciones, como UTRGV, tienen excelentes centros de consejería y departamentos

académicos, que hacen un gran esfuerzo para dar consejo personalizado a cada uno de sus estudiantes, es un reto atender adecuadamente a todos y cada uno de ellos. La idiosincrasia del estudiante hispano en el sur de Texas es de vivir con constantes retos y necesidades económicas. Para los estudiantes del área, esta situación llena de deficiencias, con falta de recursos, y apoyo para establecer y conseguir objetivos académicos, hace que los escolares no identifiquen la ayuda disponible, o no soliciten recursos que necesitan, o no estén acostumbrados a preguntar. La falta de consejo o costumbre en preguntar hace que el estudiante pierda oportunidades académicas. Por eso, uno de los retos más comunes es ignorar que las cosas pueden ser diferentes, y que quizás exista ayuda donde la falta de información o atención en solicitar ayuda impide el acceso a esa ayuda aun cuando está disponible.

Respuesta de estudiantes

Los estudiantes han respondido de una manera muy positiva a todos estos métodos inusuales de utilizar el español como herramienta para la educación de los estudiantes en ingeniería. De hecho, no se menciona explícitamente que se está usando el español como herramienta educativa. Solo se integra como parte del arsenal de métodos y estrategias educativas en el salón de clase.

Las respuestas positivas no solo han venido de los estudiantes. También, algunas empresas locales han mencionado su satisfacción con la habilidad técnica de los estudiantes, pero lo hacen en español. Estos representantes de empresas se han comunicado con este miembro de facultad en español. Pero no sólo de manera verbal, sino por escrito a través de e-mails que nos han enviado para felicitar a los estudiantes y la facultad, o para solicitar ayuda en reclutar más. La figura 3 muestra un breve ejemplo de un mensaje enviado por un representante de una empresa internacional con una planta en el valle del sur de Texas.

> e-mail, junio del 2019
>
> Dr. Moya se que ya no pude hablarte personalmente en la tarde, solo quería compartirte la información anexa. Esto es producto entre otras cosas de la excelente imagen que se llevaron los Executivos de -------- el dia de las presentaciones del --- ----------- sobre UTRGV.
>
> Muchas gracias por tu apoyo y sabes que estamos empujando muy fuerte para seguir haciendo vinculación entre ------- y UTRGV.
>
> Un abrazo y estaremos muy pronto entregándoles --- --------.

Figura 4: E-mail de agradecimiento de empresa local.

Aunque los resultados anecdóticos sean muy positivos, se requiere de un estudio formalizado para medir el impacto en los estudiantes. Se necesita un adecuado diseño en los experimentos, con grupos realmente aleatorios, para su análisis y comprobación del impacto. Sin embargo, lo que sí se puede medir es el número de invitaciones para participar en foros en español, o el número de presentaciones que se dan en conferencias internacionales en otros países. Este número va en aumento, y la visión de UTRGV es que sea un modelo B^3, bilingüe, bicultural, y bi-letrada, para otras HSI o instituciones académicas que quieran educar a su comunidad hispana.

Necesidad académica

La falta de representación de hispanos en ingeniería, y STEM en general, ha sido extensamente investigada desde hace mucho tiempo y continúa siendo estudiada en la actualidad, llegando a similares conclusiones de urgencia y necesidad de modificar la situación (Rivera, 1980, Dika, 2020). Sin embargo, esta baja representación de estudiantes hispanos en las carreras de STEM contrae otras consecuencias indirectas para las futuras generaciones.

Si se tiene dificultad para reclutar, retener, y graduar estudiantes hispanos en STEM y en particular en todas las carreras de ingeniería, entonces se va a reducir el número de posibles candidatos que estén interesados en continuar estudiando una maestría y más aún, continuar hasta completar un doctorado. Y de ese número reducido de hispanos que terminan el doctorado, el número que se integra a la facultad resulta ser mucho más pequeño. Arellano et al (2018), en el artículo "Latino engineering faculty in the United States", indica que mientras el total número de latinos en la facultad de ingeniería hasta el 2016, es casi cerca de 600 miembros, solamente 48 del total nacieron en Estados Unidos. Considerando que en UTRGV es la segunda institución más grande en EE. UU. HSI, identificada como institución que sirve a la comunidad hispana, y tiene solamente dos miembros de la facultad hispanos nacidos en Estados Unidos, indica la gravedad de la situación. Aunque miembros de la facultad considerados hispanos nacidos de otros países son siempre bienvenidos, en muchos de los casos no han experimentado los retos culturales de crecer con el sistema educativo en EE. UU. Quizás conocen las universidades a nivel doctorado, pero falta la experiencia en la industria y/o vivir con los retos que la comunidad hispana tiene.

Aunque la falta de ejemplos de profesores hispanos no es el mayor reto para aumentar el número de hispanos en ingeniería. Ingeniería es una profesión bien remunerada y en alta demanda. Por eso, los estudiantes domésticos, personas nacidas en EE. UU. sin importar la raza o el color, que terminan ingeniería entran al área laboral. Entonces, estudiar un doctorado significa años de estudio sin salario industrial, y que muchos estudiantes domésticos no están dispuestos a sacrificar.

Evidentemente, la falta de ejemplos o modelos a seguir en la facultad es crítico. La necesidad de dar asesoría, consejo, y apoyo a la facultad hispana debe ser prioritario para todas las instituciones, en particular las HSI. Si los sistemas de apoyo son indispensables para los estudiantes, así también son de gran importancia para los miembros de la facultad que sirven de ejemplo a los estudiantes. Al mejorar el número de estudiantes hispanos en ingeniería, se puede mejorar el número de profesores hispanos, nacidos en EE. UU., que participan en la academia.

Conclusiones

Los estudiantes en ingeniería tienen retos académicos de por si grandes. Si le agregamos la dificultad de acceso a URMs o grupos subrepresentados, la falta de costumbre en preguntar o solicitar ayuda, los retos económicos, y la falta de ejemplos a seguir, hacen que la carrera de ingeniería en hispanos termine con los números bajos que vemos hoy en día. Por eso, la intención es usar herramientas no convencionales para poder conectar con los estudiantes y ayudarles a eliminar barreras de comunicación, entendimiento, y educación. Usando el español para

motivarlos a hacer preguntas, entender, y resolver los problemas, hace que se sientan cómodos solicitando ayuda.

Esta experiencia de implementar el uso del español como herramienta educativa, ha dado muy buenos resultados en una HSI. Ya sea que simplemente se abre la opción de hacer preguntas en español durante la clase, en la oficina, o impartir clase completamente en español, ha fomentado un aumento en la confianza del estudiante y el orgullo cultural, al poder comunicarse en su idioma familiar. Con más herramientas para poder derribar barreras educativas, más resultados positivos se tendrán en reclutamiento, retención, y graduación de estudiantes hispanos nacidos en Estados Unidos.

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Toda lengua es válida aquí en esta clase: Translanguaging pedagogy and critical language awareness in sociolinguistics courses on the U.S.-Mexico border

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&

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Abstract

This study examines how translanguaging pedagogy (García & Lin, 2017), or the leveraging of students' full linguistic repertoires, is implemented in two asynchronous online sociolinguistics courses at a Hispanic Serving Institution. After describing the courses' translanguaging design, we present a mixed methods analysis of student code-switching on Flipgrid video discussion boards and reflection papers. Out of 125 reflection papers, 36.0% include code-switching, while the analysis of Flipgrid video discussions shows that code-switching increased throughout the semester, from 3.6% in Week 1 to 38.6% in Week 2. Student reflection papers describe the significance of translanguaging in the course, while also examining aspects of critical linguistic awareness. These results demonstrate the importance of planned as well as moment-by-moment decisions for the implementation of translanguaging pedagogy. Furthermore, we suggest that in order to reach its full potential as a transformative agent of social justice, translanguaging pedagogy should be complemented with critical language awareness.

Toda lengua es válida aquí en esta clase: Translanguaging pedagogy and critical language awareness in sociolinguistics courses on the U.S.-Mexico border

1. Introduction

Monolingual, monoglossic, and English-only ideologies are powerful and ubiquitous in the United States, even though the U.S. does not have an official language. While this impacts all levels of society, it is remarkably apparent in the instantiation and reification of English as the de facto 'international language of academia' (Phillipson, 2009). In contrast, a translanguaging pedagogy leverages students' full linguistic repertoire in the classroom (García & Lin, 2017). As such, its implementation in higher education can "challenge the hegemonic presence of English as the language of knowledge and instruction" (Rodríguez et. al, 2021, p. 2). Translanguaging pedagogy in higher education is steadily expanding with studies examining a wide variety of contexts, courses, and languages, such as Zapotec and Spanish in Mexico (De Korne et. al, 2018), Spanish and English in Puerto Rico (Mazak et. al, 2017), and English and French in Canada (Van Viegen & Zappa-Hollman, 2020). Translanguaging has the potential to disrupt an old and outdated English-only system and "crack the 'standard language' bubble that continues to ostracize many bilingual students" (García & Li, 2014, p. 115). While translanguaging pedagogy holds significant potential for any classroom, it is especially powerful in settings with high numbers of bilingual students, such as the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV).

UTRGV is the second largest Hispanic serving institution in the United States. Located in South Texas, UTRGV serves the Rio Grande Valley (RGV), an area comprised of four counties along the southernmost U.S.-Mexico border: Hidalgo, Cameron, Starr, and Willacy. According to recent census data, the region is 91.9% Hispanic (U.S. Census Bureau [USCB], 2020) and 77.2% of the population speaks Spanish (USCB, 2019). The UTRGV student population is largely comprised of local students, and as such, the students mirror the community in terms of both heritage and language use. According to the Fall UTRGV Enrollment Profile, the student population is 90.5% Hispanic.

Part of UTRGV's Strategic Plan is the B3 Initiative, which stands for bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate. The executive summary of this initiative explains that "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" (Becoming a B3 Institution). As a part of this initiative, courses may be designated as Spanish or Bilingual; but even without these designations, the initiative provides the opportunity for UTRGV faculty to include translanguaging in a number of diverse disciplines (See Esquierdo, Feria, Moya, and Stehn, this volume; Cavazos & Musanti, 2021; Musanti & Cavazos, 2018; Rodríguez et. al, 2021).

In this study, we review the conceptual framework of translanguaging pedagogy and critical language awareness. Next, we describe how translanguaging pedagogy is implemented in two sociolinguistics courses. Finally, we examine how students respond to these pedagogies through a mixed methods analysis, including a quantitative analysis of student code-switching in reflection papers and Flipgrid video discussions along with a qualitative analysis of students' perceptions of the course's translanguaging pedagogy.

2. Conceptual Framework

Translanguaging Pedagogy

The term translanguaging was originally coined by Cen Williams (1994) to describe the alternate use of English and Welsh for input and output in the classroom. Over the years, the term translanguaging has been elaborated to refer to both the use of one's full linguistic repertoire including multiple diverse languaging practices[17] and the pedagogical approach which encourages and engages these practices in the classroom setting (García & Lin, 2017). It is the latter, translanguaging pedagogy[18], that we will discuss in the present paper. We understand a translanguaging pedagogy as both planned and intentional (Lewis et. al, 2012) as well as moment-by-moment and organic (García & Li, 2014; Mazak et. al, 2017). To this end, we follow Rodríguez et. al (2021) in applying the constructs of translanguaging stance, translanguaging design, translanguaging shift, and translanguaging event. Translanguaging pedagogy always begins with a *translanguaging stance*, or "a deep belief" (García, 2019) that diverse languaging practices are a resource (Ruiz, 1984) rather than a scaffold to be used only as needed or transitioned away from, as in transitional bilingual education or subtractive models of bilingualism. *Translanguaging design* refers to the strategic, intentional, and purposeful planning of the class to leverage students' full linguistic repertoire, including bilingual and/or bidialectal language practices. This may include activities, tasks, lessons, assessments, and instructions, among other planned aspects of the course. However, a translanguaging pedagogy also goes beyond the premeditated course design to incorporate *language shifts*, or the moment-by-moment decisions instructors make to provide feedback, engage students' rich funds of knowledge, and enhance learning (García, 2019; González, Moll, & Amanti, 2006; Mazak et. al, 2017; Musanti & Cavazos, 2018). Finally, this paper analyzes *translanguaging events*, the particular ways and instances in which teachers and learners engage in translanguaging (Álvarez, 2014).

Language Variation

A core concept in sociolinguistics is the fact that languages vary and change, or language variation. As such, this notion is central to the sociolinguistics courses described in this study. Languages vary based on in regional, social, and/or contextual differences in how people speak. These variations may be characterized as phonological, morphological, syntactic, or lexical, etc. Phonological variation is at the level of the sound system or pronunciation, such as the English or Spanish pronunciation of loanwords ('tacos' pronounced as ['takos] or ['t ʰakʰouz]). Morphological variation takes place at the level of the morphemes, or building blocks of words (hablaré v. voy a hablar). Syntactic variation occurs at the level of the sentence structure (cuando *estaba* chiquito v. cuando *era* chiquito). The type of variation that people most readily notice is lexical variation in word choice (troca v. camión). Language variation is normal and occurs in all languages and among all speech communities (monolingual and multilingual) as well as within individual speakers. While certain forms may be stigmatized, sociolinguists eschew notions of

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[17] Although most often referring to (multi)bilinguals, the literature emphasizes that translanguuging applies to (multi)bidialectal speakers and monolinguals as well (Otheguy et. al, 2015).

[18] Similar pedagogical concepts have been referred to as crosslinguistic pedagogy (Cummins, 2019) and flexible bilingual pedagogy (Creese & Blackledge, 2010) to provide just a few examples.

correct versus incorrect language. A language variety is simply the language that a speaker and/or speech community uses.

