

Improving Intercultural Interactions:

School Counselors in Rapidly Changing Schools

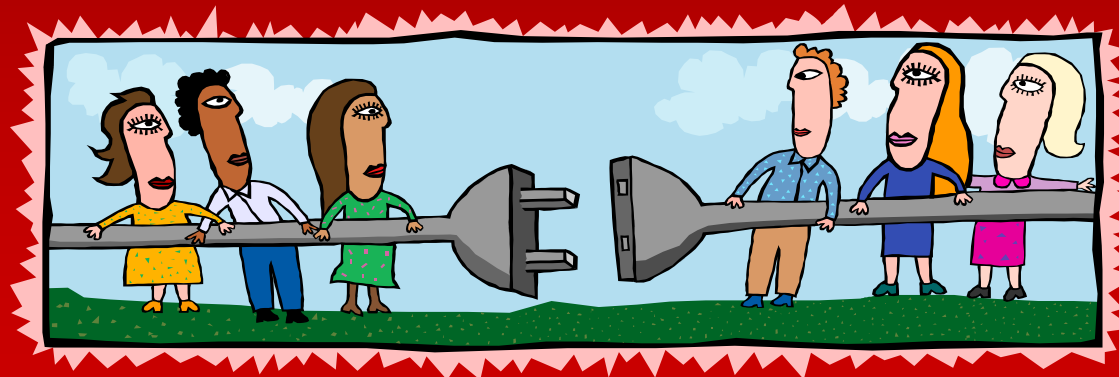


Presented by

*Waldo Alvarado, M.S.Ed.
Reading School District*

Workshop Objective

Develop a better understanding of students' home cultures in order to interact more effectively with them and increase their engagement in school.



Goals for this Workshop:

3

Identify specific **counseling guidelines** in working with culturally different students and parents.

2

Describe the ***Bridging Cultures*** framework and discuss the sources of home-school conflict deriving from different Cultural perspectives.

1

Recognize **demographic** trends that are changing the face on American schools

Part I: Demographics Trends




The Diversification of the US is due primarily:

1. The aging and declining birth rate of Anglo population
2. The current immigration rates

Current US Population in Millions

Source: US Census 2005



<i>Ethnic Groups</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>White</i>	198
<i>Hispanics</i>	42.7
<i>Blacks</i>	39.7
<i>Asians</i>	14.4
<i>American Indian/Alaskan Natives</i>	4.5
<i>Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders</i>	1.0



