

## 9 Educating International and Immigrant Students in US Higher Education: Opportunities and Challenges

Ofelia García, Mercè Pujol-Ferran and Pooja Reddy

### Introduction

That English had its own social and economic value even back when the colonists were shaping the future of the United States is evidenced by the fact that the Founding Fathers decided against making English the official language of the country they were shaping (Heath, 1976). But although much has changed since those early years of national formation, the language ideologies that valorized English as the language of power and success that were prevalent during colonial times are still very much in vogue today. Today on the one hand, bilingualism for the international community, in the form of the appropriation of English by all is encouraged, in order to increase the size of the market and the economy, and thus serve national interests. But on the other hand, immigrants to the United States are asked to give up their own languages and 'take up' monolingualism in English only, also to protect national interests. It is this implicit US language policy that on the one hand encourages the bilingualism and the 'taking up' of English by people outside of its borders and, on the other hand, demands English monolingualism from its own residents, that is responsible for the different treatment of international students and immigrant students in US colleges and universities.

This chapter documents how this implicit US language policy that we may term 'protectionist,' is manifested in two different higher education contexts – a two-year community college with a majority of poor Latino immigrants, and a university with graduate programs that has a large group

of middle-class international students, many from Asia.<sup>1</sup> Our two case studies describe the student populations, as well as how English, as well as languages other than English (LOTEs), are used in the two higher education contexts. We use the two case studies to theorize about the role that English and multilingualism play in the social and academic fabric of US higher education of the 21st century. But before we present our case studies, we review the presence of international and immigrant students in US higher education in general, along with the ideologies and practices about multilingualism and English in US higher education contexts.

### International and Immigrant Students in US Higher Education

Higher education in the United States generally occurs in three types of institutions: (1) two-year community colleges that prepare students for transfer to four year institutions or for careers, and where students finish with Associate's degrees; (2) colleges that focus on four-year undergraduate studies and where students receive Bachelor's degrees; and (3) universities that offer undergraduate Bachelor's degrees, as well as graduate Master's degrees, and in some cases doctoral degrees. Higher education institutions in the United States can be public; that is, predominantly funded by public means; or private; that is, not operated by government, although subsidized partially by public means. Both public and private institutions charge student tuition, although tuition at private institutions of higher education is much more expensive. That is, although tuition at the public universities hovers around \$8000 a year, tuition at private universities is approximately \$40,000 annually.

American colleges and universities have attracted international students especially since World War II (Bevis & Lucas, 2007). Today, despite growing competition from other English speaking countries such as Great Britain, Canada, Australia and Singapore, and despite the tighter restriction of the issuance of US education visas since September 11th (Chellaraj *et al.*, 2005), US institutions of higher education continue to host more international students than any other country in the world (Institute of International Education, 2010). In 2009–2010, there were 690,923 international students in US colleges and universities, with 19% of the population coming from China, followed by India (15%), and finally South Korea (10%). Together, these three Asian countries account for nearly half (44%) of the total international enrollments. There were more international graduate students (293,885) than undergraduates (274,431), and almost 55,000 are enrolled in non-degree programs at higher education institutions, including intensive

English programs. Almost a quarter of all international students were studying business and management (21%), with engineering a close second (18%) (Open Doors, 2010).

All international students that enter US universities are required to have qualifying scores in an English proficiency exam (the TOEFL or the IELTS). The international student population is very heterogeneous and has a varied range of skills in English. Yet, most, although not all, international students come with academic English that enables them to study in English. They often have studied English in their country of origin, though their English has different characteristics from that of US-educated students. Although these differences do pose some difficulties for some faculties, these language differences are not a major obstacle for their educational achievement. Because most international students study business or engineering, and because at least half are graduate students, their literacy skills in English are not the biggest concern of the faculty who teach them. In addition, these international students, often coming from the upper social classes in their countries of origin, have strong academic literacy in their home languages.

Immigrant students in US colleges and universities have other characteristics and have historically been afforded a different treatment. As a result of the Civil Rights movement, US colleges and universities started to open their doors in the mid-1970s to educate more non-traditional college students, especially language minority students and immigrants. Shaughnessy (1977), writing around this time, called these students, 'strangers in academia'. In contrast to the welcome that international students receive in US higher education institutions, immigrant students are often shunned in these same institutions, usually because some of their professors perceive them as being 'unqualified' (Sieber, 2004).

In 2009, 11% of all 18–24 year old residents, and 19% of all 25–34 year olds were foreign born (US Census, 2009). Of course, it is the minority of the foreign born 18 to 34 year olds who go to college, but in urban centers, these students make up an important part of the college population. Some (although by no means all) of these students are emergent bilinguals, known more commonly as 'English language learners', and thus still need English language development when they get to college. Most immigrant newcomers go to community colleges and take special English-as-a-Second-Language classes focusing on developing their oral, reading and writing abilities. Besides English language development, these immigrant college students often face other social issues associated with immigration and poverty. They are often the 'bread-winners' in their families, and have to balance study with work and be responsible for children and aging parents and relatives.

Squeezed in between recently arrived immigrant students and the children of immigrants are those immigrants who have arrived in the United

States as school-age children or adolescents and have gone to school in the United States, but who still have weak literacy skills in academic English. Known as the 1.5 generation (Rumbaut & Ima, 1988), they have attracted a lot of attention among college composition scholars (see, for example, Harklau *et al.*, 1999; Roberge *et al.*, 2009). Interestingly, these students also have weak literacy in their home languages, a product of a US English-only education. In fact, they might only have academic literacy in English. As Thonus (2003: 18) has said: 'Unlike international students, generation 1.5 students lack a basis of comparison in fully developed oral, written, or both systems of a first language.' Many times, these students are relegated to low ability tracks in US schools where students have had little practice with academic literacy and writing research papers. Whereas immigrant students recognized as English-as-a-second language learners have ESL options for them, these 1.5 generation students often get lost. Recently, more English developmental literacy courses have been developed to meet their needs (Harklau *et al.*, 2009; Roberge *et al.*, 2009).

