

## Cultural Considerations when working with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Populations

ECI Webinar Series  
Summer 2011

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### Outline for Today

- Importance of Culture
- Cultural Parameters
- Use of an interpreter
- Cultural competence in assessment and intervention

### Learner Objectives

- Participants will list, identify, describe...:
  - The importance of developing knowledge about other cultures to optimize client outcomes
  - Nine parameters that can be used to characterize cultures
  - Ways to facilitate culturally familiar environments to maximize success in treatment
  - The influence a family's culture could have on a child's evaluation results
  - How to effectively work with an interpreter

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### Why study culture? Demographics



- Between 1990 and 2000 the Latino population increased by 57.9 percent.
- In 2000, 12.5 percent of US residents were Latino and half of all Latinos in California and Texas.

(Salas-Provence, Erickson, and Reed, 2002).

## Why study culture?

### Improved Therapeutic Outcomes

- A client's cultural beliefs will influence how they describe their health problems, the manner in which they communicate their symptoms, who they seek for health care, how long they remain in care, and how they assess the care provided.
- Culturally familiar environments facilitate success in treatment as clients are more secure and responsive in these settings.

(Tomoeda & Bayles, 2002; Mahendra et al., 2006).

## The Nine Parameters of Cultural Consideration

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## Nine Cultural Parameters

1. Individualism versus collectivism
2. Views of time and space
3. Roles of men and women
4. Concepts of class and status
5. Values
6. Language
7. Rituals
8. Significance of work
9. Beliefs about health

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## Individualism vs. Collectivism

**1.**

- A culture is termed individualistic when great value is placed on individuals and their rights and decisions.
  - Members of individualistic societies may tend to have more casual relationships.
- A culture is collectivistic when great value is placed on the group and membership in the group.
  - These societies form close ties between individuals and reinforce extended families.

## View of Time and Space

# 2.

- Time
  - How strictly a culture adheres to a schedule
    - *Emphasis on punctuality*
    - *Event oriented*
- Space
  - Personal space and how much distance between conversational partners is required for individuals to feel comfortable.

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## Roles of Men and Women

# 3.

- Gender roles vary across cultures and influence many areas, including
  - Education
  - Ownership
  - Choice of profession
  - Decision-making authority in the family.

(Tomoeda & Bayles, 2002)

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## Concepts on Class and Status

# 4.

- What determines an individual's societal position and place of respect varies across cultures (Tomoeda & Bayles, 2002).
- Wealth often plays a large part in the determination of class.
- Socioeconomic class may result in even greater group dissimilarities than country of origin.

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## Values

# 5.

- A cultural group's values are manifested in it's view of the relationship of man to nature and of human beings to other human beings, the importance of ancestors and of the environment, and the degree of materialism (Tomoeda & Bayles, 2002).

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## Language

# 6.

- The influence that the pragmatics of a language has on interpersonal communication.
- The amount of information conveyed through setting or context differs among cultures, ranging from high to low context.
  - High-context cultures
    - context is crucial to communicate meaning
    - a culturally competent provider would be especially aware of nonverbal aspects of communication, such as eye contact, gestures, space, use of silence, and touch.
  - Low-context cultures
    - Meaning is conveyed primarily through words

## Rituals

# 7.

- Rituals or ceremonies are conventional ways of commemorating significant historical events or life changes and renewing commitment to shared values.
  - Weddings
  - Births
  - Deaths
  - Religious worship(Tomoeda & Bayles, 2002).
- Daily rituals including meals and daily routines

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## Significance of Work

# 8.

- This parameter refers to the importance of work in a culture and how it is defined by the members of the culture (Lynch & Hanson, 2004).

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## Beliefs about Health

# 9.

- Illness and disabilities are viewed differently across cultures.
- In many cultures, someone with a disability may be seen as special or holy, or they may be seen as bewitched.
- Illness may be thought to occur when an individual is out of harmony with nature or the universe, and a spiritualist, folk healer, herbalist, or witch doctor may be chosen over Western medical professionals to provide health care.

