

Assessing Intercultural Experience: Differences in Biculturalism, Intercultural Sensitivity, and  
Cognitive Flexibility Among Latino Immigrants

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### **Abstract**

This study examined first generation immigrants, defined as those who were born in a Latin American country and moved to the U.S. after the age of 12, and second generation immigrants, defined as those who were born in the U.S. or moved here before the age of 12. Literature in the field of cross-cultural adaptation suggests that intercultural communication competence tends to be further developed as a result of intercultural adaptation. The intent of this research was to test this assertion. Data was collected by way of survey administration on a sample of 216 Latino immigrants representing both first and second generations. Three hypotheses guiding this study proposed that first generation immigrants would score higher on cognitive flexibility, intercultural sensitivity, and biculturalism than second generation immigrants, because of their tangible exposure to more than one culture. These hypotheses were not supported; results showed that second generation immigrants scored higher on all three measures than their first generation counterparts. Furthermore, it was expected that a bicultural orientation would be correlated with cognitive flexibility and intercultural sensitivity. However, only a moderate correlation was found between higher scores on biculturalism and cognitive flexibility and intercultural sensitivity. Reasons for these unexpected findings are discussed.

**Key Terms:** immigrants, acculturation, biculturalism, intercultural communication, Latinos, intercultural sensitivity, cognitive flexibility.

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## Introduction

Every year, individuals from varying backgrounds cross cultural boundaries for assorted reasons. Missionaries, diplomats, Peace Corps volunteers, professors, students, and sojourners may venture into unknown cultural environments as strangers hoping to successfully adapt to a new culture. As noted by Begley (2000), “Distance and seas no longer keep people at home; more of the world’s population is now on the move seeking trade, work, knowledge, and adventure” (p. 404). Kim and Gudykunst (1988) stated that refugees, and immigrants in particular, traverse cultural boundaries “in search of freedom, security, and social, economic, or cultural betterment” (p.7). Sojourners, whether short-term or long-term, are met with challenges when they cross cultural boundaries, and will inevitably need to initiate strategies to adapt to a new culture. Immigrants are a particular group of sojourners who move to another culture to seek permanent or long-term residence.

The ethnic minority population in the United States is on an increase due to the steady flow of immigration. Centuries ago, the influx of immigrants emanated from Europe; in contrast, since the mid- sixties, the majority of immigrants are arriving from Asia and Latin America (Nguyen, 2006). The United States has seen a drastic increase in immigration from Latin America, resulting in Hispanics now comprising 15.1% of the total population (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). According to Guzmán (2001), the population of Hispanic immigrants has increased by 57% in the last ten years. In fact, Hispanics are arriving at a higher rate than Americans of European descent are born and are predicted to comprise one-fourth of the total population within the next fifty years (Van Oudenhoven, 2006; Nagayama Hall & Barongan, 2001). Stodolska (2008) argued that this rapid increase of young immigrants has a large impact on “the social, cultural, political, and economic fabric of the American society” (p. 35).

Before moving into specific terminology relating to immigrant adaptation and related constructs, it is first important to provide a brief outline of divergent ideologies pertaining to immigrant acculturation. Over the last century, two prevailing perspectives have been presented in terms of immigrant adaptation (Martin & Midgley, 1994). First, the melting pot ideology was constructed to explain immigrant orientation with a host society (Postiglione, 1983). Historically, the melting pot (assimilation) perspective has condoned a rejection of native culture on the grounds that it inhibits the adoption of the host culture (Martin & Midgley, 1994). Beginning in the 1930s, the Americanization movement showed that the “host society became supportive of restricting immigration and educating ethnicity out of immigrants” (Postiglione, 1983, p. 163). However, others argue that early uses of the term assimilation did not suggest that there was a need to discard the characteristics of one’s culture of origin, but encouraged an entrance into mainstream American culture (Alba & Nee, 1997). Many researchers agree that with time, the concept of assimilation has shifted towards the ideal that old traits be discarded and American traits replace them in a linear fashion (Rumbaut, 1997).

At the turn of the century, Germans and Scottish-Irish were aggressively resisting complete Americanization and were attempting to preserve the ways of their original heritages (Postiglione, 1983). Postiglione further claimed that immigration history has demonstrated that immigrants “want to become part of the nation, yet, they do not want to relinquish their ethnicity” (p. 163). This notion is referred to as the embedded domain assumption, which basically argues that immigrants do not fully assimilate. Accordingly, “It may be inferred that it is the nature of man to retain a segment of his ethnicity even while engaging in the process of assimilation” (p. 163). This orientation is referred to as pluralism—an ideology that accepts the notion that immigrants can maintain their original culture while participating with the host

society (Van Oudenhoven, Ward, & Masgoret, 2006). This view is the alternative to the melting pot (assimilation) ideology. A rigid adoption of either perspective is futile; thus neither ideology should be taken to the extreme. For instance, “the pluralists’ insistence on maintaining group identity limits the freedom of individuals to choose their own loyalties” (Martin & Midgley, 1994, p. 38). In turn, a strict adoption of U.S. American culture and a complete and immediate abandonment of one’s original culture is suboptimal. Thus, a “pluralistic integration” was proposed by Higham (1984). This view esteems a common culture for all individuals living in the U.S., but also respects the decision of minority groups to preserve their original culture. The multiculturalism debate is complex and has become politically charged. Although the political ramifications of immigration are both important and relevant, it is important to note that the present researcher does not wish to address stark political issues related to immigration and multiculturalism.

Attention will now focus on studies that have addressed pluralistic and assimilationist perspectives, but first, it is important define the terms that will be referenced. Numerous definitions and conceptions of adaptation and assimilation exist in the intercultural communication literature. The term adaptation is used more broadly and encompasses the concepts of assimilation, acculturation, integration, etc. (Kim, 2001). Kim (2001) defined assimilation as the process whereby “immigrants become ‘absorbed’ into the native population through convergence in cultural values and personal traits” (Kim, 2001, p. 15).

Mainstream research in cross-cultural studies has focused on the potentially negative effects of cultural transition, such as depression, suicidal ideation, and substance abuse (Alegría, et al., 2007; Hovey & King, 1996; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001), where assimilation into mainstream American society has been viewed as a solution. More recent studies have demonstrated that

assimilation may foster negative psychological outcomes, especially among young people (Portes & Zhou, 1993; Harker, 2001). However, according to Stodolska (2008), “Towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the opinions regarding young immigrants’ adaptation became more liberal and attention shifted toward virtues of multiculturalism, transnational connections, and the beneficial effects of ethnic traits’ retention on immigrants’ mental, social, and economic well-being” (p. 49). In this way, the assimilationist ideal has been brought into question. There has been a perpetual debate between the assimilation ideal and the multicultural or pluralistic ideal.

As stated, traditional studies in the area of intercultural communication have focused on cultural convergence, or assimilation, as a means to adaptation. In the past, this “melting pot” ideology was preferred in the United States (Van Oudenhoven, Ward, & Masgoret, 2006); however, currently in the U.S., there appears to be a shift towards more of a tossed salad ideology (Kim, 2001). In fact, “in most multicultural societies, the current discourse centers on the question of whether immigrants should assimilate or integrate” (Van Oudenhoven, Ward, & Masgoret, 2006, p. 641). Social ideological debates have prevailed among researchers in regards to whether or not a melting pot/assimilationist perspective is the best way to achieve adaptation. For example, Nelson (1974) sided with a pluralist ideology, arguing that “assimilation is only a special case of changes involved in the acculturation process, and that acculturation should be seen as a bidirectional process that does not require changes in values within the acculturating group” (qtd. in Kim, 2001, p. 24.) Pluralist models also consider the acceptance and/or rejection of both the host culture and home culture. Although an integrative approach may be favored by immigrants, the host society members often contend that immigrants should adopt an assimilative stance and “are expected to abandon their cultural and

linguistic distinctiveness and adapt the core values of the host society” (Van Oudenhoven, Ward, & Masgoret, 2006, p. 642).

Commenting on the divergent perspectives of pluralism and assimilation, Kim (2001) claimed that the “ongoing ideological debate between assimilationists and pluralists loses its logical as well as its pragmatic relevance,” because there is an inherent duality between acculturation and deculturation (both involved in the adaptation process) that cannot be easily resolved. Furthermore, Kim asserted, “Neither ideology accurately shows the way things really are in cross-cultural situations. Both ideologies fail to affirm the consistent research evidence that both convergent (assimilative) and divergent (pluralist) tendencies play out simultaneously whenever differing cultural (or subcultural) systems interface for prolonged periods” (Kim, 2001, p. 227).

All this considered, it is argued that certain immigrant individuals may be more inclined to assimilate than others as a mode of adaptation. For example, second generation immigrants, generally referred to as those born in the United States to immigrant parents, may prefer assimilation because they have been more accustomed to American culture starting at a young age. As a result of being socialized in American schools and institutions, second generation immigrants are automatically exposed to the American way of being. Thus, they may be more inclined to learn about their culture-of-origin in a “social vacuum,” typically in the isolation of their home. Because they lack the multicultural experience that their parents have developed, these individuals may be at a disadvantage in certain respects. Many researchers (e.g. LaFromboise, Coleman, & Gerton, 1993; Szapocznik, Kurtines, & Fernandez, 1980; Horenczyk, 1996; Van Oudenhoven et al., 1998) have argued that immigrants can function effectively within American culture while retaining aspects of the original culture and identity. This blended, or

integrated, strategy of acculturation may be more difficult for second-generation immigrants to achieve.

Although the word “immigrant” is often associated with negative connotations, Jan Pieter van Oudenhoven (2006), who has done research on immigrants in the Netherlands, argued that the multicultural background of many immigrants can be advantageous and lead to successful outcomes. He argued, “Immigrants may by their acculturation process have become more cosmopolitan and interculturally more effective as compared to non-immigrants” (p. 177). He continued to say that “Their intense personal experience with more than one culture may foster an attitude of cosmopolitanism which makes them more effective in current multicultural societies” (p. 178).