While Asian students make up the majority of the international students in US colleges and universities, Latino students make up the majority of immigrant students and those labeled '1.5.' US Latinos in general have been shown to be 'the most undereducated major population group in the country' (Gándara & Contreras, 2009: 18). Gándara and Contreras (2009: 196) add:

Only slightly more than 50% of Latino students graduated with their high school class in 2005, and only 54% of these graduates went directly to college, compared to 73% of white students. Of the 54% who went on to college, most enrolled in a two-year institution. In the same year, only 7% of bachelor's degrees were awarded to Latinos.

In 2011 the White House Initiative for Educational Excellence for Hispanics and the US Department of Education (2011) issued a report that called for the improvement of Latino education. After emphasizing that 22% of students in US public schools are Latinos, the report emphasized: 'Latinos have the lowest educational attainment level of any group' (p. 2). It states:

Only about half of all Latino students earn their high school diploma on time; those who do complete high school are only half as likely as their peers to be prepared for college. Just 13% of Latinos have a bachelor's degree, and only 4% have completed graduate or professional degree programs.

The attention on improving the English academic literacy of Latinos has left little room for thinking of the development of students' Spanish academic literacy or the role that Spanish might play in educating Latino students in college. Rather than providing these students with a rigorous academic education, the college education of Latinos sometimes focuses on the remediation of English literacy skills so that they can pass all the mandated tests, excluding students from meaningful content learning. We turn now to the role that bilingualism plays in universities in the United States today.

## The Role of Bilingualism in US Colleges and Universities

Whereas in most of the world bilingual universities have grown over the last decade, as the contributions in this volume attest, US colleges and universities have shunned bilingualism, often even restricting their offerings in LOTEs. 'Foreign' language requirements at the college level have been mostly eliminated, and faculties teaching languages, especially in French and German, have shrunk considerably. The Modern Language Association (MLA) reports that enrollments in courses in languages other than English, especially Spanish, Chinese and Arabic have increased since the 1960s (Furman *et al.*, 2007; MLA, 2007). But although the raw numbers of students show an increase, the ratio of enrollments in courses to learn and develop languages other than English, compared to the total number of students registered at colleges and universities, has actually decreased. That is, in 1960 that ratio was 16.1, whereas today it is 8.6, almost half the 1960 ratio (Furman *et al.*, 2007). Spanish accounts for 50% of the enrollment in courses other than English in higher education, although, as with all languages, that enrollment is mostly at the beginner level and drops sharply afterwards (MLA, 2007). The ideologies against bilingualism in the US have done much to affect the nation's ability to develop bilingual college and university students. Unlike the growth of bilingualism in European Universities, spurred by the Bologna accords, US universities are insisting more than ever on English only. This is reflected in the poor state of the bilingual university in the US.

The future of a bilingual university in the United States is tied to the experience we have had as a nation with bilingualism in the education of children. Since the early 1970s, bilingual education has been used to teach immigrants and those who speak English poorly. But as the nation became more multilingual, bilingual education was increasingly abandoned, a result

of increasingly xenophobic attitudes. English-only statutes banning bilingual education were passed in two states with large Spanish-speaking populations: California in 1998 and Arizona in 2000. In 2002, Massachusetts also passed a proposition that replaced transitional bilingual education with 'structured English immersion programs.' At the same time, the word 'bilingual' was struck out of every single name of federal education offices and projects, as well as legislation. For example, the Office of Bilingual and Minority Language Affairs came to be called the Office of English Language Acquisition. Likewise, the National Clearinghouse for English Language and was renamed the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education. Even more significant was that the Bilingual Education Act itself was substituted by Title III of the No Child Behind Legislation of 2002, now named Language Instruction for Limited English proficient and Immigrant Students. By 2010 twenty-eight states had passed English-only laws (García & Kleifgen, 2010). The word 'bilingual' had become the 'B' word (Crawford, 2007); that is, a word not to be named.

These ideologies have permeated American higher education, robbing it of the possibility of teaching bilingually. There are very few examples today of higher education programs that grant any kind of bilingual degree. One at Florida International University. This Master's program is entirely taught in Spanish and targets aspiring or experienced journalists 'who want to work at the professional level in the Spanish-language media in the United States, Latin America or Europe.'? One of the options that this Master's program offers targets specifically the US Latino bilingual market, and thus half of the courses are taken in Spanish, and the other half in English.

Because of the great number of Spanish speakers in the United States the language other than English used in American higher education is often Spanish, although it is usually restricted to the community college level, especially in technical fields or certificate programs that do not lead to an Associate's degree. For example, Mount St Mary's College in Los Angeles offers a Certificate Program in Hispanic Pastoral Ministry where all courses are in Spanish. Milwaukee Area Technical College offers a Certificate and an Associate's degree in Child Care, Dental Assistant, Medical Assistant and Nursing Assistant, Office Assistant, Small Business Assistant, Medical Assistant, Cosmetologist, where courses are delivered in Spanish or bilingually.

Other community colleges offer courses in Spanish or bilingually. transition to English, that is, while students are also taking intensive English as a Second Language program. This is the case, for example, of Hudson County City College in Jersey City where students are allowed to take up to 24 credits in Spanish, although textbooks are in English.

There are very few examples of such bilingual teaching in four-year universities. Recently there have been two notable efforts. In 2002, Arturo de Hoyo started the National Hispanic University in Salt Lake City, offering both Associate's and Bachelor's degrees in General Studies, Business and Information Technology. The website<sup>8</sup> explains the bilingual pedagogy used:

All professors at Hispanic University speak Spanish and English. Course lectures are delivered in Spanish, while the textbooks are in English. Offering lectures in students' primary language allows students to more easily absorb course content.

