Capitalizing on Diversity in Counselor Education: An Application of the Interaction for Learning Framework

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This article presents a systematic, pedagogical approach to infusing multicultural interaction across curricula using the interaction for learning framework (ILF; Arkoudis et al., 2013) as a tool for exploring bias and, ultimately, promoting multicultural competence in counselor education programs. The authors provide educators with a description of the course curricula, instructional methods, student learning outcomes, and challenges from application of the ILF in a master's-level assessment course in rehabilitation counseling.

Keywords: multicultural interaction, counselor education, cultural competence, pedagogy, teaching and learning

Este artículo presenta un enfoque pedagógico sistemático en la inclusión de interacciones multiculturales en múltiples planes de estudios usando el marco de interacción para el aprendizaje (ILF por sus siglas en inglés; Arkoudis et al., 2013) como herramienta para explorar sesgos y, a largo plazo, promover la competencia multicultural en los programas de educación de consejeros. Los autores proporcionan a los educadores una descripción de los planes de estudios, métodos didácticos, resultados del aprendizaje de los alumnos y retos derivados de la aplicación del ILF en un curso de evaluación de nivel máster en consejería en rehabilitación.

Palabras clave: interacción multicultural, educación de consejeros, competencia cultural, pedagogía, enseñanza y aprendizaje

Recognizing cultural diversity as instrumental to effective counselor education, training programs are increasingly adopting policies and procedures for recruitment and retention of a diverse student body (Dickson, Argus-Calvo, & Tafoya, 2010). This trend is reflected in national data from the U.S. Department of Education, which indicate increasing racial/ethnic diversity among students enrolling in counselor education (Kena et al., 2015).

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The diversification of the student body within counselor education programs provides a tremendous opportunity for multicultural training that prepares counselors to work effectively with clients from diverse cultural backgrounds. Even when homogeneity predominates the classroom, multicultural interaction (MI) may still be facilitated through the intersectionality of gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, nationality, religion/spirituality, political view, and a host of other group differences.

In addition to recruitment efforts, counseling programs incorporate multiculturalism through various models. Traditional models include (a) the stand-alone multicultural course, (b) the infusion of multicultural material across courses within the curriculum, and (c) the combination of the stand-alone course and infusion of multicultural courses (Donnell, Robertson, & Shannon, 2009). Whereas stand-alone courses appear to be insufficient (Arredondo & Arciniega, 2001), multimethod approaches provide greater opportunities to analyze and explore the issues and to begin a process of self-awareness and awareness of other cultures (Donnell et al., 2009). Stadler, Suh, Cobia, Middleton, and Carney (2006) suggested that interaction with culturally diverse peers and faculty may be the most valued multicultural learning experiences.

Recognizing the utility of MI, we summarize the research and highlight the benefits and challenges of applying an MI framework in a master's-level assessment course in rehabilitation counseling. Within the clinical evaluation process, it is important for students to develop knowledge and skills in considering cultural data to formulate accurate and comprehensive case conceptualization (Whiston, 2009). Therefore, students in the assessment course were encouraged to understand clients' diverse backgrounds; to understand the purpose of each assessment; and to engage with issues of norming, reliability, and validity to determine whether selected instruments were appropriate for diverse individuals. This process of matching instrument to client was guided through intersectionality exercises, the use of case-based learning, and interactive discussion. Specifically, the course was adapted using the *interaction for learning framework* (ILF; Arkoudis et al., 2013) to ascertain if pedagogical strategies to promote MI in the classroom would affect students' perceptions of their multicultural counseling awareness, knowledge, and skills.