A concept known as the *Immigrant Paradox*, or the *Hispanic/Latino Paradox* carries similar applications to the abovementioned cosmopolitan perspective. Introduced by Nguyen (2006), this view maintains that despite the negative factors such as poverty and minority status, the immigrant (foreign-born) population “do better than U.S.-born peers on an array of indices, ranging from health to education to criminal behaviors” (p. 312). However, Nguyen continued to say that the positive outcomes of immigration seem to phase out with subsequent generations. Another aspect of this paradox concerns the traditional acculturative strategy of assimilation, where acculturative strategy refers to “the various ways that groups and individuals seek to acculturate” (Berry, 2008, p. 331). Miranda, Estrada, & Firpo-Jimenez (2000) claimed that empirical evidence suggests that both marginalization and assimilation, are accompanied with “negative influences on Latinos’ mental health” (p. 342). Moreover, Buriel, Calzada, and Vasquez (1982) discovered increased delinquency rates and violent behavior among third-generation Latinos as compared with previous generations of less assimilated immigrants.

In opposition, Rumbaut (1999) remarked, “To get ahead, immigrants need to learn how to become American, to overcome their deficits with respect to the new language and culture, the new health care and educational system, the new economy and society. As they [immigrants] shed the old and acquire the new over time, they surmount those obstacles to make their way more successfully” (p. 174). In turn, other studies have found mainstream assimilation to be negatively correlated with psychological adaptation (Padilla, 2006; Phinney et al., 2001).

As mentioned earlier, the motive of this research was not to take a side on the issue of cultural assimilation or pluralism, but rather to explore the cognitive and communicative ramifications of different cultural experiences and acculturative orientations. The central aim was to see if differences would emerge when individuals are raised in one culture as opposed to being socialized in two distinct cultures. More specifically, it was intended to determine the role of multicultural experiences in the development of intercultural communication competence. This research focused on first and second generation Latino immigrants living in the United States. Again, in comparing these two groups, it was expected that a relationship would emerge in regards to intercultural experiences and the ability to understand and embrace cultural differences in the United States. Although subtly connected to the opposing ideological platforms of assimilation and pluralism, this paper did not intend to take a side or dissect the cultural complexities related to both perspectives; rather, the aim was simply to acknowledge that integrative and assimilationist approaches may contribute to differences in cognitive and relational functioning.

The current movement towards globalization is evident in the economic, educational, and political fabric of U.S. American society. Part of this trend is due to an increase in immigration flow, of which the Latino community comprises a large portion. The target population of the

current study was Latino immigrants residing in the mid-Atlantic region of the U.S. Using Young Yun Kim's (2001) theory of cross-cultural adaptation as a framework, the researcher investigated the degree to which the increased multicultural experiences of first-generation immigrants was associated with increased communication competency in intercultural situations. Attention will now be given to providing a clear conception of what it means to be a first-generation immigrant and a second-generation immigrant, respectively.

### **Defining First and Second Generation Immigrants**

Various parameters exist in defining generational cohorts of immigrants. After consulting several studies addressing the impact of generational status on assorted variables it was evident that no clear, agreed-upon parameters exist to describe a first or second-generation immigrant. Portes and Rumbaut (2005) defined the second generation as "native-born children of foreign parents or foreign-born children who were brought to the U.S. before adolescence" (p. 988). In a study linking generational status with academic performance, Padilla (2001) considered a first generation immigrant as one who has moved to the United States after being born in another country, but does not further confine the definition to age of arrival to the U.S. Thus, a 1-year old child who moves to the United States with his/her parents is considered first-generation under this definition. Defining the first-generation cohort simply as "foreign-born" is problematic. Padilla placed immigrant arrival to a new culture into the following three age categories: early (0-5 years of age), middle (6-10 years of age), and late (11+ years of age). In addressing the transmission of ethnic cultural practices, Padilla (2001) referred to a second-generation individual as one who was born in the U.S. to immigrant parents, or moved to the U.S. before the age of 5. As noted by Portes & Rumbaut (2001), immigrant children born in the U.S or having moved here at a very young age are almost identical when assessing linguistic

abilities, academic behaviors and cultural assimilation. Other immigrant studies (e.g. Stodolska, 2008; Gonzales et al., 2004) referred to the first and second-generation immigrant cohorts, but never operationalized these terms.

A nuanced conception of generational status emanated from the work of Kim, Brenner, Liang, and Asay (2003); this definition combines characteristics of first and second-generation immigrants. In investigating the adaptive experiences of Asian American college students, these researchers coined the term 1.5-generation. This term is used to describe those who “immigrated to the United States as a child or an adolescent [where] a large portion of their developmental years was spent in the United States” (pp. 156-157). They considered the first generation as those individuals who immigrate as adults. An example of the different adaptive experiences of the 1.5 and first generation cohorts was noted by Hurh (1990). He says the 1.5 generation immigrants are at an advantaged due to dual social and linguistic exposure to the United States and to their ethnic culture of origin.

Researchers looking at the adaptation experiences and subsequent outcomes of another group of sojourners, Third Culture Individuals (Lyttle, Barker, & Cornwell, 2010), consulted developmental psychology literature (e.g. Newman & Newman, 2003; Dacey and Travers, 2002) to help determine age parameters. Cross-cultural transitions occurring between the ages of 6 and 18 were found to be very impactful on an individual. Pollock and Van Reken (2001) refer to Third Culture Individuals as those who are exposed to more than one culture for a significant portion of their developmental years. Although this group is different from immigrant individuals in that they eventually return to their home culture, Third Culture Individuals go through similar processes of immigrants. Thus, in defining first and second-generation

immigrants, human developmental research should also be considered, specifically, characteristics of middle childhood (ages 6-12) and early adolescence (12-18).

According to Newman and Newman (2003), during middle childhood, “children are learning the fundamental skills of their culture” (p. 254); this period is also marked by the acquisition of enhanced cognitive and social abilities, where an individual is more apt to recognize differences between people (Dacey & Travers, 2002). Early adolescence is accompanied by a more complex stage in life, with an individual developing more refined cognitive and affective components of mental functioning. During later adolescence (ages 18-24), individuals experience a “heightened sensitivity to the process of identity development... [and] attempt to embrace particular values, goals, and life commitments” unique to their culture (Newman & Newman, p. 232). In considering the important processes an individual undergoes during these different developmental stages, it is important to incorporate this information into a working definition of immigrants coming from different generations. For example, consider the following situation... “Depending on their age at the time of immigration, many young immigrants have already been socialized to the culture of their parents and as a consequence experience some difficulty in adapting to their new surroundings because of the demand to learn the language and cultural practices of their hosts” (Newman & Newman, 2003, p. 473). Similarly, Mena, Padilla, & Maldonado (1987) discovered that adolescents immigrating before the age of 12 experienced less acculturative stress than those individuals immigrating after the age of 12.

As stated, there is still existing ambiguity in defining generational cohorts. Drawing from developmental psychology and third culture literature (Newman & Newman, 2003; Dacey and Travers, 2002; Lyttle et al., 2010), the definition for the 1.5-generation (Kim et al., 2003),

and other immigrant studies (e.g. Padilla, 2001, 2006), the following definitions and terminology were used in this study: first generation immigrants were defined as those individuals who were born in another country of citizenship and moved to the United States after the age of 12.

Second-generation immigrants were defined as those individuals who were born in the United States to immigrant parents, or who immigrated to the U.S. before the age of 12, excluding Americans born overseas.

Portes and Rumbaut (2005) exemplified the relevance of studying immigrant samples in the following statistic: “Almost one in four Americans under the age of 18 is an immigrant or a child of an immigrant and the proportion just keeps going” (p. 986). Moreover, many individuals residing in the United States are either immigrants, have immigrant parents, or are socialized around immigrant friends or classmates. With this in mind, further investigation of immigrant acculturation was warranted. In a broad sense, it is important to investigate how these individuals affect and are affected by American culture.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this quantitative study is to investigate the degree to which the increased multicultural experiences of first generation Latino immigrants was associated with greater intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility compared to second generation Latino immigrants. In this study, multicultural experience refers to “all direct and indirect experiences of encountering or interacting with the elements and/or members of foreign cultures” (Leung, Maddux, Galinsky, & Chiu, 2008, p. 169). Intercultural sensitivity is defined as “the ability to discriminate and experience relevant cultural differences” (Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, p. 422). A person who is cognitively flexible is said to have heightened awareness, confidence, and a willingness to adapt in new situations (Martin & Anderson, 1998). Both of

these characteristics are related to the overarching attribute of intercultural communication competence, where intercultural sensitivity would be considered the affective component, and cognitive flexibility would be considered the cognitive component. Chen and Starosta (1997) conceptualize intercultural sensitivity as “an individual's ability to develop a positive emotion towards understanding and appreciating cultural differences that promotes appropriate and effective behavior in intercultural communication” (p. 7). Moreover, Bennett (1998) considered intercultural communication competence as an avenue for individuals to achieve mutual understanding among culturally distinct counterparts. Acculturation served as a mediating variable in this study and is referred to as the change that results from having contact with people from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Using Kim’s (2001) theory of cross-cultural adaptation as a lens, this investigation also sought to determine the degree to which increased intercultural adaptation experiences contribute to greater levels of intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility. It was contended that second-generation immigrants have a harder time internalizing two cultures and thus are less apt to develop multicultural perspectives because they have been socialized to a large degree in a single culture. Undergoing research in this area was intended to elucidate a largely ignored area of communication research—the positive outcomes of internalizing two cultures. For example, Padilla (2006) found dual culture acquisition, or biculturalism, to be a positive coping mechanism for adapting to a new society. Cognitively speaking, Benet-Martinez, Lee, & Leu (2006) and Tadmor & Tetlock (2006) found that bicultural individuals demonstrated more cognitive complexity than their monocultural counterparts. These researchers argued that “exposure to more than one culture may increase individual’s ability to detect, process, and organize everyday cultural meaning, highlighting the potential benefits of multiculturalism” (p.