A recent partnership of Ana Méndez, a private nonprofit university system in Puerto Rico, with Regis University, a nonprofit institution of higher education in Denver with experience in online education resulted in AHORA, a program that awards Bachelor's and Master's degrees and where courses are offered in both Spanish and English. AHORA has programs in Orlando, Miami, and soon Tampa – all in Florida (Epstein, 2010).

It is against this backdrop of wariness against the use of LOTEs in US education, and emphasis on the development of English among a growing US bilingual population, that we present our two case studies. We start with the case of a community college that serves mostly Latino immigrants in the northeast before we turn to the case of a university with graduate programs and many international students. We focus in our case studies on the role that English, and LOTEs, play in the education of both types of students, drawing differences and discussing reasons for these different approaches.

### A Community College with Immigrant Students

This community college, located in the Bronx, is part of a large university system, and was established to meet the needs and specifically address the diverse linguistic nature of its mostly Latino and African-American community and student body. More than half of the population living in the Bronx is of Hispanic origin (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). The majority of Bronx Latinos are of Puerto Rican heritage (324,412), and there is a growing number of Dominicans (238,321). In addition, 34% of the population is Black or African. Of Bronx residents who are five years old and above, 45% speak Spanish at home (580,627), and of those who speak Spanish at home, a full 45% speak English less than very well (260,553) (US Census Bureau, 2009). The Bronx is also the poorest borough in New York City, and the

median family income is approximately half of that in the United States. Only 17.6% of the residents hold a Bachelor's degree (U.S. Census Bureau, 2005–2009). Thus, in general, the Bronx population is characterized by its low socio-economic status, as well as its poor educational capital and English language competency.

The community college was established in 1968 with a mission of providing bilingual educational offerings (Spanish and English) to immigrant students who were developing English language skills, while providing all students with intensive English language and mathematics instruction. Today the college has an enrollment of close to 6500 students. It awards Associate Degrees in Arts, Science, and Applied Science. While the Associate degrees in Arts and Science enable students to transfer to four-year colleges and receive Bachelor's degrees, Applied Science degrees permit recipients to work in such fields as Dental Hygiene, Nursing, Early Childhood Education, or Accounting.

Although the college's mission remains the same today, the approach to educating its population has changed. Bilingual education is no longer the main vehicle to educate Spanish-speaking students. The emphasis is on offering: (a) English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) courses to those who need to improve the four language skills (reading, writing, oral comprehension, and speaking) in English; (b) remedial reading and writing courses to English speakers (many identified as 1.5 generation) whose literacy skills in English are not at the college level; and, (c) remedial and advanced courses in mathematics and technology, which is not the focus of this paper. The college continues to provide only a limited number of Spanish content/language courses despite the significant number of Latino students who cannot perform in English and the positive relationship that research has established between students taking language/content courses in Spanish and their academic achievement (Cummins, 1979; García, 2009).

In 2010 the college's Latino population accounted for 56.9% of the total enrollment, down from 61.4% in 2002. Despite the continued predominance of Latino students, the college is more diverse now than it was at its founding just eight years ago. For example, although Latinos and Blacks made up 90.3% of the population in 2002, in 2010 they constituted 79.1% of the population, reflecting the growing diversity of the Bronx context.

Students at this community college are mainly high school graduates from the New York City public school system, and in 2010, 42% of the students attended part-time, juggling jobs, families and children (68% are females), and school. Although in 2010, 87.5% of the entering students were taking a remedial English reading, remedial English writing, or remedial math, which is indicative of students' weak language and academic skills

(Newman *et al.*, 2003), only 4.6% of the entire population was enrolled in a content course in Spanish, representing only 302 students out of 6499 registered students. This represents a sharp decrease from 2002, when 28% of the students were taking at least one course in Spanish, accounting for 1030 students out of 3670 enrolled in the fall of 2002. This may have to do with the fact that in 2002 the college dropped the language requirement for the associate degree in arts. But it may also be attributed to the intensification of English-only teaching within the college, a reflection of less tolerance toward bilingualism and LOTEs in US society today.

All entering students are required to take and pass the university's mandated placement tests in reading, writing, and math before they may register in courses for their major. The reading placement test is computerized and consists of multiple-choice analytical questions on various content passages to which students must critically respond. The writing placement test presents a short written passage to the students and requires that they write an essay that summarizes the passage and elaborates on one of its major points, reflecting both comprehension, as well as good writing skills. This test is graded on the basis of a university-wide rubric that focuses on the following categories – critical understanding, development and organization of ideas, vocabulary use and sentence structure, and grammar and punctuation. Most entering students fail one of these placement tests.

For ESL students with the lowest English scores on the placement tests, there is a pre-college program without college credit that provides 25 hours of ESL instruction a week for a year. ESL students who fail the placement tests in English but have higher scores, have two alternatives: (1) There is a three-semester college program that consists of 12 hours of instruction a week at the high beginning level for four credits, and nine hours at the intermediate and advanced levels for three credits; and (2) There is also the alternative of an intensive college program where the regular three-semester college ESL sequence is completed in two semesters of 15 hours of instruction per week for a total of 10 credits.

The ESL instruction emphasizes the students' development of the four language skills through the integration of appropriate-level content-based reading material – newspaper articles or internet resources on current events; subject matter from different college disciplines such as Psychology, History, or Environmental Sciences; and literary texts of various genres. Computer technology and video and film productions are essential educational tools that facilitate students' comprehension of assigned readings and help them connect class discussions and assignments to their personal and community experiences, thus enhancing their vocabulary use and critical thinking. Students also go on field trips and produce projects collaboratively.