the benefits of diversity and MI for learning

Diversity is defined as the existence of multiple social identities—complex configurations that can include race, ethnicity, culture, religion, spirituality, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, social class, language, citizenship, and so on (Higbee, Siaka, & Bruch, 2007). Cultural diversity and linguistic diversity provide ample, but often underutilized, opportunities for MI (Arkoudis et al., 2013) through dialogue, debate, and writing. MI can also

foster leadership, critical thinking, and cross-cultural communication skills and boost confidence in working with people from multicultural backgrounds (Barron et al., 2007). Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, and Gurin (2002) explored the relationship between students' experiences with diverse peers and postsecondary educational outcomes. Their findings suggest that a required curriculum that exposes students to knowledge about diversity issues and interactions with peers from diverse cultures fosters a learning environment that supports active thinking, intellectual engagement, and personal development. Finally, Arkoudis et al. (2013) found that peer interaction across diverse cultural and linguistic groups was associated with increased awareness and understanding of different perspectives, as well as better preparation for working with individuals from multicultural backgrounds.

course design

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Given limited evidence for conceptualizing the range of teaching practices into an accessible framework, Arkoudis et al. (2013) developed the ILF to inform systematic planning and use of MI within teaching contexts. The ILF consists of six interrelated dimensions, and each dimension represents a strategy for creating appropriate conditions in which MI can thrive (see Table 1). Dimension 1,

TABLE 1

The Interaction for Learning Framework

Dimension	Description
Dimension 1: Planning interaction	Designing relevant teaching and learning tasks and peer activities that require interaction
	Providing clear guidelines about learning objectives, assessment processes, and learning outcomes
Dimension 2: Creating environments for interaction	Developing students' confidence in interacting with other students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds
	Providing opportunities for students to move out of their cultural comfort zones
Dimension 3: Supporting interaction	Providing the expectations and benefits of working across different cultural and linguistic groups for learning
	Understanding the value of multicultural interaction and setting up the comfort zones
Dimension 4: Engaging with subject knowledge	Drawing on different skills, learning strategies, and cultural experiences to coconstruct subject knowledge
Dimension 5: Developing reflexive processes	Promoting higher levels of interaction and cognitive engagement through peer feedback and assessment to enhance students' critical thinking and reflection on their learning through multicultural interaction
Dimension 6: Fostering communities of learners	Using diversity as a resource for independent learning among students from diverse cultural backgrounds

Note. From Arkoudis et al. (2013).

planning interaction, involves establishing course objectives and learning tasks that reflect interaction as an essential learning outcome. Dimension 2, *creating environments for interaction*, focuses on setting the stage to counter homophily and monoculture, supporting students to move out of their regular social groups, and developing their confidence in interacting with diverse individuals and groups. Dimension 3, *supporting interaction*, functions to set clear expectations and guidelines for respectful interaction and emphasizes the benefits of peer interaction for achieving specific learning outcomes. Dimension 4, *engaging with subject knowledge*, focuses on encouraging students' engagement with course content through peer learning activities, creating a mutually respectful atmosphere, and promoting a sense of shared purpose and collaboration. The purpose of Dimension 5, *developing reflexive processes*, is twofold: to promote higher levels of interaction and cognitive engagement and to enhance critical, reflective practices. Finally, Dimension 6, *fostering communities of learners*, focuses on encouraging students to work collaboratively, support each other, and develop a shared practice by giving them a sense of connectedness that opens communication.

The ILF provides insight into developing peer interaction for learning across diverse cultural groups and aids academics in understanding the complexities of student interaction (Arkoudis et al., 2013). Using the concepts of the ILF, we infused MI pedagogy into each class session of a master's-level assessment course in rehabilitation counseling. The students in the course included eight women and one man with a mean age of 29.22 years (*SD* = 10.26). The students identified as African American (*n* = 3), European American (*n* = 4), Hispanic (*n* = 1), and Asian (*n* = 1); of these nine students, three were international students. All class activities and assignments were designed to meet course learning objectives, with additional emphasis placed on the multicultural aspects of assessment. The aim was to promote interaction as a means to build multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills as required skill sets for future practice as rehabilitation counselors. Moreover, interaction was explicitly taught as a key aspect of ongoing, professional development—that is, a professional behavior that fosters continual development of multicultural competence in practice settings, not simply in classroom interactions. The ILF offers both utility and practicality for counselor educators because it provides a guide to adapting an existing course syllabus into one that supports MI. In this application, we added additional multicultural learning objectives, guidelines for interaction, and cultural activities that reinforced and extended the existing content.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The overarching goal of the course was to teach students knowledge and skills in using psychological, educational, and vocational assessment techniques to assess personal characteristics of clients with disabilities from multicultural backgrounds for rehabilitation planning purposes.