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## Cultural concerns in standardized testing

Examining the BDI



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## Cultural Considerations in the BDI

Receptive Communication 15 & 32

- Recalls events from a story presented orally.
  - En la mesa había huevos, pan tostado y jugo de naranja.
- Donde está tu pie?/Where is your foot?

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## BDI Cultural Considerations

Expressive Communication 30

- Follows conventional rules of conversation.

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## BDI Cultural Considerations

Receptive Communication 15

- Donde está tu pie?/Where is your foot?

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## BDI Cultural Considerations

- Self Care 13, 15 & 16
  - Child uses a spoon or other utensil to feed himself.
  - Child feeds himself with a utensil without assistance.
  - Child drinks from a cup (not sippy cup) without assistance.

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## BDI Cultural Considerations

- Self Care 22 & 25
  - Child asks for food at the table.
  - Child obtains a drink from a tap without assistance.

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## BDI Cultural Considerations

Adult Interaction 5, 15, 17

- Child explores adult facial features
- Child helps with simple household tasks.
- Child greets familiar adults spontaneously

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## BDI Cultural Considerations

Reasoning and Academic Skills 4, 9 & 10

- Child shows interest in books
- Child names the colors red, green and blue
- Child identifies to sources of common actions
  - What barks?/Quién ladra?

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## BDI Cultural Considerations

### Fine Motor

- Child fastens clothing without assistance

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## Working with Interpreters in Assessment and Intervention

Accessing clients and families through their home language.



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## The Top Ten Tips

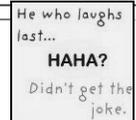
- Establish and agree to ground rules
  - How to run the session
  - Number of sentences at a time
  - Confirmation of jargon/idioms – Avoid it!
  - When to take breaks
- Brief the interpreter **prior** to the session
  - Who, what, why
  - Specific terminology
  - Format
  - Your job and what you are looking for



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## The Top Ten Tips (continued)

- Familiarize them with the topic
  - Best if your interpreter has some experience in education, special education, speech-language
  - Important for interpreter to know what you need
- Avoid humor
- Plan your time carefully (twice the time)
- Do not rush, speak slowly and clearly and provide pauses for the interpreter



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## The Top Ten Tips (continued)

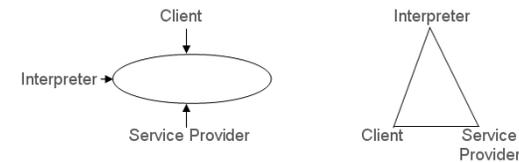
- An interpreter should never translate emotions, body language works for that
- An interpreter should never answer questions on your behalf.
- Ask them their opinion after the session
- An interpreter should never alter what you say.



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## How to work with an interpreter

- Talk to the family, not to the interpreter
- Sit across from client and interpreter takes a mediating position



Note: An inexperienced interpreter may talk more or less than you do.

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## Interpreter bias

- It is human nature to want a member of your culture to perform well
- An interpreter should:
  - Maintain Neutrality
  - Translate statements verbatim
  - Maintain confidentiality



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## Types of Interpretation

- Consecutive Interpreting
  - **The interpreter listens to a section and then the speaker pauses to give time to interpret**
  - Used in one-to-one and small group meetings
- Simultaneous Interpreting
  - The interpreter attempts to relay the meaning in real time.
  - Used more for conferences and speeches to large groups



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## How to find an interpreter

- On-line resources
  - [www.professionalinterpreters.com](http://www.professionalinterpreters.com)
- The Professional Community
  - Nurses, healthcare professionals
- Community Volunteers
  - Cultural centers
  - Religious groups
- The family
  - Extended members preferred



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## Debriefing and writing the report

- Debriefing
  - Ask the interpreter their impressions of the interaction and client after the interaction
- Reporting
  - Annotate that an interpreter was used
  - Supplement testing with other data
    - Observations
    - Teacher/family input



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*Thank  
you!*