Students' class assessment is based on their acquisition of the linguistic skills required for each level and their ability to comprehend and critically respond to written texts through oral and written form. Students are also encouraged to revise and edit their written work and build a writing portfolio. These portfolios are utilized to assess students' progress over the course of a semester.

After completing the course sequence of remedial ESL courses, students who are prepared, and with their instructors' recommendation only, take, and pass, the reading and writing English tests that are the same they took ready, they take two additional developmental courses, one in writing, and another one in reading. As soon as students complete these two developmental reading and writing courses, they are required to again take the English reading and writing tests. If students fail one or both tests upon course completion, they are unable to proceed with their major requirements. They will either repeat the remedial (or ESL) reading and/or writing course(s) or take additional non-credit workshops to continue their preparation for the English reading and writing test(s).

Once the students pass the English reading and writing test(s), successfully complete two core English courses, *Expository Writing*, and *Literature and Composition*, as well as two Writing Intensive (WI) content courses. WI courses require students to engage in extensive formal and informal writing, and are part of a university-wide initiative that stresses writing to learn content disciplines.

In the academic life of the college, English is certainly the primary language of instruction. According to the Fall 2010 schedule of classes, there were 19 pages outlining English course offerings in the various departments. By contrast, there was less than one complete page listing courses in Spanish. These included very few sections of introductory classes in Biology, Mathematics, or Psychology, and Spanish language and literature courses. This is surprising, given the number of Latino students who are unable to take their major content courses in English every semester because they haven't passed the required English reading and writing tests. The college also offers a few sections of French and Italian language courses every semester.

Faculty at the college have recently released a Position Paper supporting a Linguistics Initiative. A few elective linguistics courses are offered that enable students to study the attributes and uses of language. These courses have increased students' sensitivity and appreciation for each other's linguistic backgrounds and have assisted them in enhancing their own reading and writing skills in preparation for the required English reading and

writing tests. To draw upon the ESL students' emergent bilingualism and to develop their metalinguistic awareness and metacognitive strategies, a bilingual linguistics course that contrasts Spanish and English grammar is also offered at the college. The course explores the different language systems by using Spanish and English newspaper articles and samples of student writing. This enables students to examine the structure of both languages, reflect on their own language skills, and take an active approach to develop their bilingualism (Pujol, 2006, 2007). Despite its proven successes, some faculty members discourage Latino students from taking it, believing that in order to learn English, one needs to think, read and write only in English, which is far from being the case.

Walking through the college hallways, a lot of English is heard among faculty and students. Nonetheless, because many faculty members are bilingual, Spanish is also frequently spoken in public. For example, a bilingual professor has heard her students say such things as: '*Maestra*, I can't stay in class today. *Me tengo que ir temprano algunos días por mi hijo*' [I have to leave early some days because of my son] or '*Quiero hacer un appointment para venir a verla*. [I have to make an appointment to come see you.] I have problems with my writing.' And one student recently complained to her: '*Pues usted siempre me quita puntos por las "eses" que me olvido, en español y en inglés*. [So, you always take off points for the "s's" that I forget, in Spanish and English.] That's not fair.'

Latino community health specialists and counselors in the college utilize both English and Spanish when interacting with students. But all academic meetings are conducted in English only, and faculty members who engage in scholarly research do so mostly in English. Outside the college, in the community, one hears as much English as Spanish, and the college cultural center, which also serves the community, promotes theatrical and musical performances both in English and Spanish.

A recent debate for elections of student government reveals the tensions exhibited between Spanish and English (see also Doiz *et al.* and van der Walt & Kidd in this volume for other examples of linguistic tensions). One group with the slogan 'New Blood'/'Sangre Nueva' wore red T-shirts. The other group with the slogan 'Transparency, Organization, and Participation = TOP'/'Transparencia, Organización, Participación' was dressed in green T-shirts. The two groups carried their slogans both in English and Spanish. While members of 'New Blood' used more English, members of 'TOP' used more Spanish, and its presidential candidate, a Colombian student, spoke eloquent Spanish, while her English skills were weaker. At one point, 'TOP' attacked 'New Blood' for not displaying 'good' Spanish skills; then 'New Blood' responded back complaining that some 'TOP' members could

not speak 'good' English. Interestingly enough, it seemed that students themselves put pressure on their student government leaders to display appropriate bilingual skills in both English and Spanish.

Although both English and Spanish are highly utilized in informal and social settings by faculty and students, the teaching and learning of academic Spanish has been minimized and unfairly discredited in the recent past, as English has been emphasized. While this seems to be widely accepted by the majority of the faculty and some students, many others feel that Spanish needs to play a more prominent role in the academic life of the college because of its traditional mission, as well as for the sake of the students the college serves. There seems to be a widespread belief in the college community that when the college offered many content courses in Spanish, Latino students did not sufficiently develop their linguistic proficiency in English. Some, however, believe that many Latino students did take advanced academic, linguistic, and critical thinking skills, as well as boosted their intellectual self-esteem and confidence, vital aspects that encouraged students to stay in college. Students were then able to transfer some of this knowledge to support their English development and content learning. It is true, however, that students who came into the college with very low levels of English and took most of their content courses in Spanish did not develop the strong English skills that would enable them to receive an associate's degree in English.

Immigrant Latino students who are emergent bilinguals deserve to advance academically, while acquiring higher levels of literacy in English. This can be done in various ways – taking challenging content courses in Spanish or content courses in English tailored to their particular linguistic needs, discussing the subject matter of any content course in English or in Spanish in small groups, or doing formal and informal writing in English, as well as in Spanish, to clarify content material and exhibit understandings. All immigrant students can benefit from taking rigorous and advanced language courses in their home languages, while they are strengthening their English skills. In fact, improving their home language literacy practices may be the fastest and most significant way to contribute to their proficiency in English (Cummins, 1979; García, 2009; see also van der Walt & Kidd, this volume).