Specific course objectives related to multicultural competence included the following:

1. Develop awareness of assessment considerations relevant to multicultural background, such as gender, socioeconomic status, racial and ethnic background, and disability.
2. Understand the process involved in administering, scoring, and interpreting assessment results in a culturally sensitive manner.
3. Identify appropriate culturally and linguistically responsive assessment tools and/or methods for information gathering.
4. Enhance sensitivity and skills in utilizing assessment information for rehabilitation planning with the client.
5. Develop a conceptual framework of assessment in rehabilitation and a critical thinking approach toward the assessment of individuals with disabilities.
6. Become comfortable with MI with learners from diverse cultural backgrounds inside and outside the classroom.
7. Study and learn course concepts through interactions with each other.
8. Demonstrate enhanced ability to interact with peers through diverse teaching strategies, class activities, and assignments.

the intervention

In alignment with the six dimensions of the ILF, we developed the following strategies to link learning outcomes with teaching methods and learning activities.

PLANNING AND SUPPORTING INTERACTION

As outlined earlier, peer interaction pedagogy was integrated into relevant learning objectives before the semester began. In addition to highlighting MI as an essential learning objective in the syllabus, we instructed students in developing written guidelines for respectful interaction (Boud, Cohen, & Sampson, 2001). Arkoudis et al. (2013) noted that being clear about the expectations and guidelines for group interaction helps students understand the purpose of MI, leads to collaborative learning, and supports students in achieving learning outcomes.

In an effort to be transparent, the multicultural aims of this course were explicitly stated in the syllabus and listed as follows: (a) emphasize MI among learners from diverse cultural backgrounds inside and outside the classroom; (b) encourage students to study and learn course concepts through interactions with each other; and (c) enhance students' ability to interact with peers through diverse teaching strategies, class activities, and assignments. Moreover, the course format was made clear to students during the first class meeting and was explicitly stated in the syllabus, which read as follows:

Peer interaction is an essential component of the course. Students from different cultural backgrounds are expected to interact with each other and share their opinions and experiences. Such interaction is beneficial to all students in terms of expansion of knowledge, increasing awareness of each other's worldviews, and ultimately enhancing students' learning outcomes. In order to enhance interaction among students, this course will provide (a) instruction on peer learning, (b) open discussion of essential communication skills necessary for interaction with others, and (c) group work resources and information.

CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT FOR INTERACTION

To establish the classroom environment as a welcoming, safe space to learn and interact, the instructor (second author) began the first class by engaging students in a discussion of the ground rules for respectful interaction and invited students to participate in revising and augmenting those rules. The orientation focused on the need for cultural sensitivity when interacting with the instructor and peers in class and with clients in practice settings. On the basis of guidelines recommended by Dalglish (2002), students refined a list of rules (see Table 2) that established the classroom cultural norms and emphasized the need to engage and interact respectfully to build not only cultural awareness but also comfort in interacting.