386). In this study, multiculturalism refers to a general acceptance of cultural difference, and biculturalism refers to the internalization of two distinct cultures within the same individual (LaFromboise et al., 1993). These concepts will be further explored in the literature review.

## **Literature Review**

Within the field of intercultural communication exists several prominent theories and concepts that have contributed to the extant knowledge related to the cross-cultural and intercultural transitions of sojourners. Kim (1977, 1988, 2001) has done extensive investigations on the cross-cultural adaptation of both short-term and long-term sojourners, including immigrants. Disciplines such as cross-cultural and developmental psychology have contributed significantly to the current knowledge regarding the acculturative and adaptive processes of immigrants. The following information will address the existing literature on immigrants' cross-cultural adaptation, acculturation, and various components of communication competence.

### **Cross-Cultural Adaptation**

Kim (2001) argued, "In this increasingly integrated world, cross-cultural adaptation is a central and defining theme: The multicultural world is enhanced by the experiences of sojourners, immigrants, and others who successfully make the transition from one culture to another" (p. xi). Kim dedicated much of her research to the study of immigrant populations. In investigating the adaptive processes of short-term and long-term sojourners, including immigrants, Kim composed an integrative piece of literature that explains and highlights major components of the adaptive process. An overview of the stress-adaptation-growth dynamic and Kim's research on the immigrant population will be reviewed.

Adaptation is the process of overcoming the barriers separating foreigners from their new surrounding environments. According to Kim, the necessary process of cross-cultural adaptation is defined as "the entirety of the phenomenon of individuals who, upon relocating to an unfamiliar sociocultural environment, strive to establish and maintain a relatively stable,

reciprocal, and functional relationship with the environment” (p. 380). There are multiple internal and external components operating in conjunction during this process; therefore, cross-cultural adaptation can be conceptualized as a “dynamic interplay of the person and the environment” (p. 379). Begley (2000) provided a similar definition of adaptation as “how a sojourner chooses to cope with cultural changes” (p. 401).

The stress-adaptation-growth model suggests that the stress and “psychic disintegration” initially experienced by strangers in a new environment serves as a precursor for adaptation (Kim, 2001). By necessity, individuals are prompted to change by meeting the demands of the host environment in order to mitigate feelings of psychic disequilibrium (Kim, 1988). Gudykunst and Kim (2003) posited that the “reflexive and self-reflexive capacity of the human mind that reviews, anticipates, generalizes, analyzes, and plans, [allows us to be] capable of transforming our internal conditions creatively” (p. 380). Following the initial feelings of stress and subsequent adaptation is a *growth*, which “enables the individual to grow into a new kind of person at a higher level of integration” (p. 381). Through the experience of intercultural communication and the adaptive process, there is the potential for what Kim referred to as an intercultural personhood (Kim, 2001, 2008). A study using the stress-adaptation-growth dynamic as a theoretical lens found that long-term study-abroad students reported an increased self-and-other awareness as well as a more profound understanding of differences as a result of their cross-cultural experiences (Gill, 2007). However, in line with Kim’s model, these students did report initial stress as a result of being in a foreign cultural milieu.

The image of intercultural personhood is said to prepare an individual for further change to come (Kim, 2001). Intercultural personhood is defined as an “acquired identity constructed after the early childhood enculturation process through the individual’s communicative

interactions with a new cultural environment” (p. 191). Three aspects that accompany intercultural transformation are: “an increased functional fitness in the host environment, an increased psychological health vis-à-vis the host environment, and an emergence of an intercultural identity that reaches beyond the perimeters of the original cultural identity” (p. 184). The inevitable setbacks and stressful irregularities inherent in cross-cultural environments ultimately point to an increased ability to see the world and the people who inhabit it with new eyes. Wilson (1985) contended that intercultural persons “provide the hub and glue of the moral infrastructure that is necessary to hold together divergent groups, to facilitate individual freedom, to discourage excessive claims for social categories, and to help build communities where individuals with disparate identities are given their respective places without losing sight of common aspirations” (as cited in Gudykunst & Kim, 2003, p. 388).

Preceding Kim’s research on intercultural personhood, Adler (1977) discussed the notion of a “new kind of man,” which he defined as one “whose identifications and loyalties transcend the boundaries of nationalism and whose commitments are pinned to a vision of the world as a global community” (p. 240). This kind of person is said to be psychologically adept to uphold multiple perspectives and understand the reality people experience in different cultures. Furthermore, the multicultural man is said to be flexible, open, and mobile, and is able to understand cultural similarities and differences. However, these positive characteristics can be easily marked by stressors, such as vulnerability, detachment, and a lack of loyalty to one particular culture. In sum, “He is neither totally *a part of* nor totally *apart from* his culture; he lives, instead, on the boundary” (p. 241).

Kim (2001) viewed “intercultural identity development as being rooted in, embracing, and not discarding the original cultural identity” (2001, p. 67). She argued, “Just as cultural

identity links a person to a specific culture, intercultural identity links a person to more than one culture, and ultimately, to humanity itself” (p. 191). Moreover, intercultural persons are said to “better manage the dynamic and dialogical interaction between the original culture and the new culture,” and are better able to manage multicultural situations with increased ease. (p. 192).

Two specific components of intercultural personhood are individualization and universalization. A heightened sense of self-awareness and self-identity comprises individualization.

“Universalization of identity serves as a mind-set that integrates...” (p. 194). Also, “It accentuates a cognitive orientation based on an understanding of profound differences between and among human groups and, at the same time, of profound similarities in human conditions not ascribed to one culture but embraces other cultures...” (p. 194). The dynamic emergence of an intercultural identity results from this process; terms used to describe an intercultural identity are “bicultural,” “multicultural,” or “cosmopolitan” (Kim, 2008). This is consistent with other research (e.g. Berry, 1997) that suggested that adaptation does not mean the original cultural identity needs to be discarded. In fact, research discussing some of the suboptimal effects of immediate disposal of one’s original culture will now be briefly explored.

Suro (1998) contended that second generation immigrants are often more apt to develop gang-related, maladaptive behaviors. Although Suro focused much on political and economic ramifications of “bumpy-line” assimilation and delinquent behavior, the idea that rapid Americanization can lead to a variety of suboptimal results is important to consider. This type of assimilation refers to the process whereby children surpass their parents “in absorbing American ways but are turning into unemployable delinquents as a result” (Suro, 1998, p. 51). He continued to say the following: “It seems so often that the resolute striving, the creativity, and hard work so evident among the immigrant generation dissipate among its children” (Suro, 1998,

p. 50). Thus, a rapid assimilation into American culture may contribute to the “Second Generation Decline,” as discussed by Gans (1992). The possibility of maintaining one’s original cultural identity while also adapting to the new culture will be further discussed in the following sections on acculturation and biculturalism.

### **Acculturation and Immigration**

Cross-cultural psychology scholar, Sam (2006), said the following regarding acculturation research: “Although *acculturation* is now a term commonly used in discussions around immigrants and refugees, the term, its meaning and operationalization within the social sciences still remains elusive” (p.11). Acculturation is often confused with other terms and concepts such as, “re-socialization,” and “multiculturalism.” However, it is most often mistaken for the concept of assimilation, which involves a wish to interact with the new culture and disassociate with the culture of origin (Berry, 1997). Acculturation and assimilation are not synonymous; instead, assimilation is considered one of the four possible outcomes, or “strategies” of acculturation.

Early literature on acculturation (e.g. Gordon, 1964) assumed that immigrants would acculturate in a unidimensional fashion. In other words, they would either completely adopt the new culture or maintain their original cultural heritage without adapting to the host society, but both were not possible. However, throughout the last 30 years, an alternative approach has been led by J.W. Berry, who began composing his acculturation taxonomies in 1972 and 1974. In his latest revision of the four-fold taxonomy, Berry (1997) discussed the acculturation strategies, which are referred to as assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization. All of these strategies address the degree of original cultural maintenance and acceptance of the host culture. According to Berry and Sabatier (2010), assimilation is a process whereby “individuals do not

wish to maintain their cultural heritage and seek daily participation with other cultures in the larger society” (p. 193). Integration involves simultaneously maintaining the original culture while also interacting with members of the host society. This strategy is considered to be an alternative to “melting pot” assimilation (Berry, 1983, 1997), and was shown to be the most adaptive acculturative strategy to adopt. In reference to an integrative acculturative strategy, Guimond, Oliveira, Kamies, & Sidanius (2010) suggested that integration, rather than assimilation, can improve intergroup relations, and is dissociated with discrimination, as opposed to the other four acculturative strategies (Berry & Sabatier, 2010). Avoiding contact with the host culture and a desire to maintain original cultural identity is referred to as separation. Finally, marginalization occurs when the stranger does not hold on to aspects of the original culture, nor does he or she attempt to interact with the new culture (Berry, 1997). Marginality has also been conceptualized differently throughout acculturation literature; for example, it has also been coined *deculturation* and *acculturative stress*—where the former is willful and the latter is imposed (Rudmin, 2003). Acculturative stress was defined by Amer & Hovey (2007) as “the distress experienced by individuals when the demands imposed on them during the acculturation process are too challenging to overcome” (p. 336). In addition, Taft (1981) referred to marginality as “bicultural marginality,” but considered the marginalized person to possess characteristics of bicultural competence.