In two-year colleges, the time to develop students' full literacy skills in English is precious, and the type and the quality of instruction matter. Understanding the intertwined and dynamic linguistic nature of immigrant college students' language uses and thinking processes may help develop more effective ways of preparing them to confront the academic challenges

of today. Immigrant students certainly deserve to receive a sound bilingual/multilingual education, for themselves, their families, and for the communities in which they live. Only in this way will they be equipped to compete in today's global world, face the challenges ahead, and become valuable citizens that can contribute in unique ways to the growth of the United States.

## A University with International Students

This global research university has many campuses, including 11 campuses across the globe, although the main campus is located in a medium-size city in the northwestern United States whose residents have higher socioeconomic levels than those in the Bronx. It has more than 11,000 undergraduate and graduate students, and the programs in computer science, engineering, business and public policy are consistently ranked among the best in the country, and in the top 20 in international rankings.

Started as a technical school in 1900, the institution merged with an industrial research institute in 1967 to become a university. The university's student population is diverse, and as such has provided rich opportunities for the exchanges of ideas and knowledge across national borders. And yet, this diversity has presented challenges that the university has negotiated over the years and that we will address below. The total number of students from different countries enrolled in fall 1986 (when systematic data recording began), and in Fall 2010, are illustrated in Table 9.1.

**Table 9.1** Enrollment data by nationality for undergraduate and graduate students in Fall 1986 and Fall 2010\*

	<i>Undergraduate</i>		<i>Graduate</i>	
	<i>Fall 1986</i>	<i>Fall 2010</i>	<i>Fall 1986</i>	<i>Fall 2010</i>
Africa	3	2	29	39
Asia	496	571	1344	2089
Australia/Oceania	5	8	7	32
Caribbean/Central/South America	7	3	70	102
Europe	23	25	177	222
North America (Canada & Mexico)	33	37	103	132
U.S. Citizens	4481	5350	2269	2854
Unknown/Unreported	31	24	51	40
TOTAL	5079	6020	4050	5510

\*Source: Office of Institutional and Research Analysis

The data in Table 9.1 suggest that the number of international students has increased over the years, with a majority of them coming from Asia. In fact, the number of graduate international students in 2010 makes up half of the student body and is close to the number of US students. In 1986, the largest number of international undergraduate and graduate students was from India; in 2010, the largest number of international undergraduate students was from Korea, and the largest number of international graduate students was from India (followed closely by students from the People's Republic of China).

Reflecting the large numbers of international students on campus, multilingualism has begun to play an increasingly important role in the social fabric of the institution, although academically, it is the development of English that has been the focus of attention. In the 1990s, English teachers of the incoming class began recommending students for supplemental tutoring classes offered through the English program. In the late 1990s, a 45 minute placement test, in which students were required to write a short expository passage in English started to be administered by the Modern Languages Department during the undergraduate international student orientation held a few weeks before the Fall semester began every year. On the basis of this test, developmental English courses for international students were offered by the Modern Languages Department.

Nearly a decade later, in 2006, when the heterogeneity of the international student population became progressively magnified and students were entering their freshmen year with very varied levels of English proficiency, a course was developed by the English Department to develop students' academic English. By making connections between academic advisors, admissions, and enrollment services, names of students who might need help with academic English reading and writing are identified before the semester begins, and new online placement testing started during the summer. The new test that was developed requires students to answer questions about their language and literacy backgrounds, and to choose a set of two English readings (from two sets) and write brief summaries of both texts in English. Students are also asked to write an essay comparing both texts. Two teachers who teach the university-wide freshman English class read the students' essays and grade them on a rubric focusing on English language structures and rhetorical choices. A third reader assesses the papers if the two readers are in disagreement.

Students who pass the placement test then enroll for the regular first-year English course along with their other courses. Those who do not (approximately 125–150 students a year out of an entering class of about 1500 students) are required to take a course in academic English, while

simultaneously beginning other coursework in their field of study. After completing this academic English course, and without having to take the test again, students are then allowed to take the freshman English class, which is mandatory for all undergraduate students.

The academic English course required of those who do not pass the placement test is an academic reading and writing course for multilingual students. It is designed as a prerequisite for the freshman English class and is important for college writing in general. The course emphasizes reading comprehension strategies for reading a variety of text types in English (e.g. journalism, textbook selections, popular press arguments, and academic journal articles). Throughout the semester, students use these sources to write summaries and short position papers. The course introduces students to readers' expectations for North American rhetorical style at the sentence, paragraph, and whole text or genre levels. Explicit genre and linguistic norms for writing in academic English are discussed so that writers can connect with their readers.

The required academic English course focuses on topics such as '*Digital Selves in a Real World*' and '*Whose English is it Anyway? A Language at the Crossroads*.' Although course themes are left up to the discretion of each individual instructor, the core assignments (and their respective rubrics), designed by the head of the first-year English program, are meant to enable students to: (a) draw on discourse analytical and metacognitive strategies for reading and writing academic English; (b) identify major claims and evidence appropriately; (c) summarize and compare texts in writing; (d) argue for a position that other authors might find controversial; (e) build strategies for demonstrating control of conventions for writing in English; (f) draw on genre conventions for writing academic English from a functional and rhetorical perspective; (g) analyze models of effective academic writing; and (h) engage in collaborative peer review processes.

It is evident that the design of this academic English course heavily emphasizes the norms and conventions that are required for reading and writing in Western, academic contexts. Although international students may have scored high in the standardized English tests that were prerequisites for admission to this university (the TOEFL or the IELTS), most of them have not had opportunities to read and write academic materials in English; and for those who have, they are unlikely to have been exposed to the Western genres that will comprise the vast majority of the reading and writing they will be expected to do in their coursework as undergraduate students. Thus, this course attempts to create a springboard which students can use to dive into the reading and writing assignments within their own majors.