After establishing classroom norms and setting clear expectations regarding respectful interaction, the instructor asked students to form multicultural groups (three groups with three members each). Groups were responsible for bringing food from a specific culture and sharing facts about that culture. Students then engaged in a discussion about what diversity means to them. To guide this exploration, the instructor encouraged students to first discuss individual and group similarities before exploring differences. The purpose of this activity was to have students become familiar with culturally relevant

TABLE 2

Guidelines for Respectful Interaction, Adapted From Dalglish (2002) and Developed Through Classroom Discussion

Guidelines for Respectful Interaction
1. Your name is important. Please help others pronounce it as best we can.
2. Classroom cultural norms:
a. I will not always give answers; I encourage you to exercise your clinical judgment and ask for additional information as needed.
b. Debate and discussion are encouraged.
c. Thoughtful challenging will not be viewed as disrespectful.
3. We aim to be globally relevant.
a. Extrapolation and extension of learning to your home country, state, or previous experience is encouraged but not required.
4. Please ask for clarification if you hear acronyms or jargon you are not familiar with.
5. Strive for person-first language.
6. Use humor with care.
a. Ensure that your use of humor does not rely on stereotypes. Although you may not have intended to offend, your words can still have harmful effects.

facts about themselves and their peers, and to foster a willingness to seek familiarity with diverse individuals both within and outside of the classroom. Students were then asked to connect multiculturalism to assessment by brainstorming how diversity affects the assessment process. This activity was designed to extend students' knowledge from awareness of diversity on campus and in their communities to awareness of the importance of cultural considerations throughout all aspects of the assessment process, including intake and instrument selection, scoring and interpretation, and reporting. This discussion yielded a comprehensive list of cultural issues relevant to assessment and fostered interaction that was far richer than simply listing the challenges of addressing diversity in the assessment process as outlined in the course text. With this type of inductive process, students' observations, insights, and experiences became tangible, contextualized examples that augmented the textbook.

USING CULTURE TO ENGAGE WITH SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE

Setting the stage with the aforementioned activities illustrates the purpose and benefits of peer interaction for the students. Arkoudis et al. (2013) suggested that, to continue to build on the initial engagement, educators should provide students with a variety of collaborative activities that encourage engagement with the subject content. These activities should elicit sharing of each student's knowledge, experiences, and cultural norms and values (Arkoudis et al., 2013). For example, after introducing students to the ILF, establishing guidelines for interaction, and setting the stage with an introductory activity, the instructor engaged the students in an intersectionality exercise that required them to write and discuss (a) how they identify themselves, (b) what aspects of their identities give them privilege, and (c) what aspects of their identities have been oppressed. This activity aimed to expand students' conceptualization of multiculturalism as pluralistic within the individual as well as in society, and to further explore how culture both supports and inhibits thriving within diverse contexts. Accordingly, students were able to articulate sensitive and complex aspects of culture, such as White privilege and gender inequality, thereby establishing a shared experience within this diverse group.

  Another in-class activity included presentations on case scenarios based on the interplay of gender, race, and disability in society. Students developed strategies for addressing cultural adjustment related to attitudes about disability within a particular culture by sharing diverse experiences and exploring similar and differing perspectives. Specifically, students engaged in independent reading and group development of presentations addressing the impact of culture on a case conceptualization and assessment plan. Cases presented included the interplay of gender and career development, linguistic barriers in assessment, cultural differences in spousal relationships, appraisal of abuse, sexual orientation and stereotypes regarding HIV, and the impact of disability as a cultural construct in the assessment of client strengths and needs. The use

of case-based learning enabled students to consider the impact of culture on assessment from a broad array of experiences, thereby mitigating reliance on individual experience and facilitating learning through simulation. Group discussion fostered a synthesis of varied perspectives about normality and awareness of where lines exist between cultural respect and legal and ethical imperatives, such as duty to warn and mandated reporting.

Ultimately, we designed each of these culturally grounded and topically relevant activities to challenge students to consider culture in practice, particularly during assessment, and to build students' cultural awareness and confidence in assessing the diverse array of clients they will serve in practice. Furthermore, students may extend the activities they learned in class to initiate therapeutic relationships with clients. For example, students initially became acquainted with one another and their cultures by sharing their names along with the origin and meaning of each name. Similar activities can be applied to the assessment process as initial means to establish rapport and to learn about the client's cultural background.