Aside from the numerous acculturative strategies that have been identified, another perplexing issue with the concept of acculturation is the countless definitions that have been formulated. For Example, Ramirez (1983) emphasized the growth aspect of acculturation, contending that an acculturating individual *will* maintain their original cultural values while simultaneously participating in the host culture. In line with Ramirez’s definition of

acculturation, Cuellar (2000) conceived of acculturation in bicultural terms, and highlighted the benefits of bi-cognitive development and adaptation. He underlined the benefits, and mitigated the stressors; he argued that as a result of being raised in a multicultural context, positive attributes such as flexibility, adaptability, and empathy can result. However, not all immigrants experience multicultural contexts; many were born here in the United States and may or may not have been exposed to a multicultural environment. Marden and Meyer (1968) defined acculturation as “the change in individuals whose primary learning has been in one culture and who take over traits from another culture” (p. 36). Though the above-mentioned conceptions of acculturation are useful, Berry’s definition of acculturation is more consistent with research specifically on the experience of immigrants: “acculturation is a process of cultural and psychological change that results from the continuing contact between people of different cultural backgrounds” (2006, p. 27). Rudmin (2003) effectively summarized the controversial nature of acculturation research: “It is probably not possible to standardize the vocabulary of acculturation theory, because the topic extends across academic disciplines, across decades, and across national boundaries” (p. 22).

### **Biculturalism**

One of the factors of interest, biculturalism, is defined as “an integration of the competencies and sensitivities associated with two cultures within a single individual” (Buriel & Saenz, 1980, p. 246). A central axiom of Berry’s conception of acculturation is that immigrants are charged with “assessing the value of both retaining their own cultural identity and having contact with mainstream society” (Oppedal, 2006, p. 101). In looking at bicultural identity as related to the stress-adaptation paradigm, Gil, Vega, and Dimas (1994), found that foreign-born Hispanic teenagers had higher levels of stress as a result of cross-cultural adaptation, but also

demonstrated more adaptive growth than their U.S.-born counterparts. Szapocznik and Kurtines (1980) found that embracing biculturalism facilitated greater adaptation. Results from a study done by Birman (1998) suggested that “acculturation to both the culture of origin as well as the American culture was useful for the immigrants in different life situations” (p. 348). This study also found that immigrant individuals’ feelings of self worth and competence increased due to an ability to draw on two cultural repertoires.

According to LaFromboise et al. (1993), second culture acquisition can lead to the development of bicultural competence; this competency is marked by knowledge of cultural beliefs and values of both cultures, a positive attitude toward both groups, and communication competency, among others. Thus, it was implied that increased overall adjustment is positively correlated with being acculturated to both cultures, or, being bicultural (e.g., LaFromboise et al; Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997; Coatsworth et al., 2005; Phinney et al., 2001). This argument was supported in the following testimonial noted in a study by Kim et al. (2003), [being bicultural] “is definitely an asset because we can mold ourselves to fit into our surroundings and it makes us more open to accepting other cultures that are hugely different than American culture” (p.164).

Introduced by LaFromboise et al. (1993), the fusion model of cultural accommodation was used by Chuang (1999) to study the second culture acquisition of Taiwanese biculturals in the United States. Results showed that the fusion model, characterized by a combination of old and new cultures, marked by openness and flexibility, led to bicultural competence. This suggests that biculturalism produces growth and ability to merge old and new culture to create a new culture (Chuang, 1999). Thus, incorporating the new cultural knowledge is important, but so is the maintenance of the culture of origin.

In a study addressing biculturalism and cognitive outcomes, Tadmor and Tetlock (2006) found that immigrants choosing integration, rather than assimilation or separation, were found to have higher levels of integrative complexity, or “the degree to which a person accepts the reasonableness of different cultural perspectives on how to live...” (p. 178). These researchers also suggested that increased cognitive complexity of integrative biculturals may have implications in the workforce, especially in considering international work assignments. In a similar fashion, Ramirez (1974) highlighted the academic advantages that can result from the bicognitive development of immigrant students. He suggested that bicultural individuals have the ability to switch between cognitive orientations, drawing on ethnic orientations or American orientations according to the demands of the situation. This ability was referred to by Benet-Martinez et al. (2002) as cultural frame-switching, which again suggests that bicultural individuals possess an increased cognitive capacity to successfully operate within two cultures. These results mirror the research findings of Padilla & Gonzalez (2001), where immigrant students were shown to outperform their U.S.-born counterparts in several areas of academic achievement. These findings contradict previous suggestions that U.S.-born children of immigrants assimilated into the mainstream will be more successful in academic settings (Padilla & Gonzalez 2001). Buriel & Saenz (1980) found that increased biculturalism contributed to increased college enrollment of Chicanas. Finally, Duran (1992) found cognitive complexity to also be related to perceptive abilities necessary to be a competent communicator.

Although literature addressing immigrant acculturation is mixed, an adequate amount of research suggested that immigrants who internalize two cultures become more competent in the “host communication system, [and are] better able to discern the similarities and differences between their original home culture and the host culture and are able to act accordingly” (Kim,

2001, p. 72). Thus the increased amounts of intercultural experience obtained by first-generation immigrants may very well contribute to a better understanding of similarities and differences of their culture of origin and the host culture. For example, Bhawuk and Brislin (1992) found that increased intercultural experience was correlated with increased amounts of intercultural sensitivity. Similarly, Keefe and Padilla (1987) looked at cultural awareness, which assesses the knowledge and understanding that immigrants have of their original cultural heritage as well as in the host society. The results of their study showed a decline in cultural awareness from the first to fourth generations of Mexican immigrants, with the most drastic decline occurring between the first and second generation. Interestingly, loyalty to culture of origin did not decline with subsequent generations as cultural awareness did.

### **Third Culture Individuals**

Another group of sojourners that share similar characteristics with bicultural individuals are known as third culture individuals, also referred to as third culture kids (TCKs). As stated by Dewaele and Oudenhoven (2009), “The literature that deals with TCKs is situated within a larger area of research that deals with immigration and cross-cultural adaptation” (p. 445). Useem, Useem, and Donogue (1963) broadly defined the third culture as “The behavior patterns created, shared, and learned by men of different societies who are in the process of relating their societies, or sections thereof, to each other” (p. 169). Pollock and Van Reken (2001) expanded upon this basic definition to describe third culture kids: “A Third Culture Kid (TCK) is a person who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside the parents’ culture. The TCK builds relationships to all of the cultures, while not having full ownership of any. Although elements from each culture are assimilated into the TCK’s life experience, the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of similar background” (p.19). Several parallels exist

between third culture individuals and bicultural immigrants; for example, both undergo the adaptive processes of deculturation and acculturation (Kim, 2001), and both groups are seen as “foreigners” by dominant culture members. Furthermore, both third culture individuals and immigrants have the capacity to develop an intercultural personhood, which Kim describes as an “Acquired identity constructed after the early childhood enculturation process through the individual’s communicative interactions with a new cultural environment” (p. 191). Noteworthy studies investigating the third culture population will now be addressed.

Pollock and Van Reken (2001) have directed much of their research towards ethnographic studies of third culture individuals. In their book, *Third Culture Kids: The Experience of Growing up Among Worlds*, they summarized the characteristics of third culture individuals. In reviewing these attributes, in particular the benefits and challenges of this particular lifestyle, several parallels can be drawn between third culture individuals and immigrants. One of the benefits of living in a cross-cultural and mobile environment is an expanded worldview. Because they have grown up among worlds, third culture individuals have been exposed to different geographies and political and philosophical ideologies, thus contributing to an “awareness that there can be more than one way to look at the same thing” (p. 79). Similarly, third culture kids have had tangible, hands-on experiences within different cultures that others have seen only on TV or other media, thus contributing to a heightened awareness of the world around them. Due to the rich and profound understanding of other cultures, third culture individuals have learned “to appreciate the reasons and understanding behind some of the behavioral differences rather than simply being frustrated by them as visitors tend to be” (Pollock & Van Reken, p. 86).

Cultural adaptability is another prospective benefit shared by third culture individuals and other immigrant samples (Pollock & Van Reken, 2001; Kim, 2001). For example, third culture individuals are often referred to as cultural chameleons that have the ability to “easily switch language, style of relating, appearance, and cultural practices to take on the characteristics needed to blend better into the current scene...” (Pollock & Van Reken, p. 92). In a similar fashion, these individuals are generally less prejudiced, and demonstrate more understanding towards their culturally-distinct counterparts. They are also said to display more patience with distinct people and situations and truly enjoy the richness and complexity of intercultural interactions. Because of their experiences in multicultural situations, immigrants and third culture individuals in particular display heightened observational and linguistic skills, and an ability to understand different perspectives, which in turn produces a sense of inner confidence and self-reliance. Finally, as a result of past experiences with uncertainty, they can cope with and manage new situations (Pollock & Van Reken, 2001). Useem, Useem, & Donogue (1963) adequately summarized these beneficial characteristics in the following statement: third culture individuals may be more apt to assuage the “vast differences [that] prevail between two societies in degree of literacy, technical knowledge, wealth, complexity of social organization, and modern institutions” (Useem, Useem, & Donogue, p. 170).

In a recent study by Lyttle, Barker, and Cornwell (2010), levels of interpersonal sensitivity were compared between third culture individuals and mono-cultured individuals. A central aim of this study was to see if a correlation existed between intercultural experience and increased interpersonal sensitivity, which contains both social and emotional components. After administering self-reported questionnaires and performance-based tests measuring social and emotional sensitivity to both groups, interesting results emerged. Third culture individuals

scored higher on social sensitivity scales than did their monocultured counterparts, while monocultured individuals scored higher on the self-reported measure of emotional sensitivity.

Overall, the study confirmed that increased intercultural experience is positively correlated with increased perceptual abilities, but a significant correlation was not found between levels of intercultural experience and interpersonal sensitivity. Related to acculturation literature, those participants who classified themselves as “integrators” scored higher on levels of social and emotional sensitivity than did participants who were self-classified as “assimilators.”

