How an Intensive English Program and a Graduate Counseling Program Founded a Strong Working Relationship

Dr. Andrea Todd
Associate Director, Virginia Tech Language and Culture Institute
Acculturation refers to “those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous firsthand contact with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups”

STAGES OF “CULTURE SHOCK”

- Honeymoon Stage
- Disintegration Stage
- Reintegration Stage
- Autonomy Stage
- Interdependence Stage

STAGES OF ACCULTURATION

1. Contact
2. Conflict
3. Adaptation
CULTURE ILLUSTRATED

Adapted from:
VTLCI STUDENT SURVEY

Understanding of U.S. culture and the acculturation process pre- and post-orientation

How long have you been in the United States?

[Pie chart showing percentages of time since arrival]

- More than twelve months
- Seven to twelve months
- Four to six months
- One to three months
- Less than one month
KNOWLEDGE OF U.S. CULTURE

Which of the following statements best describes your knowledge of U.S. culture BEFORE the presentation? (Please choose one.)

- I knew a lot about U.S. culture before the presentation.
- I knew a little about U.S. culture before the presentation.
- I did not know anything about U.S. culture before the presentation.
In which stage of acculturation do you think that you are?
COMPARISON OF CULTURES

Based on what you have learned, please choose the statement below that best describes a comparison between your culture and U.S. culture.

- My culture is very similar to U.S. culture.
- My culture is somewhat similar to U.S. culture.
- My culture is very different from U.S. culture.
Collaboration Model Between VTLCI Program and Counselor Education Students Using the Continuum of Broaching Behavior as a Guiding Conceptual Framework

Broaching the subjects of race, ethnicity, and culture during the counseling process refers to the counselor’s consideration of racial and cultural factors that may influence the client’s counseling concerns. Effective counseling efforts necessitate that the counselor pay selective attention to cultural factors that may impact the client’s sociopolitical experience.

Broaching is more than consideration or acknowledgement of racial and cultural factors; it refers to the counselor’s explicit efforts to both initiate and respond to the sociocultural and sociopolitical concerns during treatment.


INFUSING COUNSELOR

• Regards broaching as important and related to other efforts to eliminate oppression and promote social justice and equality
• Demonstrates a commitment toward broaching race, ethnicity and culture; feels a sense of responsibility towards eradicating all forms of oppression
• Broaches as a way of being and not as a professional obligation; broaches as a lifestyle orientation
INFUSING COUNSELOR

Resulting Behavior: Works within and outside the counseling relationship to provide systemic interventions that improve client well-being; oriented towards social justice and systemic change

*Ideally, counselor trainees should function at the Infusing level
BENEFITS OF THE COLLABORATION

VTLCI Students:
• learn about U.S. culture and acculturation;
• share their culture in a meaningful way with U.S. students using contrast and comparison;
• express their personal concerns with a counselor trainee;
• connect with American students and practice conversational English skills.
BENEFITS OF COLLABORATION

Counselor trainees:

• have the opportunity to work with students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds;
• develop and refine their multicultural counseling skills;
• enrich their classroom experience with an authentic learning experience;
• develop a greater appreciation for the acculturative concerns of international students.