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# A Pilot Study To Determine The Value Of Bilingual Counseling In A High School Where The Student Population Is Predominately Spanish/english Bilingual

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**BILINGUAL COUNSELING IN A HIGH SCHOOL WHERE THE STUDENTS ARE PREDOMINATELY  
SPANISH/ENGLISH BILINGUAL**

by

**TERRENCE MICHAEL MCCABE**

**DISSERTATION**

Submitted to the Graduate School

of Wayne State University,

Detroit, Michigan

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

2014

MAJOR: COUNSELING

Approved by:

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Advisor

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Date

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2014

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## DEDICATION

For my mother, Patricia M. Cavanagh, who pressed me to complete my doctorate even as her strength diminished. My mother's example of grit and determination in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles enabled me to persevere and complete my doctoral work. Thank you, Mom. Your love sustained me and encourages me still.

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## CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

## SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

In a way, the problem is as simple as language and the role it plays in therapeutic interventions. Over the course of the last eighty years, theorists as diverse as Buxbaum (1949), Freud (1944), Piaget (1926), and Vygotsky (1962) have written about language and its impact upon the emotional and developmental lives of children. More recently, Marcos and Alpert (1976) have demonstrated specific ways in which bilingual clients adapt linguistically as they respond to therapeutic interventions. Still more recently, a specific target sample – Mexican American psychiatric patients – was found to respond more verbally (e.g., expressing more symptoms indicative of psychopathology) when interviewed in their primary language, which was Spanish (Price & Cuellar, 1981).

The problem of language and its effect on therapeutic interventions takes on new significance as America transitions into the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and struggles to meet the needs of all its people.

Language is the problem that this dissertation examines. Specifically, it is bilingualism. The study examines bilingual counseling and its role in servicing Spanish/English bilingual students who attend high school in southwest Detroit. America's changing demographics make this a worthy area to explore. More precisely, the numbers make this subject relevant, perhaps even critical. It is these numbers, in fact, that help explain the scope of the problem.

According to the 2010 census, 50.5 million Latinos report living in the United States. This represents 16.3 % of America's population. In 2000, that number was 35.3 million. In the last ten years, America's Latino population grew by 43%. Latinos are currently the nation's largest minority group, with blacks coming in second at 37.7 million (12.2%), Asians at 14.5 million (4.7%), and six million non-Latinos who checked more than one race (Pew Hispanic Center, 2011). The numerical growth for Latinos over the last ten years surpassed each of the previous two decades. Given this trend, projections for further growth are substantial. The Latino population in the United States is expected to swell to 128 million by 2050. This will more than double the current number. Latinos will compose 29% of the population, compared to the current 16.3%. This will account for approximately 58% of the nation's growth from 2010 to 2050 (Pew Hispanic Center, 2011).

The 2010 Census places Detroit's population at 706,585. Of this number, 6.8% is Latino. That translates into approximately 48,000 Latinos reported as living in Detroit. Most Latinos reside in southwest Detroit. It is the center of Latino life in Detroit. Not only are there restaurants and bakeries, typical of most ethnic enclaves, but there are businesses, such as law offices, dentists, doctors, and insurance companies that service the Latino community. The signs that advertise these services are in Spanish. Most are located along Vernor Highway, which is the hub of the Detroit Latino community. One of the high schools in southwest Detroit is situated in this neighborhood. As of 17 October 2013, two weeks after students were officially counted for the purposes of state funding, 1,465 students were reported as attending this school; of these, 1054 are Latino. This represents approximately 72% of the student population. In terms of bilingual status, 920 students report Spanish/English bilingual

capabilities. This represents approximately 63% of the total school population. Many students are not documented. If they are United States citizens, they are likely first generation Americans. The vast majority of Latino students (87%) are bilingual. Many of their parents/guardians are Limited English Proficiency (LEP); they speak little English, if any at all. This school is the setting for the present study.

The efficacy of bilingual counseling within a high school in southwest Detroit has not been explored. This setting is ideal for such a study. There are case studies that chronicle the pressing need for, and the proven success of, bilingual counseling in clinical settings (Buxbaum, 1949; Constangion, Makgady & Rogler, 1986; Foster, 1992; Greeson, 1950; Krapf, 1955; Zuniga, 1991). Others have conducted research studies with bilingual clients, indicating the utility of bilingual counseling services (Bond & Lai, 2001; Gutfreund, 1990). Conville and Ivey (1975) were the first to appeal for the training of bilingual school counselors. The training itself has been written about (Bruhn, 2001; Bruhn, Irby, Luo, Thweatt, & Lara-Alecio, 2005; Research and Evaluation Special Interest Group of the National Association for Bilingual Education, 2001). However, so far, there is no survey study of a bilingual high school that offers bilingual counseling services. Given the demographic information listed above, the need for such a study exists. It is a timely study, especially as the number of Latinos living in the United States has grown with each passing year.

Bruhn et al. (2005) chronicle a program that trained bilingual school counselors. The narrative is thorough in so far as it describes the ways by which prospective counselors were recruited and trained. Bruhn et al. (2005) conclude on a positive note with the



recommendation that university counseling programs expand their curriculum to prepare bilingual counselors for placement in the field. This will entail training counselors to function in a bilingual capacity. This will increase effective communication among the bilingual Latino students, the school personnel, and the bilingual students' parents. Bruhn et al. (2005) cite the district directors' contention that such training will engender positive outcomes. "This will assist us in better communicating with students and their parents ... (when) because parents don't speak English, he/she [the bilingual counselor] can be the bridge of communication between the parent and the school" (p. 158). Bruhn et al. (2005) discuss training for the field, but they never venture into the field itself. In a telephone conversation with Bruhn that transpired on the afternoon of 16 July 2013, Bruhn reported that there had been no follow-up research to assess the efficacy of the training program he helped put in place. In fact, Bruhn remarked upon the scarcity of any published material that deals with bilingual school counseling, much less its effects upon clients (i.e., students). In a similar vein, Biever, Gómez, González, and Patrizio (2011) followed up an earlier article (Biever et al., 2002) with recommendations for the training of bilingual mental health professionals, specifically psychologists. Training included courses that would "improve participants' Spanish-language proficiency in work-related contexts" (Biever et al., 2011, p. 83). A second goal was to increase cultural competency among the trainees in order to "improve multicultural competence in service delivery to Latino clients" (p. 83). The program included three semesters of practicum in a Spanish-speaking setting (p. 84). However, here, too, there are no outcome data examining the efficacy of the program in terms of the clients. The article's concluding sentence speaks to this very point: "Further research is needed to assess the effects of the training from the

perspective of clients” (p. 87). The present study takes off where Bruhn et al. (2005) finish – in the field. This study examines the efficacy of bilingual counseling in a high school that services a Latino client base. Echoing the sentiments of Bruhn et al., Biever et al. (2002), and Biever et al. (2011), this study acknowledges the need for bilingual mental health professionals, specifically counselors, in a rapidly changing linguistic and multicultural world.

#### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Preliminary data show that bilingual counseling is essential to servicing bilingual Latino students. To further the knowledge base, a survey study of the staff at a high school in southwest Detroit will be undertaken to assess the value of bilingual counseling.

The numbers alone indicate a pressing need for bilingual counselors. Professional organizations (e.g., the American Counseling Association, the Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development, and the American Psychological Association) support this in their canons of ethics and mission statements. Still, there is a paucity of trained bilingual school counselors. Finally, there is sufficient evidence that bilingual counseling is efficacious. The linguistic components, combined with counseling skills, ensure positive therapeutic outcomes. Buxbaum (1949), Greeson (1950), and Krapf (1955) recorded their work with bilingual clients and demonstrated how their own proficiency in at least one other language enabled them to effectively treat their clients. Bond and Lai (2001) examined the extent to which a second language affords individuals the distance necessary to discuss forbidden topics without embarrassment. Marcos (1976) writes that bilingual Spanish/English clients who are proficient in only one language may express an emotionally charged experience without the

corresponding emotionally-charged affect. This detachment effect is the result of a language barrier. This phenomenon “may cause certain experiences to remain vague and unreal for the patient as well as the therapist” (p. 557). The bilingual counselor’s proficiency in a second language (the client’s primary language) will mitigate the language barrier.

In 1995, when the number of Latinos in America was appreciably lower (22 million, based on the 1990 census), Santiago-Rivera observed the following: “Combined with the rapid change in demographics, the experiences of Hispanics present mental health professionals with the urgent need to provide culturally relevant and bilingual services that are effective for this segment of the population” (p. 12). Nearly twenty years later, with more Latinos living in the United States, the sentiment is no less true. In numbers alone, the need for bilingual services is even more urgent.

For all of the evidence that supports the need for bilingual counselors, there is a conspicuous scarcity of trained professionals. Much of this is due to a lack of training programs that prepare prospective counselors for treating bilingual clients. “Little is available to assist bilingual practitioners in providing services in Spanish” (Biever et al., 2002, p. 330). Although most training programs make incremental steps toward offering courses that foster an appreciation of diversity, they have far to go in terms of appreciating and, even more important, accommodating linguistic differences. “According to Rosado and Elias, ‘the language barrier deters many Hispanics from seeking treatment,’ and, ideally, ‘service providers should speak the Spanish language’” (Biever et al., 2002, p. 332). This applies to clients for whom Spanish is the predominant language. This is a stark assessment of the problem, but it cogently

goes to the heart of the matter and to the essence of the problem of this study: bilingual counseling and its usefulness in servicing America's bilingual Latino high school students.

#### RATIONALE

The rationale for bilingual counseling stems from the barriers to effective communication between a bilingual client and his/her monolingual English-only counselor. Language barriers comprise the greatest obstacles to effective communication. Among the problems, for example, is the Latino client "accurately understanding instructions for prescription medications and written information from a doctor's office" (Rios-Ellis et al., 2005, p. 5). Other obstacles include a lack of knowledge about where services are offered, combined with a lack of transportation to get to those places, and a lack of linguistically proficient healthcare providers (p. 7).

Interpreters do not necessarily ensure a positive outcome. They are not without hazards. Vasquez and Javier (1991) focus upon the hazards of using interpreters in a clinical setting. Mediation by an interpreter can be an intrusion, often disrupting the communication pattern. Moreover, distorted and confusing material is intensified as a result of this intrusion (p. 164). Common errors include omissions; the interpreter deletes part of what the client has said. Addition is another error. The interpreter adds information that the client never uttered. Condensation is another error. The interpreter replaces or substitutes information for what the client has said. Role exchange is a fourth error. The interpreter replaces the counselor's question with his/her own, effectively replacing the counselor (p. 164). Other potential errors include the interpreter abridging the client's dialogue and taking "literary license" (p. 164).

Other dangers include the interpreter's unfamiliarity with regional dialects and colloquialisms. In the face of a scarcity of trained bilingual counselors, interpreters are sometimes drawn from the unlikeliest of quarters. Bilingual janitors and security guards are sometimes enlisted to translate (p. 164). Friends and family members who function as translators risk minimizing or exaggerating psychopathology (Bamford, 1991; Marcos, 1979). Even the best translators bring problems, such as a lack of confidentiality and the clinician placed at an emotional remove from the client. "The inability to correctly assess affect may underestimate the risk of suicide" (Bamford, 1991, p. 388).

Employing interpreters, family members, or even other bilingual students to translate, poses a myriad of problems. Principally, confidentiality is compromised. As a result of this, (or, perhaps, because of it), an ethical breach transpires. In its mission statement, the American Counseling Association guarantees to promote respect for human dignity and diversity (American Counseling Association, 2014, p. 2). When as counselors we rely upon others to mediate communication and, thereby, threaten confidentiality and content accuracy, we respect neither the client's dignity nor diversity itself.

Underutilization of services is a concern among low-aculturated Latino clients (Abreu, Consoli, & Cypers, 2004; Cheung & Snowden, 1990). Moreover, those who seek counseling, do so for relatively few sessions and terminate prematurely (Cheung & Snowden, 1990; Sue, 1977). Among the reasons for underutilization of services is an underrepresentation of minority staffing (Cheung & Snowden, 1990; Wu & Windle, 1980). Geographic location and accessibility

of services further account for underutilization of mental health services. So, too, do language and ethnic match of client and counselor (Abreu et al., 2004, p. 319).