Research by Dewaele & van Oudenhoven (2009) also addressed the cross-cultural mobility of third culture individuals, where they looked at the impact of multilingualism and multiculturalism on the personality characteristics of third culture individuals. The Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ) was administered to third culture individuals and dominant culture individuals living in London. Results of the study showed that the multilingual and multicultural background of many third culture individuals positively predicted cultural empathy and openness, but showed a negative correlation with the dimension of emotional instability. These results suggest that the third culture and immigrant experiences are not free of some negative side-effects (e.g. emotional instability), but that cross cultural transitions can also “... make them stronger, more open-minded, and unprejudiced. They realize that their own views and attitudes may not be shared by the people around them; hence their need to develop awareness of different cultural norms and values” (p. 456).

### **Intercultural Communication Competence**

Intercultural communication competence (ICC) is an area that is multidimensional in nature. Several approaches exist to study the concept, and numerous definitions and conceptions of ICC can be found in intercultural literature. A study by Arasaratnam and Doerfel (2005)

revealed several dimensions of a competent communicator, including: motivation, being observant, and sensitivity. The latter characteristic will later be evaluated in more detail. Kim's (2001) integrative theory of cross-cultural adaptation extends to other intercultural communication constructs such as communication competence. A transformation is said to be catalyzed by the development of host communication competence, also known as intercultural communication competence. According to Kim (1991), this construct is defined as the "ability to manage various differences between communicators, cultural or otherwise, and the ability to deal with accompanying uncertainty and stress," which allows "strangers to tolerate and appreciate their differences instead of responding to others with 'intergroup posturing'" (qtd. in Kim, 2001, p. 99).

According to Chen and Starosta (1997) communication competence entails not only self-perceptions of competence, but should also address whether or not others perceive a person to possess communication competence. As one of the leading contributors to the intercultural communication competence literature, Spitzberg (2000) lists motivation, knowledge, and interpersonal skills such as flexibility to be some of the characteristics related to increased communication competence. In addition, Spitzberg and others (e.g. Bochner & Kelly, 1974; Wiemann & Backlund, 1980) provided a broad conception of communication competence as being appropriate and effective according to the situation.

In applying the ability to communicate competently with people from different cultural backgrounds, Chen and Starosta (2000) further argued that sojourners should possess "the ability to negotiate cultural meanings and to appropriately execute effective communication behaviors that recognize each other's multiple identities in a specific environment" (p.7). These researchers considered communication competence to be an "umbrella concept which is

comprised of cognitive, affective, and behavioral abilities of interactants in the process of intercultural communication” (p. 3). Developing one of these competencies is said to facilitate the formation of the other two. Intercultural sensitivity, which comprises the affective component of communication competence, will be discussed in more detail. The concept of cognitive flexibility (e.g. Martin & Anderson, 1998) will also be reviewed as a component of communication competence.

### **Intercultural Sensitivity**

Hammer, Bennett, and Wiseman (2003) view intercultural sensitivity as a precursor to greater intercultural competence. A rudimentary conception of intercultural sensitivity is defined as “the ability to discriminate and experience relevant cultural differences” (p. 422). An individual who possesses intercultural sensitivity is one who does not deny the existence of cultural differences, but one who embraces cultural disparity, while demonstrating acceptance and adaptability. Bhawuk and Brislin (1992) contended that “to be effective in another culture, people must be interested in other cultures, be sensitive enough to notice cultural differences, and also be willing to modify their behavior as an indication of respect for the people of other cultures” (p. 416). Similarly, Christa Lee and Kroeger (2001) looked at associations between international experience, global competencies, and intercultural sensitivity—in order to promote the need for intercultural development for educators working internationally. Results showed a correlation between intercultural sensitivity and international experience. These authors consistently suggested that living in a global village necessitates an ability to recognize similarities and differences between cultures. In a similar fashion, based on research by Bennett (1984), and Hammer, Bennett, and Wiseman (2003) Chen and Starosta (2000) discussed the concept of intercultural sensitivity, and the process involved in creating the Intercultural

Sensitivity Scale. Chen and Starosta (1997) defined intercultural sensitivity as a “desire to motivate [oneself] to understand, appreciate, and accept differences among cultures, and to produce a positive outcome from intercultural interactions” (p.7). The cognitive component of communication competence is modeled by intercultural awareness, and the behavioral component is represented by intercultural adroitness. The above mentioned terms are often used interchangeably; thus, another purpose of their research was to “clarify the ambiguity among the three concepts” in order to develop valid and reliable measurements to assess communication concepts.

Chen and Starosta (2000) claimed that “successful intercultural communication demands the interactants’ ability of intercultural awareness by learning cultural similarities and differences, while the process of achieving awareness of cultural similarities and differences is enhanced and buffered by the ability of intercultural sensitivity” (p. 6). Five dimensions comprise the intercultural sensitivity scale, including: interaction engagement, respect for cultural differences, interaction confidence, interaction enjoyment, and interaction attentiveness. The scale has been used with several different groups to measure intercultural sensitivity as it relates to various constructs. For example, Shi-Yong (2006) measured the intercultural sensitivity of college students and multinational employees in China. This same author administered the instrument to compare levels of intercultural sensitivity between ethnic Chinese and Thai nationals in 2005. West (2009) measured levels of multicultural competence of counselors in international schools, and Graf (2005) used the scale to predict intercultural decision-making quality, in regards to expatriate selection.

In line with Chen and Starosta’s view of intercultural sensitivity as a precursor to intercultural communication competence, Dong, Day, & Collaco (2009) administered Chen and

Starosta's Intercultural Communication Sensitivity Scale (ICS) to undergraduate students to measure how they felt about interacting with people with different cultural backgrounds. The authors made a slight modification to the title of the scale by adding "Communication." As expected, results showed that increased levels of intercultural sensitivity were negatively correlated with ethnocentrism, which is a mindset that can lead to "negative stereotypes, negative prejudice, and negative behaviors against ethnic/minority group members" (p. 34). Thus, as students' experience with cultural differences increased, so did levels of intercultural competence.

### **Cognitive Flexibility**

Flexibility is considered to be a characteristic acquired by an individual who possesses communication competence (Spitzberg & Cupach, 1984; Bochner & Kelly, 1974; Berger & Roloff, 1980). Martin and Anderson (1998) claimed that being flexible involves the following cognitive elements: (1) "*awareness* that in any given situation there are options and alternatives available, (2) *willingness* to be flexible and adapt to the situation, and (3) *self-efficacy* or beliefs that one has the ability to be flexible" (p.1). Similarly, Endicott, Bock, and Narvaez (2003) defined cognitive flexibility as "the ability to understand, consider, and weigh multiple frameworks, or schemas" (p. 415). To assess the cognitive flexibility a person possesses that leads to behavioral flexibility, Martin and Anderson (1998) developed the Cognitive Flexibility Scale. Results from several studies testing the validity of the scale indicates that cognitive flexibility enables a person to be more confident in communicating with strangers; it was also suggested that cognitively flexible individuals "have more confidence in their ability to communicate effectively, especially in new situations" (p. 6). When Omizo et al. (2008)

administered the Cognitive Flexibility Scale to a group of Asian Americans living and going to school in Hawaii, cognitive flexibility was found to be positively related to an adherence to both Asian and American values.

This chapter reviewed the literature related to the cross-cultural adaptation of immigrants, as well as potential outcomes of this process. A more in-depth synopsis of Kim's (2001) theory of adaptation and related concepts was reviewed and related to the immigration experience. Much of the literature lends adequate support to the notion that immigrants who have undergone the adaptation process and who have embraced a bicultural orientation will be more likely to possess increased levels of intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility.

### **Methodology**

The above-reviewed literature on cross-cultural adaptation, acculturation, and components of communication competence was believed to have implications for the Latino immigrant experience. A central argument of this research was that increased cross-cultural experiences facilitate increased communication competence, especially in the sub-components intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility. Thus, first generation immigrants, who have undergone the process of cross-cultural adaptation as discussed by Kim (2001), were expected to score higher on measures of intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility than their second-generation counterparts. Furthermore, because many first generation immigrants have been socialized in two distinct cultures, these individuals were expected to score higher on a measure of bicultural acculturation. Adequate research supported these initial premises.

Intercultural sensitivity is a measurement of the affective component of intercultural communication competence, and is defined as a “desire to motivate [oneself] to understand, appreciate, and accept differences among cultures, and to produce a positive outcome from intercultural interactions” (Chen & Starosta, 1997, p. 7). Cognitive flexibility is said to contribute to an increased effectiveness in intercultural communication (Martin & Anderson, 1998), and is characterized by an awareness of communication alternatives, as well as a belief that one can be adaptable and flexible in communicative interactions. Different levels of communication competence among first and second generation immigrants were assessed, looking specifically at the subcomponents of intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility. Just as intercultural experience was a key differentiator between third culture individuals and mono-cultured individuals (Lyttle, Barker, & Cornwell, 2010), this same variable was expected

to have a significant impact on levels of intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility among first and second generation Latino immigrants.

As evident in the literature review, an adequate amount of research has suggested that immigrants who internalize two cultures become more competent in the “host communication system, [and are] better able to discern the similarities and differences between their original home culture and the host culture and are able to act accordingly” (Kim, 2001, p.72). Thus, the increased intercultural experience obtained by first-generation immigrants may very well contribute to a better understanding of similarities and differences of their culture of origin and the host culture, as was determined by Bhawuk and Brislin (1992) who found that increased intercultural experience was correlated with increased amounts of intercultural sensitivity.

In conjunction with measuring intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility, this study also addressed the varied acculturation strategies adopted by first and second generation immigrants. A supplementary aim was to see if those scoring high on bicultural acculturative orientations are more likely to come from the first-generation cohort, and subsequently possess increased intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility. The generational status of the immigrant participant served as the independent variable in this study. Measures of intercultural sensitivity, cognitive flexibility, and biculturalism served as the dependent variables.