DEVELOPING REFLECTIVE PROCESSES AND FOSTERING COMMUNITIES OF LEARNERS

According to Arkoudis et al. (2013), once students are prepared for engaging with the subject knowledge, the next step is to promote higher levels of interaction and cognitive engagement through peer feedback and critical reflection on learning. After presenting multicultural case studies, we asked students to share and discuss their reflections through the peer evaluation process. Students were provided with an evaluation form that prompted them to score group members based on cooperation, willingness to participate, timely communication, openness to others' opinions and ideas, and the sharing of resources and workload. In addition to assigning points to each of these aspects of group interaction, we prompted students to add examples to illustrate the rationale for each peer rating. A review of students' comments regarding this exercise revealed that they valued peers' willingness to be "open with ideas and thoughts" and "considerate of varied perspectives." In essence, students appreciated that this diverse group of male and female, African American, European American, Hispanic, and international students "valued the opinion of others." Sharing reflections about interaction across different cultural contexts and developing a shared practice produced a richness of learning and fostered a stronger sense of community. Rovai (2002) found that a strong sense of community is linked to more efficient and effective collaborative learning outcomes. Although the small size of this group of nine students made it easy to engage in critical and reflective group discussions, additional opportunities to reflect through written assignments, such as journaling or online discussion posts, can further enhance interaction. In our experience, the additional processing time and flexibility to respond at an individual pace, as afforded in written reflection, augments the sharing of insights and interaction.

In sum, educators can systematically facilitate multicultural understanding and competence by planning for interaction, creating environments that foster interaction, supporting students in their efforts, engaging with subject knowledge, and developing reflexive processes through formative and summative assessment. Ultimately, these efforts provide students with preservice experiences that explicitly encourage engagement with multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills beyond the classroom and into professional settings.

student learning outcomes

As part of the final assessment of student perceptions of instruction, students were asked to explore their perceptions of multicultural counseling competence and how multicultural pedagogy influenced these perceptions. Specifically, we asked the following questions: (a) What skills and qualities can you bring to group interactions in the classroom? and (b) What do you think are the learning benefits of fostering MI within the classroom? Responses suggest that the intervention increased students' awareness of the role of culture in the assessment process and improved their knowledge of culturally sensitive approaches. Within the context of group interactions, students stated that they were able to "learn together" and that they possessed "listening and reflective skills" and the ability to engage in "open-minded discussions and be nonjudgmental." When asked about the benefits of fostering MI in the classroom, students stated that it "challenges the student and provides a different perspective," "enables one to dispel several misconceptions about certain groups," and "also enables one to be very effective in dealing with individuals from different backgrounds." In addition to collecting open-ended responses, the course instructor kept a journal to document observations on students' responses to the intervention. Specific observations included, for example, nonverbal signs of relief (smile, sigh, eye contact with instructor) from one international student when it was stated that no one would be expected to be the spokesperson for their country or culture. The sharing of cultural food during the class break was also observed to be a rich opportunity for students to discuss intercultural similarities, such as the role of grandmothers in passing down family recipes; the pitfalls of assimilation within the less regional and more national or franchised food choices in the United States; and the vibrancy of immigrant food culture in expected places, such as Chicago, as well as in cities less commonly associated with international diversity, such as the thriving community of people from Ghana in Buffalo, New York. These shared meals spurred discussions beyond cuisine to include topics relevant to assessment, such as the changing definitions of culture beyond race and ethnicity, difficulties in finding assessment tools normed for the heterogeneous demographics of the United States, and ethical dilemmas inherent to differences in cultural norms around gifting or the roles of women. In summary,

students responded positively to the course design and noted that MI helped them in "understanding the differences."