Critical Language Awareness

However, presenting language varieties without critically examining how language practices are embedded in power relations and language ideologies runs the risk of 'dressing up inequality in diversity' (Fairclough, 1992, p. 15). Critical language awareness (CLA) goes beyond language or dialect awareness "toward social and political consciousness-raising and action" (Alim, 2010, p. 215). CLA asks students to critically analyze language and the assumptions and beliefs related to languages and language varieties, known within the field as language ideologies. It also prompts students to examine how social, historical, and political contexts relate to issues of power and hierarchies of language. At the same time, students consider how power relations impact the perceived appropriateness of certain language varieties and how race, gender, sexuality, nationality, status, and other marginalized identities play into these perceptions. More to the point, CLA's overarching goal "is not only *to think* about these issues of power, but it is also *to do* something about them" (Alim, 2010, p. 208). Over the years, instructors have documented the "substantial 'shock' potential" (Fairclough, 1989) and benefits of a CLA approach with a variety of student populations. Most relevant to the present study, CLA has been shown to have a remarkable impact on speakers of Spanish as a heritage language (Herrera Dulcet, 2019; Leeman, 2018; Martínez, 2003). The present analysis adds to the call for further accounts of CLA in the classroom (Reagan, 2006). Moreover, it demonstrates how CLA complements and advances the transformative potential of translanguaging pedagogy.

3. Context & Courses

The Researchers

The linguistic, academic, and cultural backgrounds of this paper's two authors influence the course design, pedagogical practices, and analysis herein.

Katherine (Katie) designed and taught both courses described and analyzed in this paper as the sole instructor of record without teaching assistants. Having grown up in southeastern Pennsylvania, outside of 'Philly,' she learned Spanish in high school and college. During her undergraduate degree, Katie studied abroad for a summer in Orizaba, Veracruz, Mexico and then for a year at the Universidad de las Américas in Cholula, Puebla, Mexico, living in homestays with local families each time. Beyond these experiences, she has spent extended stays in Guatemala and the Dominican Republic as a volunteer and Spain as a leader for a study abroad program. After graduating with a B.A. in Spanish and Elementary Education, Katie taught English as a Foreign Language for two years in Campo Limpo Paulista, São Paolo, Brazil. While completing her graduate degrees at the University of Arizona in Tucson, Arizona, she attended and taught Sunday School at a Hispanic, Spanish-speaking church and taught many Hispanic students, especially in Portuguese for Spanish Speakers courses. After a couple years in New Mexico, Katie moved to McAllen, Texas, where she has lived for the past four years. In all, she has lived in the southwest for 13 years now.

Kimberly is a third generation Mexican American. Although she was born in California, she moved to the RGV as a baby and describes the RGV as her home and herself as a *Tejana*.

Kimberly learned both Spanish and English as first languages at home and in her community. She grew up speaking with complex, intricate, and beautiful codeswitching patterns at home with her family. Unfortunately, when she entered school, she was confronted with negative perceptions of bilingualism and code-switching. Students told her that her Spanish wasn't "real Spanish" or that the way she spoke was "fake." Kimberly participated in Katie's 'Intro to Border Languages' course in Fall 2020, where she critically analyzed the negative ideologies surrounding bilingualism. A first-generation college graduate, this course inspired her to continue as a graduate student in the M.A. English program with a concentration in Linguistics at UTRGV. During Spring 2021, she participated in Katie's 'Community Language Project' course as a graduate student. Kimberly has a unique perspective as an undergraduate and graduate student in both courses described and analyzed in this paper.

For clarity and readability, throughout the rest of this paper, 'I' refers to the first author (Katie), and 'we' refers to both authors (Katie and Kimberly).

Corpus Bilingüe del Valle (CoBiVa)

The two courses examined in this paper are both designed as community engaged scholarship courses, where students participate in the Corpus Bilingüe del Valle or CoBiVa (Christoffersen & Bessett, 2019). As a community-engaged scholarship project, it connects what is being taught in classrooms to surrounding communities, history, literature, cultural heritage, and local environment and recognizes that all communities have valuable intrinsic knowledge, assets, and resources (Guajardo et. al, 2016). In my community engaged scholarship classes, students are trained to conduct sociolinguistic interviews, which are casual conversations that aim to draw out vernacular or informal speech. Through convenience sampling, students interview any adult who has lived in the community for over 10 years[19] for approximately one hour in length, since participants more closely monitor their speech during the first 20 minutes. While these interviews are typically in-person and audio-recorded, students conducted interviews via Zoom during Spring 2021 due to the Covid 19 pandemic. The students collect data related to the participant's language background, language use, and demographic information. They then transcribe, anonymize, revise, and/or reformat interviews for incorporation on the website. The audio files, transcript files, and accompanying documentation are accessible to researchers, students, and community members pending a short 'request access' form on the CoBiVa website. The project aims to document the language of the Rio Grande Valley while also providing a greater appreciation for local bilingual language practices, such as code-switching.[20] Studies have demonstrated the many benefits of involving students in community-engaged scholarship and corpus building projects (Alim, 2010; Cavazos & Musanti, 2021; Christoffersen et. al, 2020; Pascual y Cabo et. al, 2017; Tagliamonte, 2006).

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[19] During later stages of the project, we hope to obtain further funding to allow for a more balanced dataset in terms of age, socio-economic status, language, generation, etc. However, we are currently using the snowball method of data collection, allowing students to select their interviewee. The participant data is especially important, since it provides detailed information about each participant for researchers, students, and community members.

[20] The CoBiVa currently contains 108 interviews, although there are 29 interviews on the website. Each interview audio, transcript, and document are anonymized and run through at least three rounds of revision for reliability and accuracy before added to the website. You can learn more about CoBiVa on the website and blog.

Course 1: Intro to Border Languages

The 'Intro to Border Languages' course is an undergraduate linguistics elective on language at the U.S.-Mexico border. During the first week, students complete the Institutional Research Board (IRB) training courses on the ethical conduct of research. Upon completion, the paperwork is submitted to the university's IRB to add each student as a research assistant on the project. The first part of the course is organized into the following topics: language ideologies (beliefs about language), language attitudes (reactions to the way someone speaks), language maintenance and shift, language politics and policies, language variation, code-switching, translanguaging, Spanglish, borderlands (Anzaldúa, 1987), and language and ethnicity. Each week students complete a response paper on one or more readings, podcasts, or videos related to the topic. In Fall 2020, it was taught as an online asynchronous class, so students watched video lectures with short, embedded quizzes. To facilitate asynchronous discussions, students responded to a prompt on the Flipgrid video discussion board. At times, the prompt was a student group video presentation on the topic. During the last two weeks, students reformatted and revised transcriptions of sociolinguistic interviews. At the end of the semester, students submitted a final reflection paper and analyzed the language from their interviews based on topics discussed during the course.

Course 2: Community Language Project

The 'Community Language Project' is an experiential learning internship style course that I created and designed as a companion course to 'Intro to Border Languages.' Similarly, students first complete the IRB training courses for ethical conduct of research, which are submitted for approval. Then, students are introduced to the concepts of language variation and sociolinguistics. After that, students received detailed training on conducting and recording a sociolinguistic interview and collecting documents, such as the consent form, bilingual language profile, and demographic information. During Spring 2021, the course was online asynchronous, and the students were provided with at least one video lecture per week, although often several shorter videos were created for different trainings and topics. The opportunity for students to learn from one another and engage in translanguaging was further enhanced as the course was crosslisted several ways. It was listed as an undergraduate linguistics elective (ENGL 3371)[21], an undergraduate Spanish course (SPAN 4317), and a graduate level linguistics course for master's students (ENGL 6366). There are no pre-requisites for any of these course listings. After completing their sociolinguistic interviews, the students were taught two different transcription methods: manual transcription using ExpressScribe and revising an auto-generated transcription using Microsoft Stream. Students were provided with readings related to the course's two highlighted topics for analysis: gender assignment of borrowings (i.e., whether someone would say "los keys" or "las keys") and language ideologies and attitudes (i.e., negative perceptions of code-switching). The graduate students enrolled in the course created video presentations on articles related to these topics, and students responded on the discussion board within Blackboard.

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[21] At UTRGV, linguistics courses fall under the Writing & Language Studies Department and have a ENGL pre-fix. This is not due to the language modality but rather the content pre-fix of ENGL for English Studies which are also within the department. On the other hand, courses with SPAN pre-fix are within the Spanish program under the Writing & Language Studies Department, and these courses are taught in Spanish.

Students also participate on the Flipgrid video discussion board each week, discussing the readings, topics, presentations and what they noticed about the language of the interviews and the transcription process. At the end of the semester, students created group video presentations in which they compared and analyzed linguistic features from each of their sociolinguistic interviews, especially as they related to the two highlighted topics. Finally, undergraduate students submitted reflection papers, and graduate students submitted reflective research papers on the highlighted course topics.

The Students

At UTRGV, even when courses aren't designated as bilingual or Spanish, the class may be predominantly comprised of Spanish/English bilingual students. According to self-reports, my Fall 2020 'Intro to Border Languages' class included 28 students Spanish/English bilinguals, one English/Arabic bilingual, and two students with receptive competence in Spanish, meaning that they understand spoken and/or written Spanish (See Figure 1). In Spring 2021, my "Community Language Project' course included 27 Spanish/English bilinguals, one English/Arabic bilingual, and one student with receptive competence in Spanish. (See Figure 1.) In the Spring course, there were 13 students registered under the English undergraduate section, 5 students registered under the Spanish undergraduate section, and 10 students registered under the English graduate M.A. level section. (See Figure 1.)
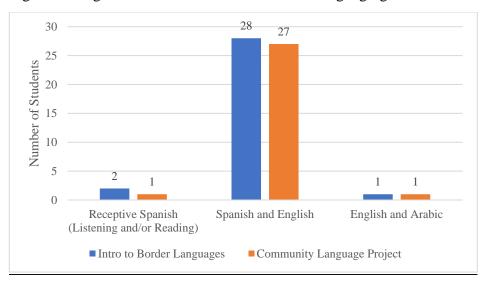
Figure 1. Linguistic Profile of Students in Translanguaging Courses

It should be noted that the students with receptive Spanish skills wrote that they spoke only English; however, they each mentioned understanding either spoken or written Spanish to some extent. Similarly, students who are labeled as Spanish/English bilinguals in Figure 1 often included disclaimers, stating that they speak "mainly English" or "broken Spanish." Unfortunately, it is quite common for individuals with Spanish as a heritage language to experience linguistic insecurity about their Spanish skills and to describe their language use as not real Spanish, inadequate or incorrect in some way, or not enough to be counted (Christoffersen, 2019). During the semester, we work to reverse this.

4. Translanguaging Stance & Design

Each of these courses embodies a translanguaging pedagogy expressed through intentional planning and design, which is evident in a) the syllabi, b) the community engaged scholarship project, c) Flipgrid video discussion boards, d) weekly announcements/emails, e) instructor videos, and f) course content. Below I will review each of these aspects of translanguaging design in the 'Intro to Border Languages' and 'Community Language Project' courses.

a) Syllabi

In my syllabi, I describe my translanguaging stance in a section entitled 'Bilingual/Translanguaging Pedagogy.' Below is an excerpt from my syllabi (1).

(1) Bilingual/Translanguaging Pedagogy
Where would a class on Border Languages in the valley be without *Spanish, code-switching, translanguaging, Spanglish,* or *TexMex*? (We'll talk about these terms this semester.) Whatever languages or combinations of languages you speak, we *embrace all language varieties* in this classroom space as having inherent value. Instead of a deficit perspective, we will recognize *multiple and diverse language practices* as *enriching* our classroom environment, our learning, and ourselves. At any time in class discussions, you are *encouraged* to use Spanish, English and/or other languages or combinations of languages as a *resource*. You are also welcome to use diverse languaging practices on any and all assignments.
I lived in Puebla, Mexico for 1 year, and São Paolo, Brazil for 2 years. I love languages and all varieties of language! So, please feel free to contact me *en español, inglés, portugués, o una combinación* via email, zoom, yammer, or talk to me in class or office hours in *any of these languages*.

Figure 2. Image used in syllabus, an advertisement for elote (corn) using both Spanish and English (Santos)

The bold and italicized typeface highlight important concepts from translanguaging pedagogy and introduce students to translanguaging as a key aspect of the course. I instruct students that they may use diverse languaging practices on any and all assignments, and the use of code-switching in the second paragraph (starting with 'en español') is intentional, in order to model and reinforce that these languages can be used together. On the Border Languages syllabus, I include an image of a sign that incorporates code-switching (Figure 2), which we discuss during the course.

b) Community Engaged Scholarship

The community engaged scholarship project is inherently bilingual as students collect and/or revise bilingual interviews for a bilingual corpus. Although participants may start the interview in either Spanish or English, we talk extensively about how code-switching is expected given the bilingual context, in-group communication, and casual nature of the conversations. Prior to the interviews, we talk about how code-switching has been documented as a highly sophisticated skill and how it will be very interesting to analyze this practice. Students are given sample interview

questions in both English and Spanish, and they are instructed to allow the participant to choose whether they would like to fill out the intake forms in Spanish or English, such as the consent form and the Bilingual Language Profile. The introduction to the project also features a video about the CoBiVa (Jiménez, 2020) including positive valuations of code-switching and local bilingual language varieties.

c) Instructor Videos

Each week, I create an overview video to introduce the module's topic and assignments. I also create one to four video lectures or training videos. All of these videos typically include code-switching in one way or another. It can be through greetings ('Welcome! *¡Bienvenidos!*') or clarification of instructions ('*y te puedes presentar en español o inglés o los dos si quieres').* Another common type of code-switch is including relevant examples of topics, themes, or sample interviews from the CoBiVa.

d) Flipgrid Video Discussion Boards

During the first week, students introduce themselves on the Flipgrid video discussion board with short videos. Below is the prompt from the first week (1), which was accompanied by the image in Figure 3.