The following hypotheses were tested:

**(H1)** First generation Latino immigrants have higher levels of intercultural sensitivity than second generation Latino immigrants, as a result of being exposed to two cultures.

**(H2)** First generation Latino immigrants have higher levels of cognitive flexibility than second generation Latino immigrants, as a result of being exposed to two cultures.

**(H3)** First generation Latino immigrants are more likely to embrace biculturalism than second generation Latino immigrants, as a result of being exposed to two cultures.

**(H4)** Biculturalism will be positively correlated with both intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility.

This research sought to test these differences on the above-mentioned components of communication competence by way of survey instrumentation. Moreover, bicultural acculturation styles of first and second generation Latino immigrants were measured and considered in terms of the generational status of the participant. The following information will address the specific steps that were taken to undergo this research, and will also provide an overview of the survey instruments and sample.

This research employed a quantitative survey design to compare differences in intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility among first and second generation Latin American immigrants. First-generation immigrants have a bicultural background, have been exposed to the adaptation process, and thus have tangible experiences with two distinct cultures. In contrast, second generation immigrants have less exposure to intercultural experiences due to the fact that they were born in the United States, or moved here at a very young age, and have most likely not had the opportunity of visiting their country of origin for a significant amount of time. The sample was divided based on generational status (i.e. whether an immigrant individual is from the first or second generation cohort), then tested for intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility. Qualifications had to be met in order for immigrant individuals to participate in the study. First generation immigrants were defined as those who were born in a Latin culture and moved to the U.S. after the age of 12; immigrants comprising the second generation were those who were born in the U.S. or moved here before the age of 12. In

analyzing the data, a third group was extracted from the other two and termed “the 1.5 generation.” This group included individuals who came to the United States between the ages of 6 and 12. It was expected that this group would perhaps score higher on the measurements than both the first and second generation participants due to their unique dual social and linguistic exposure to the United States and their home culture during middle childhood. However, after testing statistical differences between the three groups, the results were not significant enough to consider this group as separate in the analysis and results.

### **Overview of Research Method**

This research used a survey design because it allowed the researcher to collect a large amount of data and generalize the findings. Furthermore, this approach allowed the researcher to collect data from populations that would have been difficult to study if a laboratorial procedure had been used. Established survey instruments were located to measure acculturation, cognitive flexibility, and intercultural sensitivity among immigrant samples. The researcher is unaware of any previous studies that have measured intercultural sensitivity or cognitive flexibility across immigrant generations. In order to determine whether participants met the eligibility requirements of the study, a demographics questionnaire (see appendix A) was administered.

Research participants were sampled from community centers, churches, and university organizations from the Southeast and mid-Atlantic regions of the United States. These individuals were not randomly selected, rather the manner of participant recruitment constituted a sample of convenience. Surveys were administered and collected during the months of July and August, 2010. Attendees of four Protestant churches and two Catholic churches agreed to fill out a survey. Each participant completed a demographics questionnaire, followed by the abbreviated multidimensional acculturation scale (AMAS-ZABB, see appendix B), the

intercultural sensitivity scale (ISS, see appendix C), and the Cognitive Flexibility Scale (CFS, see appendix D), all of which were assimilated into a single survey questionnaire, and made available in English and Spanish for respondents to choose. After completing an application outlining the research intentions and methodology of this study, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Liberty University and Gainesville State College approved the research, and permitted the researcher to collect data from human subjects. A portion of survey data was obtained by college-aged students from the above-mentioned universities.

### **Research Instruments**

**Demographic questionnaire.** Questions addressing gender, age, culture of origin, and age of immigration were asked in a demographics survey. Administering this questionnaire served as a means to categorize participants into first generation immigrants and second generation immigrants. Other factors such as gender and age were included as a means to address variables other than generational status that may impact results. Items on the questionnaire inquired whether the participant was born in the United States, or in a Latin American country. Furthermore, if the individual was born abroad, age of arrival to the United States was indicated. If the individual was born in the U.S. the Latino background of the parents was ascertained.

**Abbreviated multidimensional acculturation scale.** Zea, Asner-Self, Birman, and Buki (2003) created this scale to measure the domains of cultural identity, language competence, and cultural competence in both the host culture and culture of origin. These researchers claim that the impetus for further inquiry regarding acculturation is that immigrants, in general, “are transformed by their interpersonal and intercultural experience, and the degree of change needs to be taken into account when designing social science research” (p.108). In addition, it

measures acculturation on two separate scales. Nguyen and Benet-Martinez (2007) agree that using a bidimensional scale of acculturation is useful because not all individuals are going to internalize a second culture in a mechanized fashion. For example, changes in language usage, identity, and communication styles may vary among individuals. There were several advantages to using this scale, especially for the purpose and needs of the current research. Scoring this scale allowed the researcher to isolate the three subscales (identity, language, and cultural competence) to see which is most influential in predicting a given variable. It is adaptable for use with diverse cultures, such as foreign-born and U.S.-born immigrants. Finally, both the English and Spanish versions of the scale have been tested and validated on a sample of 246 Latino participants. Permission to use the scale was granted by Dr. Maria Cecilia Zea.

The original scale contains 42 items; however, it was decided to use an abbreviated version. The AMAS-ZABB 20 is comprised of 20 items, and is also available in English and Spanish. Statements 1-8 are rated on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree); items 9-20 are also rated on a 4-point scale, but responses range from 1 (not at all) to 4 (extremely well). However, permission was granted by the creator of the scale to use a five-point Likert scale on the first 8 questions to comply with the prior response sets. Items 9-20 remained on a four-point scale.

Garcia (2008) is one of several researchers who employed the AMAS-ZABB to measure acculturation. This study sought to establish a relationship between personality traits, acculturation, and subjective well-being. Although results showed that acculturation, treated as an interaction variable, and cultural competence were unrelated to subjective well-being, it was found that the scale was generalizable to individuals born in the U.S. as well as those born in a Latin country. Furthermore, “concurrent validity was also assessed by comparing the score of

participants that were born in a Latin country with those that were born in the U.S., and statistically significant differences were consistent” (p. 72). To assess levels of biculturalism, these researchers first added each of the three dimensions of each cultural orientation to produce an average; they then multiplied the U.S.-American dimension average with the Latin dimension average. High involvement was signified by scores between 12 and 16.

**Intercultural sensitivity scale.** Chen and Starosta (2000) developed the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS). According to Chen and Starosta (1997), intercultural sensitivity is marked by a genuine desire to understand and embrace cultural differences. The scale showed validity after being significantly correlated to five other scales, such as David’s perspective-taking scale. There are 24 items on the scale; participants rate the responses on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). Two item examples are as follows: “I respect the values of people from different cultures,” and “I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded.” The terms “different cultures” or “other cultures” used in the scale are intended to be perceived by participants of any culture other than the one they identify with. After reverse-coding the indicated items, an average score was obtained for each participant. Dr. Guo-Ming Chen granted permission to use the measurement.

**Cognitive flexibility scale.** Created by Martin and Anderson (1998), this scale tests the three elements (awareness, willingness, and efficacy) involved in communication flexibility. There are 12 items on the measurement and each question is rated on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 6 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). However, the scale was slightly modified to a 5-point Likert response set in order to establish congruency with the other scales used in the study. This was done with the permission of the scale’s creator, Dr. Matthew Martin. Examples of statements found on the scale read as follows: “I can communicate an idea in many

different ways,” and “I am willing to listen and consider alternatives to a problem.” The scale was found to be reliable and contains construct and concurrent validity (Martin & Rubin, 1995). To score, all items were averaged after reverse coding certain items, to form a score of cognitive flexibility.

**Survey translations.** In order to consider the diverse educational levels and linguistic proficiencies of immigrant participants, the demographics questionnaire, intercultural sensitivity scale, and cognitive flexibility scale were translated into Spanish and then evaluated by way of back-translation. This is a standard translation method employed in social science research. The process involved one qualified individual conducting an initial translation of the documents from English to Spanish. Following the original translation, another qualified individual translated the documents back into English, without having been exposed to the original document. Finally, the completed translations were compared and assessed in terms of similarity. Any discrepancies were then discussed with the translators and all necessary amendments were made to ensure that the surveys did not lose their intended conceptual meanings. Armida Arcaraz, a bilingual/bicultural school translator in Gainesville, Georgia agreed to do the initial translation. Wes Vonier, a Spanish teacher in Georgia, who possesses both English and Spanish fluency, agreed to assist with the back-translation of the survey instruments. Upon completion of the reverse translations, a single bilingual questionnaire was produced with the combined instruments; see appendices A-D to locate the above- mentioned instruments.

### **Analysis**

The data collected from the intercultural sensitivity scale, the cognitive flexibility scale, and the abbreviated multidimensional acculturation scales were used to draw conclusions on how first and second generation immigrants differ on these constructs. The demographic questions

were used as a means to separate the participants into two groups based on generational status. Only those questionnaires that were fully completed (i.e. no unanswered items) were used when analyzing the data, resulting in a usable sample of 216 participants; the number of participants completing each instrument was not equal; the range of participants completing the different scales on the questionnaire varied from 204 to 213. The *Statistical Package for the Behavioral Sciences* (SPSS) Version 18 was used in the analysis.

Several statistical tests were employed to analyze the data. Generational status served as the independent variable in this study; this variable was assessed by demographic items at the beginning of the questionnaire, which asked for country of origin, and age of arrival to the United States—allowing the researcher to easily identify surveys as belonging to participants from the first or second generation. The results from the cognitive flexibility scale, intercultural sensitivity scale, and the abbreviated multidimensional acculturation scale served as dependent variables. Taken together, the data was used to determine if first and second generation immigrants differ on aspects of communication competence. In order to determine statistical significance of results, the statistical tests employed included mainly independent samples *t*-tests, and Pearson product-moment correlations. The independent samples *t*-test was employed to analyze the mean differences between first and second generation Latino immigrants, in terms of how the independent variable of generational status impacted the dependent variables of intercultural sensitivity, cognitive flexibility, and acculturation.