challenges

Although our experience in applying the ILF to this assessment course in rehabilitation counseling proved to be a seamless experience, it must be noted that we were able to capitalize on a high level of diversity within this cohort, including three international students and a mix of race and ethnic representations. Not all programs are afforded such obvious diversity; consequently, faculty must also consider individual factors, such as gender, age, sexual orientation, political ideology, and spirituality, as well as the more localized cultures of city, neighborhood, and social affiliations. In addition to the challenges imposed by homophily, the inherent power differential imposed by the student-teacher relationship may limit student feedback, thus challenging faculty to develop awareness of implicit bias and act to counter cultural assumptions conditioned by their own unique set of cultural experiences. Finally, validating MI as a means of fostering increased multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills is daunting because of the situational nature of the intervention, threats to fidelity, the need to compare infusion versus stand-alone curricular methods, and difficulty in pooling multiple samples of students and instructors across programs.

implications

Despite empirical limitations, and in recognition of the importance of becoming comfortable and proficient in MI as one means of fostering lifelong development of cultural competence in counseling practice, this article offers easily transferrable teaching strategies for incorporating MI pedagogy into counselor education and related courses. On the basis of our experience developing and delivering a course in rehabilitation counseling, we propose the following implications for counselor educators and researchers who seek to infuse MI into their curricula.

IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELOR TRAINING

Peer interaction and discussion about cultural diversity promote cross-cultural learning that encourages students to challenge each other, develop better awareness of their own and other cultures, and ultimately consider alternative viewpoints (Boud et al., 2001); however, MI is not the norm in most classrooms. Accordingly, the development of a strong multicultural pedagogy is essential to enhance cross-cultural interaction and learning outcomes for all students. In designing diversity education and training curricula, first and foremost, educators should be aware of their own multicultural biases and increase their personal knowledge so that they can incorporate multiculturalism into

coursework and model to their students how to learn and grow beyond one's own cultural encapsulation (Lewis, Bethea, & Hurley, 2009). To increase self-awareness of specific personal biases and increase their cultural knowledge, educators should continuously work with culturally diverse populations. Tomlinson-Clarke and Clarke (2010) found that direct, ongoing cross-cultural interactions facilitate cultural knowledge acquisition. Increased self-awareness of one's own multicultural biases is maximized when educators are continually working to develop the attributes of cultural competence (Lewis et al., 2009). If ideal conditions do not exist in the classroom, then educators should seek broader involvement on their campuses and with their local communities.

It is also recommended that educators use MI as a course objective, set clear expectations and guidelines about interaction, and inform students about how engagement with diverse learning strategies will assist their learning (Arkoudis et al., 2013). In recognition of the positive features of cultural diversity within learning environments, educators are encouraged to design teaching and learning activities, such as group discussions and projects, that require students to engage with others from diverse backgrounds and draw on their unique cultural perspectives within the group to complete tasks. It is also important for educators to incorporate assignments that require reflection on learning and performance through peer feedback.

In addition to these facilitating factors, educators should also consider limiting factors in the design of diversity education and training programs. Paige (1993) identified several risk factors associated with MI, including risk of embarrassment and failure. When delivering the current application, we had limited time devoted to explicit interaction across groups, focusing instead on interaction within the assigned small groups of three. It is critical for educators to maximize interaction by deliberately planning for interaction across groups. Also, educators are encouraged to collect formative feedback from students to shape interaction throughout the semester so that they can support students to overcome the challenges associated with MI. Educators should provide students with adequate guidance and assistance in the development of the skills required to interact effectively in class. This means educators must be multiculturally competent themselves before taking on the role of being multicultural educators. Educators must be highly efficient and effective multicultural learners and possess the skill to engage with and utilize diversity to develop their own and their students' multicultural skills. They must be self-reflective and critically aware of how their own culture influences what they do, including the way they design the curriculum and select learning activities and how they respond to students. Moreover, they must be able to adjust their teaching to fit with a culturally diverse learning environment rather than expecting learners to adapt to a monocultural, inflexible environment (Leask, 2009).