US Population is One-Third Minority₅

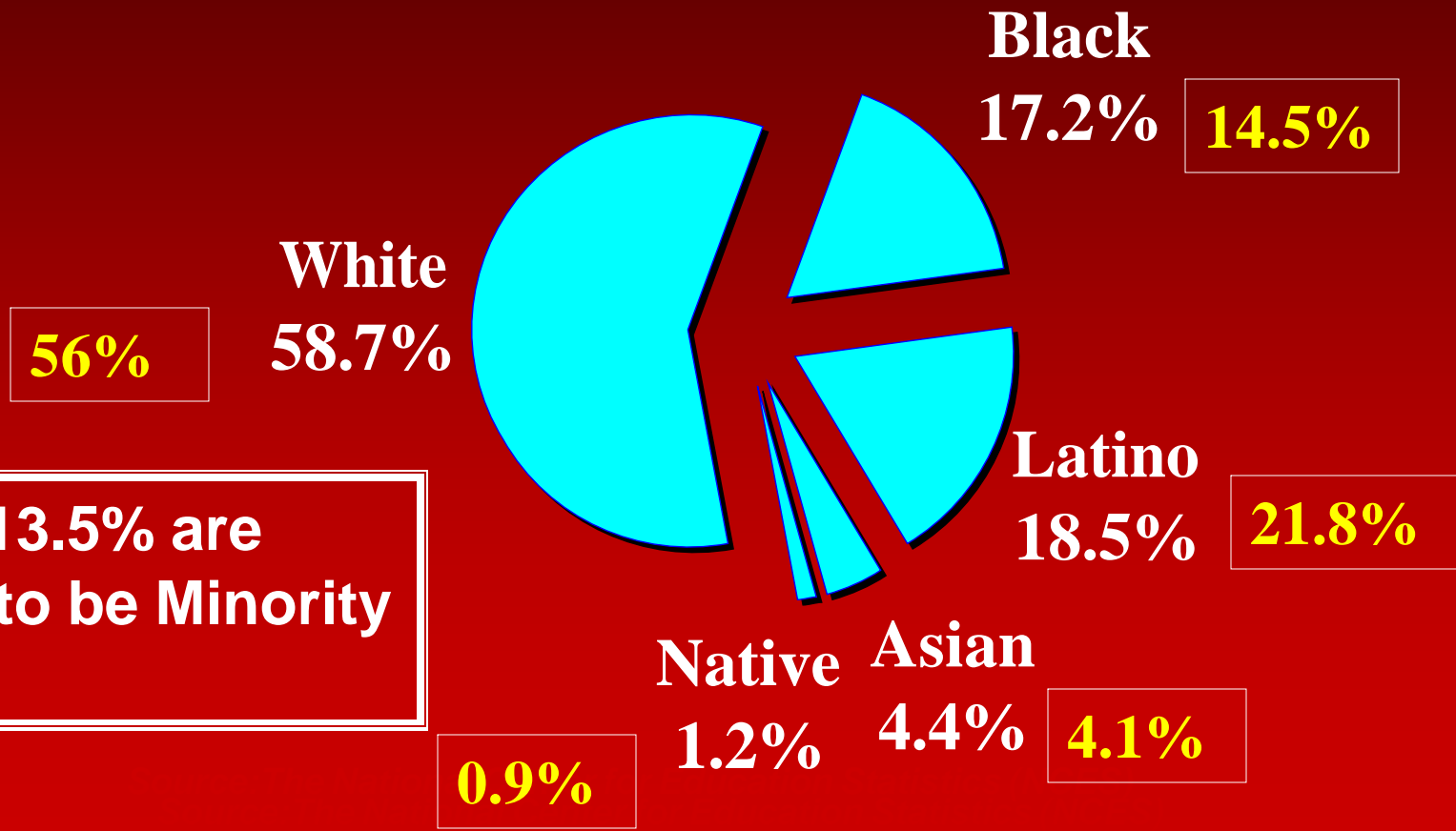
National Population Growth 2004-2005

2.8 Millions

Source: US Census, 2005

Group	Subtotal	Percentage	New Births	Immigration
White	500K	19	300K	200K
Hispanics	1.300K	46.4	800K	500K
Blacks	496K	17.7	407K	89K
Asians	421K	15.0	182K	239K
AI/AN	43K	1.5	43K	
NH/PI	15K	0.5	15K	

Enrollment of US Public Schools by Ethnicity/Race in 2003



Yet only 13.5% are reported to be Minority Teachers

Part II



The Bridging Cultures Project

The Bridging Cultures Project



Initial Training, 1996

Participants

Seven bilingual Spanish-English elementary teachers (four Latino, three European American)

Method

Three videotaped workshops over four months

Outcome

All teachers learned to understand and apply the Bridging Cultures framework.

The Bridging Cultures Project



Shifting Roles, 1997-2001

Bi-monthly meetings provided opportunities to continue applying and researching the framework

Teachers moved from being teacher-participants to teacher-researchers, finding new examples and applications of *Bridging Cultures* in their schools

Teachers became conference presenters, publications co-authors, and school leaders.¹⁰

Solving a Classroom Dilemma

(Raeff, et al., 2000)



It is the end of the school day, and the class is cleaning up. Salvador isn't feeling well, and he asks Juan to help him with his job for the day, which is cleaning the blackboard. Juan isn't sure that he will have time to do both jobs.

What do you think the teacher should do?

- 1) Find someone else to do Salvador's job
- 2) Tell Juan to help Salvador

What is Culture?