Abreu and Sasaki (2004) report an overestimation of psychological disorders among Latino clients. Some studies (Robert & Vernon, 1984) find a higher rate of psychopathology among Latinos than other minority groups; symptoms are mistaken for dependent variables (Abreu & Sasaki, 2004; Rogler, 1989). Elsewhere, symptoms are not viewed as sufficiently descriptive to warrant a diagnosis (Abreu & Sasaki, 2004, p. 306). For all of the conflicting conclusions, one especially vexing problem remains: "Bias in clinical judgment against ethnic minority clients [here, Latinos] may lead to misdiagnosis that over- or underpathologize clients" (p. 306).

If cultural stereotypes are one obstacle to treatment, language is another. Physical maladies such as diabetes and lung cancer, the leading cause of cancer deaths among Latinos (Abreu & Sasake, 2004, p. 305), combined with mental disorders such as depression, anxiety and acculturative stress, translate into Latinos who, as a group, are in need of treatment. However, "The medical establishment needs to address issues regarding the role of stereotyping and language as barriers to effective practices" (p. 310).

Bilingual therapists have effectively treated bilingual clients. Buxbaum (1949), Foster (1996), Greeson (1950), Krapf (1955), and Marcos and Alpert (1976) all treated adult bilingual clients. Yet, there is no data concerning the effectiveness of bilingual school counseling. The researcher hopes to demonstrate that just as bilingual therapists have successfully treated bilingual adult clients, so, too, may a bilingual school counselor effectively address the needs of

bilingual school-age children. Just as bilingual psychoanalysis has successfully employed interventions with adult bilingual clients, so, too, may bilingual counseling prove effective with bilingual school-age children.

The researcher developed the questionnaire (see Appendix B), which is the testing instrument for this study. It is designed to assess the value of bilingual counseling from the perspective of the adult staff members who work with Spanish/English bilingual high school students at the setting for this study. Interviewing bilingual students or their parents/guardians is problematic; many of the students and their parents are undocumented. Precise numbers do not exist. In order to include bilingual students in the study, the researcher would require informed consent forms, signed by the students' parents/guardians. This is problematic because undocumented parents/guardians, in order to safeguard their identity, refrain from recording data of any kind. It is for this reason that the researcher includes adult colleagues only. They, too, benefit from bilingual counseling. They, too, interact with bilingual students and appreciate the importance of bilingual counseling. This is what the study hopes to demonstrate. Including adult staff members enables the researcher to establish a baseline. This is a first-of-its-kind study, a pilot study. It is a first step in assessing the value of bilingual counseling in a high school setting.

#### PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to examine bilingual counseling in a localized setting: a high school in southwest Detroit. The study exists in order to assess the ways in which bilingual counseling increases effective communication among bilingual students, school personnel, and

students' parents/guardians. For example, teachers turn to the bilingual counselor when a bilingual student is in distress. This may involve suicidal ideation or simply/not-so-simply absenteeism. Monolingual English-only teachers, social workers, and administrators ask the bilingual counselor to call home in order to communicate with Spanish-speaking parents/guardians whose lack of English proficiency poses a barrier to communication. A bilingual counselor will sometimes attend a meeting at the request of a school social worker who seeks a dialogue between him/herself, the student, and the student's parents/guardians. The same applies to parent-teacher conferences where English-only teachers seek authentic conferences with parents/guardians who are more favorably disposed to speaking in Spanish rather than English. It may be as simple as the parents'/guardians' comfort level, or the students' for that matter. Although translation is clearly a critical component, it is only part of the equation; a bilingual counselor is required, one who understands and embraces all of the nuances that characterize the counseling profession, chief among them confidentiality.

The purpose of this study is to assess the value of bilingual counseling in a high school setting. However, the narrower focus is upon effective communication (i.e., dialogues, discussions, problem solving) among all interested parties: bilingual students; their teachers, counselors, social workers, assistant principals, etc.; and, finally, their parents/guardians. Counselors engage in talk therapy. Effective counselors actively listen. It is only fitting, therefore, that the efficacy of bilingual counseling in the school setting should be measured by communication and the extent to which bilingual counselors increase effective communication. For example, do bilingual counselors increase conversations among students, staff, and parents/guardians about tardiness, absenteeism, faltering grades, systemic family problems,



and a host of other issues that may arise? By increasing communication, does the bilingual counselor increase fruitful dialogues among students, staff, and parents/guardians? These are some of the questions that this study intends to answer.

#### RESEARCH QUESTION AND HYPOTHESIS

The research question is as follows: Does bilingual counseling increase effective communication among high school bilingual Latino students, school personnel, and students' parents/guardians in southwest Detroit? The client base is bilingual. The level of linguistic proficiency is as varied as the countries whence many of them originate. Much of the western hemisphere encompasses the varied points of origin that linguistically define these students. Many students, although proficient in English, prefer to speak their native language, Spanish. Where a teacher's lack of proficiency in Spanish impedes his/her ability to communicate with a bilingual student, the bilingual counselor is essential. A bilingual counselor is essential, not another student acting as a translator; not a Spanish-speaking janitor; not a Spanish-speaking secretary. A bilingual counselor who is versed in servicing the cognitive, affective, behavioral, and systemic needs of the student is essential. The bilingual counselor is necessary for many reasons, including but not limited to promoting communication among bilingual students and all other interested parties.

The hypothesis is as follows: Bilingual counseling increases effective communication among high school bilingual Latino students, school personnel, and students' parents/guardians in southwest Detroit.

#### NEED FOR THE STUDY

The results of the study will impact a vast array of populations. First, they may have an impact upon counselors who are either currently in the field or those who intend to enter it. The changing demographics demand a re-evaluation of our approach to working with a diverse client base. Sensitivity to multicultural matters is by now a foregone conclusion. Language, however, takes on a special significance. For counselors who are not Latino, and even for those who are but who are not proficient in Spanish, the importance of counseling Spanish/English bilingual Latino students carries with it the mandate to learn a second language. This is a lengthy process. It takes effort and a willingness to commit appreciable time and energy. Additional education is necessary. In fact, linguistic proficiency requires not only the study of grammar and vocabulary, but contextualized learning, which can be obtained in literature classes, conversation classes, and history and culture classes. The counselor whose second language proficiency is fully developed and well-rounded must have taken a sizeable portion of these academic classes and practiced extensively in order to treat clients in a bilingual capacity. Biever et al. (2002) advanced this very argument when they described the Psychological Services for Spanish Speaking Populations (PSSSP) program that they instituted at Our Lady of the Lake University (OLLU) in San Antonio, Texas. Established in 1997 as the first program designed to train bilingual mental health practitioners, the curriculum was thorough and rigorous. "The curriculum includes courses in professional and technical Spanish, Latino culture and language variability, application of professional skills in the Spanish language and Supervised Practica" (Biever et al., 2002, p. 332). Theories and interventions were presented in Spanish. Supervision, too, was conducted in Spanish. At the time of the journal article's publication, the efficacy of the program was hard to assess. "Given that the students initially

enrolled have yet to graduate, only informal evaluations of the program have been conducted” (p. 333). In 2011, Biever et al. described the program in greater detail, focusing primarily upon language proficiency and multicultural competence. Biever et al. (2011) were able to evaluate participant outcomes in terms of language and cultural competence. Still, the focus was centered upon the program itself and its effectiveness in training bilingual mental health practitioners.

Bruhn et al. (2005) recount how the department of Educational Leadership and Counseling at Sam Houston State University (SHSU) responded to the critical shortage of bilingual counselors. The emphasis in training was different than Biever’s, but the motivating impulse was the same. In order to accommodate the needs of approximately 40,000 English Language Learners (ELL), the program started with school teachers who were already fluent in Spanish, and adapted the existing graduate program in counselor education to their work schedule and to the training of bilingual counselors. (p. 150). The university devised 10 bilingual counselor competencies, which dealt broadly with an appreciation for multiculturalism and the ELL client base. Two of the competencies addressed language and the importance of counseling in a bilingual capacity. Competency 4 required that counselors “appreciate human diversity by providing equitable guidance and counseling services for all learners, including effectively communicating with ELL students and parents.” (p. 151). Competency 7 ensured that counselors would “be able to use formal and informal assessment in the native language to provide information about ELL learners, to monitor student progress, and recommend modifications to the educational environment” (p. 151).

Counselors-in-training may be affected by this study. They may appreciate the importance of speaking the bilingual client's primary language when that language is not English. Counselors in the field who are not bilingual may likewise be affected; they, too, may recognize the importance of bilingual competency when servicing bilingual clients. Educational institutions that train counselors will be affected as some (e.g., OLLU and SHSU) have already recognized the need and have modified their programs accordingly.

Most important, the clients (here, bilingual Latino high school students) will themselves be affected. The study holds a mirror to the changing world around us. It offers a portrait of a growing client base that is underserved because of a scarcity of bilingual counselors. Many counselors and prospective counselors who read this study may appreciate the importance of the bilingual counselor's Spanish/English proficiency when servicing Spanish/English bilingual clients. In this way, the study not only serves a purpose – to inform – but it provides a service to the population it chronicles. The study is relevant, clearly. However, it is also impactful as it provides the potential to effect change and, thereby, touch the lives of the client base it reveals.

The potential benefits of the study include opening a window on the role of a bilingual counselor in a bilingual high school. The bilingual counselor affects a host of populations: teachers, administrators, other counselors, bilingual students, and their parents/guardians. In a way, the bilingual counselor causes a rippling effect as he/she intervenes. The bilingual counselor may ostensibly intervene on behalf of an English-only staff member, but it is all in the service of helping the client, as here, the bilingual student. There is a systemic element that is

addressed. The entire school, at different times and to varying degrees, is affected when the bilingual counselor is called upon to open lines of communication and, thereby, attempt to remedy a situation. This is one of the primary benefits of this study; it may demonstrate the efficacy and necessity of bilingual counselors who service bilingual high school students.

Another potential benefit of the study is that it may alert counselors and prospective counselors to the need for bilingual proficiency when servicing bilingual clients. This applies to Latino and non-Latino counselors alike. The counselor who is bilingual may be encouraged to put those linguistic abilities to good use by working with bilingual high school students. For those who already work in a bilingual setting but lack proficiency in a second language, they may be encouraged to acquire that second language and, thereby, better serve the bilingual population that attends their school.

The study advances the profession by revealing a heretofore unexamined aspect of school counseling: the role of the bilingual counselor. Bilingual therapists as far back as the 1940s and 1950s (Buxbaum and Krapf respectively) have chronicled cases that dealt with bilingual clients. However, the setting was always a private practice, not schools. That is what sets this study apart. It seeks to determine the value of bilingual counseling in a high school where the student population is predominately Spanish/English bilingual.

This study may advance the field by showing how the field (i.e., the counseling profession) can remain relevant. Echoing the mission statement of the ACA (2014), this study illustrates how, by promoting communication among all interested parties, bilingual counselors may enhance the quality of life for bilingual high school students, thereby “advancing the

counseling profession and practice of counseling to promote respect for human dignity and diversity” (ACA, 2014, p. 2).

#### DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Bilingual counseling** is defined as counseling in two languages. For the purposes of this study, these languages are English and Spanish. The bilingual counselor is able to communicate with his/her client in either language.

For the purpose of this study, **Latino** will be defined as an individual living in America who traces his/her roots to a Spanish-speaking country. Taylor, Lopez, Martínez, and Velasco (2012) cite Public Law 94-311, which was enacted into law by the United States Congress in 1976, as the initial step in collecting economic and social data for “Americans of Spanish origin or descent” (2012, p. 3). In 1977, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) referred to this group as “Hispanic”. “A second OMB directive in 1997 added the term ‘Latino’ to ‘Hispanic’ (Rumbert, 2006)” (2012, p. 3). Taylor et al. use the terms Hispanic and Latino interchangeably. For the purpose of this study, Latino will be used almost exclusively. In the researcher’s experience, Spanish-speaking clients self-identify with the word, Latino, rather than Hispanic. Moreover, Latino is culturally appropriate because it is a Spanish word, as opposed to the English language derivative, Hispanic.

**Limited English Proficiency (LEP)** denotes individuals who cannot read, write, or speak English. For the purposes of this study, Spanish is the native language for these individuals. The designation derives from the field of education, where bilingual teachers determine students’ level of English proficiency and, therefore, materials most suitable to students’ needs.

As a rule, Limited English Proficiency (and its abbreviation, LEP) is used as an adjective (e.g., Manuel is an LEP student).