(1) Introduce yourself to your classmates. It is up to you what you would like to share. Options include: name (nickname), preferred gender pronoun, degree/major/minor, year of study (freshman, junior, etc), a hobby, a favorite sport, a favorite food, a favorite show/podcast, something that makes you happy, your Quarantine Superpower :D. *Te puedes presentar en español o inglés, o los dos si quieres.*

Figure 3. Images accompanying first Flipgrid post: hi. hello. hola. hey. (Society 6)

While the syllabus and syllabus quiz emphasize that students may use any languages or combination of languages on any and all assignments, I re-state this in the first Flipgrid prompt. To break the long entrenched patterns of English superiority and English as the only acceptable academic language, it requires some encouragement. Even still, in the first week, only a few students code-switched in their first Flipgrid videos; however, as will be detailed in the analysis below, that quickly increased in the following weeks. During the first week, I respond to each student's video post individually with a video. After that, I respond to each video post with a written comment. In each case, I follow the student's language choice and encourage the use of code-switching.

e) Weekly Announcements/ Emails

Every week, I send out an announcement in Blackboard, which is also sent to students via email. This announcement includes clarifications, feedback, and reminders as well as a section called 'Flipgrid Highlights'. This provides public recognition for students' contributions on the video discussion board. Below are some excerpts of 'Flipgrid Highlights.'

(2) **Kimberly**, **Ileana**, and **Chrissy**[22] brought up awesome examples of beautiful local terms like *troca*, *vaquerero*, and *parqueadero*. Remember, there is no one right way to say anything. It's just language variation. On that note, the language you use in school is not the 'correct' one. In fact, Critical Language Awareness helps us understand that more.

(3) ***Daniela*** *mencionó la percepción de un español puro y percepciones que tienen algunos sobre cual versión del español sea major. También compartió sus experiencias y perspectivas como una futura maestra. Por cierto, ¡va a ser una maestra excelente!*

(4) **Taalah** also shared about how she could relate to the topic as a speaker of Moroccan Arabic who feels comfortable speaking only with certain individuals just like Victor in the article.

In my 'Flipgrid Highlights,' I follow students' linguistic choices. For example, the comment referring to the conversation among Kimberly, Ileana, and Chrissy (2) includes some of the borrowings they mentioned, and my comment about Daniela's post (3) is in Spanish, following her linguistic choice. While most of the students are Spanish/English bilinguals, we sometimes have other languages represented in the class, and I encourage students to draw connections between their experiences. For instance, I highlight Taalah's video (4) which connects her English/Arabic bilingualism to the Spanish/English bilingualism of the valley,

f) Course Content

Another key aspect of translanguaging pedagogy in these courses is the course content. In the Border Languages course, 15/19 readings are by Hispanic authors, and they are all relevant to the context of U.S.-Mexico border. While there are fewer readings by Hispanic authors in the Community Language Project (4/14), we consider the sociolinguistic interviews from the community as a key text as the students spend the majority of their time conducting, collecting, transcribing, revising, reformatting, and/or analyzing these interviews. As such, these courses also adhere to culturally relevant pedagogy (Paris, 2012; see also Feria, this volume).

4. Methods

As an ethnographic study, the research methods for this paper include many hours of participant observation. Kimberly was enrolled as a student in both courses, and I was the sole instructor of the courses. Additionally, we provide thick, detailed descriptions of the courses along with how translanguaging pedagogy is implemented in these classes, including the community engaged scholarship project. We then analyze how students translanguage in the classes through a mixed methods analysis of code-switching (Zentella, 1990), incorporating a quantitative and qualitative analysis of reflection papers and Flipgrid video discussion boards.

Students complete reflection papers at the end of the semester in each class, and the instructions for undergraduate students follows:
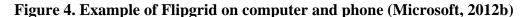
(5) Write a short reflection on your experience during this course and with the sociolinguistic interview project. What have you learned? How will this impact you as you move forward in your studies and/or career path? You may refer to readings from the class, but this is not necessary. You may discuss any of the topics during class that related to your

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[22] All student names are pseudonyms, except for those mentions of Kimberly's contributions.

experience during the interview or anything you noticed about the language used during the interview.

Graduate students write a reflective research paper, so the assignment sheet included more instructions referring to the literature review and analysis portions of the paper; however, graduate students are also asked to reflect on their experiences. Interestingly, while the instructions did not ask students to reflect on the translanguaging pedagogy of the course, this topic did come up in many of the papers.

Flipgrid (Microsoft, 2012a) is a free online video discussion board, originally created by Dr. Charlie Miller. In contrast to typical written text-based online discussion boards, Flipgrid allows students to upload videos. Since it is asynchronous, it allows students to see and hear one another even if they do not have a fixed class meeting time. Students may access the Flipgrid via a smartphone app or computer. (See Figure 4.) In the sociolinguistics courses discussed here, I typically post prompts, and students respond with a short video. Although in 'Intro to Border Languages,' sometimes students respond to group video presentations. In addition to replying to the prompt, students respond to each other's posts with either a video or written comment.

Figure 4. Example of Flipgrid on computer and phone (Microsoft, 2012b)

In all, we analyzed 125 reflection papers from the eight times that I have taught these courses over the past four years. We also analyzed 390 Flipgrid posts (video or written) from Fall 2020 and Spring 2021. Code-switching is often defined as the alternation between two or more languages within the same utterance or conversation (Gumperz, 1982). Although scholars debate whether all single word code-switches are borrowings or if this should be determined based on phonological integration and/or frequency (Grosjean, 1995; Poplack & Meechan, 1995), we have coded simply as multi-word code-switches and single-word code-switches, since our intent here is to determine how and to what extent students engage in translanguaging events in the courses.

Figure 5. Example Coding for Reflection Paper

We manually coded each instance of code-switching as single-word or multi-word, and we coded for references to translanguaging pedagogy. We used Dedoose (2018) qualitative data analysis software to organize, analyze and code the data. Videos were coded with detail, resulting in multiple codes for each video, representing each instance of single-word and multi-word code-switching. Figure 5 demonstrates the coding process for a reflection paper; each coded segment is shown in different colors, although they may refer to the same code. Similar to other qualitative data analysis software, housing all the data inside of one platform facilitates the analysis across the various data, which in this project include videos, written word documents, and text comments.

6. Analysis of Translanguaging Events in Student Code-Switching

The instructor's translanguaging stance and translanguaging design are essential to a translanguaging pedagogy, but the purpose of all of this is to encourage students' use of their full linguistic repertoire and translanguaging in the classroom. An analysis of code-switching is certainly not the only way to observe this, but it does serve as a baseline measure of how students respond to the translanguaging stance, design, and shifts implemented by their instructor. In essence, our question is: How and to what extent do students engage in dynamic bilingual languaging practices in these courses characterized by translangugaging pedagogy?

Student Code-Switching in Reflection Papers

Out of 125 reflection papers from eight different sections of these two courses over the past four years, 87 (69.6%) papers include no code-switching, 38 (30.4%) include single-word code-switching, and 7 (5.6%) include multi-word code-switching. (See Figure 6.)
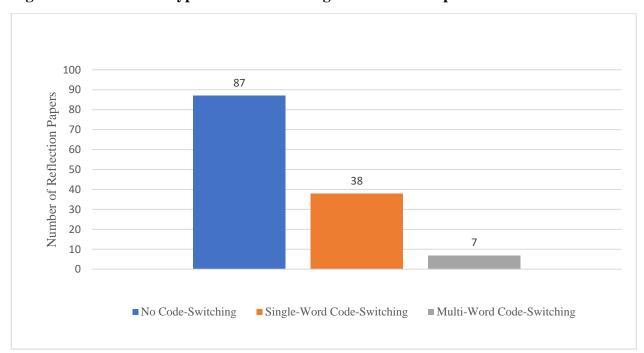
Figure 6. Amount and Type of Code-Switching in Reflection Papers Overall

The amount of code-switching in reflection papers (45 out of 125, 36.0%) is significant compared to reflection papers from a course without an explicit translanguaging pedagogy (4 out of 22, 18.2%) ($Z = 4.74$, p = < 0.0001). This shows that there is a significant effect for the explicit translanguaging design and pedagogy. These results are especially noteworthy given that I have always been open to speaking Spanish to students in my classes, incorporating Spanish language examples and having conversations with students. So, the actual effect may be even more pronounced compared to code-switching in another course. However, to limit confounding factors of different professors and assignments, I have used a comparison point for a similar reflection paper assignment in one of my other classes. The use of code-switching in written papers is particularly striking, since English is widely accepted as the language of academics, especially in writing (Mazak & Herbas-Donoso, 2014). As the reflection papers were turned in at the end of the semester, it is likely that students' level of comfort with incorporating bilingual practices in these courses increased throughout the semester, as will be shown below in the analysis of student code-switching on the Flipgrid discussion board.

Student Code-Switching on Flipgrid Video Discussion Board

In the Fall 2020 'Intro to Border Languages' course, students participated in asynchronous video discussions on Flipgrid. An analysis of the Flipgrid video posts and comments provides insight into the evolution of translanguaging in the course. During Week 1, 80 (96.4%) of students' video and written comments includes no code-switching, 1 (1.2%) includes single-word code-switches and 2 (2.4%) includes multi-word code-switching. However, during the second week, the trend changes quite drastically. Only 47 (67.1%) of Flipgrid posts exhibit no code-switching, while 14 (20.0%) include single-word code-switches, and 13 (18.6%) include multi-word code-switches. (See Figure 7.) The amount of code-switching on Flipgrid in Week 2 (27 out of 70 posts, 38.6%) is significantly greater compared to code-switching on Flipgrid during Week 1 (3 out of 83 posts, 3.6%) (Mann–Whitney U test statistic [MWU] =2069 P<0.0001)
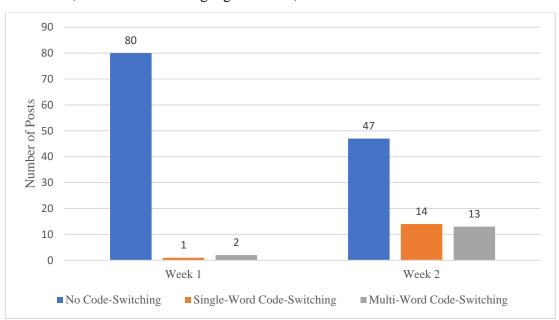
Figure 7. Amount and Type of Code-Switching on Flipgrid per Post for Week 1 and 2 During Fall 2020 (Intro to Border Languages Course)

We believe that this increase from Week 1 to Week 2 is at least partially accounted for by the course content and instructor feedback. In terms of Week 2 content, students in the Border Languages class read about counter-hegemonic language practices and ideologies in Southwest Texas (Achugar, 2008) and language ideologies in the Rio Grande Valley (Christoffersen, 2019); they also viewed two video lectures on language ideologies that included code-switching.

By Week 2, I provide positive reinforcement for the use of code-switching through video responses to students on Flipgrid as well as the 'Flipgrid Highlights' section of the weekly announcement/email, characterized by translanguaging shifts. The following are excerpts from the Flipgrid video discussion board. When students mention speaking Spanish or code-switching, I encourage them to use these languaging practices in the class:

(6) **Eduardo**: My major is English with a teacher certification 7 through 12. *Y una cosa que me gusta hacer es comer y ir al parque pero ahorita no puedo hacer eso por que* quarantine. And well other things that I like to do is play football and hang out with my wife and my baby.
Katie: Hi Eduardo! *Es el primer video que veo que es en español* or at least part of it *en español.* So *me encanta.* I love it. Thank you. *Gracias*. Also, I remember seeing that picture of your daughter and she's just so cute… So it's great to have you in class and *mucho gusto, es un placer* and it's super nice to meet you.

(7) **Luis**: …I like to make new friends as well so. So I'll be here and I also speak Spanish, so you can talk to me in Spanish or English. And I really don't mind…
Katie: …*Es muy bueno que puedes hablar español e inglés. Y entre- durante las discussions en* Flipgrid *y también en las escrituras y en las asignaturas puedes escribir en español, los dos. Todo es válido- toda lengua es válida aquí en esta clase.* So you can feel comfortable to use both of those languages together. Choose- use one, go in and out, either way, right?...

(8) **Laura**: My first language is Spanish. That's the language I grew up speaking, and I only learned English until I joined elementary school here, Mercedes.
Katie: Hi Laura, *hola, y nada más para decirte que puedes hablar español aquí. El español, el inglés o los dos, como quieras....* It's great to have you here *y cuando quieras puedes hablar en español, inglés, los dos. Como quieras como te sientas a gusto.*

Kimberly remembers seeing the translanguaging pedagogy in the syllabus and the instructions stating that they could use Spanish or code-switching. But the first week, she was a bit nervous whether this was really the case and didn't code-switch in her Flipgrid video or weekly response paper. She started code-switching during Week 2 after viewing the video by Eduardo along with my video reply (6) and reading the weekly email/announcement where I highlighted Flipgrid posts, including some that used Spanish and code-switching. In this way, the encouraging comments in a reply to one student impacted other students in the class as well.

Other students already use code-switching in their Week 1 Flipgrid videos, and I reinforce this practice by following their linguistic choices and providing positive evaluations of code-switching. The following Flipgrid video post (9) provides one such example.