What feels “normal”

Deeply ingrained social habits

Ways of valuing

Invisibility of Culture



Surface Culture

Observed or Demonstrated
actions / conduct

Deep Culture

Values
Beliefs
Attitudes
Expectations
Universal Human Needs

Source: Ting-Toomey & Oetzel, 2001

Individualism

Collectivism

Representative of the mainstream US culture

Fosters independence and individual achievement

Emphasizes the physical world, private property, and objects out of contexts

Promotes individual needs, self-expression, and personal choice


Representative of many immigrant cultures and 70% of the world

Fosters interdependence, family, and group success

Emphasizes the social world, shared property, and objects in social contexts

Promotes norms, respect for authority and elders, and group consensus

Risk: Overgeneralizing

- 
- Generation of descent
 - level of acculturation,
 - language dominance/preference,
 - **region of residence,**
 - **formal education,**
 - **socioeconomic status,**


All cultures, like people, are both individualistic and collectivistic and change over time. However, despite cultural shifts toward mainstream, child-rearing values can persist over many generations

Benefit: Understanding




The individualistic-collectivistic framework:

- Provides a tool for uncovering cultural variation
- Opens the door for understanding others
- Helps foster meaningful interactions
- Suggests solutions to conflicts



Seven Sources of Home-School Conflict



Sources of Home-School Conflict

#1 Individualism

Collectivism

Independence



Helpfulness

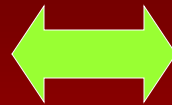
Sources of Home-School Conflict



#2 Individualism

Collectivism

Personal property



Sharing

Whose Blocks?

Critical Incident #4



Picture this: At pre-school, a European American boy was playing with blocks. Nearby, Jasmine, daughter of immigrant Latino parents, took one of the blocks that the boy was not using and began to play with it. In response, the boy hit Jasmine and she began to cry.

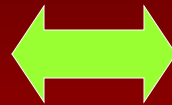
Sources of Home-School Conflict



#2 Individualism

Collectivism

Personal property



Sharing

Sources of Home-School Conflict

#3 Individualism

Cognitive skills
Objects out of
Context



Collectivism

Social skills
Objects in a social
Context

Science from Stories

Critical Incident # 2

Carolina's story

- Playing in the garden with grandmother, saw hummingbird near the cherry tree

- Bird “stood in the air.” Carolina tried to get close to the pretty bird but it kept moving away.

Hummingbird qualities

- Brownish with bright, iridescent green and red coloring around head and neck
- Wings beat rapidly
- Can hover, fly in any direction
- Must eat often because using constant energy in its movements

Perspectives on Knowledge

The Blackbirds Math Problem



Collectivistic:

Grounded in personal
experience

Part of a subjective
“flow” of impressions
and events

Individualistic:

Knowledge comes
from the world
outside the self

Facts can be
examined
independently of
their context

Sources of Home-School Conflict

#3 Individualism

Cognitive skills
Objects out of
Context



Collectivism

Social skills
Objects in a social
Context

Sources of Home-School Conflict

#4 Individualism

Collectivism


Child as an
individual



Child as part of a
family

School Breakfast

Critical Incident # 3



There had just been a major crisis involving the federally funded school breakfast program. The problem, as seen by the school, was that immigrant Latina mothers were accompanying their children to school, bringing younger siblings, and eating breakfast together with their children; as a consequence, eating food that “belonged” only to the school children

Sources of Home-School Conflict

#4 Individualism

Collectivism

Child as an
individual



Child as part of a
family

Sources of Home-School Conflict

#5 *Individualism*

Parent's role
includes
teaching



Collectivism

Teacher's role
includes
socialization

Parents' Role vs. Teacher's Role



In a study of immigrant Latino families, Valdes found that mothers saw themselves as participating actively in their children's *educacion*, that is, in raising children to be good and well-behaved human beings. They did not, however, see themselves as adjunct schoolteachers. They did not see their role as involving the teaching of school subjects. In their own experience in school, this had been the province of the teacher.