**English Language Learners (ELL)** is another term that denotes students for whom English is not the dominant, or first, language. In this study, Spanish is the language that all ELL students speak. When it is not abbreviated, the term frequently functions as a noun (e.g., English Language Learners fill the bilingual classrooms). When the term is abbreviated, it is almost necessarily an adjective (e.g., ELL students populate American bilingual classrooms).

**Language switching** occurs when the bilingual client transitions from one language to another. The client who is preoccupied with diction and grammar to the detriment of communication may be encouraged to switch to his/her first language. In counseling, language switching may be therapeutic. It “offers the opportunity to explore directly the patient’s language-specific sense of self, and to analyze its cognitive affective components” (Marcos & Urcuyo, 1979, p. 337).

**Compound bilinguals** acquire two languages and use them in mixed contexts. As a rule, compound bilinguals speak both languages from infancy and throughout their lives.

**Coordinate bilinguals** acquire two languages separately and use them in different contexts. Coordinate bilinguals learn the second language later in life, usually after the age of ten, “and usually in a setting other than the family” (Lambert, 1972, p. 309).

## CONCLUSION

Demographics alone indicate a rapidly changing cultural and linguistic world. In order to remain relevant, counselors will have to change with it. However, the particulars are not so readily apparent: why is bilingual counseling so necessary in schools, whose populations are predominately bilingual? This study seeks to provide one answer: communication. The study will attempt to demonstrate the extent to which bilingual counseling increases effective communication among all interested parties in order to better serve clients, who are bilingual Latino students attending high school in southwest Detroit.



## Chapter 2

## LITERATURE REVIEW

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Preliminary data show that bilingual counseling is essential to servicing bilingual Latino students. To further the knowledge base, a survey study of the staff at a high school in southwest Detroit will be undertaken to assess the value of bilingual counseling.

**I SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM****a. Present Demographics**

The report, "Census 2010: 50 Million Latinos," (Pew Hispanic Center, 2011) provides the most accurate demographic data on Latinos in the United States. Based on the 2010 census, it contains the most recent data available. The report details actual data as collected by the United States Census Bureau. It does not project future numbers. Instead, it records current ones at the time of the data collection (2010). The report illustrates consistent increases in the numbers of Latinos who live in the United States. For example, "the nation's Latino population, which was 35.3 million in 2000, grew 43% over the decade" (p. 1). Before that, the numbers swelled. "Growth rates topped 50% in the mid 1980s (53%) and 1990s (58%)" (p. 2). In light of this trend, it is probable that the number of Latinos currently exceeds the 50.5 million, which is listed in the report.

Demographic data that are detailed in the report pertain to particular locales where Latinos predominate. For example, more Latinos live in Los Angeles County (4.6 million) than in

any state except California or Texas (Pew Hispanic Center, 2011, p. 2). Moreover, in New Mexico, Texas, California, Arizona, and Nevada, Latinos represent “more than one-in-four state residents” (p. 2). Michigan is the only state where the Latino population increased while the state population declined (p. 3).

The significance of the report is manifold. First, it details the number of Latinos in the United States, and it breaks down the numbers by state. For example, California and Texas lead with 14,014,000 and 9,461,000 respectively (Pew Hispanic Center, 2011, p. 4). The report delineates trends. Not only does it record the current numbers, but it compares growth rates over the past decades. Although the report does not project future numbers, the data contained herein allow the reader to extrapolate. It is reasonable to conjecture that the number of Latinos will continue to increase over the course of the next forty years as it has over the last thirty years. The decline in this increase has been only recent and, even then, nominal (i.e., 43% from 2000-2010, as compared to 53% in the 1980s and 58% in the 1990s) (p. 2).

The “Statistical Portrait of Hispanics in the United States, 2009” (Pew Hispanic Center, 2011) is recent. Its numbers, therefore, are especially relevant. The report delineates the language spoken at home and the English speaking ability of Latinos who are residents and those who are foreign-born. Among the resident population ages 5-17, 5,584,131 Latinos speak English very well, whereas 1,818,913 speak English less than very well. The English proficiency diminishes among residents ages 18 and older. Here, 11,380,052 speak English very well, whereas 13,868,834 speak English less than very well. The combined number of resident

Latinos who speak English less than very well is 15,687,756. For counseling to be effective for this group, a bilingual (Spanish-English) counselor is necessary.

Table 20 in the Statistical Report states that the number of Latinos who speak only English at home, ages 5-17, is 3,855,245. Among Latinos ages 18 and older, the number is 6,405,030. Subtracting the combined total of 10,260,275 from Table 20's total of 42,912,211 leaves a total of 32,651,939 residents who are either bilingual (Spanish-English) or monolingual (Spanish only). The number is significant because even coordinate bilinguals (those who are fluent in both English and Spanish) benefit from bilingual services.

The numbers reflected in Table 20 are included in the Census Bureau's 2009 American Community Survey. The total number of Latinos, 42,912,214 is at variance with the number cited in the Report, "Census 2010: 50 Million Latinos" (Pew Hispanic Center, 2011). The report is based on the 2010 census, which places the number at 50.5 million. The variance is possibly due to the year in which the data were collected. Perhaps the most significant detail is that 32,651,939 Latinos are either bilingual or monolingual. This translates as approximately 76% of the recorded 42,912,214 2009 Latino population that could serve as a potential client base for bilingual counseling.

"English Usage Among Hispanics in the United States" (Hakimzadeh & Cohn, 2007) contrasts English proficiency among Latino immigrants and their U.S. born children. The report documents that "fewer than one-in-four (23%) Latino immigrants reports being able to speak English very well" (p. 1). By contrast, 88% of their U.S.-born children are proficient English speakers. The percentage increases to 94% among later generations. For the purposes of this

study, the immigrant population remains Limited English Proficiency (LEP). “For most immigrants, English is not the primary language they use,” (p. 2) either at work or at home. The disparity between the adult children of foreign-born Latinos and their parents is great; half of the children speak mainly or only English at home, while 7% of their parents do. At work, 29% of the foreign-born Latinos speak English (p. 2). The report distinguishes English proficiency among ethnicities: “Puerto Ricans and South Americans are the most likely to say they are proficient in English; Mexicans are the least likely to say so” (p. 2). This statistic is relevant because there are more Latinos of Mexican descent (31,674,000, according to the Pew Hispanic Center’s “Country of Origin,” 2011) than any other nationality living in the United States.

The Pew Hispanic Center’s report, “Bilingualism” (2004), is based largely upon the 2000 census. The numbers do not coincide precisely with the numbers that are listed above. This is due largely to the difference in the compilation of the data. Nevertheless, the findings reveal a substantial segment of the Latino population that is either monolingual (Spanish only) or bilingual. The report states that in 2000, 24.7 million Latinos spoke Spanish at home (p. 1). The report does not distinguish between monolingual and bilingual Spanish speakers. Based on the number of Latinos living in the United States in 2000, which was 35,506,000, this figure represents approximately 70% of resident Latinos who spoke Spanish at home. The report does not distinguish between native-born and foreign-born Latinos.

Included in this report are the findings of the 2002 National Survey of Latinos. According to this survey, 46% of Latino adults are bilingual (Pew Hispanic Center, 2004, p. 2). This same survey determined that 40% of Latino adults spoke predominately Spanish. By

contrast, 14% spoke primarily English (p. 2). Within the Latino adult population (25 million, as cited, here), 86% were either bilingual or monolingual. Even in 2004, when the report on Bilingualism was published and the number of Latinos in the United States was lower, the potential need for bilingual services was great.

The report, “Bilingualism”, (Pew Hispanic Center, 2004) notes a distinguishing generational factor. Nearly 97% of the Spanish speaking Latinos were born outside the United States (excluding Puerto Rico), whereas 93% of the English-only Latinos were native born, predominantly third generation Americans (p. 3). Among the Latino bilingual population, the numbers are evenly divided between the native-born and the foreign-born Latinos. “Nearly a third of bilingual speaking Latinos are second generation. They were born in the United States with at least one foreign-born parent” (p. 3).

#### **b. Future Projections**

“U.S. Population Projects: 2005-2050” (Passel & Cohn, 2008) projects a nearly three-fold increase in the number of Latinos living in the United States over the next 40 years. Based on data available in 2008, the number of Latinos living in the United States will swell to 128 million in 2050 (p. 2). According to the report, Latinos will comprise 29% of the total U.S. population (p. 3). “In 2050, nearly one in five Americans (19%) will be an immigrant” (p. 2). If the rise in the Latino population will be due to immigration as opposed, for example, to birth rates alone, then the number of Latinos who speak English less than very well is almost certain to increase. The “Statistical Portrait of Hispanics in the United States, 2009” (Pew Hispanic Center, 2011) records that among the foreign-born Latinos ages 18 and older, 12,018,871 speak English less

than very well, as opposed to 1,849,972 Latinos who were native-born (Table 20). The number is based on a population of 42,912,214. This segment alone represents 28% of the nation's Latino population. At a population of 128 million, the number of foreign-born Latinos who speak English less than very well could be as high as 35,840,000. Even this number is conservative. According to the "U.S. Population Projections: 2005-2050" (Passel & Cohn, 2008), "The nation's foreign-born population, number 36 million in 2005, is projected to rise to 81 million in 2050, growth of 129%" (p. 2). In light of this data, a prospective client base for bilingual counselors could be substantial.

The demographic data, both current and projected, reveal an America where linguistic diversity predominates. Specifically, Spanish is and will continue to be spoken, either exclusively or bilingually together with English, by a sizable part of the population. The demographic data as reported by the Pew Hispanic Center, point to the need for bilingual counselors to service the country's Latino population now and in the years ahead.

## **II THE AMERICAN COUNSELING ASSOCIATION**

Demographic data reflect the need in current and future numbers for bilingual counselors. The ethical imperative is less concrete because it is not data-driven per se. However, organizational documentation reflects an ethical mandate that matches the numbers. The 2014 *ACA Code of Ethics* (American Counseling Association, 2014) addresses the importance of linguistic diversity. The ACA Mission Statement (American Counseling Association, 2014) speaks to the importance of diversity, and even ends with this all-important concept: "The mission of the American Counseling is to enhance the quality of life in society by

promoting the development of professional counselors, advancing the counseling profession, and using the profession and practice of counseling to promote respect for human dignity and diversity” (p. 2). The importance of this concluding concept, diversity, resonates throughout the remainder of the *ACA Code of Ethics*. Section A is titled “The Counseling Relationship.” Much of the section addresses the services that counselors provide clients. Linguistic diversity is addressed specifically in Section A.2.c. Here, the code acknowledges the value of linguistic compatibility with respect to informed consent. “Counselors use clear and understandable language when discussing issues related to informed consent” (p. 4). The importance of this precept is compounded when the client speaks a language (e.g., Spanish) that is not shared by the dominant culture. This is one more reason why bilingual counselors are vital to the counseling process. So important is it that interpreters are required if the counselor him/herself cannot bridge the linguistic divide. “When clients have difficulty understanding the language that counselors use, counselors provide necessary services (e.g., arranging for a qualified interpreter to translate) to ensure comprehension by clients” (p. 4). Of course, bilingual counselors obviate the need for interpreters.

Section E of the *ACA Code of Ethics* (American Counseling Association, 2014) addresses evaluation and assessment instruments. Section E.8., Multicultural Issues/Diversity in Assessment, specifically refers to this. “Counselors recognize the effects of age, color, culture, disability, ethnic group, gender, race, language preference, religion, spirituality, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status on test administration and interpretation” (P. 12).

Section F.11., Multicultural/Diversity Competence in Counselor Education and Training Programs (American Counseling Association, 2014), harks back to the mission statement as it acknowledges the importance of diversity to counseling. The word, diversity, is embedded in much of the three subsections. Subsection F.11.a. (p. 15) deals with faculty and exhorts counselor education programs to recruit and retain diverse faculty. Although language is never specifically mentioned in subsection F.11.b., Student Diversity (p. 15), the value of linguistic differences is referenced, if only implicitly. Here, the *ACA Code of Ethics* urges counselor educators to recruit and retain diverse student bodies. Further, counselor educators must “demonstrate a commitment to multicultural/diversity competence by recognizing and valuing the diverse cultures and types of abilities that students bring to the training experience” (p. 15). Among those types of abilities that diverse students bring to the counseling profession is the ability to speak a second language, one that is compatible with monolingual (Spanish only) and bilingual (Spanish-English) clients.