(9) **Beto**: I think that the linguist spoke of several things that were mentioned in Gloria Anzaldúa's book, from a different perspective- were borderlands and *fronteras.* And. This idea of a hierarchy of dialects or hierarchy of language, language variations. It is something really prominent in that book of hers. And. *Y sí, o sea creo que es algo que en el valle tenemos algo en particular al menos si vives aquí en el valle es completamente foranio aquí. Yo viví diez años de mi vida en Reynosa, los diez primeros años de mi vida. Y me mudé aquí en pues en los diez años y he estado 16 años aquí. Entonces*, in that time I learned to value and respect this language variety that we have something that was not the case *cuando llegué.* Now where I come from, we call this code-switching Tex-Mex, or it's Spanglish, *pocho*. And this is a derogatory term where I come from. And it means that you're not Mexican enough and....
Katie: I often tell students if they have more to say, they can feel free to add an additional another video so *no hay problema y me encanta tu* code-switching *tu cambio de código* and that's something that I just love, and I think if- we can do it in this class and it's really beautiful. *En tus reflexiones, cuando quieras. Escrito y también en las conversaciones aquí en* Flipgrid, you can feel free to switch between the languages.

Here Beto fluidly uses his entire linguistic repertoire, switching between Spanish and English. Interestingly, when he's doing an analysis or commentary on readings, he talks in English. Then for his experience with the valley and Reynosa, he switches to Spanish. In this video post, he draws connections to his own experiences, the course content, and previous knowledge related to Anzaldúa's (1978) theorization of borderlands. I respond by encouraging the use of Spanish and English together in both Flipgrid videos and written assignments.

We do not see the same drastic change between Week 1 and Week 2 of the Spring 2021 'Community Language Project' course, which makes sense since 16 out of 25 students[23] (64%)

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[23] This analysis omits students who officially dropped the course.

had taken one of my courses before, and of those 12 (48%) had taken the 'Intro to Border Languages' course. So, they were already familiar with my translanguaging pedagogy.

Figure 8. Number of Code-Switches on Flipgrid by Topic in Fall 2020 (Intro to Border Languages)
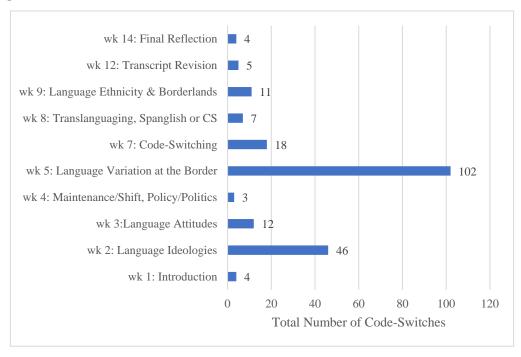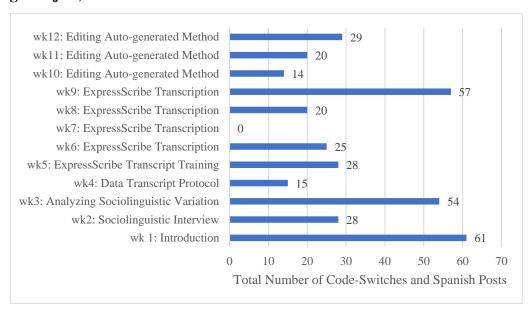

Figure 9. Number of Code-Switches on Flipgrid by Topic in Spring 2021 (Community Language Project)

We also note that the amount of code-switching differed by topic and week. Here we count single-word and multi-word code-switches together per each Flipgrid post. [24] During Fall 2020, the highest instances of code-switching occur when discussing language variation (102), language ideologies (46), code-switching (18), and language ethnicity and borderlands (11). (See Figure 8.) During Spring 2021, the highest instances of code-switching and Spanish language posts are for introductions (61), week 9 ExpressScribe transcription (57), analyzing sociolinguistic variation (54), week 12 editing auto-generated transcriptions (29), and sociolinguistic interviews (28).[25] (See Figure 9.) The topics with the highest amount of code-switching in Fall 2020 are related to various aspects of language variation; there are fewer instances of code-switching once students start the CoBiVa project. Although at that point, their homework assignments are bilingual, as they revise sociolinguistic interviews. In Spring 2021, students code-switch for topics related to language variation but also transcription methods. This may be due in part to the cross-listing of the course with the Spanish section (SPAN 4317).
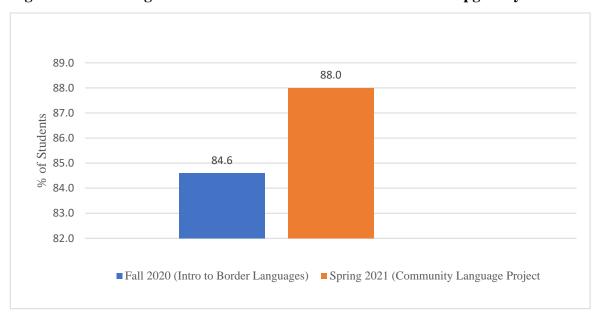
Figure 10. Percentage of Total Students who Code-Switched on Flipgrid by Semester

Perhaps one of the most important findings is that most students in each class include at least one code-switch or fully Spanish language post on Flipgrid during the semester. Altogether 22 out of 26 students[26] (84.6%) code-switch at least once during Fall 2020 and 22 out of 25 students (88.0%) during Spring 2021. (See Figure 10.) Averaged over the two semesters, 44 out of 51 students (86.3%) code-switch at least once on Flipgrid.

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[24] There were optional Zoom meetings as an alternative to Flipgrid during Weeks 3, 9, 12, and 14 for Fall 2020, which result in lower code-switches. During Spring 2021, optional Zoom meetings were held during Weeks 4, 5, 6, 10, and 13 as an alternative to FlipGrid. Additionally, students' one lowest discussion score was during each class, and some students decided not to complete one Flipgrid post.

[26] This analysis omits students who officially dropped the course.

Figure 11. Number of Code-Switches on Flipgrid per Student during Fall 2020 (Intro to Border Languages Course)
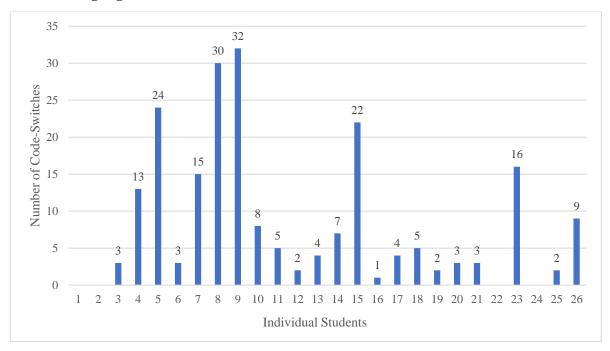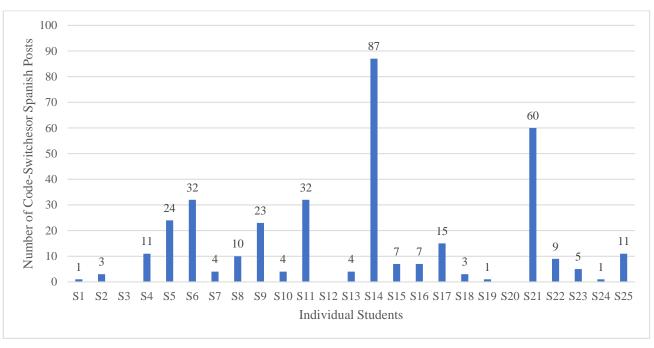

Figure 12. Number of Code-Switches on Flipgrid per Student during Spring 2021 (Community Language Project Course)

The amount of code-switching per student on Flipgrid ranges from zero to 32 during Fall 2020 and from zero to 87 during Spring 2021. (See Figure 11 and Figure 12.) Overall, students code-switch an average of 8.2 times during Fall 2020, and 14.2 times during Spring 2021. These results show that students are in fact responding to the translanguaging pedagogy by using bilingual languaging practices including single-word and multi-word code-switching. In fact, these results

for code-switching do not include monolingual Spanish posts, which are prevalent in Spring 2021, due to the Spanish crosslisting. It should also be noted that even when students aren't code-switching, they are responding to one another's comments. So, in yet another way, students are translanguaging as they respond to posts that include code-switching or Spanish language posts, even if they choose to respond in English.

7. Analysis of Student Reflections on Translanguaging Pedagogy

Some students use reflection papers as an opportunity to reflect on the translanguaging aspect of the course, even though this was not specifically required per the instructions. This suggests that the courses' translanguaging pedagogy was meaningful enough for these students to reflect upon unprompted. For example, in (10), Monica examines how the course's translanguaging pedagogy was meaningful to her personally and how it 'meant so much' to her that I spoke both English and Spanish in the class and incorporated bilingual materials, such as the readings.

> (10)   **Monica**: My problem with identity was always a question mark because of my Spanish Mexican cultural roots and yet my English education dominated most of it; I no longer have this problem about who I am because **my professor welcomed discussions in the course using and encouraging both English and Spanish words as she spoke** and it made me feel like that was right, I felt progression in her bilingualism and it felt correct, **almost like the justice Gloria Anzaldúa spoke of in her poems, the best way forward from linguistic terrorism is duality, the usage of bilingualism** and even translanguaging if there's room for it- Of course there could be. **How many professors-White professors in University classrooms do this in America? In the RGV? I've never heard any of my professors here use Spanish unless they were off the clock and code-switching or unless they were actually teaching Spanish**. This small thing, is a sentiment to me that **means so much**, and for the first time I was introduced to **texts in our class readings that had both Spanish and English in them**, whether they were studies such as my favorite Toribio's Accessing bilingual code-switching competence, or poems written by Mexican-Americans and Chicanos(as) such as Anzaldúa and her How to Tame a Wild Tongue, or from our class textbook written by Glenn A. Martinez…. **We don't need to make a barrier in the classroom** when it comes to written works, and code-switched and switching language. Whether we read or have discussions in which the language is mixed, **this should be the new okay**.

In this powerful reflection, Monica draws connections between the translanguaging in the course and the duality in Gloria Anzaldúa's (1987) work, stating "the best way forward from linguistic terrorism is duality." Anzaldúa's concept of linguistic terrorism refers to the hostility expressed by English and Spanish speakers towards Chicanos' bilingual language varieties. Monica extends the notion of duality to the two languages used in the course. She also states that not only has she never had any professors use Spanish in class when not specifically teaching the Spanish language but that she never heard of this. She references English as the language of the school system and instead remarks that "We don't need to make a barrier in the classroom." For Monica, this course has broken down barriers and allowed a new vision and space to imagine a classroom pedagogy where bilingual language practices should be the "new okay." While this statement may at first seem anti-climactic, the "new okay" is actually quite powerful, suggesting perhaps that rather than something marked or surprising, translanguaging pedagogy could become commonplace and expected in the classroom.

In another reflection paper (11), Faith mentions the historical context and the power hierarchies of the English language, including its connection to colonization and racism.

(11)   **Faith:** The mere prevalence of English has to deal with much greater issues of colonization and racism, amongst others, and merely teaching the language I think can in a way help perpetuate these issues. When teaching students who speak other languages, I would not want to subject them to the same negative language attitudes we've discussed in class, and I think more institutions should embrace these other languages instead of abandoning them in favor of English. **When I say this though, I mean a full embracing of the language, similar to how this class was a linguistic safe space, rather than just viewing it as an additional asset to be tapped into whenever needed.**

Faith also discusses how learning from this course will impact her teaching. Specifically, she will avoid negative language attitudes and subtractive models of bilingualism. Instead, she plans to implement "a full embracing of the language" which harkens the translanguaging notion of the full linguistic repertoire. Faith further describes how this class has been a "linguistic safe space, rather than just viewing it as an additional asset to be tapped into whenever needed." This last sentence is quite telling. Despite decades of research on the functions, systematicity, and sophistication of code-switching (Poplack, 1980; Zentella, 1982), it is still often incorrectly viewed as a 'crutch' for lexical gaps. Faith here is countering that negative notion, suggesting that bilinguals should not be required to limit their linguistic skills. Instead, we need to fully embrace, encourage, and appreciate bilingual languaging practices in the classroom.

One of the few students that wrote his reflection paper in Spanish (12), Ivan outlines the benefits of Flipgrid video discussions as a beneficial tool that allows students to reflect and discuss the material without filters involved in writing.

(12)   **Ivan**: *Algo que definitivamente disfrute mucho fue el formato en el que compartimos nuestras discusiones, desde mi punto de vista personal el uso de Flipgrid para entablar un tema de conversación con los compañeros de clase es una herramienta muy beneficiosa ya que mantiene el dinamismo del foro y creo que ayuda mucho a que el autor de la discusión refleje su punto de vista de una mucho mejor manera y sin tantos filtros debido a no encontrar la manera de poner las palabras que busca en el papel. **Otra cosa que me gusto y me pareció muy peculiar fue que la clase fue bilingüe, eso es algo que nunca me había tocado ver en ninguna de mis otras clases antes, creo que eso ayudo mucho a la dinámica de la clase ya que por ejemplo en mi caso personal, las discusiones no me gustaba hacerlas en inglés debido a que sentía que me costaba más expresarme y el hecho de poder hacer mis discusiones en español y recibir la realimentación de mis compañeros en inglés fue algo único que creo que de alguna manera termina por ser un formato algo futurístico.***

The second thing that Ivan reflects upon that he enjoyed during the course is the bilingual nature of the class, something that he never saw before in any of his other classes. He explains that this helps the dynamic and allowed him to complete the discussion videos in Spanish while receiving feedback from his classmates in English. He describes this format as "unique" and "futuristic."