The mean scores from each research instrument were used in the analysis. Following this, a correlation analysis was done to assess the relationship between intercultural sensitivity, cognitive flexibility, and biculturalism. In this way, the researcher was able to determine if intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility were related to the participants' mode of

acculturation. The results from this study will be reported in more detail in the following chapter, and Chapter Five will expound upon the implications of the reported results.

## Results

The variables examined in the current study were participants' self-reported scores on cognitive flexibility, intercultural sensitivity, and acculturation, with generational status serving as a predictor variable. Data was calculated by way of traditional paper-and-pencil survey administration. A total of 295 individuals participated, generating a sample of 216 usable, completed surveys. There were sixteen countries represented in the sample, with the majority of individuals coming from Mexico (52%). Other countries represented in the sample included: The United States, Colombia, Uruguay, Guatemala, El Salvador, Puerto Rico, Honduras, Peru, Brazil, The Dominican Republic, Cuba, Venezuela, Argentina, Bolivia, and Costa Rica. This chapter will report the statistical analyses of the above-mentioned variables as they relate to their associated hypotheses.

### Hypothesis One

Examination of intercultural sensitivity scores among first generation and second generation immigrants was one of the central aims of the current investigation. This study predicted that the first generation Latino immigrants would have higher levels of intercultural sensitivity than second generation Latino immigrants, as a result of being exposed to two cultures. To test this hypothesis, the data collected from the self-reported intercultural sensitivity scale was examined. The difference between the two groups was tested with an independent samples *t*-test. Results yielded a small, but significant difference between the first generation and the second generation. However the second generation scored *higher* on this test, which is opposite to what the first hypothesis predicted. The first generation produced a mean score of 3.97 (SD=.476), and the second generation produced a mean score of 4.11 (SD=.426), where (  $t(210) = -2.24, p = .026$ ). These findings are illustrated in table 1.

Table 1  
*First Generation and Second Generation Intercultural Sensitivity Scores*

<b>Generational Status</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Std. Error Mean</b>
<b>First Generation</b>	<b>115</b>	3.9681	.47553	.04434
<b>Second Generation</b>	<b>97</b>	4.1082	.42635	.04329

Thus, these results demonstrate a small but significant difference, but in the opposite direction than expected. It was surmised that first generation immigrants would score higher on this measurement, which was not the case. Rather, second generation immigrants' scores were higher.

### **Hypothesis Two**

The second hypothesis predicted that increased multicultural experiences would be associated with increased cognitive flexibility; specifically that first generation Latino immigrants would demonstrate higher levels of cognitive flexibility than second generation Latino immigrants, as a result of being exposed to two cultures. Testing this hypothesis was also done by way of an independent samples *t*-test. The results of the test are displayed in Table 2.

Table 2  
*First Generation and Second Generation Cognitive Flexibility Scores*

<b>Generational Status</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Std. Error Mean</b>
<b>First Generation</b>	<b>116</b>	3.8549	.49528	.04599
<b>Second Generation</b>	<b>97</b>	4.0464	.44520	.04520

As with intercultural sensitivity, second generation immigrants demonstrated higher scores on the cognitive flexibility scale. The results of the test scale yielded a small, but statistically significant difference between the first generation, whose mean score was 3.85,

(SD=.495), and the second generation, whose mean score was 4.05, (SD=.445), where ( $t(212) = -2.94, p = .004$ ). Thus, the hypothesis that first generation immigrants would score higher than second generation immigrants on cognitive flexibility was not supported. Additionally, a Pearson's Product Moment correlation was used to see if there was a relationship between intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility; results revealed that these two dimensions are moderately correlated, ( $r(209) = .51, p < .01$ ).

### Hypothesis Three

The third hypothesis predicted that first generation immigrants would score higher on a measure of biculturalism than their second generation counterparts as a result of increased intercultural experiences. An independent samples t-test was employed to determine which generation scored higher on biculturalism. Results are displayed in table 3 below. According to Zea et al. (2003), high scores on this scale would range from 12-16 and would indicate biculturalism. In comparing these two groups on this measure of biculturalism, a significant difference emerged. The mean biculturalism score for the first generation was 9.63 (SD=3.15), in comparison to a mean score of 13.35 (SD=3.03) for the second generation, where ( $t(202) = -8.54, p < .001$ ). Thus, second generation immigrants demonstrated significantly higher scores on biculturalism than did their first generation counterparts, which was opposite of what the hypothesis had predicted.

Table 3

*First Generation and Second Generation Biculturalism Scores*

<b>Generational Status</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Std. Error Mean</b>
<b>First Generation</b>	<b>116</b>	9.63	3.15	.30277
<b>Second Generation</b>	<b>97</b>	13.35	3.03	.31269

After testing the levels of biculturalism, it was decided to analyze the three subscales of the acculturation scale (a total of six components when considering U.S.-American acculturation and Latino acculturation) to further discern the differences between these two groups. Overall, it was found that the first and second generation immigrants demonstrated almost no differences on the three Latin dimensions of acculturation (language, identity, and cultural competence). However there were significant differences on the U.S. dimensions of acculturation (language, identity, and cultural competence). Independent-samples t-tests were used to interpret this data (See Table 4). The results will be discussed in the following order: Latin identity, U.S. identity, English language ability, Spanish language ability, Latin cultural competence, and U.S. cultural competence.

Results showed that first and second generation immigrants did not differ in regards to identifying with their Latin cultural heritage, where the first generation's mean score was 4.77, (SD=.547) and the second generation's means score was 4.81, (SD=.504);  $t(202) = -.646, p = .52$ . Thus, no significant difference was found on this dimension.

In regards to U.S. cultural identification, a significant difference was found between the first generation, (M=2.92, SD=1.17) and the second generation (M=3.95, SD=1.05);  $t(200) = -6.559, p = .000$ . This finding indicates that the second generation immigrants are more likely to identify themselves with American culture as a result of being born here or moving to the U.S. at a young age.

In a similar fashion, significant results emerged in relation to English language competency, where the first generation again scored lower than their second generation counterparts. The mean score for the first generation was 2.50, (SD=.709) and 3.84 (SD=.526) for the second generation;  $t(204) = -15.16, p < .001$ . Here it is demonstrated that second

generation immigrants are able to communicate in English significantly better than their first-generation counterparts.

Table 4  
*First Generation and Second Generation AMAS subscale scores*

<b>Subscale</b>	<b>Generational Status</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Std. Error Mean</b>
LatID	First Generation	110	4.7659	.54738	.05219
LatID	Second Generation	94	4.8138	.50393	.05198
USID	First Generation	108	2.9167	1.17211	.11279
USID	Second Generation	94	3.9521	1.05512	.10883
ENG	First Generation	112	2.4955	.70868	.06696
ENG	Second Generation	94	3.8351	.52562	.05421
SPAN	First Generation	112	3.7813	.49220	.04651
SPAN	Second Generation	94	3.7074	.53586	.05527
LatCC	First Generation	112	2.7232	.74083	.07000
LatCC	Second Generation	94	2.4840	.77927	.08038
USCC	First Generation	112	2.1964	.75518	.07136
USCC	Second Generation	94	3.2074	.77045	.07947

A small but insignificant difference surfaced when considering the Spanish language abilities of both groups, where the first generation produced a mean score of 3.78 (SD=.492), and the second generation produced a mean score of 3.71, (SD=.492);  $t(204)=1.029$ ,  $p=.305$ . This is not surprising as it was implicitly surmised that second generation immigrants would not be as competent in speaking the native tongue of their parents, as they are socialized in American schools and institutions.

Only very slight but significant differences emerged in regards to the Latin cultural competence levels of first and second generation immigrants; the first generation's mean score was 2.72 (SD=.741), and the second generation's mean score was 2.48 (SD=.779);  $t(204)=2.254$ ,  $p=.025$ . This suggests that second generation immigrants do not demonstrate a decline in their levels of Latin cultural competency, as was expected.

Finally, there was a significant difference between the two groups on scores of U.S. cultural competence, where the first generation yielded a mean score of 2.196 (SD=.755), and the second generation yielded a mean score of 3.207 (SD=.770);  $t(204)= -9.483$ ,  $p< .000$ . It is also not surprising that the second generation of immigrants scored higher on this dimension of acculturation.

The results gleaned from the AMAS-ZABB did not reveal significant differences between the first and second generation in terms of Latin identification and Spanish language competency. However, differences between the two groups were found on the all three dimensions of the U.S. acculturation subscales as well as the Latin cultural competence subscale. These results point to the conclusion that the second generation of immigrants have assimilated components of the American way of life into their culture repertoire, but have not discarded aspects of their heritage culture, as was originally hypothesized. In turn, it is possible that second generation immigrants are more exposed to two cultures than was expected, with the first generation not acculturating to the host culture.

#### **Hypothesis Four**

The fourth and final hypothesis proposed that as a bicultural orientation increases or decreases, so will scores on intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility. It was predicted

that biculturalism would be positively correlated with both intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility.

After determining which participant groups scored higher on this scale, a correlation analysis was run to assess the relationships among intercultural sensitivity, cognitive flexibility, and acculturation. The results yielded small to moderate associations among the three variables, with the highest correlation occurring between intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility; ( $r(212) = .51, p < .01$ ). The relationship between cognitive flexibility and biculturalism and intercultural sensitivity and biculturalism yielded very similar results, which are displayed in table 5.

Table 5

*Correlations with Intercultural Sensitivity, Cognitive Flexibility, and Biculturalism*

<b>Variable</b>	<b>CF</b>	<b>Biculturalism</b>
<b>IS</b>	.51**	.36**
<b>CF</b>		.37**

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The association between cognitive flexibility and biculturalism ( $r = .37, p < .01$ ) accounted for 14% of the variance in biculturalism; the relationship between intercultural sensitivity and biculturalism ( $r = .36, p < .01$ ) accounted for 13% of the variance in the biculturalism variable. Also, a moderate relationship was found between intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility, providing a logical link between these two measurements because they both assess components of intercultural communication competence. These correlations indicate that the fourth hypothesis was supported.