The subsections of the *ACA Code of Ethics* that are cited above are the only ones where language is referenced specifically, or as in subsection F. 11. B., nearly so. Nevertheless, the entire Code of Ethics is informed by a call for linguistic diversity. Section B, “Confidentiality and Privacy” (American Counseling Association, 2014, pp. 6-8) deals with issues surrounding confidentiality. Throughout this section, as elsewhere, language holds great significance because confidentiality, its protections, limitations and exceptions, must be communicated to the client. It may be obvious, but counseling involves communication; it involves language. To the extent that the *ACA Code of Ethics* mandates a respect for diversity, it necessarily invites linguistic diversity.



### III THE ADVENT OF SCHOOL COUNSELING

Conville and Ivey (1975) present what is likely the first appeal for the training of bilingual school counselors. The sense of urgency, nearly 40 years ago, is understandable as the authors write from the vantage point of Montreal, Canada, where French-English and English-French bilingual populations have coexisted for many years. Conville and Ivey endorse language switching, not only because it facilitates a therapeutic outcome, but because it is a measure of the counselor's empathic investment in the client: "Language switching may be the most important indication of respect and empathy communicated to the child throughout the entire session" (p. 7). The authors urge an appreciation for a bilingual society as a stronger society, one that has at its disposal many ways of coping with the world and thus, "more options for individual and group adaptation and growth for solving social problems" (p. 9).

Conville and Ivey cite Lambert (1972) who asserts that bilingualism is not a handicap. On the contrary, it is a decided strength. "Bilingual children consistently demonstrate a [sic] higher intelligence test scores than a matched group of monolinguals. The bilingual child is, in fact, culturally and intellectually advanced over his or her monolingual peer" (p. 9). This observation is both prescient and valid . Not quite 40 years later, on March 18, 2012, *The New York Times* featured an editorial with the title, "Why Bilinguals Are Smarter." "Being bilingual, " the editorial reports, "makes you smarter" (Bhattacharjee, p. 12). Specifically, bilingualism affords a number of advantages. First, it improves executive functions. "It forces the brain to resolve internal conflict, giving the mind a workout that strengthens its cognitive muscles" (p. 12). Switching languages at will enables bilinguals to separate relevant from irrelevant

information. This translates into the bilingual's enhanced capacity to multitask. Moreover, bilinguals are better able to ignore distractions and remain focused. Bilingualism gives people an enhanced ability to monitor their environment. Again, language switching on a daily basis is largely responsible. "It requires keeping track of changes around you in the same way that we monitor our surroundings when driving" (p. 12). Not only does bilingualism make people smarter, but it delays the onset of dementia and Alzheimer's disease. It achieves this goal because of the cognitive workout that the brain receives as a result of switching languages.

Finally, Conville and Ivey (1975) call for communicative competence among school counselors who work in bilingual communities. Training programs must instill in their trainees an appreciation for the following sociological factors: "language domains, code switching, role relationships and the relations among language, thought, and reality" (p. 10).

At the time of the writing, the authors lamented the linguistic incompetence that pervaded the school culture throughout French-English bilingual Canada. In the nearly 40 years since the publication of the article, not much has changed. Replace French with Spanish, Canada for the United States, and the situation is much the same. Still, Conville and Ivey remain hopeful. Awareness of the hazards of communicative incompetence and the need for bilingual counselors then, as now, is a good starting point. Certainly, it is reason for hope.

Clemente and Collision (2000), too, write about school counseling. The focus is that there are not enough counselors working in a bilingual capacity in American schools. The need is readily apparent. "To create context and perspective in regard to these statistics, the United States has the fifth largest Latino population in the world" (p. 339). Citing data from the Bureau

of Census, Clemente and Collision conclude that for all the diversity among Latinos, the one common denominator is language; whether as coordinate or compound bilinguals, they all speak Spanish. "There are not sufficient professionals with both training in their field and Spanish proficiency to satisfy the need" (p. 340).

Clemente and Collision report having selected 48 student from four schools with sizable (10% - 35% or more) Latino populations. They also selected one counselor and one English as a Second Language (ESL) instructor from each of the four schools. Among the findings was a need for Spanish-speaking counselors. "Most counselors agreed on the linguistic disparity and difficulties in establishing a counseling relationship with monolingual Spanish speakers, emphasizing the need for bilingual counselors capable of meeting the needs of Hispanic/Latino students" (pp. 343-344).

Because the counselors did not speak Spanish, the entire systemic was affected. ESL staff had minimal contact with counselors. Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students also had little contact with counselors.

Because the schools had at least as many European American students as Latinos, there were linguistic-based frictions. European American students felt excluded from the Latino students and vice versa. Consequently, gang activity ensued. This, too, was a problem that a bilingual counselor could have rectified by bridging the linguistic gulf that estranged the students.

Clemente and Collision (2000) recommend that colleges of education institute programs for the training of bilingual counselors. They recommend the training of nonnative speakers as

well as Spanish-speaking Latinos. The emphasis should be placed equally on counseling and language. “All classes should be conducted in English and Spanish with an emphasis on the latter” (p. 346). Moreover, Clemente and Collision recommend that Spanish be offered, not as a foreign language, but as a second language. “The acquisition and learning of a second language is better associated with an addition, carrying a positive and practical connotation” (p. 346). Not only are LEP students entitled to ESL teachers, they are entitled to ESL, or bilingual, counselors.

#### **IV COUNSELING STUDENT POPULATIONS**

##### **a. ESL Students**

Roysircar, Gard, Hubbell, and Ortega (2005) report the training of 60 master degree and doctoral students to serve as mentors to ESL students in a low income, mid-western community. The purpose was to enhance multicultural skills among the trainees. An appreciation of environmental barriers emerged from the training as a core idea. In one of three teams of trainees, five themes for disconnection/distance grouping arose. Environmental barriers were a part of this domain. Linguistic disparity between trainee and student was cited. “One of the continuing issues is the different levels of language ability between me and my student. She was not really able to talk too much about how to solve a problem past a relatively superficial level” (p. 27).

Roysircar et al. (2005) approach linguistic disparity from an oblique perspective. The authors discuss the trainees’ linguistic limitations and their inability to communicate sufficiently with students. Their lack of bilingual ability, combined with the students’ limited English

proficiency, account for barriers to communication. “Trainees referred to language barriers, the environment, inadequate background information about ESL students, and a nonclinical setting, situations perceived to impinge upon the meetings and experienced as frustrating” (p. 31).

### **b. Immigrant Students**

Goh, Wahl, McDonald, Brissett and Yoon (2007) examine the growing number of immigrant students. Much of their focus is on the problems posed by language. They cite the language barrier; translation is one problem. Placing students in the role of interpreters in schools creates “awkward role reversals on families” (p. 70). According to budgetary crises that often cripple school funding, the authors urge using trained interpreters on an as-needed basis. Counselors can make home visits, utilizing these interpreters when necessary. Goh et al. (2007) argue for increased school involvement on the parents’ parts. This would encourage greater involvement in their children’s education. In light of budgetary constraints and the cost of trained interpreters, counselors can reach out to community organizations that may function as cultural and linguistic liaisons.

Goh et al. (2007) recommend “cross-cultural understanding for the entire school community” (p. 76). This includes counselors. What the authors neglect to recommend is bilingual skills that the counselors should embrace. This is arguably the article’s most serious flaw. A bilingual counseling staff will build the cross-cultural bridges that the authors recommend.

## **V TRAINING PROGRAMS**

### a. Bilingual Mental Health Professionals

Biever et al. (2002) and Biever, Gómez, González, and Patrizio (2011) stress the importance of training bilingual mental health professionals. What sets this article apart is documentation of a training program, arguably the first in the United States, for the training of bilingual mental health professionals. Biever et al. (2002) begin first by noting the need for bilingual services and follow with the scarcity of such services. The authors put their purpose simply: “Our goal is to focus on one critical variable: language” (p. 331).

Biever et al. (2002) depict a model program, one which is the first such program for the purpose of training bilingual psychologists in the United States. The program is the Psychological Services for Spanish Speaking Populations (PSSSP), which is located at Our Lady of the Lake University (OLLU), in San Antonio, Texas. Fifty-six percent of the population of the greater San Antonio metropolitan area is Latino. The majority of these are of Mexican descent (p. 332). “Many of these individuals are monolingual Spanish speakers regardless of their length or residency or citizenship in the United States” (p. 332).

The PSSSP program emphasizes linguistic competence. Among the Practicum courses, one is taught in Mexico; this immerses students in both culture and language. Two of the seven courses are taught bilingually. The final course is taught primarily in Spanish (Biever et al., 2002, p. 333). Upon completion of the program, students are prepared to think therapeutically in the target language. “Students have reported that thinking in Spanish throughout their therapy sessions represent the point at which they feel equally competent in both languages”

(p.333). The praise is not reserved for the students alone. The faculty, too, benefits, especially with respect to improving their own Spanish-speaking skills.

As timely and fitting as the PSSSP program is, even Biever et al. (2002) concede limitations. It is certainly helpful and altogether quite necessary. But one program, especially in the American southwest, can do only so much. “The need for well trained bilingual psychologists far exceeds the capacity of our graduate program” (p. 334).

#### **b. Bilingual School Counselors**

More recently, Bruhn, Irby, Luo, Thweatt, and Lara-Alecio (2005) report a model program for training bilingual school counselors. It is likely the first such program in the country. Echoing Biever et al. (2002), Bruhn et al. articulate a pressing need. The program involved six school districts in the greater Houston, Texas metropolitan area. In 2000, when the census reflected lesser numbers than in 2010, there were 100,000 LEP students, of a total 442,518 student population. There were only 102 bilingual Spanish-English school counselors. By this reckoning, Bruhn et al. estimated one bilingual counselor for every 979 LEP students (p. 148). Funded by the United States Department of Education, the five-year program was based at Sam Houston State University (SHSU). Forty-three ESL teachers were trained as bilingual counselors over the course of the five year program. As with the PSSSP program at OLLU, bilingualism was integral to the program. SHSU developed the Ten Bilingual Counselor Competencies, the program’s canon of ethics that was aimed at servicing the needs of the LEP (or, as articulated here, English Language Learners: ELL) students. The competencies stressed a sensitivity to cultural and linguistic diversity. They emphasized service, not only to ELL

students, but to their parents, the school, and the community. In addition to the ELL students and their families, those affected would include bilingual teachers, general education teachers, special education teachers, and administrators. The competencies explained that bilingual counselors should “be able to establish strong positive ties between the school and community” (p. 151).

Outcomes were positive. Although Bruhn et al. (2005) do not provide numbers, they acknowledge that bilingual counseling interns were hired “prior to or during the practicum semester” (p. 154). Six school districts subsequently invited SHSU to train their teachers to become bilingual school counselors. Bruhn et al. urge that school districts and universities collaborate for the good of bilingual communities that are emerging everywhere. “We recommend that other universities place an intentional focus on developing field-based and bilingually-oriented curriculum for programs training bilingual school counselors” (p. 158).

## VI THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

Existential therapy lends itself to working with bilingual Latino high school students, especially when increasing effective communication is involved. The reasons are manifold. In terms of immediacy alone, an existential orientation is appropriate to the client (here, the bilingual student) and the situation. “The *phenomenological method* focuses on the immediacy of experience, the perception of experience, the meaning of that experience, and observation with a minimum of a priori biases” (Prochaska & Norcross, 2007, p. 110). Teachers require assistance from a bilingual counselor when responding to bilingual students in distress. The



help that the counselor provides is here and it is now. A sick child must be cared for; the LEP parent must be contacted immediately. The bilingual counselor steps in.

When the counselor steps in, he/she increases effective communication among all interested parties. In this way, an authentic dialogue ensues. Authenticity is one of the hallmarks of existential therapy. “For the existentialist, authenticity is its own reward” (Porchaska & Norcross, 2007, p. 113). Simply put, the authentic self is a healthy self. Similarly, inauthenticity represents psychopathology. “Lying is the foundation of psychopathology” (p. 106). Certainly, the bilingual counselor ensures accuracy, given the linguistic strengths that distinguish the bilingual counselor. However, in the capacity of counselor, not just interpreter, the bilingual counselor fosters an authentic dialogue between student and teacher, teacher and parent, and parent and student. The objective behind any of these scenarios is authentic communication.