Finally, Daniela (13) simultaneously discusses the bilingual aspect of the course and enacts it as she writes with frequent multi-word code-switches.

(13)   **Daniela**: However, this class allowed me to realize that Spanglish speakers don't ever have to apologize for **being fabulous** *y poder hablar un idioma* **and quickly switch to the other**, *y al que no le guste,* **let them continue being linguistic oppressors**. Because, why is it that the use of Spanglish piss off so many people? Like, **I appreciate** *cuando me dicen "Daniela, nos vemos mañana" pero le falta sazón*, **so,** *"Daniela ahí nos watchamos!"* **it really touches my soul.**

Daniela describes "Spanglish speakers" as "fabulous" and people who criticize or dislike code-switching as "linguistic oppressors." She references Spanish varieties and how it feels different to her when someone says "nos vemos mañana" in a more formal 'standard' Spanish variety and "ahí nos watchamos" with a morphologically integrated borrowing of the word 'watch' that is common in U.S. Spanish varieties. This excerpt then is a beautiful reflection of a student integrating their full linguistic repertoire (through multi-word code-switches), demonstrating metalinguistic awareness (nos vemos v. nos watchamos), and critical language awareness (linguistic oppressors).

6. Discussion & Conclusions

This study responds to calls for further examples of translanguaging pedagogy (Canagarajah, 2011; Creese & Blackledge, 2010), in this case online asynchronous courses at a Hispanic Serving Institution. The description of the courses provides examples of intentional and purposeful translanguaging design in course syllabi, content, instructor videos, and assignments. Examples of instructor feedback demonstrate translanguaging shifts in moment to moment classroom interactions. Additionally, the analysis of translanguaging events through the quantitative analysis of student code-switching and the qualitative analysis of student reflections on translanguaging pedagogy demonstrate the powerful impact of translanguaging pedagogy as a transformative tool for social justice.

Based on the findings, we suggest the importance that instructors explicitly state, encourage and reinforce the translanguaging pedagogy. We also suggest that class discussions are an important site to implement and reinforce translanguaging pedagogy. In online asynchronous classes, instructors may consider incorporating Flipgrid video discussion boards in order to provide a mode of interaction that approximates face-to-face classroom discussions. Additionally, we note the drastic increase in code-switching on the Flipgrid video discussion board after the first week's discussions, demonstrating the need for frequent translanguaging shifts through instructor feedback. Based on these findings, we recommend that instructors actively engage with students in their chosen language varieties, to encourage and highlight bilingual language practices, to model bilingual language practices in all aspects of the course, and to include bilingual and/or culturally relevant materials.

While the courses described and analyzed above successfully implemented a translanguaging pedagogy, they also incorporate other complementary pedagogies. For instance, the community engaged scholarship project allowed students to value and study their community and their community's language through involvement in a research. The incorporation of a culturally relevant pedagogy (Paris, 2012) by way of including Hispanic authors and bilingual texts relevant to the community provide models and examples of translanguaging and increase appreciation for these bilingual language practices.

Finally, these classes incorporate critical language awareness by providing a space for students to critically examine, question, and challenge the historical contexts and hierarchies of language. In order for a translanguaging pedagogy to have its most transformative effect, instructors should move beyond the promotion of multiple and varied linguistic codes in the classroom to a critical analysis of the power relations embedded within the sociohistorical and political use of language, empowering students to envision and create change in their classrooms and their communities. In the qualitative analysis of student reflections on translanguaging pedagogy, students did not only comment on translanguaging. Rather, Monica references Anzaldúa's theorization of linguistic terrorism (Anzaldúa, 1987), Faith examines issues of colonization and racism, and Daniela refers to and admonished linguistic oppressors. Most importantly and in true CLA fashion, they each look forwards in how to create change. Monica describes "the new okay," Faith explains how this will impact her teaching, Ivan describes the translanguaging pedagogy as "futuristic," and Daniela describes a new realization that "Spanglish speakers don't ever have to apologize for being fabulous." As Monica so beautifully phrased it, "the best way forward from linguistic terrorism is duality." While a translanguaging pedagogy is a wonderful starting point, translanguaging pedagogy together with critical language awareness allows students to critically examine and challenge negative valuations of language varieties.

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Aprendizaje activo y pedagogía culturalmente relevante en STEM: Tres lecciones aprendidas dentro y fuera del aula

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Resumen

Uno de los mayores desafíos en la ciencia, la tecnología, la ingeniería y la educación matemática (STEM, por sus siglas en inglés) es mejorar el rendimiento y la retención de estudiantes de diversos orígenes. Existen grandes diferencias entre los logros académicos de los estudiantes de minorías subrepresentadas (EMS) con aquellos que no pertenecen a estas minorías. Las diferencias inician desde el kínder y continúan hasta los estudios de posgrado. El aprendizaje activo y la pedagogía culturalmente sensible/relevante han mostrado resultados exitosos minimizando estas diferencias educacionales. Desafortunadamente, el aprendizaje activo y la pedagogía culturalmente relevante no son métodos comunes de enseñanza en STEM. Este documento resume tres lecciones aprendidas utilizando el aprendizaje activo y la pedagogía culturalmente relevante dentro y fuera del aula en diferentes plataformas de enseñanza que incluyen servicios de aprendizaje, enseñanza bilingüe, participación comunitaria, estudios en el extranjero y aprendizaje cooperativo en línea como parte de cursos en STEM. Las lecciones incluyen: romper el hielo, incluir reflexiones en los cursos y socializar.

Palabras clave: STEM, aprendizaje activo, pedagogía culturalmente relevante, romper el hielo, reflexiones, socializar

Aprendizaje activo y pedagogía culturalmente relevante en STEM: Tres lecciones

aprendidas dentro y fuera del aula

Introducción

En lugar de escuchar pasivamente en clase, el aprendizaje activo permite una constante participación por parte de los alumnos y el profesor mediante el uso de diversas actividades pedagógicas que consisten en fomentar el conocimiento y la comprensión de los temas de la clase (Freeman et. al, 2014). Las actividades del aprendizaje activo son diversas. Algunos ejemplos incluyen diarios o reflexiones, estudios de caso, aula invertida o por su nombre en inglés, *flipped classroom*, entre otras. Un curso de aprendizaje activo estructurado requiere que los estudiantes (1) se preparen antes de las clases, (2) participen en clase con ejercicios de aprendizaje activo y (3) trabajen en evaluaciones semanales tipo práctica antes de un examen. Aunque estas prácticas son poco comunes en STEM, este modelo ha dado resultados satisfactorios para elevar el aprovechamiento de los estudiantes de cursos de nivel universitario (Freeman et. al, 2014; Haak et al, 2011).

Otra estrategia de enseñanza eficaz que es poco común en las clases universitarias de STEM es la pedagogía *culturalmente relevante*, aunque existen notables excepciones (Anhalt, 2018; Hamstra et. Al, 2021; Timmons-Brown & Warner, 2016). Si un curso con aprendizaje activo estructurado incluye estrategias que son *culturalmente relevantes* (Scherff & Spector, 2011; Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995) se podría crear un ambiente cordial, familiar donde el estudiante siente que *pertenece*, que es parte importante de ese entorno y por lo tanto tendrá más oportunidades de tener éxito en el curso.

La *Cultura* ha sido definida como una forma de "*cómo el cerebro da sentido al mundo*" (Cook-Sather & Des-Ogugua, 2019). No dominar el idioma inglés, o sentir que no se domina, podría ser un obstáculo en una cultura Hispana (Harper & Davis, 2016). Por ejemplo, tener un acento marcado al hablar en inglés podría hacer sentir menos confiada a un estudiante al momento de participar en clase o de asistir a conferencias científicas (comentarios personales). Esta experiencia podría reflejarse de una manera negativa en el desempeño del estudiante en el aula.

La pedagogía culturalmente relevante sostiene que los educadores deben ser inclusivos (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011). Es decir, no deben criticar los antecedentes culturales de sus estudiantes, si no deberían usar esos antecedentes culturales como una herramienta poderosa en el aula, que permita que los estudiantes se sientan incluidos y por lo tanto tengan éxito en el curso (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011). En mi búsqueda por la literatura en este tipo de temas, encontré un artículo que me sirvió bastante y que resumo a continuación. Me dio gusto descubrir que yo estaba ya siguiendo algunas de estas prácticas sin haber tenido una formación pedagógica. Esto es muy común en ciencias. Sabemos sobre nuestro tema de investigación, pero no tenemos herramientas pedagógicas porque no estamos preparados para dar clases, lo cual es paradójico si es que queremos hacer una carrera como profesores en una institución académica en donde podamos hacer investigación.

Las recomendaciones para prácticas docentes inclusivas y culturalmente relevantes incluyen: (1) Ser explícito sobre las prácticas pedagógicas y las interacciones en el aula. Esto es,

proporcionar expectativas claras para los estudiantes; (2) Darse tiempo para conocer a los estudiantes. Es decir, aprender de los desafíos académicos que los estudiantes están enfrentado; (3) Compartir experiencias académicas personales con los estudiantes, para que puedan ver la parte humana del profesor; (4) Proporcionar varias oportunidades de participación, como discusiones en clase entre pares de estudiantes; (5) Utilizar ejemplos e ilustraciones múltiples e inclusivas como temas de clase que estén conectados con la vida personal del estudiante; (6) Analizar el papel del silencio en el aula. Dar una pausa después de plantear una pregunta en clase da a los alumnos tiempo para pensar en la respuesta y participar; y finalmente, (7) Ser aliados y defensores de nuestros alumnos (Cook-Sather & Des-Ogugua, 2019). Al incorporar este tipo de recomendaciones, la cultura puede enriquecer fácilmente toda la experiencia académica.

Yo he seguido estas sugerencias, pero he aprendido otras. El presente documento resume tres lecciones aprendidas utilizando el aprendizaje activo y la pedagogía culturalmente relevante dentro y fuera del aula en diferentes plataformas de enseñanza. Estas plataformas de enseñanzas incluyen servicio de aprendizaje, clases bilingües (español/inglés), participación comunitaria, estudio en el extranjero y aprendizaje cooperativo en línea, como parte de cursos que he impartido en el Departamento de Biología en la Universidad de Texas del Valle del Rio Grande (UTRGV sus siglas en inglés) por un lapso de 13 años. En este artículo, primero describo mi filosofía de enseñanza. A continuación, demuestro tres lecciones dentro y fuera del aula en cursos presenciales (romper el hielo, reflexiones, y socializar). Y, al final, considero como estas prácticas y métodos pueden ser utilizados en cursos en línea.

Descripción general de los cursos y métodos de enseñanza

En UTRGV he impartido diversas clases, desde clases básicas como Biología General o especializadas que yo desarrollé como Ecología del Cambio Global y clases de maestría como Ecología Avanzada o Ecología del Cambio Global Avanzada. Mis clases tienen componentes de servicio social, enseñanza bilingüe, con participación de la comunidad, y de investigación. Estos cursos los he enseñado a estudiantes internacionales, nacionales y con distintas modalidades, como presencial y en línea (asincrónica y sincrónica).

Para que los estudiantes logren los objetivos de los cursos, se sientan incluidos y tengan éxito en la clase, utilizo múltiples métodos de enseñanza inclusivos con actividades de aprendizaje variadas (clases invertidas, pausas cada 20 minutos en clase para discutir el tema impartido, discusiones entre dos o cuatro compañeros, etc.) y culturalmente relevantes inclusivos (por ejemplo, trabajos de reciclaje con diseños culturales o investigación de organismos nativos como plantas, aves, etc.). Frecuentemente uso material del curso que los estudiantes anteriores han desarrollado como ejemplos para los estudiantes. Los comentarios de los estudiantes al final del semestre me han demostrado que algunos de los métodos más impactantes son las de clase invertida (*flipped classroom*) y reciclaje. Algunos comentarios anónimos de los estudiantes en mis evaluaciones al final del curso incluyen:

- *"I enjoyed that Dr. Feria made us engage with the material being covered through team-based assignments such as flipped classroom assignments."*
- *"There have been many flipped classroom assignments and through our team recycling project, I have gained experience talking to my peers and expressing my ideas in a group setting."*

Además, a lo largo de los años, noté que los estudiantes que me esperaban al final de la clase o que iban a mi horario de oficina, hacían preguntas en español y buscaban una explicación en el mismo idioma, a menudo su primer idioma nativo, por lo que desarrollé la **primera clase bilingüe** llamada Ecología del Cambio Global (Global Change Ecology), en la Facultad de Ciencias de mi universidad en el 2016, que incluye aprendizaje activo y pedagogía culturalmente relevante. Una de las actividades en este curso incluye la creación de productos de reciclaje de diversos materiales como plástico, papel, llantas de automóviles, etc. Mis estudiantes desarrollan proyectos que contienen aspectos culturales (Figura 1), por ejemplo, la inclusión de colores, diseños, usos, en los cuales invitan a sus familiares a participar. ¡Tías, abuelitas, hermanos, primos, mamá, papá, toda la familia colabora!

Figura 1. Estudiantes y sus productos de reciclaje. Clase bilingüe Ecología del Cambio Global, primavera del 2019.

Para que los estudiantes cumplan con los objetivos de mis cursos, dejo que los estudiantes decidan lo que quieren crear en sus proyectos de reciclaje o el tema de investigación relacionado a las clases y de acuerdo con su interés, porque en mi experiencia esta es la mejor manera de sentir propiedad y pasión por lo que hacemos además de que refuerza su creatividad y pensamiento crítico.