Sources of Home-School Conflict

#5 Individualism

Parent's role
includes
teaching



Collectivism

Teacher's role
includes
socialization

Parent Involvement Factors

(Trumbull, et al., 2001)

1. Role Expectations

Parents are the children's first teachers

Teachers are the children's second parents

2. Sense of efficacy

"Spanish Inquisition"

Teachers may also inadvertently criticize parents for adhering to a different set of ideals for children, families and parenting

Greenfield, et al., 1996

3. Invitations from school

4. Conflicting expectations from students

Sources of Home-School Conflict

#6 Individualism

Collectivism


Praise (to promote self-esteem)



Criticism (to achieve normative behavior)

Praise versus Criticism

Critical Incident # 1



A Mexican immigrant mother recalls her experience in a parent-teacher conference in which her child's teacher called her daughter "outstanding".

According to this mother, "I did not know what to do about her being 'outstanding': I had tried to show my daughter not to 'show off' or be cruel to others, but it seemed it was not working. I blamed her 'bad habit' of 'standing out' on this country's social influences as I had seen on TV and in my personal observations."

Sources of Home-School Conflict



#6 Individualism

Collectivism

Praise (to promote self-esteem)



Criticism (to achieve normative behavior)

Sources of Home-School Conflict

#7 Individualism

Collectivism

Oral expression



Listening to authority

Two Proverbs:

- “The squeaky wheel gets the grease”.
- “The nail that sticks out gets pounded down!”.

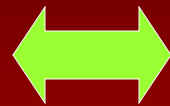
Sources of Home-School Conflict



#7 Individualism

Collectivism

Oral expression



Listening to authority

Seven Sources of Home-School Conflict

Individualism versus Collectivism

1. Independence versus Helpfulness
2. Personal Property versus Sharing
3. Cognitive skills and objects out of context versus Social skills and objects in a social context
4. Child as an individual versus Child as a part of a family
5. Parents' role to teach versus Teacher's role to educate
6. Praise to promote self-esteem versus Criticism to achieve normative behavior
7. Oral expression versus Listening to authority

The Bridging Cultures Framework Has Produced Changes in:



Classroom management & organization

- Cooperation
- Homework club
- The star chart

Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment

- Valuing alternative perspectives

Relationship with parents & Families

- Group conferencing
- Emphasis on social development

“Bridging Cultures” Project

(Noelle Caskey)



- **Research based**
- **Economical framework**
- **Makes teaching easier**
- **Generative**
- **Teachers use paradigm after training**
- **Applicable on systemic level**


Part III:



Guidelines for Counseling Latin@s

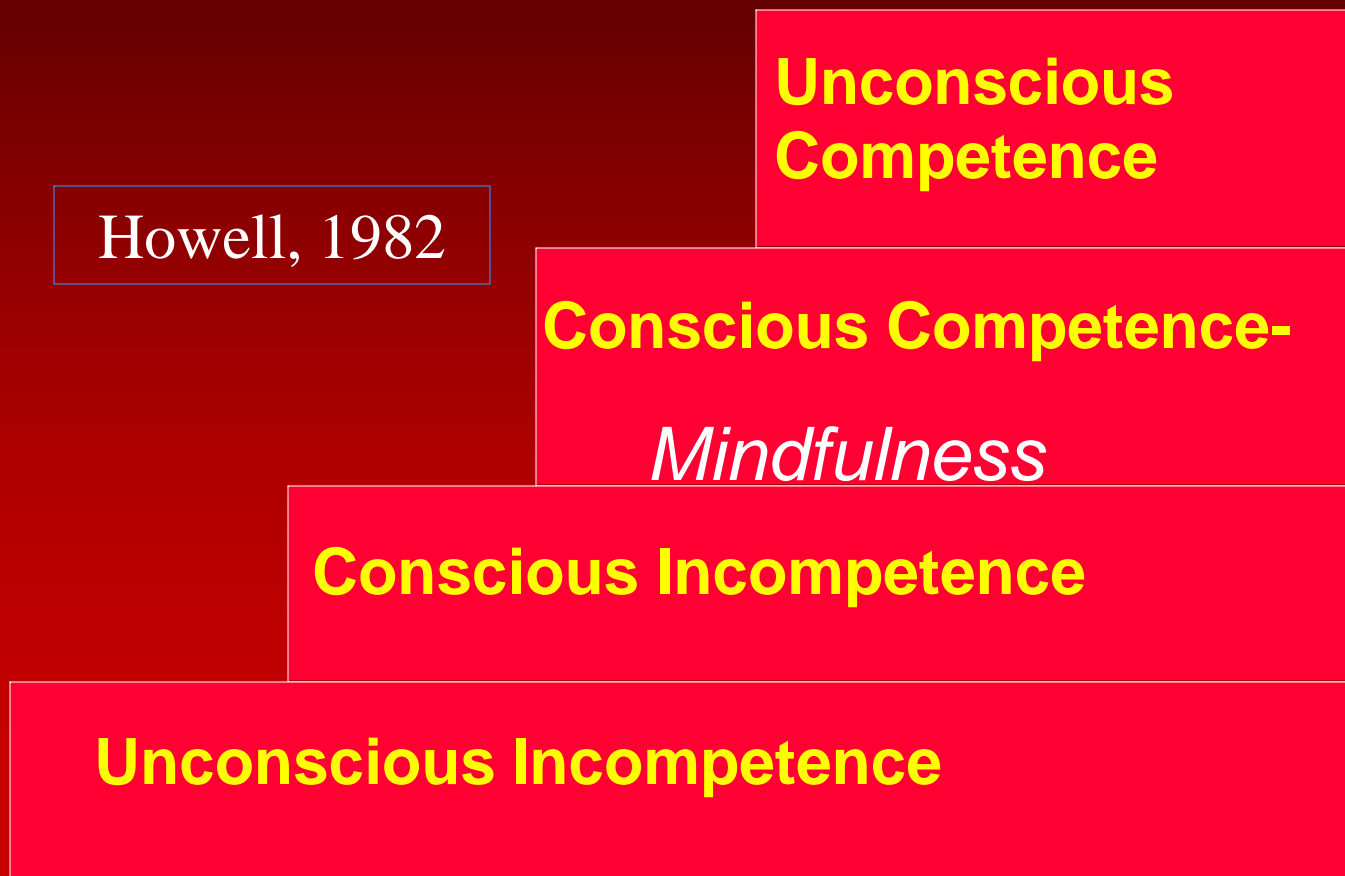
There is nothing more unequal than the equal treatment of students who have unequal needs and backgrounds.

What's the More Reliable Measure of Competence?




The ability to behave in a manner that is relevant and responsive to the client's cultural worldview
(Sue et al., 1992)

The Staircase Model of Intercultural Competence



Specific Guidelines

(Bean, Perry & Bedell, 2001)

- 
1. Use Family therapy as the preferred treatment modality
 2. Act as an advocate for the family with helping agencies.
 3. Process experience about the family immigrant experience

Specific Guidelines

(Bean, Perry & Bedell, 2001)



4. Assess level of acculturation
(Transcultural / transnational experiences)
5. Incorporate language and learn to speak the student's culture
6. Respect the father or father figure

Specific Guidelines

(Bean, Perry & Bedell, 2001)



7. Do separate interviews with family subsystems
8. Do not force change in the family relationships
9. Provide family with concrete suggestions

Specific Guidelines

(Bean, Perry & Bedell, 2001)



10. Engage family in the first session with warmth and personalism

It is ironic that in counseling, equal treatment maybe discrimination and differential treatment is not necessarily preferential

D. W. Sue

Reflection:

What can we do to appreciate the **values and strengths that culturally different students and parents bring to our schools and society?**

“The positive attitudes of recent immigrant children are a remarkable resource; as a society we would be best served by harnessing rather than crushing that energy

Carola Suarez-Orozco, 2000

- Interpersonal relationships
- interdependence/ group success
- social responsibility
- sharing
- respect for elders/ tradition
- Stable role system
- Multilingual skills
- Respect for the environment

Questions and Evaluation



Thanks for your
honest feedback!

www.crosscultural-skills.com