“Existentialists suggest that conflicts in communication are almost inherent in our isolation” (Prochaska & Norcross, 2007, p. 116). One aspect of existential anxiety is this very isolation, “*aloneness* in the universe” (p. 105). Here, too, the bilingual counselor can allay isolation through linguistic and therapeutic skills. “Communication through the medium of words can still present a rich enough picture of an individual’s experience if the receiver drops theoretical decoders and listens with the openness of a trained phenomenologist” (p. 116). Substitute “bilingual counselor” for “phenomenologist”, and the value of bilingual counseling is readily apparent.

Existential therapy is applicable to the therapeutic relationship between bilingual counselor and client. Here, the quality of presence is central. The existential counselor is equal parts guide, accompanist, and symbol. “The therapist provides the client with a sense that the quest is valid and that it may be undertaken to good advantage” (Corsini & Wedding, 2007, p. 312). While the journey remains the client’s own, the therapist is there – authentically – to offer support and guidance. Bolling (1995) uses the term, *Dasien* to connote the therapist’s “being there” with the client. Additionally, this term means “an unconditional meeting of experience and relational presence” (Prochaska & Norcross, 2007, p. 120). Authenticity is essential to the existential relationship because it serves as a foundation for everything else in the client’s existential journey, which must necessarily be similarly authentic. “The encounter between therapist and client may well serve as prototype for authentic relationships that will eventually be cultivated outside the confines of the consulting room” (Corsini & Wedding, 2007, p. 314).

The existential (and as here, bilingual) counselor is also a catalyst, according to Wheelis (1973), “sometimes necessary, never sufficient” (Corsini & Wedding, 2007, p. 312). In the context of this study, the bilingual counselor is a catalyst for communication in the present moment and together with (i.e., in the presence of) bilingual students and others with whom students must communicate or who must communicate with students.

Finally, the bilingual counselor fosters “being in the world.” Central to this is the existential relational triptych: *Umwelt*, *Mitwelt*, and *Eigenwelt*. *Umwelt* translates as being-in-nature and includes our relationship to the physical world; *Mitwelt* denotes being-with-others

and suggests our social dimension; *Eigenwelt* means being-with-oneself (Prochaska & Norcross, 207, p. 102). When we live authentically, we are open to nature, to others, and to ourselves because we elect to confront the world, and ourselves, directly without hiding it from us, nor us from it. As the bilingual counselor increases effective communication between student and teacher, teacher and parent, parent and student, and student and self, he/she strengthens being in the world at all levels.

When all interested parties come together, as they frequently do in schools, they form a group. Here, too, existential therapy is appropriate. Corey (2000) identifies self-awareness as a basic goal of existential therapy because it increases the potential for choice, yet another hallmark of existential therapy. Moreover, Corey links self-awareness to this very being-in-the-world in terms of implications for group work. "In groups this goal is pursued by helping members discover their unique 'being-in-the-world'" (p. 250). The participants may not form a group in the traditional sense. Nevertheless, all participants may gain from such a convergence, especially when the bilingual counselor increases authentic and effective communication.

## CHAPTER 3

## METHODOLOGY

## RESEARCH DESIGN

“First, the universe to be sampled and studied must be defined” (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000, p. 605). Because the setting is confined to a high school in southwest Detroit, the sample will be composed of staff, primarily educators and former educators who work in the school.

The sample will consist of teachers, counselors, social workers, the school psychologist, the librarian, the attendance agent, administrators, and education technicians. Among the teaching staff, general education teachers together with bilingual teachers and special education teachers will participate. Those not participating will be the clerical staff (secretaries and office workers), custodial staff (janitors, engineers, and boiler operators), public safety personnel, substitute teachers, and the school bookkeeper. Nor will the researcher himself, who is the school’s bilingual counselor, participate. The sampling plan is appropriate as the sample is restricted to full-time staff who are primarily educators and former educators who interact with students on a daily basis.

“The next large step in a survey is the construction of the interview schedule and other measuring instruments to be used” (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000, p. 606). The measuring instrument in this study is a questionnaire. The researcher will distribute copies of the questionnaire together with informed consent forms. The researcher will distribute the questionnaires to participants individually. Before he gives each prospective participant the questionnaire, he will

read a prepared informed consent script. The researcher will explain that participation is voluntary and anonymous. The researcher will briefly describe the design. If the individual consents to participate, the researcher will give the participant a copy of the questionnaire. Each participant will return the completed questionnaire to the researcher via his mailbox, which is located in the school's main office. The data gathering ensures the anonymity of the participants. It also ensures that participation is voluntary. In this respect, the data gathering method is appropriate.

“Data collection is the second large part of survey research” (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000, p. 606). Data are collected when the questionnaires are completed and returned to the researcher. The data will be gathered via distribution of the questionnaire.

“The third large part of the flow plan is analytical. The responses to questions are coded and tabulated” (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000, p. 607). The responses are first coded. This information is placed into “specific categories for purposes of analysis” (p. 607).

The final step is tabulation. Responses are placed in appropriate categories for the purpose of statistical analysis. The analysis includes percentages, averages, and relational indices. “The analyses of the data are studied, collated, assimilated, and interpreted” (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000, p. 607).

## SETTING

The setting is a high school in southwest Detroit. This is an appropriate setting for a number of reasons. First, it reverts back to the Problem Statement. In this setting, bilingual

counseling exists. Approximately 72% of the student population is Latino; approximately 63% of the student population is Spanish/English bilingual. The school is located in southwest Detroit, which is predominately Latino. Finally, the setting addresses the salient features of the research question.

## PARTICIPANTS

All of the participants work at the high school in southwest Detroit. They interact with bilingual Latino students. In this respect alone, the participants ideally suit the purpose of the study. A cross-section of the educators and support staff will be asked to participate in this study. Not only does the sample represent different departments from within the school, it represents a sample of all manner of educators (e.g., general education teachers, bilingual education teachers, special education teachers as well as administrators and support staff who were themselves classroom teachers at one time). It is specific to the population of this geographic area, and in this way, it is homogenous. It also reflects the larger world of education. It is the many facets of education in miniature.

The researcher works at the high school setting. In this respect, utilizing these participants is convenient. In this way, the sample is a convenience sample. Although it is a convenience sample, it also represents a purposive sample. "Purposive sampling is different from convenience sampling in that researchers do not simply study whoever is available but rather use their judgment to select a sample that they believe, based on prior information, will provide the data they need " (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012, p. 100). Yes, the sample is close

at hand and, in this respect, convenient. However the selection of subjects is deliberate. In this way, the selection of participants more nearly resembles a purposive sample.

Because the participants represent a cross-sectional design, there is a great variety. This pertains not only to job title, but to linguistic proficiency and ethnicity. Some of the participants are Latino/a, others are not. Some are bilingual (English-Spanish), others are not. Even among the Latinos, some participants speak Spanish, others do not. Some of the non-Latino participants are English-Spanish bilinguals.

“The control of extraneous variables means that the influences of those independent variables extraneous to the purposes of the study are minimized, nullified, or isolated” (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000, p. 460). One method of controlling for extraneous variables is to include participants who are homogeneous. This approach has its strengths and its weaknesses. Extraneous variance is controlled, and this is desirable. However, generalizability may be compromised in an effort to ensure homogeneity. “To eliminate the effect of a possible influential independent variable on a dependent variable, choose participants so that they are as homogeneous as possible on that independent variable” (p. 460).

Participants in this study are almost all educators. In this respect, homogeneity exists. However, there are vast differences among them in terms of job title and bilingual proficiency. Some are classroom teachers, whereas others are counselors, administrators, and social workers; some are bilingual, and some are not. In this respect, the sample is heterogeneous. Moreover, the sample is not random. It is a convenience sample and a purposive sample. On these bases alone, it will be difficult to control for extraneous variables. Moreover, statistical

equality will not be achieved. "If proper randomization has been accomplished, then the experimental groups can be considered statistically equal in all possible ways" (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000, p. 460). Without randomization and homogeneity, the researcher will have difficulty controlling for extraneous variables. Moreover the participants represent a cross-section of educators in the high school. In this way, the sample is heterogeneous. What may be lost in control of extraneous variance, however, may be gained in generalizability.

### INSTRUMENT

The researcher works at the school where the study will be conducted. The researcher knows many of the participants, and many of them know the researcher. In order to ensure the anonymity of all participants and the integrity of the responses, the researcher has included no descriptive statistics. There is no question that seeks demographic information. There is no question that can link the participant and the responses on the questionnaire. No one, including the researcher, will know the identity of the respondents. There is no identifying marker or information on the survey. These steps have been taken in order to ensure the anonymity of the participants and the integrity of the process. These measures are outlined in the informed consent information sheet (see Appendix A) that accompanies each questionnaire as it is given to every participant. Additionally, the researcher will read a prepared script that highlights the anonymous and voluntary nature of participation, which is detailed in the information sheet.

The instrument that is used to collect this data is a questionnaire, which the researcher himself designed. It is written in English, a language that is common to all of the participants.



The questionnaire consists of 19 questions. The participants' responses will reflect their attitudes and opinions, specifically with respect to the research question: Does bilingual counseling increase effective communication among high school bilingual Latino students, school personnel, and students' parents/guardians in southwest Detroit? The first two items address the students' lack of English proficiency and that of their parents/guardians respectively. Each statement requires a response of YES or NO. The remaining 17 questions will be measured on a Likert scale with the following values: 1 = not very helpful, 2 = not helpful, 3 = neutral, 4 = helpful, and 5 = very helpful. The questionnaire does not assign numerical value to the response options. Therefore, the numerical value will be assigned to the options once the data are analyzed.

Some questions address communication directly. For example, questions 13 and 16 address communication with parents and students respectively. Other questions address communication more obliquely. Question 3 asks the participant to comment upon the degree to which the bilingual counselor helps during parent-teacher conferences. Similarly, question 14 measures the extent to which the bilingual counselor assists when participants meet with a Limited English Proficiency (LEP) parents/guardians about student progress. The first and second items on the questionnaire deal with this linguistic component most directly. The first addresses the bilingual students' lack of English proficiency as a barrier to communication; the second addresses the parents'/guardians' lack of English proficiency as a barrier to communication. In one way or another, all of the items deal with communication. Almost all deal with it directly. The bilingual counselor calls home to speak with parents/guardians; the bilingual counselor assists in discussing important matters with school personnel, bilingual

students and, or parents/guardians. Even the scheduling of language appropriate classes implies communicative competence on the part of the bilingual counselor. It is a systemic aspect of the bilingual counselor's job, but it is still important as it presupposes an intimate knowledge of the bilingual student's English proficiency. It is virtually a foregone conclusion that the bilingual counselor has spoken with the student in order to make an accurate appraisal of the student's linguistic needs. The last question, too, while not ostensibly dealing with communication is nevertheless relevant. Unless many of the preceding questions have been addressed, the ultimate goal of attending high school in the first place (i.e., graduation) will not be met.

Cognitive, affective, behavioral, and systemic concerns are similarly represented in the questionnaire. Questions deal with the bilingual counselor's intervention when students are in distress (e.g., suicidal ideation). Many other questions are largely systemic. For example, the scheduling of language-appropriate classes arises. Elsewhere, systemic and behavioral components merge where absenteeism and tardiness are referenced. The student's progress is addressed; the emphasis is partly academic and, therefore, cognitive.

The questionnaires will be given to participants onsite as opposed to being distributed to external participants. On average, participants will be able to complete the questionnaire in 15 minutes. The participants will be directed to return the questionnaires to the researcher's mailbox, which is located in the main office, on the wall that contains virtually all of the participants' mailboxes. Some other mailboxes (e.g., those of administrators and social workers) are also in the main office, but outside their office door or in a bank of mailboxes on a

different wall. They are no less accessible than the mailboxes of most of the staff. The researcher's mailbox is easily accessible to all participants. In light of the speed with which the participants may complete the questionnaire and the accessibility of the researcher's mailbox, the response rate is expected to be high. Participation is voluntary; conditions by which participants may complete and return the questionnaire are optimal.

### Variables

Bilingual counseling is the independent variable. First, it is counseling; next, it is counseling in two languages. For the purposes of this study, those languages are English and Spanish. As the independent variable, it explains the differences or changes in the dependent variable. It is the variable that the researcher brings to this study.