En mi clase de investigación llamada Problemas Biológicos, los estudiantes generalmente tienen interés en un tema de investigación basado en sus raíces culturales, condiciones de vida, experiencias familiares y/o metas profesionales. Durante el desarrollo de sus ideas en clase los estudiantes incluyen comentarios como los siguientes:

- "*Mi familia come nopales*",
- "*Tenemos un árbol de cítricos en mi patio trasero*",

- "*Quiero estudiar medicina*",
- "*Mi tío tiene un rancho con ganado*",

Estos comentarios me permiten identificar mejor el tema de investigación que podrían desarrollar con éxito. Por ejemplo, uno de los temas de estudio involucra al nopal (Feria-Arroyo, 2020), que sin duda es uno de los temas que más acerca a los estudiantes hispanos con sus orígenes culturales ancestrales. En este curso los estudiantes también tienen la oportunidad de interactuar con investigadores y administradores de empresas de diferentes organizaciones como del Texas Parks and Wildlife Department y United States Department of Agriculture, por nombrar algunos. Esto también ayuda a los estudiantes a visualizar la importancia de las colaboraciones interdisciplinarias y transdisciplinarias y a tener lugares potenciales para continuar estudios de posgrado o encontrar puestos de trabajo.

Yo sigo los consejos mencionados anteriormente e incluyo como un aspecto importante de mi vida personal una presentación titulada "*Mi heroína indígena*" que realice en memoria de mi abuela materna. Esta presentación la doy para que los estudiantes conozcan mis orígenes como profesora hispana nacida en el Estado de México, México. Esto es muy importante para mí porque la mayoría de mis estudiantes son hispanos y aunque yo también soy hispana, no soy de la región donde ellos viven en el Valle de Del Rio Grande (VDRG) de Texas. Para entender la cultura de nuestros estudiantes es necesario comer lo que ellos comen, visitar los lugares que ellos visitan, escuchar la música regional, etc. Pero, también aprendemos de la cultura de los estudiantes en el aula. Por lo cual hago a continuación tres recomendaciones importantes desde mi propia experiencia que me han ayudado a que los estudiantes tengan más confianza en sí mismos, participen más en la clase y a que se cumplan satisfactoriamente los objetivos de aprendizaje del curso.: (1) romper el hielo, (2) incluir reflexiones en los cursos, y (3) socializar.

Lección 1: Romper el hielo

La primera lección que recomiendo es Romper el Hielo. Es decir, dejar que los estudiantes se conozcan unos a otros y que nos conozcan a los profesores también. La forma que tengo para realizar esto es la siguiente. Mis temarios de clase son centrados en el estudiante (Palmer, Wheeler, & Aneece, 2016) y detallan, los objetivos de aprendizaje, cómo se van a evaluar y la calificación que se obtendrá por el trabajo. Mi tono es en primera persona como si estuviera hablando con el estudiante. Lo más importante aquí es que incluyo una sección en donde invito a los estudiantes a escribir sus objetivos de aprendizajes personales. Este ejercicio tiene varios propósitos: (1) me permite reflexionar y mejorar el contenido del curso y (2) permite que los estudiantes se conozcan unos a otros. De esta forma, ellos mismos se dan cuenta que existen varias cosas en común entre ellos. No están solos; están con un grupo de estudiantes que tiene inquietudes y preguntas similares.

El temario está disponible para los estudiantes antes de las clases; sin embargo, imprimo el documento y les entrego una copia en persona a los estudiantes el día de la clase. Leo con ellos el temario y los invito a escribir sus tres objetivos de aprendizaje personales. Después, los invito a presentarse con un compañero de clase que no conozcan y que les platiquen sobre sus objetivos de aprendizaje. Doy 10 minutos para esta actividad y después les pido a los estudiantes que regresen a sus lugares, que nos presenten al nuevo estudiante que conocieron ese día y que nos platiquen sobre los objetivos de aprendizaje de ese estudiante. Esta actividad puede darse en inglés o español, como sea mejor para el estudiante. Después yo traduzco al inglés como sea necesario. Es fascinante ver que los estudiantes presentan a sus compañeros con mucho respeto y hablan de

los objetivos personales de sus compañeros mencionando "*tenemos ideas similares,*" "*su objetivo personal es fascinante,*" o "*fuimos a la misma secundaria, pero no nos conocimos,*" etc. Estos comentarios son importantes porque permiten **romper el hielo** e iniciar con lo que espero: una interacción en clase que me ayude a que todos los estudiantes se sientan incluidos y respetados. La confianza que los estudiantes obtienen durante el semestre se vuelve notoria desde las primeras clases.

Otro punto importante es que en mis cursos bilingües (español-inglés), pese a que algunos estudiantes no hablan español y que además no tienen ninguna raíz hispana que les permita conocer el idioma, el hecho de participar en un curso donde se interactúa constantemente desde el primer día, ayuda mucho a que los estudiantes se sientan con la confianza de participar durante el curso y ellos mismos recomiendan que este aspecto de la clase se conserve o se use en otras clases (ejemplo de una reflexión: Figura 2): "*In this class, I think that it was wonderful that I got to know everyone and we got to hear everyone's wonderful ideas. In the future, this is what the world needs if we are to solve the world's pressing problems*".

Figura 2. Ecología del Cambio Global, Servicio a la comunidad clase bilingüe 2018. Reflexión de un estudiante.

Otros ejemplos sobre el beneficio de la interacción constante entre estudiantes desde el primer día se ven reflejadas en mis evaluaciones anónimas de final de curso e incluyen:

- "*her way of teaching was so great that in that it incorporates many different methods which is beneficial to all students. Her assignments helped me to interact with other students (opinions) and come out of my comfort zone during our interactive presentations. I really felt Dr. Feria's passion when she taught, and I found myself incredible interested in this subject.*"
- "*From the very first day, Dr. Feria did something that many professors do not- she made me feel welcome.*"

Entonces, para romper el hielo, mi recomendación es usar un temario que este centrado en el estudiante e invitar a los estudiantes a conocerse los unos a los otros desde el primer día de clase en el idioma que se sientan más confiados de usar. Esto, en mi experiencia, los motiva desde la primera clase, además de que los ayuda a tener una mejor percepción de lo que se espera de ellos, así como lo que ellos esperan de la clase. Animarlos a que se conozcan y puedan interactuar desde el primer día de clase, ayuda a los estudiantes a tener confianza y autoestima, lo que puede garantizar un semestre positivo para el profesor y los estudiantes. Esto se ve reflejado en una cultura inclusiva de solidaridad y confianza en el aula.

¿Como saber si el temario está centrado en los estudiantes? Existen rubricas para hacer esta evaluación (Palmer, Bach, & Streifer, 2014). Además, en mi caso, el Centro de Excelencia para la Enseñanza ofrece cursos y realiza la evaluación del temario (The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Center for Teaching Excellence -CTE-, 2021). Por lo que es importante acudir a talleres pedagógicos y estar en constante comunicación con el personal de los centros de enseñanza de nuestras universidades. Existen también herramientas que nos permiten asegurarnos de que el estudiante lea el temario y lo entienda (Guertin, 2014). Si esto no es suficiente, leerlo con ellos el primer día de la clase es una buena inversión de nuestro tiempo que se verá reflejado durante el transcurso de la clase.
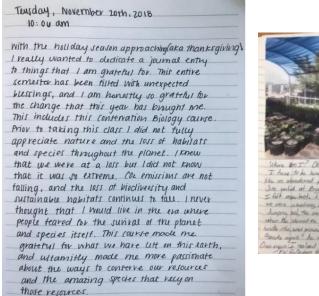
Lección 2. Reflexiones

Escribir reflexiones en un diario o cuaderno, es uno de los múltiples métodos que utilizo en clase para involucrar a los estudiantes en el proceso de aprendizaje. Kolb y Kolb (2012) en su principio de aprendizaje experiencial en espiral afirman que,

> "*cuando una experiencia se enriquece con una reflexión, se da sentido al pensar y se transforma con una acción; la nueva experiencia creada es más rica, más amplia y profunda, representando una culminación superior de un proceso de aprendizaje*".

Por lo tanto, en todos mis cursos, los estudiantes escriben reflexiones en un diario y solicito que sea a mano (excepciones deben hacerse si es cuestión de inclusión y accesibilidad). Les pido que escriban a mano porque en mi propia experiencia, puedo recordar, entender y usar todos mis sentidos cuando escribo a mano, pero también está documentado en artículos científicos que existen muchas ventajas de escribir a mano (Bouriga & Olive, 2021).

Las reflexiones son variadas (Figura 3). Les pido transformarse en un super héroe, o bien platicar con su familiar más querido sobre lo que están aprendiendo en la clase. Les pido que reflexionen en como esta clase puede tener un impacto positivo en su vida diaria y aún más allá, en su vida profesional. También les pido que me digan que método de enseñanza de los múltiples que uso, fue el que causó un impacto más positivo o negativo y por qué.
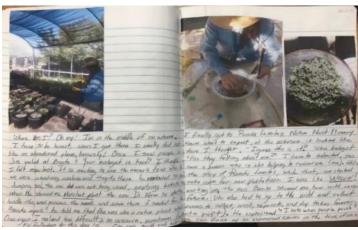
Figura 3. Ejemplos de reflexiones escritas por estudiantes.

Empecé a incluir reflexiones en mis cursos porque asistí a programas para desarrollo profesional impartidos por el CTE, Programa de Estudios Mexicoamericanos y del Instituto B3 (Bilingüe, Bicultural, Bi-literario) de mi universidad. El Programa de Estudios Mexicoamericanos y el Instituto B3 organizaron un taller de formación docente en la Ciudad de México en el 2017, lidereado por el Dr. Francisco Guajardo quien era director del Instituto B3. Todos los participantes escribíamos reflexiones después de cada día durante los siete días del programa. La mejor manera de aprender es sin duda la del ejemplo que se sigue. Por lo que yo incorporé reflexiones en mis clases e inmediatamente desarrollé una clase en el extranjero que fue aprobada en el 2017. En esta clase llamada Global Change Ecology Study Abroad (Figura 4), viajo con los estudiantes a Mérida Yucatán, en donde aprendemos temas relacionados a la cultura del lugar, los temas de la clase, y la cultura del VDRG, en donde la mayoría de mis estudiantes radican. Las reflexiones de los estudiantes me permiten observar como este tipo de experiencias los acercan más a sus propias raíces culturales. Como lo demuestra la reflexión de una de las estudiantes que tomo el curso:

- *This course has been eye opening towards the struggles that the indigenous people have. The fact that many Mayan people feel the*

Figura 4. Curso de Enseñanza en el Extranjero, verano de 2018. Periódico el Monitor.

need to deny their roots so they will not be judged on preconceived notions is harrowing. I was very happy to see Gener, our tour guide, take pride in his beautiful culture. The Mayans were people of science, mathematics, and architecture. This experience has inspired me to rediscover my Mexican American roots and use them to propel myself forward into my studies. – Nora Sustaita.

De los 9 estudiantes que asistieron a este curso el primer año, dos continuaron sus estudios de maestra como mis estudiantes, uno está realizando un doctorado y tres fueron seleccionados como Embajadores de Cursos al Extranjero (Study Abroad Embassadors, UTRGV).

Ya se han documentado los beneficios de cursos que se llevan a cabo en el extranjero (Strange & Gibson, 2017) y de cómo evaluar estos beneficios (Nerlich, 2020). Sin embargo, el objetivo en el presente escrito es mostrar como el uso de reflexiones nos pueden ayudar a revisar el material y las actividades de nuestros cursos para establecer de esta manera un ambiente cultural que permita al estudiante cimentar las bases de su propia cultura y usar esas ventajas en el aula. La escritura científica es uno de los componentes centrales en nuestro departamento de Biología. Sin embargo, la escritura en general, y más específicamente la escritura de reflexiones, no es una práctica común en la ciencia. Así que, implementar esto en mis clases fue una innovación.

Desde que empecé a incluir reflexiones en mis cursos noté niveles de participación mayores y ambientes más positivos en el aula. Como ejemplo, en mi curso de servicio de aprendizaje, Biología de la Conservación (BIOL 3404.01S), las reflexiones incluyen temas relacionados con el uso de conocimiento que están adquiriendo en esta clase y en las carreras potenciales de los estudiantes. Esto me ayuda a evaluar si están cumpliendo sus metas de aprendizaje establecidas al inicio del semestre, así como para mejorar mis practicas docentes y el material del curso.

Incluir reflexiones de los estudiantes me ayuda a reclutar nuevos estudiantes en clases como Biological Problems, ya que estos sirven como testimonios del éxito de estudiantes que concluyeron un proyecto de investigación en mi laboratorio. No solo eso, sino que permite que los estudiantes practiquen escritura de divulgación de la ciencia. Por ejemplo, después de terminar su trabajo de investigación (financiado por el Departamento de Agricultura de los Estados Unidos, Training the Next Generation of Agricultural Scientists: coping with food Security and climate change), una de mis estudiantes encontró un trabajo en la Revista *Pulse* en UTRGV y decidió publicar un artículo/refección (Mathew, 2018a páginas 23-27) sobre el impacto positivo en sus estudios gracias a uno de mis programas de investigación que le otorgó una beca. Otro estudiante, que también participó en el mismo programa de investigación conmigo, fue aceptado en un programa de

Figure 5. Ashley and Joshua Matthew participando en la conferencia llamada Engaged Symposium 2018, UTRGV.

entrenamiento para estudiantes nacional y muy competitivo llamado Science Today. El estudiante fue invitado a escribir una reflexión sobre estas dos experiencias (Mathew, 2018b páginas 72 y 73) la cual habla de lo positivo que fue participar en proyectos de investigación como estudiante de licenciatura (undergraduate; Figura 5).

