Inter-Ethnic Friendship, Co-Ethnic Friendship And Acculturation Among Adolescent Immigrants To Spain

BARRY H. SCHNEIDER

IBIS MARLENE ALVAREZ-VALDIVIA
Earlier studies, inspired by the U.S. “melting pot” concept, considered only the degree of identification with the host culture.

Groundbreaking research conducted at the University of British Columbia demonstrated many advantages of bidimensional models, in which identification with both host culture and the culture of origin are considered (Ryder, Alden & Palhaus).
BERRY’S MODEL

John Berry’s model is based on the principles of cultural maintenance and contact-participation

- Cultural Maintenance
  - the extent individuals value and wish to maintain their cultural identity

- Contact-Participation
  - the extent individuals value and seek out contact with those outside their own group, and wish to participate in the daily life of the larger society
BERRY’S ACCULTURATION TYPES

• Integrated individuals
  Individuals want to maintain their identity with their home culture, but also want to take on some characteristics of the new culture (Cultural maintenance + contact/participation)

• Assimilated individuals
  These people do not want to keep the identity of their home culture, but would rather take on all of the characteristics of the new culture (Contact/participation but not cultural maintenance)

• Separated individuals
  • Want to separate themselves from the dominant culture
  • Can be called segregation if it is forced separation
    (Cultural maintenance but not contact/participation)

• Marginalized individuals
  These individuals don’t want anything to do with either the new culture or the old culture
    (Neither cultural maintenance or contact/participation)
The essence of Berry’s principles

- **Integrated individuals**, who value and wish to retain their cultures of origin but who also wish to establish contact with the host culture and participate in it, function best in multicultural societies. They also are the best adjusted psychologically.
The concept of code switching, borrowed from psycholinguistics, refers to the mastery of the different behavioral rules, norms and expectations needed to interact successfully within both one’s home culture and the host culture (i.e., to be or become and integrated individual in Berry’s terms).
Which countries receive the most immigrants?

- 52% of immigrants – 222 million live in the 10 countries with the largest number of international migrants
- **USA** (43 million), Russia (12 million), Germany (11 million)
- Saudi Arabia (7 million), **CANADA** (7 million)
- France (6.6 million), U.K. (6.5 million)
- **SPAIN** (6.4 million), India (5 million), Ukraine, 5 million

(United Nations statistics, 2010)
Which countries have the highest proportion of immigrants (foreign-born residents)?

- Spain has a higher proportion of immigrants (11%) than either France (10%) or the U.K. (9%).
- Australia (24%) and Canada (21%) have higher proportions of immigrants than any European country, as does Israel (29%)
- Immigrants represent 13% of the population of the U.S.
- The countries with the highest proportions of immigrants have small native populations and many temporary workers – Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Kuwait, etc.
Immigration to Spain in context

- Many immigrants arrived for economic reasons during the era of prosperity in the 1990s
- Immigrants suffer disproportionately in the current economic crisis
- For many Spaniards, the peaceful reconciliation among the country’s regions is more important than welcoming immigrants
- As in much of Western Europe, immigrants benefit from a policy of civic integration. However, there is nothing like the concept of a melting pot or of multiculturalism.
School and community policy on immigration is somewhat nebulous
Objectives of our study

- To establish the extent of inter-ethnic and co-ethnic friendship among adolescent immigrants to Barcelona and Girona
- To determine the effects of acculturation on the friendships of immigrant adolescents and on their adjustment to school
Sample

- 682 adolescents from six schools in Barcelona and Girona
- 15 and 16 years old (Secondary I and II)
- 47% male; 53% female
- 228 were first- or second- generation immigrants (34%)
- 10 different cultural groups (Latin America, Middle East, Eastern Europe, India, China)
Major instruments

- Demographic questionnaire
- Sociometric nominations for friends
- Acculturation scale (Ryder, Alen & Paulhus, 2000)
- Friendship Quality Scale (Bukowski, Boivin & Hoza, 1994)
- Social Skills Rating Scale (Gresham & Elliot, 1988).
- Ratings of parent expectations and peer support for school success (Fuligni, 1997)
- Scenarios about parent and teacher promotion of acculturation (Tyler, Boykin, Miller & Hurley, 2006)
How common is intercultural friendship?

- For immigrants, 45% of best friendships are within the same cultural group; 26% with members of other immigrant groups; 29% with majority culture
- For participants of majority cultures, 85% are with other members of the majority culture
Acculturation and friendship

- For immigrants, acculturation to the *culture of origin* is correlated (.24*) with positive features of friendship, such as spending time together, intimacy, reciprocal help and loyalty. Small but significant negative correlation with conflict (-.14*)
- Acculturation with the host culture is not correlated with friendship quality
Acculturation and school adjustment

- Acculturation with the *host culture* is correlated with the school adjustment of immigrants as rated by their teachers: Cooperation .20*; Self-Control .21*; Externalization -.19*; Internalization -.23*; Hyperactivity -.17*; Academic Competencia .24*; Assertiveness .11 (NS)
- Acculturation with the *culture of origin* is not correlated with any aspect of school adjustment as rated by teacher
Teacher-rated cooperation by acculturation group

Marginalized: 5
Separated: 4
Assimilated: 5
Integrated: 6
Teacher-rated academic competence by acculturation group

Bar chart showing the academic competence ratings for different acculturation groups:
- Marginalized: 13
- Separated: 13
- Assimilated: 13
- Integrated: 13.5

The chart indicates that the Integrated group has the highest rating, followed by Assimilated and Separated, with Marginalized having the lowest rating.
Self-reported positive friendship quality by acculturation group

- Marginalized
- Separated
- Assimilated
- Integrated
Major conclusions

- Identification with the host culture is linked with success at school.
- However, *integrated adolescents*, who identify simultaneously with host culture and culture of origin, do best at school, consistent with Berry’s theory.
- Identification with the country of origin is linked with friendship quality.
- Friendship quality is highest among adolescents who *either* identify with their host culture but not Spanish culture *or* among integrated adolescents (i.e., significantly higher than assimilated or marginalized participants).
- Thus, Berry’s principles need to be considered by domain.