The dependent variable is effective communication. It may be communication between a bilingual student and a staff member (e.g., a teacher, an administrator, or a support staff member); communication between a bilingual student and that student's parent; communication between a student's parent and a staff member; or, finally, communication among all three: the bilingual student, a staff member, and the student's parents/guardians. Effective communication is the outcome that this survey study measures.

### DATA ANALYSIS

The first two items on the questionnaire require responses of YES or NO. Measures of central tendency (mean, median, and mode) will be used in order to rank the researchers

findings. In this way, the researcher will report the proportion of YES responses and No responses.

Questions 3-19 will be measured on a Likert scale. Values of 1-5 will be assigned to the response options, ranging from not very helpful (1) to very helpful (5). Here, too, measures of central tendency and measures of variability will be used to rank the researcher's findings.

The internal consistency reliability of the questionnaire will be assessed with Cronbach alpha via Hoyt's correction for the overall instrument. The approach to item deletion via reliability analysis will provide the first level of evidence that the survey questions are homogeneous with the purpose of the instrument.

An exploratory factor analysis will be conducted on the remaining items subsequent to the initial reliability analysis. A principal components extraction with a varimax rotation analysis will be conducted, and the factor weights will be sorted with those below [.4] suppressed. Further factor structure will be supported with an eigenvalue of at least 1.0, or by a scree plot. The reliability analysis will then be revisited, with the Spearman-Brown prophecy formula applied to the individual factors.

The researcher will use SPSS statistics in order to analyze the data. The results will be presented in a scree plot. Tables will denote the scales of measurement and scales of variance.

The null hypothesis is as follows: Bilingual counseling does not increase effective communication among high school bilingual Latino students, school personnel, and students' parents/guardians in southwest Detroit. The alternative hypothesis is as follows: Bilingual

counseling increases effective communication among high school bilingual Latino students, school personnel, and students' parents/guardians in southwest Detroit. The alpha level will be at .05. The rationale for this decision is that there will be only a 5 percent chance of making a Type I error. Because the alpha level is high, the statistical power decreases. "Lowering the  $\alpha$  to .05 decreases the power to  $1 - \beta = .26$ " (Runyon, Coleman, & Pittenger, 2000, p. 314). The underlying assumption is that by selecting a stringent alpha level of .05, the researcher minimizes the risk of a Type I error to 5 percent and decreases the statistical power to .26.

### CONCLUSION

Bilingual counseling is essential in a world that is becoming increasingly bilingual. Schools are microcosms of the world. They are populated by children who, as with the school in this study, represent a sizable segment of the profession's client base. Schools employ staff that services this client base. Among the staff is a variety of professions, including but not limited to teachers, counselors, social workers, and psychologists. This study focuses on the essential and efficacious nature of bilingual counseling. It is especially useful because it includes as its participants a cross-section of the school and, in this way, the world of education.

## Chapter 4

### RESULTS

Questionnaires were distributed to 81 participants, 61 were returned. Two of the questionnaires were spoiled; one participant only responded to the first two questions, and another indicated that he/she could not answer the questions. Thus, there were  $N = 59$  completed questionnaires (return rate = 72.8%), and the data analyses were conducted on this subset. Note that there were occasional missing values, which accounts for the slightly different number of responses for each item on the questionnaire.

### SCORING

The first two questions required responses of either yes or no. They were given a numerical weight; 0 represented a response of “no”, whereas 1 represented the answer option for “yes”. Moreover, 0 represented the minimum value, and 1 represented the maximum value. The remaining seventeen questions were measured on a Likert scale. Numerical values were given to each of the five answer options: 1 = not very helpful; 2 = not helpful; 3 = neutral; 4 = helpful; and 5 = very helpful. The minimum value was 1, and the maximum value was 5.

### RELIABILITY

Cronbach alpha, a measure of internal consistency, was used to determine the reliability of items 3 - 19 on the questionnaire. The result, .982, indicates a very high level in homogeneity of item content, and hence, very strong evidence of reliability. Summary item statistics are compiled in Table 1, and entire scale statistics compiled in Table 2. The mean value

per item was 4.17 on a scale of 1 = low and 5 = high, indicating that participants found the bilingual counselor to be helpful, and very nearly very helpful. The total scale mean was 70.96 out of a maximum total score of 85.

Table 1

*Summary Item Statistics – Data Reflecting Mean on a Scale of 1 = Low and 5 = High*

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	4.174	4.041	4.510	.469	1.116	.015	17
Item Variances	1.498	.922	1.809	.887	1.962	.050	17

Table 2

*Scale Statistics – Total Scale Mean, of a  
Maximum Total Score of 85*

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
70.96	335.957	18.329	17

Subsequently, the approach to reliability based on item deletion provided evidence that the survey questions were homogeneous with the purpose of the instrument. The item-total statistics showed a Cronbach's alpha if item deleted, which was consistent; the range was from .982 - .980 (see Table 3). Hence, there is no evidence that any items should be eliminated from the questionnaire.

Table 3

*Item-Total Statistics – Evidence that Survey Questions were Homogeneous with the Purpose of the Instrument*

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation
LEP	66.92	293.952	.900
Tardiness Parents	66.90	293.760	.887
Absenteeism Parents	66.90	292.844	.897
Failing Grades Parents	66.84	293.014	.914
Home Release	66.76	304.522	.723
Meeting	66.67	298.224	.883
Suicide	66.86	303.625	.742
Tardiness Students	66.84	294.014	.927
Absenteeism Students	66.80	294.416	.921
Failing Grades Students	66.73	294.824	.939
Communicate With Parents	66.76	294.605	.948
Progress	66.76	295.730	.934
Behavior	66.86	296.167	.892
Communicate With Students	66.92	297.035	.861
Medical Info	66.80	304.749	.763
Language Appropriate Classes	66.61	304.034	.808
Graduate on Time	66.45	309.294	.762



## ITEM RESULTS

Table 4 contains descriptive statistics on an item-by-item basis.

Table 4

*Descriptive Statistics – Each of the 19 Questions Appearing on the Questionnaire*

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Students' Lack of English	59	0	1	.66	.477
Parents' Lack of English	59	0	1	.78	.418
LEP	58	1	5	3.98	1.249
Tardiness Parents	56	1	5	4.02	1.272
Absenteeism Parents	57	1	5	4.04	1.281
Failing Grades Parents	58	1	5	4.05	1.290
Home Release	56	1	5	4.20	1.151
Meeting	56	1	5	4.30	1.143
Suicide	55	1	5	4.04	1.170
Tardiness Students	56	1	5	4.07	1.234
Absenteeism Students	57	1	5	4.12	1.226
Failing Grades Students	58	1	5	4.17	1.201
Communicate With Parents	58	1	5	4.10	1.195
Progress	58	1	5	4.10	1.180
Behavior	58	1	5	3.98	1.207

Communicate With Students	58	1	5	3.98	1.221
Medical Info	57	1	5	4.11	1.113
Language Appropriate Classes	57	1	5	4.25	1.074
Graduate on Time	59	1	5	4.42	.969
Valid N (listwise)	49				

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### CONSTRUCT VALIDITY

The internal factor structure, via exploratory factor analysis, was examined to provide evidence of construct validity. The scree plot suggested there may be two or three factors, as noted in Figure 1.

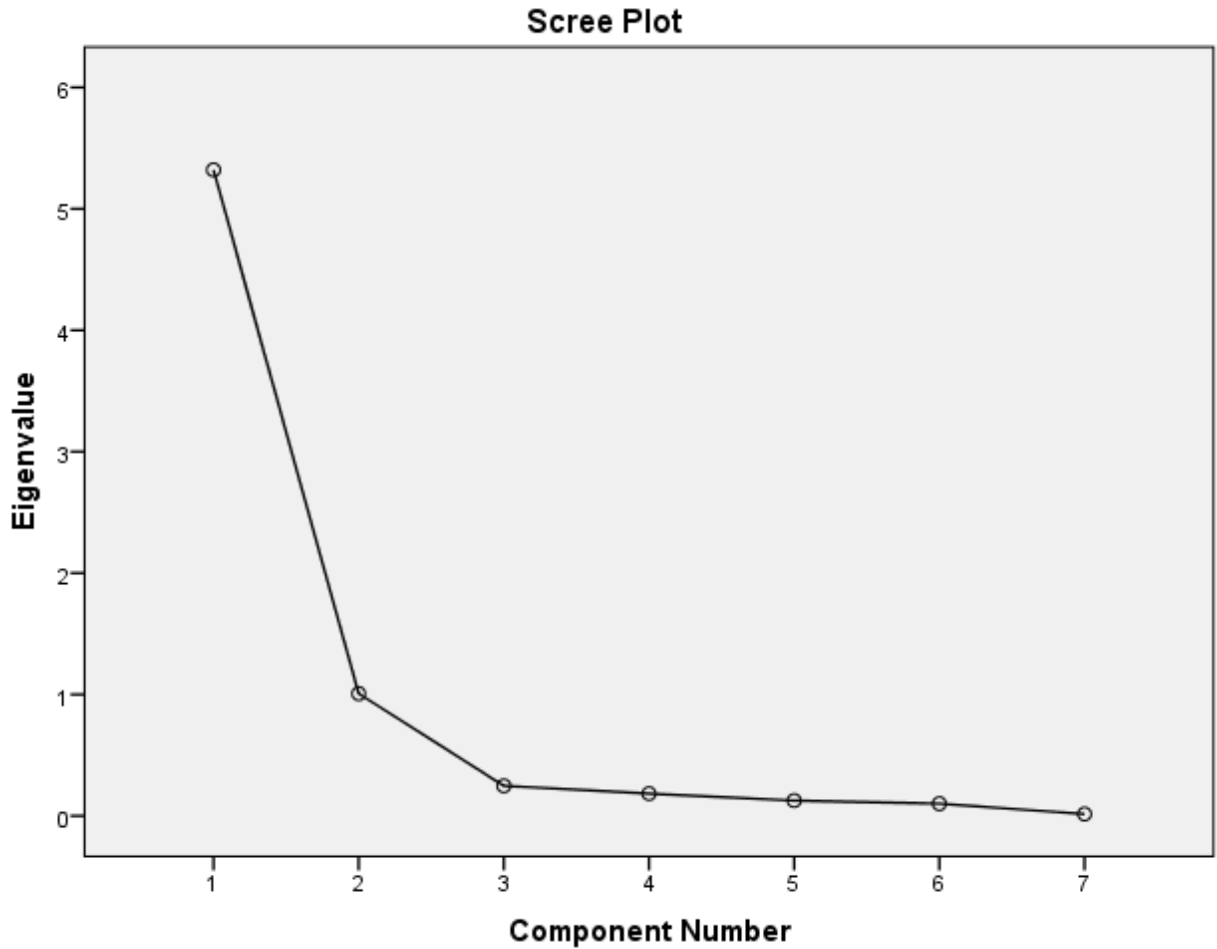


Figure 1. Scree Plot of Rotated Component Matrix Presented in Table 5.

Subsequently, a principal components extraction with varimax rotation was conducted, with the factor loadings sorted, and then suppressed if  $< |.4|$ . This led to a two factor solution (also supported by the scree plot). After four iterations, the final rotated solution in Table 5 was obtained, and as noted in Table 6, the seven remaining items accounted for 90.40% of explained variance. The exploratory factor analysis suggested high internal factor structure on factors A (communication) and B (interventions). Subsequent analyses were conducted on the full scale, but this result indicated a short form of the seven items in Table 5.

Table 5

*Rotated Component Matrix – Final Iteration  
Shows the Seven Remaining Items*

	Component	
	1	2
Absenteeism Parents	.933	
Tardiness Parents	.930	
Behavior	.885	
LEP	.878	
Communicate With Students	.861	
Home Release		.919
Suicide		.909

Table 6

*Total Variance Explained – The Seven Remaining Items Account for 90.40 % of the Explained Variance*

Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings

Component	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.214	60.196	60.196
2	2.114	30.199	90.395

RESULTS FOR THE HYPOTHESIS TESTS

Items 1 and 2 were analyzed apart from questions 3-19 because questions 1 and 2 required answers of yes or no whereas questions 3-19 contained answer options that were measured on a Likert scale. The descriptive statistics are compiled in Table 7. A t-test was conducted to determine if there is a statistically significant difference between student vs. parents on lack of English.