Por lo tanto, recomiendo ampliamente que en todos los cursos en disciplinas STEM se implementen reflexiones y que estas se realicen con asesoramiento de los centros de enseñanza de las instituciones de educación. Así mismo, recomiendo que se desarrollen talleres de formación pedagógica para los profesores en ciencias, que puedan incluir viajes al extranjero y reflexiones. Aquí sin duda el idioma y la cultura juegan un papel muy importante y deben usarse como una herramienta que permita reforzar la confianza en sí mismos en los estudiantes.

Lección 3: ¡Socializa! - El poder de la creación de redes sociales

Las mujeres y las minorías están subrepresentadas en diferentes puntos críticos de transición desde la escuela secundaria a la universidad y de la escuela de posgrado a la fuerza laboral (Fealing et. al, 2015). Los problemas y algunas sugerencias para resolverlo incluyen la creación de redes sociales -*networking* (Casad et al, 2021).

El *networking* en mis cursos de STEM es otro de los múltiples métodos que utilizo para involucrar a los estudiantes en el proceso de aprendizaje y es uno de los aspectos que más me gustan de la investigación. Este es el mejor mecanismo para encontrar colaboradores y relaciones potencialmente duraderas. Esta es una muy buena manera también de ver el lado humano de los científicos. La creación de redes académicas, o socializar, permite a los estudiantes cumplir con los objetivos del curso. Por ejemplo, en mi clase de Biological Problems, el tercer objetivo del curso es difundir los resultados de las ideas-hallazgos de la investigación. Para esto organizo diferentes eventos sociales durante el curso. Por ejemplo, organizo un mini simposio e invito a otros profesores a escuchar los trabajos de mis estudiantes. Después concluimos un evento social, todo muy parecido a asistir a una conferencia científica formal, pero como parte de la clase.

Figura 6. Estudiantes del curso de Problemas Biológicos. Halloween 2018.

La creación de redes académicas en mis cursos comienza en el aula, cuando los estudiantes trabajan y discuten temas de los proyectos de investigación o de un tema de la clase, y esto lo pueden hacer en español o inglés. También incluyo eventos sociales después de actividades académicas, después de un evento de participación comunitaria o en un día festivo. Por ejemplo, para Halloween en el 2018 los estudiantes de mi clase de Problemas Biológicos se vistieron con disfraces (Figura 6) y después de la clase organizamos un *potluck* donde cada estudiante trajo comidas tradicionales (mexicana, Mexicoamericana, de la india, filipina, etc).

Como otra prueba de que el *networking* funciona bien, los estudiantes en mis cursos han organizado Clubs u organizaciones estudiantiles. Una de ellas, llamada Native Plant Conservation Club, ha sido de las más importantes porque una estudiante que era muy reservada al inicio de la clase termino siendo la fundadora y presidenta de este Club (Figura 7). No sólo eso, sino que ella también asistió al curso de aprendizaje en el extranjero que se imparto en Mérida, Yucatán, fue aceptada en la maestría de biología en UTRGV, y ha presentado y competido en diferentes conferencias locales y nacionales y ha ganado premios por mejor presentación en cartel. Además, ella obtuvo una beca presidencial para estar en la maestría, tiene una publicación en una revista de alto impacto por su trabajo con especies nativas del Valle (Garza et. al, 2020) y fue contratada por American Forest, una organización no-gubernamental, como Senior Manager en verano del 2021. ¡Esto añadiendo que es la primera persona en estudiar el bachillerato y la maestría en su familia y la primera mujer en hacerlo! En su reflexión, ella comenta que fue gracias a la confianza que adquirió desde el primer día de mi clase.

Las redes sociales como Zoom, Facebook, Instagram y el correo regular también son buenas herramientas para la creación de redes académicas. Quizás uno de mis favoritos sea WhatsApp, ya que me permite interactuar en tiempo real con mis alumnos. Los estudiantes han expresado que la creación de redes académicas es algo único en mis cursos. Mi universidad es una universidad familiar; por lo tanto, algunas veces llevo a mi familia a algunos de estos eventos de redes académicas. Esta es quizás la razón por la que varias alumnas me preguntan cómo puedo equilibrar la familia y la carrera profesional. Mi consejo para ellos es que, si lo quieren, pueden hacerlo. Si yo puedo hacerlo, ¡ellos también pueden hacerlo!

Figura 7. Native Plant Conservation Club. De izquierda a derecha: Teresa Feria (asesor), Jose Martinez-Avila (invitado), Gisel Garza (Presidente), Armida Rivera (Secretaria), Lin and Ashley Matthew (voluntarios).

Por lo tanto, recomiendo ampliamente crear eventos sociales en los cursos en STEM, en donde los estudiantes puedan compartir no solo aspectos académicos, pero también culturales como comida, vestuarios, idioma, platicas, etc. Esto no reduce el rigor de la clase y permite que los estudiantes desarrollen y expresen su creatividad, así como su entusiasmo para continuar sus estudios de posgrado o laborales.

Algunos de los estudiantes que han tomado mi curso han presentado sus trabajos en conferencias locales regionales, y nacionales y han ganado premios por ello (ejemplo, Figura 8). Esta es otro testimonio del éxito y empoderamiento que los estudiantes adquieren en cursos que incluye aprendizaje activo, pedagogía culturalmente relevante, y las tres lecciones recomendadas en este artículo.
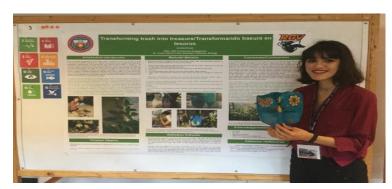

Figura 8. Armida Rivera. La estudiante ganó el premio *Académico Distinguido* por su presentación bilingüe que incluyo componentes culturales. Ver los colores y el diseño de la maceta para

COVID-19

Las tres lecciones que aprendí y que recomiendo para que los estudiantes se sientan incluidos y que se aprecie la diversidad de ideas y culturas, se dio más que nada durante las clases presenciales, sin embargo, son aspectos que también recomiendo en las clases en línea.

Antes de la pandemia del COVID-19, yo ya tenía experiencia en clases colaborativas en línea (COIL; Collaborative Online Learning). Obtuve un certificado en una capacitación docente en línea de 36 horas por parte del Center for Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL Center) de la State University of New York (SUNY) y otra para impartir cursos de Participación Comunitaria organizada por profesores del Colegio de Ciencias de mi universidad y un curso de Desarrollo Sostenible impartido por la Oficina de Sustentabilidad y CTE de mi universidad. Con este aprendizaje, desarrollé una nueva clase llamada Community Engagement and Student Learning: Sustainable Development en conjunto con líderes de la comunidad de un pueblo semirrural llamado San Carlos, Texas. Incluí un componente internacional en este curso con una profesora de Brasil, de la Universidad Federal de Pernambuco (UFEP). En este curso, los estudiantes crearon sus propias páginas sociales y se comunicaron via WhatsApp para organizar proyectos en conjunto con objetivos relacionados con los 17 objetivos de Sustentabilidad de las Naciones Unidas (United Nations, 2021). Los estudiantes de Texas construyeron un jardín de plantas nativas, trabajamos en un huerto orgánico y en la construcción de un "techo o sombra" para los visitantes del Endowment Center de San Carlos. Los estudiantes en Brasil hicieron algo similar construyendo un jardín de recreación para los niños de una escuela primaria y un huerto orgánico. Los estudiantes de ambos países estuvieron en una comunicación constante con clases sincrónicas via Zoom. Tanto los temas de las clases como los proyectos finales fueron presentados en esta plataforma. Así que cuando el COVID-19 llegó, yo ya estaba un poco preparada para mis clases en línea.

Cuando llevé el curso de COIL también nos dieron un curso de Quality Matters para dar clases en línea. Llevé un segundo curso en el verano del 2020 y transformé una de mis clases llamada Global Change Ecology (BIOL 4388) en línea en forma asincrónica, misma que impartí en el otoño del 2020. Esta clase tiene un componente de servicio a la comunidad. En clases presenciales los estudiantes forman equipos y crean proyectos de reciclaje que después presentan en diversos lugares como la universidad, parques, escuelas, etc. En sus proyectos de reciclaje los

estudiantes usan componentes culturales como colores, formas, e historias, y para ello les recomiendo a incluir a los miembros de su familia a colaborar en sus proyectos.

Como la clase fue asincrónica en línea no pude imprimir mi temario de clase y leerlo con los estudiantes, por lo que incluí un cuestionario para motivar a que todos los alumnos leyeran y entendieran el contenido del curso (Guertin, 2014). Para **romper el hielo**, les pedí a mis estudiantes que se presentaran incluyendo una fotografía, un pasatiempo y tres objetivos personales de aprendizaje para el curso. Después tenían que acceder al menos a 10 presentaciones de sus compañeros y presentarse con ellos. Incluí **reflexiones** y les pedí a mis estudiantes que mandaran una foto de lo que escribieron a mano. Para cumplir con mi objetivo de **networking**, les pedí a los estudiantes que invitaran a sus amigos, familiares y compañeros de clase a ver sus productos finales (vía Zoom en el caso de compañeros de clases o amigos, o en persona cuando se trataba de familiares cercanos). Como prueba de las presentaciones e interacciones, los estudiantes mandaron fotos y videos de las interacciones sociales que tuvieron con amigos, compañeros de clases y familiares. Puedo afirmar con seguridad, que no sabía lo que pasaría en ese semestre, pues fue la primera vez que di una clase de ese tipo, como quizás muchos de los lectores de este artículo. Esta clase la doy para entre 35 y 50 estudiantes, pero como fue asincrónica en línea, ¡la di para 70! Fue un reto leer todas las discusiones, trabajos y exámenes de los estudiantes, pero conté con la ayuda de un asistente. No obstante, mi recomendación es que siempre se contesten los correos de los estudiantes y que el instructor también participe en las discusiones. Obtuve una calificación con el 99% de satisfacción en este curso y una retención del 97% (dos estudiantes se dieron de baja) y el 97% de estos estudiantes pasaron el curso. Estas estadísticas me hacen pensar que puedo repetir este curso y que debo reducir el número de discusiones y reflexiones para poder interactuar con mis estudiantes con un balance adecuado entre el trabajo y mi vida personal.

Desde que incluí actividades de aprendizaje, culturalmente relevantes y bilingües, la evaluación de mis estudiantes siempre se ha mantenido en niveles altos del 90% de satisfacción positiva por parte del estudiante. Aunque las evaluaciones de los estudiantes no deben considerarse como el único medio para evaluar el desempeño del educador, es una satisfacción poder ver que los comentarios y las experiencias de mis estudiantes son positivos.

Conclusiones

Las actividades de aprendizaje y la pedagogía culturalmente relevante deben usarse en todos los cursos en STEM. Una interacción constante y dinámica que incluya romper el hielo, reflexiones y crear actividades para socializar/networking, puede mejorar la dinámica del curso y resultar en una tasa de retención alta y calificaciones aprobatorias para la mayoría de los estudiantes. La cultura es más que hablar el idioma de un estudiante en el aula, la cultura relevante se aplica cuando se le da la oportunidad al estudiante de utilizar esa cultura como una herramienta que fortalezca su aprendizaje. Entonces, los estudiantes usan su ingenio, iniciativa y curiosidad lo cual les permite ser creativos y desarrollar un pensamiento crítico, el objetivo en la cúspide de la pirámide de Bloom's Taxonomy, el modelo educativo más usado en educación (Morze et al, 2021).

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Reconciling the Past: Language Validation in a First-Year Experience Course at a Border

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Abstract

The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) has made part of its mission to become a bilingual, bicultural, and biliterate public institution. Established in 2015 on two legacy institutions, The University of Texas-Pan American and The University of Texas Brownsville, it must reconcile a past that was not always welcoming of its students' bilingualism. This article examines one instructor's experience taking one of the university's signature first-year experience courses and creating a class that is welcoming and supportive of the students' bilingualism while also reconciling his own educational experiences with language.

Keywords: translanguaging, bilingualism, linguistic terrorism, first-year experience, retention, belonging, autoethnography

Introduction

My parents were educated in the Rio Grande Valley of south Texas during the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s. They grew up not far from, Hargill, the hometown of famed Chicana author, Gloria Anzaldua. Like Anzaldua, my parents witnessed language shaming and linguistic terrorism, which Anzaldua characterized as the repeated attacks on one's native tongue by the dominant group (Anzaldua, 1987) in their schools. This was common practice at the time and took on many forms including punishing students for speaking Spanish by not allowing them to participate in recess, the break students have after lunch. Extreme examples of linguistic terrorism included physically punishing students by hitting them across their knuckles with a ruler or yard stick. These examples of linguistic terrorism were not isolated to my parents' communities, but was characteristic of the educational experiences for Latinos throughout the country (Hurtado & Rodriguez, 1989). Anzaldua in her work, *Borderlands/La Frontera* (1987), reflects on her experiences with language, including her experience in college; a college that sought to "get rid," of the local Mexican American students' accents (Anzaldua, 1987, p.76) My parents' experiences my parents' and Anzaldua's, and the language policies that supported language shaming and linguistic terrorism would be long lasting, and would continue to impact the educational experiences of linguistic minorities today (Christoffersen, 2019; Ramirez & Saldivar, 2020). I find myself in a unique position as a college faculty member with the power to help students find their voices as they navigate their post-secondary journey at the 2nd largest Hispanic Serving Institution in the United States, the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, located along the U.S.-Mexico border.