The degree and type of English proficiency that the international students possess is by no means homogenous, adding a layer of complexity. Neither is the language that they speak. When students in the academic English course required of students who do not pass the placement test were asked what language they consider their first or stronger language, a number of languages (and several combinations of languages) were reported, including Arabic, Cantonese, Bahasa Indonesia, Gujarati, Italian, Japanese, Spanish, Thai, and Turkish, among others. The vast majority of the students stated that their home languages were Korean, Chinese (Mandarin), Hindi, English, or Multilingual.<sup>4</sup> Table 9.2 displays the number of students who report these different home languages in Fall 2006 (when data collection began) and in Fall 2010.

Collectively, the data show several key trends about the varied language background of the students. First, there has been a decrease in the number of Korean students in the past five years in this course, and an increase in Chinese students. The Indian students were more likely to report two languages as their L1/stronger language, but there are also many Hindi-speaking students taking this course.

Second, there are a large, and increasing, number of students who consider more than one language as their L1 in this course. Although these students were likely to be Korean-English, Chinese-English, or Hindi-English bilinguals, several other combinations were reported, including Korean-Polish-Vietnamese, French-Arabic, Mandarin-Taiwanese, Kazakh-Russian, and Thai-English. What is apparent here is that students self-identify with more than one language before English even comes into the picture, and are finding it increasingly challenging to draw clear demarcations of their language background. For instance, when asked what their first or stronger language is, one student responded 'Korean? Well, to be honest, I'm equally comfortable with Korean and English. So either one could be my first language,' and another claimed that 'Although Bengali is my native language, I consider English to be my first language as it is the language used at home and school.' Therefore, a large group of students

**Table 9.2** Number of speakers of major home languages in the academic English class

	Fall 2006	Fall 2010
Korean	87	37
Chinese	29	53
Hindi	10	3
English	1	19
Multilingual	20	22



enrolled in this course come from backgrounds in which they have already been exposed to more than one language and culture.

Third, related to the second point, there is a sharp increase in the number of students who considered English to be their stronger/first language in 2010. Several of the students in this course who deem English their native language may be speakers of World Englishes (see Saarinen & Nikula, this volume for a different perspective). Thus, there has been a rise in the so-called 1.5 generation (Hartkluu *et al.*, 1999). According to the director of the first year writing program, there are many students enrolled in the academic English course who may have graduated from secondary schools in the U.S., but who have not developed strong academic English skills.

The teachers of the academic English course are graduate students from the English Department and the Modern Languages Department, as well as adjunct instructors. Their expertise is in either Second Language Acquisition, English as a Second Language, Rhetoric, Composition, or Applied Linguistics. One full-time regular faculty – the head of the writing program – also teaches the course. In the past few years graduate students from Chile, China, and India have taught this English class, mirroring the increasingly international population across the university campus. This demographic shift marks an important change in the state of English education, as it opens up the boundaries of what an English language teacher looks and sounds like in a global university.

In Fall 2010, an assignment given to students in this academic English class attempted to draw on the various linguistic and metalinguistic repertoires that these students brought with them to the English classroom. Students were allowed to write a paper on the state of English language education worldwide by referring to academic sources in multiple languages. By doing so, students found that the same Google search yielded very different data in English and Chinese, and were thus able to incorporate these different viewpoints to voice their own opinions via an academic English essay. Although it proved challenging for the teacher to check the validity of the sources in various languages, and for the students to integrate the information into one coherent essay, this type of teaching, although not prevalent, may prove invaluable in changing the multilingual landscape in global academic communication.

Foreign language education is also a central part of the educational experience of many of the students at this university. The developmental trajectory of language courses began in the late 1980s when five faculty members taught French, German, Italian, Japanese, Russian, and Spanish within the History Department. After rapid expansion because of high demand for language classes, an autonomous department was established

in 1993 dedicated to the teaching of foreign languages. In 1996 a doctoral program in Second Language Acquisition was established, and in Fall 2011 a master's program in Applied Second Language Acquisition was initiated. Thus, both language teaching and language acquisition research are central to the department.

In 2010, the undergraduate majors offered in the Modern Language Department included Chinese, French and Francophone studies, German, Hispanic Studies, Japanese, Russian studies, and European studies. According to the head of the department, a striking 52% of students at this university took a foreign language course in 2009, compared to the national average of approximately 12%. The enrollment data in foreign language classes when the program began in 1993 is compared to the data in 2010 in Table 9.3.

From 1993 to 2010, enrollment increased the most in Chinese, Japanese, and Spanish from 1993 to 2010; however, there was a rise in enrollment figures for all the languages, with one new language – Arabic – having been added. In addition to the language courses, there are also several extracurricular activities hosted by the department to foster the use of languages other than English in various situations, such as the celebration of the Chinese Moon Festival and Mexican Day of the Dead, the production of the multilingual publication written and produced by students in the department, and an international Film Festival featuring movies from around the world in various languages, open to the entire campus community. Further still, several students take advantage of the opportunity to study abroad and live for a few weeks or a year in a country in which the language they are learning is used.

Students who have taken language courses have been able to use their knowledge and expertise to enhance their career opportunities after graduation. According to the head of the Modern Language department,

**Table 9.3** Number of students enrolled in foreign language classes

	1993	2010
Arabic	0	48
Chinese	5	535
French	129	268
German	109	214
Italian	26	171
Japanese	59	416
Russian	20	126
Spanish	116	377

'[the] students report that their language skills and intercultural expertise have enriched them personally and have increased their professional opportunities in the global twenty-first century.' Hence, the foreign language education acquired at the university is a critical component of the academic and career success of many students.