Levine's test for the underlying assumption of homoscedasticity indicated this condition was violated ( $F = 8.2, p < .05$ ). Therefore, the Welsh-Aspin adjustment of the t test, with Satterthwaite adjustment of degrees of freedom, was used to compare the differences in means between the two groups. The result was not statistically significant ( $t = 1.44, df = 114.01, p = .15$ ).

Table 7

*Group Statistics- Questions 1 and 2*

	grp	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
q_1_2	1.00	59	.6610	.47743	.06216
	2.00	59	.7797	.41803	.05442

Because the normality assumption cannot be assumed, the nonparametric Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test was also conducted (see Table 8). The results were also not statistically significant ( $p = .15$ ).

Table 8

*Test Statistics- Nonparametric  
Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney Test*

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	q_1_2
Mann-Whitney U	1534.000
Wilcoxon W	3304.000
Z	-1.430
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.153

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## CHAPTER 5

## SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

## INTRODUCTION

This study was undertaken in response to the growing need for bilingual Spanish/English counselors in American schools. This study demonstrates an appreciation of bilingual counseling where it exists. The value of bilingual counseling, specifically as it increases effective communication among bilingual students, their parents/guardians, and high school personnel, is established through results from a questionnaire that lies at the heart of this study. The positive response from the participants underscores the value of bilingual counseling.

## RESTATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Preliminary data show that bilingual counseling is essential to servicing bilingual students. According to the 2010 census, 50.5 million Latinos report living in the United States. In the city of Detroit, 713,777 live there. Most Latinos reside in the city's southwest sector, which is the center of Latino life. The school that is used in this study is situated in southwest Detroit, and it is home to 1,465 students, 1054 of them Latino. Nine hundred twenty of these Latino students identify as Spanish/English bilingual. The demographics of the school mirror a growing trend throughout the United States, where the number of Latinos steadily grows with each passing year. From 2000 to 2010, America's Latino population grew by 43%. By 2050, the number of Latinos in the United States is projected to be 128 million. Currently, Latinos

represent 16.3% of America's population; by 2050, Latinos will represent 29% of the total population (Pew Hispanic Center, 2011).

To date, no study has explored the efficacy of bilingual counseling in American high schools. This study does. In 1975, Conville and Ivey wrote about the need for the training of bilingual school counselors; they were likely the first to do so. Over 25 years later, Robles-Piña, Bruhn, and Irby (2001) and Bruhn, Irby, Luo, Thweatt, and Lara-Alecio (2005) chronicled just such a program that trained bilingual school counselors. Bruhn et al. (2005) cite the directors of counseling and guidance programs of six school districts in the area of Houston, Texas, who believe that bilingual counseling will increase effective communication among all interested parties: "This will assist us in better communicating with students and their parents ... (when) because parents don't speak English, he/she [the bilingual counselor] can be the bridge of communication between parents and the school" (p. 158). Bruhn et al. (2005) and the district directors are talking about the value of bilingual counseling, specifically, its role in increasing effective communication among bilingual Latino students, school personnel, and the students' parents. This survey study explores this very issue. By examining communication between students and school personnel and between school personnel and the parents/guardians of the students, this study assesses the value of bilingual counseling at a high school in southwest Detroit.

## REVIEW OF METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The sample of this pilot survey study consisted of teachers, counselors, social workers, the school psychologist, the librarian, the attendance agent, administrators, and educational



technicians. Among the teaching staff, general education teachers, bilingual teachers, and special education teachers participated. School clerical staff, custodial staff, public safety personnel, substitute teachers, and the school bookkeeper were excluded. So, too, was the researcher himself, the school's bilingual counselor. The sample included all full-time staff, primarily educators and former educators, who interact with students on a daily basis.

The measuring instrument was a questionnaire that consisted of 19 questions. No question contained descriptive or demographic data. Because the researcher also worked in the school, it was important to guarantee the respondents' anonymity.

The first two questions required responses of either yes or no. They were given a numerical weight; 0 represented a response of "no", whereas 1 represented the answer option for "yes". Moreover, 0 represented the minimum value, and 1 represented the maximum value. The remaining seventeen questions were measured on a Likert scale. Numerical values were given to each of the five answer options: 1 = not very helpful; 2 = not helpful; 3 = neutral; 4 = helpful; and 5 = very helpful. The minimum value was 1, and the maximum value was 5.

The researcher distributed the questionnaires, together with informed consent forms, to each potential participant. Before giving the participants the informed consent form, the researcher read a prepared informed script, assuring each participant that his/her participation would be voluntary and completely anonymous.

Each participant was directed to return the completed questionnaire to the researcher's mailbox, which was located in the school's main office. This, too, ensured anonymity.

In all, 81 questionnaires were distributed; 61 were returned. No questionnaire was returned directly to the researcher; all were deposited in the researcher's mailbox. Two of the questionnaires were spoiled; one participant only responded to the first two questions, and another indicated that he/she could not answer the questions. The return rate was 72% as there were  $N = 59$  completed questionnaires. The data analyses were conducted on this subset. There were occasional missing values, which accounted for the slightly different number of responses for each item on the questionnaire.

The Cronbach alpha was used to determine the reliability of items 3 – 19 in the questionnaire. Items 1 and 2 were analyzed apart from questions 3 – 19. A t-test was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the students' lack of English vs. the parents'/guardians' lack of English as an impediment to communication. Levine's test for the underlying assumption of homoscedasticity was conducted. So, too, was the nonparametric Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test.

#### SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The Cronbach alpha established very strong evidence of reliability. Items 3 – 19 were evaluated, and the result was .982. The approach to reliability based on item deletion provided evidence that the survey questions were homogeneous with the purpose of the instrument. The questionnaire was, in fact, a reliable instrument.

The mean value per item was 4.7 on a scale of 1 = low and 5 = high. This indicated that participants found the bilingual counselor to be more-than-helpful, and very nearly very helpful.

A principal components extraction with a varimax rotation was conducted with the factor loadings sorted and then suppressed if  $<1.41$ . After four iterations, seven remaining items accounted for 90.40 % of explained variance. The seven remaining items were questionnaire items 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 15, and 16.

The exploratory factor analysis suggested high internal factor structure of factor A (items 3, 4, 5, 15, and 16, which were identified as “communication”) and factor B (items 7 and 9, which were identified as “interventions”). These seven items were the most revealing in supporting the reliability of the measuring instrument.

Levine’s test for the underlying assumption of homoscedasticity indicated that this condition was violated ( $F = 8.2$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Therefore, the Welsh-Aspin adjustment of the t-test, with Satterthwaite adjustment of degrees of freedom, was used to compare the differences in means between the two groups. The result was not statistically significant ( $t = 1.44$ ,  $df = 114.01$ ,  $p = .15$ ). Consequently, we fail to reject the null hypothesis.

The t-test that was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between items 1 and 2 yielded the following results: there was, in fact, a difference between the bilingual students’ sometimes lack of English proficiency, and that of their parents/guardians in hampering the respondents’ ability to communicate. Because the result was not statistically significant, the researcher failed to reject the null hypothesis.

The nonparametric Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test was also conducted. Here, too, the results were not statistically significant ( $p = .15$ ). Here, too, we fail to reject the null hypothesis.

## RESEARCH QUESTION AND HYPOTHESIS

The research question is as follows: Does bilingual counseling increase effective communication among high school bilingual Latino students, school personnel, and students' parents/guardians in southwest Detroit?

The hypothesis is as follows: Bilingual counseling increases effective communication among high school bilingual Latino students, school personnel, and students' parents/guardians in southwest Detroit.

The null hypothesis is as follows: Bilingual counseling does not increase effective communication among high school bilingual Latino students, school personnel, and students' parents/guardians in southwest Detroit.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In one respect, the results are not encouraging. The results from the Welsh-Aspin adjustment of the t-test, with Satterthwaite adjustment of degrees of freedom, compare the differences in the means of the two groups. The result is not statistically significant. Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. Furthermore, the nonparametric Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test evaluated the statistical significance of items 1 and 2. Here, too, the results were not significant.

Nevertheless, the Cronbach alpha indicated a high level in homogeneity of item content. Consequently, items 3 – 19 showed strong evidence of reliability. Moreover, the approach to

reliability based on item deletion provided evidence that the survey questions were homogeneous with the purpose of the instrument.

Perhaps the most revealing – certainly, the most optimistic – statistic was the measure of central tendency, the mean score for each item, including items 1 and 2. Those means were respectively .66 and .77. The range was 0 – 1. Consequently, for example, item 2 posed the query: the bilingual students' parents'/guardians' lack of English proficiency impedes my ability to communicate with parents. Seventy-seven per cent of the respondents answered in the affirmative. This is consistent with responses that indicate that the bilingual counselor is helpful. More to the point, it explains why the bilingual counselor is helpful; namely, because the parents'/guardians' lack of English proficiency is an obstacle to communication. Summary items statistics compiled an item means for questionnaire items 3 – 19. On a scale of 1 = low and 5 = high, the mean for all 17 items was 4.17. At the very least, the results indicated that respondents considered the bilingual counselor to be helpful, if not altogether very helpful. Among the highest rated responses is the collective response to item 8: How helpful is the bilingual counselor when speaking to bilingual students, their parents/guardians, and staff members when all parties convene for a meeting? Here, the mean score was 4.30. The highest mean score applied to item 19: How helpful is the bilingual counselor in assisting bilingual students to graduate on time? The mean score was 4.42. Between the clear evidence of reliability for items 3 – 19 and the mean scores for the same items, the results indicate that the participants considered the bilingual counselor to be helpful in increasing effective communication among high school bilingual Latino students, school personnel, and students' parents and guardians.

## IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The implications of the study indicate the importance (certainly, the helpfulness) of bilingual counseling. The study focuses primarily upon communication as the aspect most influenced by the bilingual counselor. Originally, the researcher hoped to examine quality of life issues in order to ascertain if bilingual counseling enhances the quality of life for bilingual students and their families. This was much too vague and, clearly, subjective. Communication, however, is much more measurable. Certainly, it is easily observable and identifiable. English-only teachers, counselors, or administrators call upon the bilingual counselor when they contend with Spanish-only or bilingual students or parents who speak in their native language.

America's ethnic and linguistic landscape is rapidly changing. Some of the most recent data predict that by 2060, 43% of the United States population will be white, whereas in 1960, that number was 85% (Pew Research Center, 2014). This same report predicts that Latinos will lead that group with 31% of the population.

As the number of Latinos increases, so, too, will the number of school-age Latino children. In order to meet the needs of this population, schools will have to employ bilingual school counselors. The need currently exists. It will grow with each passing year. As this pilot study indicates, bilingual counselors are helpful in communicating with bilingual students, their parents/guardians, and staff on a range of issues as critical as intervening when faced with suicidal ideation or simply addressing behaviors that involve absenteeism and tardiness. The implications of this study indicate a shifting school culture, one that is more responsive to the needs of an ever changing ethnic and linguistic America.

## LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted at the school where the researcher works as the bilingual counselor. Consequently, the researcher designed the questionnaire so that it was devoid of any descriptive or demographic identifiers. This is a limitation. It would have been instructive to learn how respondents, either individually or as a group (i.e., by classifications), responded to the questions. Granted, the mean scores for all of the responses were high. Nevertheless, some of the respondents indicated that the bilingual counselor was not very helpful at every level. Why was this? It is likely that a descriptive component would have yielded an answer or, perhaps, a series of answers. Perhaps the respondent was a teacher who taught only general education classes where students (bilingual or not) primarily spoke English. Perhaps the respondent never had reason to utilize the bilingual counselor. Without a demographic component, it is impossible to analyze trends in the responses. It is impossible to know why people responded as they did. Finally, a demographic component would enable the researcher to draw much more valid inferences with respect to the implications of the study.

Demographic information would also help generalize the researcher's findings. For example, English-only school personnel may rely more heavily upon the services of a bilingual counselor in a school whose population is predominately Spanish/English bilingual. Conversely, bilingual staff may more easily surmount linguistic hurdles when interacting with bilingual students or their parents. Without precise demographic data, it is impossible to draw conclusions that can be generalized. Nor is it possible to address important implications of the study. This, too, is a limitation. Moreover, it limits the researcher's ability to recommend with

specificity future avenues of research. The missing demographic data hinder insights into precise areas that would benefit from a more in-depth investigation. For example, such data may describe a school whose personnel are newly hired vs. one where the staff is seasoned. The data may depict a school whose staff speaks the students' language vs. one that employs primarily English-only teachers and counselors.