I am choosing to deliberately center myself within the discussion of language policy and a legacy of language shaming. Therefore, I will be utilizing an autoethnographic lens to examine my educational experiences and the impact linguistic terrorism had in my life and on my teaching. Autoethnography allows the author to critically analyze one's relationship to their subject (Bochner, 2012; Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011). It recognizes that while it is important to be able to step back and take a more objective view of a subject, it is also important that we recognize when our hands are dirty and we have a personal relationship to the subject. In my case, my entire educational journey has been defined by my experiences with linguistic terrorism and language shaming.

My Linguistic Journey

My parents did not teach me Spanish; the only Spanish I learned came from my fraternal grandmother, whose house I stayed at after school, and from my bilingual friends who at an early age were already comfortable speaking both English and Spanish. I fumbled with the language and did my best to fit in with my bilingual friends. In school, I excelled, which is what my parents hoped would happen if I didn't have the 'burden' of managing a second language. They would later tell me they did not want to teach me Spanish because they feared I might be punished if I was caught speaking Spanish in school. That was their reality growing up, and they wanted to shield me from it. In their experience, speaking Spanish often meant one's educational opportunities would be limited. They saw it with their peers, and they did not want me to have limited opportunities.

I would go through my primary and secondary schooling only taking one Spanish class and two German classes. I was told that if I wanted honors credit for my language classes, then I should take German. And so, I did. I fulfilled my parents' hopes by excelling in school and

graduating near the top of my class. In spite of my academic success, I felt like I was missing something. In college, I would come to realize that for all of my academic achievements, I knew very little of my Mexican American culture, heritage, history or my language. I also learned that while I was trying to be the best student I could be, mastering the English language, excelling in most subjects, I had to ask myself, what had I given up and what had I lost along the way (Carrillo, 2007).

In my first semester of college at Stanford University, I learned that my peers knew much more than I did regardless of the subject. They had learned the 'master narrative' or the dominant ideology that informs what and how we teach our children (Valenzuela, 2005). If the history of south Texas, including the people who long inhabited the area, were not in my junior high Texas History textbook, that was not an accident. The history of the conquered is seldom taught, passed over for the history of the conquerors. I began to wonder, could I excel in knowing a history that was not mine?

By the end of my freshman year, I began to find my footing and my edge. I figured out what I knew that my peers didn't know and how I could compete and possibly get ahead. My peers knew more American history, they could recite lines of poetry and could analyze Shakespeare. What my peers didn't know was south Texas. They didn't know what it was like to live along the U.S.-Mexico border or the rich tapestry of cultures that exists along the Rio Grande nor did they know about the linguistic and cultural contributions made by authors who were originally from south Texas.

The challenge for me was that I didn't necessarily know much about my part of the world, at least not yet. I knew there was richness there, because I was exposed to it at Stanford. It was at Stanford where I learned of Americo Paredes and Gloria Anzaldúa and others who wrote about growing up along the Rio Grande. So, while I didn't know very much about where I was from, I knew enough and, more importantly, knew how to learn more.

My early academic papers were about growing up along the border and about the communities and people who called the border home. My papers were different, and they gave me a perspective absent from the work others were turning in. My parents and my K-12 education did what they could to discourage me from speaking Spanish and learning about my culture. It was only in leaving that I was able to find home.

Mastering the Master's Tools

Upon completing my undergraduate and Master's degrees, I returned home to a job at the local university. The same university Anzaldua wrote about. The same institution that sought to erase its local students' accents (Anzaldúa, 1987). I approached the job with a sense of purpose. I wanted to teach my students everything I learned while I was in college. I wanted to open their minds, give them the tools necessary for combating racism and discrimination, and help them create a more just world.

After six months at the university, I was given an opportunity to teach a new course. The course, I was told, was created to help first-year students transition to the university. I was excited for the opportunity, but not long after piloting what would become a university-wide initiative, I found myself in a very familiar position.

A year after I piloted the first section, the course became a requirement for all students and a centerpiece of the university's attempt to address its abysmal first-year retention rate. At the time, the university was retaining a little over half of its first-year students. This was below the national average and became a priority. Something needed to be done, and it needed to be big.

A mandatory course for all incoming students was big. After all, research shows that students who complete a first-year experience seminar or similar style course are more likely to be retained beyond their first year (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991).

Our monthly faculty meetings began taking on a familiar tone. Instructors all talked about their students as if the problem for the low first-year retention rate rested solely on the students and not on the instructor or the institution. Instructors lamented students' lack of motivation and the drive to be successful. Others spouted that our students lacked the time management skills or couldn't balance their social life with their academics. And others said that our students lacked the English language proficiency they needed to be successful.

And there it was. The same sort of thinking that led to the institution working to erase students' accents, was still working to silence students and rid them of their "deficiencies." Instead of speaking up and questioning my colleagues, I sat silently and did nothing to challenge them.

My colleagues' words should not have come as a surprise. At the core of our first-year experience course, and many like it, is the idea that 1) our students lack the necessary tools and motivation to be successful college students, and 2) only by taking such a course could they compensate for their knowledge gaps. Critics of retention studies argue that the earliest literature on student retention and completion examined traditional college students (Cabrera, 2019). Our students were largely non-traditional students; they were commuters and first-generation students. My colleagues' thinking reinforced a longstanding, yet misinformed idea that Latino students lacked the ability and skills necessary to succeed in higher education (Valencia & Black, 2002; Valencia, 2010).

As an undergraduate, I had learned about what I had not been taught, and I embodied an entire generation's experience with linguistic terrorism when my parents did not encourage me to learn Spanish. Here I was, Richard Rodriguez's Scholarship Boy, and I was reinforcing what I had worked so hard to undo as an undergraduate (Rodriguez, 1974-75). This realization only crystalized in me when working on my doctorate; I sent one of my professors what I was thinking about for my dissertation. I was so proud, sending her pages of work on Latino student retention at a Hispanic Serving Institution along the U.S.-Mexico border. I waited in anticipation.

After a few days I received an email from the professor. She didn't respond to the questions I sent her. Instead, her email began with, "Jose, have you ever thought of looking at Latino student retention via a critical race theory lens?" That alone was enough to remind me of my own experience as an undergraduate and what I learned about the educational experiences of other linguistic and ethnic minorities. Her email reminded me that just as I had come to embody the legacy of linguistic terrorism and language shaming experienced by so many, I had now come to reinforce that legacy.

Changing Course

After the email, I changed how I taught my course and changed direction in the midst of my dissertation. In my course, I no longer required the standard text and instead began incorporating more culturally relevant articles and resources (Saldivar, 2014). Students began reading articles on 'ganas,' and autobiographical works by Latino authors and authors of color, whose educational experiences my students could relate to (Cabrera, et. al. 2012). I encouraged students to share their experiences, and I sought to remake the course so that it no longer viewed my students as deficient, but rather, helped students recognized the countless assets they brought with them (Gonzalez, et. al. 2006). Recent research on first-year courses now

shows that minority students can benefit from these courses when they incorporate socio-cultural elements to which the students can relate (Oxendine, 2020; Mendez et. al., 2020).

Changing my course was only the first step. There were other instructors also teaching the course with whom I needed to share my work. This would be a slow process, but over time I shared assignments and articles and some of the pedagogical practices I had incorporated in my sections.

A New Way Forward

In 2015, the institution that worked to erase its students' accents ceased to exist. In its place, the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley was created and with it came a new vision of higher education for south Texas. As part of its vision, the new institution was committed to being the first bilingual, bicultural and biliterate public university in the country. The vision was bold, but becoming B3 is easier said than done. The new university was operating in the footprint of the old one, with nearly all of the instructional, administrative and support staff continuing with the newly established institution. Changing years of practice would be difficult.

In the summer of 2016, we were asked to offer our first-year experience course in a bilingual format. Our course had been carried over to the new university because we had helped improve the university's first-year retention. Many of my colleagues were already offering instruction in a mix of English and Spanish, and some accepted assignments in the student's native language. There was nothing formal about what we were doing. Countless articles demonstrate that student success depends on students' sense of belonging and feeling a part of a community of learners (Means & Pyne, 2017; Cortez, L. J., 2011). What better way to do that than to encourage students to use the language they're most comfortable using as a bridge to building their college literacy and awareness? We did that, only we did it without anyone knowing. The instructors who accepted work in the students' native language and encouraged the use of Spanish in class, had created an informal agreement with their students. We didn't seek permission from anyone. We knew we needed to do it; we just didn't ask anyone. Making the class an institutionalized bilingual classroom now meant we could do so formally, with the support of the institution.

But sir, we don't sound like you

During one of my first, class sessions, I asked my student why they were so hesitant to participate. One of the students bravely spoke up:
"Sir it's 'cause we don't sound like our professors. We weren't allowed to use our Spanish in high school and we were always told our English wasn't good enough."

The specter of the linguistic terrorism and shaming experienced by Anzaldua and my parents continued to impact the lives of students, generations later. I quickly realized my task: to help my students recognize that their voice, regardless of the language, mattered and that there was no one right way to speak. I also recognized that while I was discouraged from speaking Spanish when I was a child, I was fully committed to English and I never doubted my command of the English language. My students, on the other hand, did not feel confident in either language in a university setting. They were somewhere in the middle; they were in the borderlands of language.

The classroom became a safe space for my students, a place where they could speak about their educational experiences, their hopes, their challenges, and their goals. I was there to reassure them and remind them that they belonged at the university. It was a role no different from the role many of my instructors served for me as an undergraduate. Unlike my students, as an undergraduate I was surrounded by students who were not from south Texas. It was out of fear that I approached my professors and asked for help. I told them who I was, where I was coming from, and I told them I was not sure I belonged. Every instructor I saw reassured me. They guided me, they supported me, and they encouraged me. And while it was years before the classroom felt safe, I was able to find a safe space in the offices of most of my professors. For my students, I wanted the classroom to be that safe space, and I wanted them to know they belonged.

On the first day of class, I explained to them that the course would be taught bilingually, with me translanguaging, shifting from English to Spanish. Only a few of the students knew beforehand that the class was going to be bilingual. At the conclusion of our initial class meeting, one of the students stayed after class to tell me he did not know Spanish. I reassured him and told him I would do my best to translate and encouraged him to ask questions if he did not understand. My attention had been on my bilingual students, I had forgotten about my monolingual students, but I knew I could create a space that supported both.

Un ambiente mas comodo y libre de expresarse

Students were separated into base groups. These would serve as their main groups throughout the semester. It was in the small base groups where I could hear the students comfortably moving between English and Spanish. During the early part of the semester, the larger class discussions took place in English with a few students speaking Spanish, but as the semester progressed more students felt comfortable using both English and Spanish, seamlessly transitioning between the two.

At the conclusion of the first semester offering the institutionalized bilingual first-year experience course, we surveyed our students and asked them to provide feedback on the experience. It was overwhelmingly positive. The students felt validated and supported. They were confident and free to speak in the language of their choice. Below are a few of my students' responses to the question, "How does this bilingual UNIV 1301 course differ from your other courses this semester and/or other courses from other semesters?"

"It was an easier class speaking the language I speak and understand the most. It was very different to my other classes because I felt that no matter what I was thinking, English or Spanish, I could still speak my mind about it."

"Te hace sentir en un ambiente mas comodo y libre de expresarse sin ningun temor a que los demas hagan comentarios malos de ti por tu preferencia de idioma."

"It allowed me to be free to express myself even though sometimes it was hard to find my words in English, I knew I could say it in Spanish."

"This course in specific made the best of me come out. It allowed me to speak my mind to never hold back of anything I have to say. It proved to me that no what other people say, my culture is awesome and that I have nothing to be ashamed, it made me who I am today and I am proud of that."

"This course differs in the way that it was okay to speak Spanish in the class and not only English. Also, student participation was really important in this class and a lot of discussions happened whereas in my other classes there would not be student discussions as often."

Students were also asked if they were, "…more comfortable or less comfortable participating in general discussions in this bilingual UNIV 1301 course compared to other courses? Why?" Here are a sample of their responses.

"I am more comfortable participating in general discussions. My professor along with my peers were extremely welcoming when we would have in class discussions."

"I can honestly say that I do feel more comfortable participating in class discussion during my bilingual UNIV 1301 course compared to any courses. Reason being that I knew that whenever I ran out of words in English, I was able to talk in Spanish and the overall environment of the class made it easier for you to speak out your thoughts without being judged."

"I am more comfortable participating in general discussion in this bilingual course compared to others because in this class everyone speaks with an open mind."

The overwhelming majority of the responses were consistent with the sample responses shared here. In fact, the only negative response came from a student who wanted more assignments in Spanish. Students had a positive experience and based on the responses recognized that this course was different, because they were able to speak in English or Spanish and were also more comfortable participating in the class due to the bilingual format.

Conclusion

Today, as I reflect on our course, the students' responses on the survey, and my experience taking the course from one that focused on the students' deficiencies to one that helped students build on their considerable assets, I can see that my journey has come full circle. I had been taught to rely on the English language in order to excel in school. I did not have to manage two languages because my knowledge of the Spanish language was limited and I never fully acquired even basic Spanish or basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS) as a child (Cummins, 1999). It was not until I was in college that I was able to develop my Spanish language skills. Yet, like my students, I struggled to find my voice. One could argue that in committing to the English language, I was able to have the educational success my parents hoped I would have,but what if I had learned the second language? What if I had learned my parents' language? I often tell my students that it was not until I was an undergraduate student that I truly fell in love with learning. I would often spend countless hours at the library or the university bookstore, flipping through books, even buying books for classes for which I was not enrolled. My journey for self, for language, for my heritage in college introduced me to a love of learning that I can only imagine was like learning as a young child, when we hunger to learn so much that it is almost overwhelming. Today, I can give my students the space to find their voice and hopefully ignite the same love of learning I gained searching for my voice. More importantly, I can reassure them that they do not have to choose just one language in which to speak.

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