Beyond language education and the presence of international students and international campuses, there is also a concentrated and coordinated university-wide initiative to 'globalize' education at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The steering committee, comprising of faculty, staff, and students have strived to increase global awareness in existing classes, increase opportunities for seminars and workshops that focus on global, multicultural and multilingual issues, increase and expand study-abroad opportunities, and develop and implement new courses such as *Global Systems Project Management* and *Technology for Developing Countries*. At the graduate level, competitions were held in Fall 2010 where graduate students submitted proposals persuading judges about the global economic, cultural, social, and technological impact of their research. Initiatives such as these aim at harnessing the global presence of the university and channeling future research endeavors towards deeper global awareness, thus underscoring the importance of global understanding for this university's missions.

In conclusion, this university is rapidly expanding its physical presence across the globe, increasing the number of students it takes from various countries, and as a result, increasing English and multilingualism on its campuses. Efforts are being made not only to promote academic English usage, but also to augment awareness of, study of, and research of other languages, cultures, and societies. Although there is a still a diverse pool of linguistic and knowledge resources that can be harnessed to further increase English and multilingual education in this university, great strides have been made in increasing global communication among its international student population.

## Conclusion

The two case studies presented in this chapter have important implications to theorize about the role of English and multilingualism in US higher education. Whereas international students are welcomed and perceived as a financial asset to the private US colleges and universities, immigrant university students at public institutions of higher education are received with caution. Whereas the varieties of English and different proficiencies in English that international students bring are seen as natural, the bilingualism of immigrant students at US colleges and universities is perceived as a

challenge, and often as a problem. Likewise, whereas the IOTEs of international students are taught, celebrated, and used in academic pursuits, the use of IOTEs in education is often restricted by colleges and universities serving immigrant students. Furthermore, whereas international students are welcomed in university content classes and their English proficiency is not seen as an obstacle to learning, immigrant students are often excluded from academic content until they develop appropriate English proficiency and pass English reading and writing tests. These differences are, however, related to the kind of clients these students are, as well as to the power and prestige they hold. Whereas international students in private universities support the institution in the form of tuition payment, immigrant students in public universities are sometimes seen as taking valuable resources away from US-born students.

On the whole, the differences in the treatment of international and immigrant students in our two case studies make evident the implicit 'protectionist' US language policy that on the one hand encourages the bilingualism and the 'taking up' of English by people outside of its borders, and on the other hand, demands English monolingualism from its own residents. After discussing the role of the United States as a promoter of globalization, Sue Wright explains this schizophrenic US language policy by saying:

Some of the most robust resistance to globalization comes from within the United States itself. The US government is able to guard its sovereignty and autonomy in the classic manner of the nation state. [W]e appear to be witnessing asymmetric developments within globalization: continuing economic autonomy and political sovereignty for many states; the survival of some elements of traditional 'one nation, one territory, one language' nationalism for the United States.' (Wright, 2004: 163, 165)

Our two case studies clearly show that higher education systems in the United States have different takes on bilingualism and multilingualism depending on who is speaking. When acquiring English means that international students will become bilingual, institutions of higher education are patient, inclusive, willing to work with linguistic differences. However, the emerging bilingualism of immigrant students is often viewed with intolerance, impatience, and punitive measures by the college and university systems. Of course, this doesn't mean that faculty members who teach immigrant students share these views. In fact, many educators involved in

teaching immigrants are some of the most dedicated teachers we have come across, and often transgress university policies in order to act on the students' behalf.

The lesson learned from these two case studies is that it is not bilingualism itself that is at the core of the attitudes of college and university systems towards English and LOTE of students. At the core is a nationalistic policy of 'one nation, one territory, one language,' that is related to the power and status of those it educates in the nation's institutions of higher education.

## Notes

- (1) The authors want to thank those who collaborated with us and provided information, and most especially the offices of institutional research at both institutions.
- (2) See <http://journalism.fiu.edu/programs/graduate/sj/index.html>.
- (3) See [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m0WVMAX/is\\_1\\_24/ai\\_n27164178/](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0WVMAX/is_1_24/ai_n27164178/).
- (4) Multilingual refers to most commonly Korean-English, Chinese-English, and Hindi-English.