Another limitation of the study is methodological. The current study employed a convenience sample. Therefore, it was not random. Because the sample was not random, it is impossible to determine if it was representative of most high schools, say, in the Detroit metropolitan area, or high schools surrounding Detroit that contain a predominately bilingual student body. Moreover, the sample was small. Because it was not large, the sample risked not being representative. Additionally, generalizability risked being further compromised. "With small samples, the probability of selecting deviant samples is greater than with large samples" (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000, p. 177).

The researcher contacted a neighboring high school with an identical student demographic. Unfortunately, the school did not employ a bilingual counselor. Expanding the number of schools used in this study would have made the study more generalizable and more credible. It is possible that similar trends would have been detected elsewhere. Possibly different themes would have surfaced. Still, for all of the insights that this study yields, it would have been a stronger study – more representative of the world it depicts – had the population been expanded to include additional schools.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH



The recommendations for future research stem, in part, from the limitations of this pilot study. More schools should participate in any future study. According the Pew Hispanic Center, states such as California and Texas are fairly brimming with Latino populations. Whenever this researcher speaks with a counselor in Texas or southern California, that counselor invariably has a Latino surname and speaks Spanish. Compared with cities such as Miami, San Diego, and Houston, Detroit's number of Latinos is small. Expanding the target population to include at least several schools would provide the researcher with a more accurate representation of schools' attitudes toward bilingual counseling. With a larger representative sample, the results would be more generalizable. Selecting a random sample, as opposed to a convenience sample, would further strengthen the likelihood that the sample would be representative.

Future studies should contain demographic information about the participants. The information should include the participant's age, gender, ethnicity, years of service, job title, certification, and linguistic abilities. For example, does the participant speak any language or languages in addition to English? If so, which languages? Is the participant a general education teacher; is the participant a bilingual education teacher? This information is crucial because it would enable the researcher to draw inferences about why participants respond as they do. Further, it would enable the researcher to generalize the results based on the demographic data. An English-only teacher who rarely interacts with bilingual students may never require the services of a bilingual counselor. A bilingual staff member of west European ancestry may interact more effectively with bilingual students than a Latino staff member who does not speak Spanish. Only demographic information will yield data that may explain why the

participants respond as they do. Only this kind of information will enable the researcher to draw conclusions about trends and generalize the results.

Adjusting the demographic to accommodate more languages and cultures is another recommendation. Latinos are just one cultural/linguistic group whose numbers are growing. Others include Chinese, whose numbers total 4,010,114, according to the 2010 census; Indians, whose numbers are 3,183,063; and Vietnamese, who represent 1,737,433 of the 17,320,856 Asians living in the United States (Pew Research Center, 2013). Adapting the linguistic identifier of the bilingual counselor (e.g., a Vietnamese/English bilingual counselor as opposed to a Spanish/English bilingual counselor) may also yield more nuanced results. In fact, the results may be entirely different. It is possible that communication may not even be a variable. Other cultural and/or linguistic components may surface, ones to which only a counselor in that particular environment would be sensitive. It is impossible to say what theme would arise if the demographic were expanded to include other ethnicities and other languages. But it is hopeful to consider the possibility of including others in future research. It is hopeful to conclude that, ultimately, this will have to happen.

According to the Arab American Institute Foundation (2011), approximately one-third of the city of Dearborn, Michigan reports to be of Arabic ancestry. The United States census places the approximate 2012 population of Dearborn at 96,474. Although these data do not reflect the precise number of Arabic people who live in Dearborn, it does state that 43.9% of the population of Dearborn speaks a language other than English at home, whereas only 9% of the total population of the state of Michigan speaks a language other than English at home.

Four of the public high schools in Dearborn employ bilingual counselors. Representative of the surrounding community, the primary languages in the schools are Arabic and English. Future research could benefit from expanding a study like this one to include a different language and culture (possibly, cultures) such as those represented in Dearborn schools. It would shed light upon issues that are unique to the Arabic-English bilingual population and, very likely, distinct from the Spanish-English population. It is even possible that there may be points of commonality. It is all but certain that including schools from a community like Dearborn, Michigan would increase our understanding of the concerns endemic to bilingual students in American schools.

Hamtramck, Michigan, too, is a linguistically diverse community. The city's one public high school is home to 10 languages. Future research would benefit from examining a school as linguistically rich as this one. It would enhance our understanding of the role of the bilingual school counselor.

Expanding the linguistic boundaries to reflect the ever-expanding and diverse population of school-age children in America is warranted for future research. Whether it is in communities such as Dearborn, where two languages predominate, or Hamtramck, where many languages are represented, expanding research to include an ever-changing, ever increasingly diverse student body within our schools would contribute to a discussion of bilingual counseling. It could increase our appreciation of the role that bilingual counselors play in the lives of bilingual school-age children.

The United States is evolving culturally and linguistically. It is about time that our research keeps pace with the changing landscape. It is about time that American research accurately reflects the concerns of the people – *all* of the people – who live here.

**APPENDIX A****Research Information Sheet**

Title of Study: *A Pilot Study to Determine the Value of Bilingual Counseling in a High School Where the Student Population is Predominately Spanish/English Bilingual*

Principal Investigator (PI): Terrence M. McCabe  
College of Education/Counseling  
(313) 330-2548

**Purpose:**

You are being asked to be in a research study, which examines the value of bilingual counseling in a high school whose student population is predominately Spanish/English bilingual. You are asked to participate in this study because you work in just such a high school. This study is being conducted at Western International High School.

**Study Procedures:**

If you take part in the study, you will be asked to be a member of a convenience sample that is also a purposive sample. You will receive a copy of the questionnaire. You will be asked to respond to items that will enable me to evaluate the value of bilingual counseling in a high school from the perspective of the school personnel who interact with the bilingual students and their families. This includes all full-time staff with the exceptions of clerical staff, custodial staff, public safety staff, and substitute teachers. After you complete the questionnaire, you will return it by placing it in my mailbox in the front office. The questionnaire contains neither demographic nor descriptive data. There is no question that will link you to the responses on the questionnaire. Your participation is voluntary and completely anonymous. The survey should take no more than twenty minutes to complete. Approximately 85 people will participate in this survey.

**Benefits:**

As a participant in this research study, there will be no direct benefit for you; however, information from this study may benefit other people now or in the future.

**Risks:**

There are no known risks at this time to participation in this study.

**Costs:**

There will be no costs to you for participation in this research study.

**Compensation:**

You will not be paid for taking part in this study.

**Confidentiality:**

All information collected about you during the course of this study will be kept without any identifiers.

**Voluntary Participation /Withdrawal:**

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You are free to not answer any questions or withdraw at any time. Your decision will not change any present or future relationships with Wayne State University or its affiliates.

**Questions:**

If you have any questions about this study now or in the future, you may contact Terrence M. McCabe or one of his research team members at the following phone number (313) 330-2548. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, the Chair of the Institutional Review Board can be contacted at (313) 577-1628. If you are unable to contact the research staff, or if you want to talk to someone other than the research staff, you may also call (313) 577-1628 to ask questions or voice concerns or complaints.

**Participation:**

By completing the questionnaire you are agreeing to participate in this study.

**APPENDIX B**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**

Please answer questions 1 and 2 by checking yes or no.

- 1) The bilingual students' sometimes lack of English proficiency hampers my ability to communicate with students.

YES \_\_\_\_\_

NO \_\_\_\_\_

- 2) The bilingual students' parents'/guardians' lack of English proficiency impedes my ability to communicate with parents.

YES \_\_\_\_\_

NO \_\_\_\_\_

Please check the appropriate answer.

		Not Very Helpful	Not Helpful	Neutral	Helpful	Very Helpful
	How helpful is the school bilingual counselor in assisting me by speaking					
3	with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) parents/guardians during parent teacher conferences?					
4	to parents/guardians about their bilingual students' tardiness?					
5	to parents/guardians about their bilingual students' absenteeism?					
6	to parents/guardians about their bilingual students' failing grades?					

		Not Very Helpful	Not Helpful	Neutral	Helpful	Very Helpful
	<b>How helpful is the bilingual counselor when speaking</b>					
7	with parents/guardians at home in order to gain their permission to release bilingual students to go home?					
8	to bilingual students, their parents/guardians, and staff members when all parties convene for a meeting?					
9	with bilingual students and parents/guardians when students demonstrate suicidal ideation?					
10	to my bilingual students about tardiness?					
11	to my bilingual students about absenteeism?					
12	to my bilingual students about failing classes?					

	<b>When I meet with parents/guardians, how helpful is the bilingual counselor in helping me to</b>					
13	communicate?					
14	discuss student progress?					
15	discuss student behavior?					

	<b>How helpful is the bilingual counselor</b>					
16	In assisting me to communicate with bilingual students?					
17	in communicating to me important medical information about bilingual students?					
18	in placing bilingual students in language-appropriate classes?					
19	in assisting bilingual students to graduate on time?					



## APPENDIX C

## Wayne State University Institutional Review Board Approval

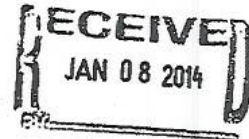
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<http://irb.wayne.edu>

## CONCURRENCE OF EXEMPTION

To: Terrence McCabe  
Theoretical & Behavior Foundations

From: Dr. Deborah Ellis *N. Naham/AB*  
Chairperson, Behavioral Institutional Review Board (B3)



Date: December 13, 2013

RE: IRB #: 117813B3X

Protocol Title: A Pilot Study to Determine the Value of Bilingual Counseling in a High School Where the Student Population is Predominantly Spanish/English Bilingual

Sponsor:

Protocol #: 1311012594

The above-referenced protocol has been reviewed and found to qualify for Exemption according to paragraph #2 of the Department of Health and Human Services Code of Federal Regulations [45 CFR 46.101(b)].

- Social/Behavioral/Education Exempt Protocol Summary Form (received in the IRB Office 11/19/2013)
- Protocol (received in the IRB Office 11/19/2013)
- Research Information Sheet (dated 12/10/2013)
- Script for Prospective Participants
- Data Collection Tools: Questionnaire

This proposal has not been evaluated for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human subjects in relation to the potential benefits.

- Exempt protocols do not require annual review by the IRB.
- All changes or amendments to the above-referenced protocol require review and approval by the IRB BEFORE implementation.
- Adverse Reactions/Unexpected Events (AR/UE) must be submitted on the appropriate form within the timeframe specified in the IRB Administration Office Policy (<http://irb.wayne.edu/policies-human-research.php>).

NOTE: Forms should be downloaded from the IRB Administration Office website <http://irb.wayne.edu> at each use.

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**ABSTRACT****BILINGUAL COUNSELING IN A HIGH SCHOOL WHERE THE STUDENTS ARE PREDOMINATELY SPANISH/ENGLISH BILINGUAL**

by

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August 2014

**Advisor:** Dr. JoAnne Holbert**Major:** Counseling**Degree:** Doctor of Philosophy

The present study examined bilingual counseling in a localized setting: a high school in southwest Detroit. The study assessed the ways in which bilingual counseling increases effective communication among bilingual students, school personnel, and students' parents/guardians. Participants included a cross-section of educators and support staff who work at a high school in southwest Detroit where the student population is predominately Spanish/English bilingual. The instrument that was used to collect data was a questionnaire, which consisted of 19 questions. The questionnaire was designed by the researcher. Questionnaires were distributed to 81 participants; 59 completed questionnaires were returned. The questions reflected the participants' attitudes with respect to the research question: Does bilingual counseling increase effective communication among high school bilingual Latino students, school personnel, and students' parents/guardians in southwest Detroit? The Cronbach alpha was used to determine the reliability of items 3-19. The result, .982, indicated a very high level in homogeneity of item content and, therefore, very strong



evidence of reliability. A t-test was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between students vs. parents on lack of English. The result was not statistically significant. The nonparametric Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test was also conducted. Here, too, the results were not statistically significant. For items 1 and 2, with a range of 0 – 1, the mean scores were .66 and .77 respectively. Summary items statistics compiled an item means for questionnaire items 3 – 19. On a scale of 1 = low and 5 = high, the mean for all 17 items was 4.17, indicating that the participants found the bilingual counselor to be helpful. The total scale mean was 70.96 out of a maximum total score of 85. The internal factor structure, via exploratory factor analysis, was examined to provide evidence of construct validity. Implications of the study, its limitations, and recommendations for future research were discussed.

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Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan  
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