In addition to building opportunities for interaction into the course design, educators should emphasize the generalization of culturally relevant skills and

strategies in practical settings (Stebnicki & Cubero, 2008). Thus, educators should ensure that multicultural perspectives are infused throughout the entire training program and offer structured activities and practice to encourage continued interaction across cultural groups within educational, social, and practice settings. In addition to preservice training, the ILF can be applied to professional development activities, such as in-servicing and team meetings, at the organizational level. The framework can be introduced to intervention teams and facilitated by group leaders as a value-added component of their service.

Essentially, multicultural learning environments need to be purposefully and intentionally designed not just at the educator level, but also at the institutional and program levels. When administrators understand the benefits of MI to the university, the program, the faculty, and students, they are more apt to embrace diversity as a value-added component. Embracing a multicultural philosophy ensures that institutions and programs work with purpose and intention to create rich and diverse learning experiences for students. Glass and Westmont (2014) highlighted the need for long-term curricular and organizational planning that addresses the unique needs of institutions with growing numbers of diverse students. They also explained that institutions have both an opportunity and an obligation to capitalize on diversity. Furthermore, they pointed to cross-cultural interaction as the key to capitalizing on diversity. Specifically, they implored administrators, educators, and student affairs professionals to engage in campus-wide multicultural dialogues as a model and catalyst for intercultural student interaction. Similarly, Arkoudis et al. (2013) and Dunne (2009) noted that administration has both the power and the obligation to create campus environments that foster interaction as the key to capitalizing on diversity.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Student interaction across different cultural groups has long been recognized as an effective strategy for cross-cultural learning, yet it has not been fully explored within the context of counselor education (Ng, 2006). Nilsson and Anderson (2004) called for more research on cross-cultural strategies to meet standards set by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (2015), noting that less acculturated students exhibit less counseling efficacy and weaker supervisory alliances. Therefore, more research is needed to capture the richness and complexity of multiculturalism within counselor education if we are to capitalize on learning opportunities for students from diverse cultural groups and begin to infuse more multicultural learning experiences throughout counselor curricula.

Student perceptions of learning gathered from this 15-week MI teaching intervention applied to a master's-level rehabilitation counseling assessment course suggest that students improved their cross-cultural communication skills and confidence in working with people from diverse cultural backgrounds

and developed knowledge that will serve them when working in multicultural settings. These observations support existing literature on the utility of MI as a pedagogical tool (Barron et al., 2007). However, future study is needed, including expanded qualitative and quantitative exploration of the effects of MI on not just multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills but also counselor competence as a synergistic outcome of these three constructs, to empirically validate this promising practice in professional preparation. For example, greater meaning and depth could have been achieved with examination of additional qualitative components, such as more open-ended responses and in-depth interviewing, particularly focusing on personal as well as shared perspectives in the group and exploration of within-group differences. The need to validate the use of the ILF within counselor education programs is apparent; this conceptual article outlines the tenets of the ILF and provides teaching strategies for infusing MI pedagogy into counselor education courses. Moreover, the findings of this article call for broader application of the ILF among multiple counseling courses so that adequate samples can be collected and quantitative instruments can be used to explore multicultural competence as a potential outcome of this intervention.

Although this article provides educators with a description of one particular course, the instructional strategies used can be implemented appropriately across program curricula through the processes of planning, developing, and reflecting. Therefore, additional research is needed to examine which courses are most effective in fostering student learning outcomes through use of the ILF.

Finally, Lau and Ng (2012) continued to call for analysis of multicultural training outcomes. Future research needs to examine how implemented pedagogical strategies and structured activities affect students' multicultural knowledge and skill generalization in practical settings. Research using longitudinal designs to explore specific qualities of effective multicultural learning on counseling practice could offer a more nuanced approach to multicultural research in counseling. Furthermore, qualitative research on how pedagogy affects skill generalization and the use of multicultural counseling skills in practice can help to further inform course design.

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