## References

- Bewis, T.B. and Lucas, C.J. (2007) *International Students in American Colleges and Universities: A History*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Chellari, G., Maskus, K.E. and Martoo, A. (2005) *The Contribution of Skilled Immigration and International Graduate Students to US Innovation*. Washington, DC: World Bank Manuscript.
- Crawford, J. (2007) The decline of bilingual education in the USA: How to reverse a troubling trend? *International Multilingual Research Journal* 1 (1), 33-37.
- Cummings, J. (1979) Linguistic interdependence and the educational development of bilingual children. *Review of Educational Research* 49 (2), 222-251.
- Epstein, J. (2010) Universities offer degrees with courses in Spanish and English. *USA Today, Inside Higher Ed*. April 8, 2010, accessed 2 June, 2011. [http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2010-04-08-bilingual-college\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2010-04-08-bilingual-college_N.htm)
- Furman, N., Goldberg, D. and Luskin, N. (2007) *Enrollments in Languages Other Than English in United States Institutions of Higher Education, Fall 2006*. New York: Modern Language Association.
- Gandara, P. and Contreras, F. (2009) *The Latino Education Crisis: The Consequences of Failed School Policies*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- García, O. (2009) *Bilingual Education in the 21st Century: A Global Perspective*. Malden, MA & Oxford: Wiley/Blackwell.
- García, O. and Kleifgen, J.A. (2010) *Educating Emergent Bilinguals: Policies, Programs and Practices for English Language Learners*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Harklau, L., Losey, K. and Siegel, M. (eds) (1999) *Generation 1.5 Meets College Composition: Issues in the Teaching of Writing to US-Educated Learners of ESL*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Heath, S.B. (1976) Why no official tongue? *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 11, 9-43.
- Institute of International Education Press Release (2010) *International Student Enrollments Rose Modestly in 2009-10, Led by strong increase in students from China*. Online at: <http://www.iie.org/Who-We-Are/News-and-Events/Press-Center/Press-Releases/2010/2010-11-15-Open-Doors-International-Students-In-The-US.aspx>
- MLA (Modern Language Association) (2007) *Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a changed world*. New York: MLA. Accessed 24 June 2011. <http://www.mla.org/Report>
- Newman, M., Tenches-Pareta, M. and Pujol, M. (2003) Core academic literacy principles versus culture-specific practices: A multi-case study of academic achievement. *English for Specific Purposes*, 22 (Spring), 45-71.
- Open Doors (2010) Report on International Educational Exchange. Fast Facts. Available at <http://www.iie.org/en/Research-and-Publications/Open-Doors/Data>.
- Pujol, M. (2006) Empowering Hispanic college students to take charge of their English with contrastive analysis strategies. *Oxford Round Table on Bilingualism and ESL*, Lincoln College, The University of Oxford, UK. (March 21) (Presentation).
- Pujol, M. (2007) Strategies for adult Hispanic ELLs: understanding the connections between Spanish and English morphology and syntax. *Oxford Round Table on Bilingualism and ESL*, Pembroke College, The University of Oxford, UK. (March 22) (Presentation).
- Roberge, M., Siegel, M. and Harklau, L. (eds) (2009) *Generation 1.5 in College Composition: Teaching Academic Writing to US-Educated Learners of ESL*. New York: Routledge.
- Rumbaut, R. and Ima, K. (1988) The adaptation of Southeast Asian refugee youth: A comparative study (final report to the Office of Resettlement). San Diego, California: San Diego State University. Eric Document Reproduction Service Ed 299 372.
- Shaughnessy, M. (1977) *Errors and Expectations*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Sieber, T. (2004) Excelling in the critical study of culture: The multilingual multicultural student advantage. In V. Zamel and R. Spack (eds) *Crossing the Curriculum: Multilingual Learners in College Classrooms* (pp. 129-144). New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Publishers.
- Thonius, T. (2003) Serving generation 1.5 learners in the writing center. *TESOL Journal* 12 (1), 17-24.
- U.S. Census Bureau (2009) American Community Survey, 2009. Washington, DC. Online at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)
- U.S. Census Bureau (2005-2009) Bronx County, New York, Fact Sheet, American Factfinder. [http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/ACSSAFFacts?\\_event=Search&lang=en&ssse=on&geo\\_id=05000US36005&\\_county=Bronx+County](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/ACSSAFFacts?_event=Search&lang=en&ssse=on&geo_id=05000US36005&_county=Bronx+County)
- White House Initiative for Educational Excellence for Hispanics and the US Department of Education (2011) *Winning the Future: Improving Education for the Latino Community*. April 2011. Washington, DC.
- Whight, S. (2004) *Language Policy and Language Planning: From Nationalism to Globalization*. New York: Palgrave.
- Institute of International Education Press Release (2010) *International Student Enrollments Rose Modestly in 2009-10, Led by strong increase in students from China*. Online at: <http://www.iie.org/Who-We-Are/News-and-Events/Press-Center/Press-Releases/2010/2010-11-15-Open-Doors-International-Students-In-The-US.aspx>
- MLA (Modern Language Association) (2007) *Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a changed world*. New York: MLA. Accessed 24 June 2011. <http://www.mla.org/Report>
- Newman, M., Tenches-Pareta, M. and Pujol, M. (2003) Core academic literacy principles versus culture-specific practices: A multi-case study of academic achievement. *English for Specific Purposes*, 22 (Spring), 45-71.
- Open Doors (2010) Report on International Educational Exchange. Fast Facts. Available at <http://www.iie.org/en/Research-and-Publications/Open-Doors/Data>.
- Pujol, M. (2006) Empowering Hispanic college students to take charge of their English with contrastive analysis strategies. *Oxford Round Table on Bilingualism and ESL*, Lincoln College, The University of Oxford, UK. (March 21) (Presentation).
- Pujol, M. (2007) Strategies for adult Hispanic ELLs: understanding the connections between Spanish and English morphology and syntax. *Oxford Round Table on Bilingualism and ESL*, Pembroke College, The University of Oxford, UK. (March 22) (Presentation).
- Roberge, M., Siegel, M. and Harklau, L. (eds) (2009) *Generation 1.5 in College Composition: Teaching Academic Writing to US-Educated Learners of ESL*. New York: Routledge.
- Rumbaut, R. and Ima, K. (1988) The adaptation of Southeast Asian refugee youth: A comparative study (final report to the Office of Resettlement). San Diego, California: San Diego State University. Eric Document Reproduction Service Ed 299 372.
- Shaughnessy, M. (1977) *Errors and Expectations*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Sieber, T. (2004) Excelling in the critical study of culture: The multilingual multicultural student advantage. In V. Zamel and R. Spack (eds) *Crossing the Curriculum: Multilingual Learners in College Classrooms* (pp. 129-144). New York: Lawrence Erlbaum Publishers.
- Thonius, T. (2003) Serving generation 1.5 learners in the writing center. *TESOL Journal* 12 (1), 17-24.
- U.S. Census Bureau (2009) American Community Survey, 2009. Washington, DC. Online at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)
- U.S. Census Bureau (2005-2009) Bronx County, New York, Fact Sheet, American Factfinder. [http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/ACSSAFFacts?\\_event=Search&lang=en&ssse=on&geo\\_id=05000US36005&\\_county=Bronx+County](http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/ACSSAFFacts?_event=Search&lang=en&ssse=on&geo_id=05000US36005&_county=Bronx+County)
- White House Initiative for Educational Excellence for Hispanics and the US Department of Education (2011) *Winning the Future: Improving Education for the Latino Community*. April 2011. Washington, DC.
- Whight, S. (2004) *Language Policy and Language Planning: From Nationalism to Globalization*. New York: Palgrave.