After testing first and second generation immigrants for differences in intercultural sensitivity, cognitive flexibility, and biculturalism, the data revealed that that second generation immigrants scored higher on these measurements, thus refuting the first three hypotheses.

However, the fourth hypothesis was supported in that both intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility were shown to be positively correlated with biculturalism. These results indicate notable differences between these two groups, which will be further explored in the following chapter.

### Discussion

The main focus of this study was to assess differences between first and second generation Latino immigrants in terms of intercultural sensitivity, cognitive flexibility, and biculturalism. A total of 216 surveys were statistically analyzed to test four hypotheses. This chapter will provide a more in-depth analysis of the results of this study as they relate to the cited literature on the cross-cultural adaptation of immigrants, as well as potential outcomes of this process. Much of the reviewed literature provides adequate support that immigrants who have undergone the adaptation process would be more likely to possess increased levels of intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility, as well as adopt a bicultural orientation. Although these hypotheses were not supported, the fourth hypothesis was supported in that those who embraced a bicultural orientation scored higher on cognitive flexibility and intercultural sensitivity. The results of this study will be discussed in light of several concepts from the literature.

Because intercultural sensitivity is considered to be a component of intercultural communication competence, it is important to review the main tenets of this concept, as it relates to the results of this hypothesis. Arasaratnam & Doerfel (2005) listed several dimensions of a competent communicator, including: motivation, being observant, and sensitivity. According to Kim (1991), intercultural communication competence affords an individual the facility to effectively manage cultural differences as well as the uncertainty and stress that often accompanies cross-cultural situations. Chen and Starosta (1997) defined intercultural sensitivity as a “desire to motivate [oneself] to understand, appreciate, and accept differences among cultures, and to produce a positive outcome from intercultural interactions” (p.7), and further argued that sojourners should possess “the ability to negotiate cultural meanings and to

appropriately execute effective communication behaviors that recognize each other's multiple identities in a specific environment" (Chen & Starosta, 2000, p. 7).

Examination of intercultural sensitivity scores revealed small, but significant findings. Second generation immigrants scored higher on this measurement than the first generation, which was not predicted. Thus, there are notable differences between these two groups, but in an unexpected direction—with second generation immigrants reporting higher intercultural sensitivity than their first generation counterparts. As a result, literature suggesting that first generation immigrants' high level of intercultural exposure and adaptation to different cultures, resulting in intercultural sensitivity was not confirmed in this study. For example, Kim's (1977, 1988, 2001) research on the adaptive processes of immigrants suggested that as individuals are prompted to change by meeting the demands of the host environment, they understand the profound similarities and differences between cultures and better demonstrate a heightened sense of self and other awareness. In a similar fashion, a study by Gil, Vega, and Dimas (1994) discovered that foreign-born Hispanic teenagers had higher levels of stress as a result of cross-cultural adaptation, but also demonstrated more adaptive growth than their U.S.-born counterparts. However, immigrants who do not allow themselves to be changed by the host culture may not achieve successful adaptation. After assessing the scores from the acculturation scale, it was found that first generation immigrants maintained their original cultural heritage but did not demonstrate acculturation to the U.S. culture. It is difficult to possess intercultural sensitivity if one is not highly involved in both cultures.

It is interesting to note that Gill's (2007) study on long-term study-abroad students may be more similar to the experiences of second generation immigrants. In this study, students reported an increased self-and-other awareness as well as a more profound understanding of

differences as a result of their cross-cultural experiences. Like second generation immigrants, these students were not permanent fixtures of more than one culture, but did experience a different culture while at school and visiting another country. Similarly, Christa Lee and Kroeger (2001) and Bhawuk and Brislin (1992) looked at associations between international experience, global competencies, and intercultural sensitivity and found a correlation between intercultural sensitivity and international experience.

With these studies in mind, the prediction was made that first generation immigrants would possess higher levels of intercultural sensitivity. However, barriers involved in the process of cross-cultural adaptation may have inhibited the acquisition of intercultural sensitivity in this group. The general inability of the first generation cohort to speak the host language, as discussed in the results section of this research, and other factors such as level of host cultural competence, are obstacles that were not overcome, shedding light on this finding.

As mentioned in the literature review, third culture individuals have some shared characteristics with immigrants. In particular, first generation immigrants share similarities with third culture individuals in that both groups have been exposed to different geographies and political and philosophical ideologies, which often contributes to an “awareness that there can be more than one way to look at the same thing” (Pollock & Van Reken, 2001, p. 79). Just as third culture individuals have had tangible, hands-on experiences in different cultures, so have first generation immigrants. Cultural adaptability is another prospective benefit shared by third culture individuals and immigrant samples (Pollock & Van Reken, 2001; Kim, 2001). They are also said to display more patience with distinct people and situations and truly enjoy the richness and complexity of intercultural interactions. Because of their experiences in multicultural situations, immigrants and third culture individuals, in particular, often display heightened

observational and linguistic skills, and an ability to understand different perspectives, which in turn produces a sense of inner confidence and self-reliance. In contrast, second generation immigrants have less tangible experience with the original culture heritage, leaving parents, peers, and media responsible for any cultural transmission. For instance, Lyttle, Barker, & Cornwell (2010) compared levels of interpersonal sensitivity between third culture individuals and mono-cultured individuals, and found that third culture individuals scored higher on social sensitivity scales than did mono-cultured participants. Based on previous research, it was expected that this study would produce similar results, where first generation immigrants, due to their intercultural experiences, would score higher on intercultural sensitivity. Again, this was not the case.

However, third culture individuals often experience a privileged upbringing; they are generally very well educated, wealthy, and have had the opportunity to travel to numerous different geographic regions of the world (McCaig, 1994). Even considering that first generation Latino immigrants have had concrete experiences with at least two distinct cultures, the lack of money, education, and in some cases U.S. citizenship are confounding variables that more than likely impact their acculturation experiences of the immigrants in this study.

It was thought that the increased amounts of intercultural experience obtained by first-generation immigrants would contribute to a better understanding of similarities and differences of their culture of origin and U.S. culture. Another explanation for why second generation immigrants scored higher on intercultural sensitivity stems from a study by Keefe and Padilla (1987). They found a decline in cultural awareness from the first to fourth generations of Mexican immigrants, with the most drastic decline occurring between the first and second generation. However, this same study also found that loyalty to culture of origin did not decline

with subsequent generations as cultural awareness did, which illuminates the fact that second generation immigrants were highly knowledgeable of their cultural heritage. Furthermore, Ramirez and Hosch (1991) found that when the cultural values and practices of Latino adolescents were drastically divergent from that of their parents, familial dysfunction increased. This finding plays another potential explanatory role in that second generation youth may embrace the cultural heritage of their parents in order to maintain positive familial functioning; Second generation immigrants did score higher on biculturalism, which suggests that biculturalism and intercultural sensitivity are, in fact, correlated. Further explanations for these results will be discussed after an account of the remaining findings on cognitive flexibility and biculturalism.

The second hypothesis predicted that first generation immigrants would score higher than second generation immigrants on cognitive flexibility. Flexibility is also considered an acquired characteristic of an individual who possesses communication competence (Spitzberg & Cupach, 1984; Bochner & Kelly, 1974; Berger & Roloff, 1980). Cuellar (2000) emphasized the benefits of bi-cognitive development and adaptation; he argued that as a result of being raised in a multicultural context, positive attributes such as flexibility, adaptability, and empathy often result. Also, Martin and Anderson (1998) demonstrated that cognitive flexibility contributed to an enhanced ability for a person to communicate with strangers; it was also suggested that cognitively flexible individuals “have more confidence in their ability to communicate effectively, especially in new situations” (p. 6). Similarly, Tadmor and Tetlock (2006) highlighted the benefits second culture acquisition, including increased cognitive complexity, for those who were able to blend new and old cultural identities. It was expected that first

generation immigrants would demonstrate a fusion of Latino and U.S. American cultures, and score higher on cognitive flexibility than their second generation counterparts.

It is surmised that because second generation immigrants did in fact demonstrate a significantly higher bicultural orientation, they also scored higher on the measurement of cognitive flexibility. The fact that biculturalism and cognitive flexibility were correlated supports this conclusion. When considering the study by Omizo et al. (2008), which found that cognitive flexibility was positively related to an adherence to both Asian and American values, although the current study was looking at a fusion of Latino and U.S.-American cultural practices, one would assume that this conclusion would generalize to other cultures as well. In this case, second generation Latino individuals also showed a dual cultural adherence, and scored higher on cognitive flexibility.

However, other studies have suggested that there is little to no difference between first and second generations in terms of cognitive assessment. For instance, a study by Leung, Maddux, Galinsky, & Chiu (2008) looked at the relationship between multicultural experience and creativity, where multicultural experience was defined as “all direct and indirect experiences of encountering or interacting with the elements and/or members of foreign cultures” (p. 169). Results showed that creativity rates were high for both first and second generation immigrants, which sheds light on the results of the current study. Although the current study didn’t investigate creativity specifically, “cognitive flexibility is necessary for effective problem-solving and creativity” (Kloo, Perner, Aichhorn, & Schmidhuber, 2010, p. 208). Interestingly, these authors also state that cognitive flexibility follows a U-shape, where flexibility increases through childhood, but later begins to decrease with advancing age. Because the respondents from the first generation were substantially older than the first (age range, 18-69) this may be

another reason for their scoring lower on this measurement. Second generation immigrant ages ranged from 18-45.

Contrary to the original conjecture, this study demonstrated that enhanced cognitive abilities are not possessed by first generation immigrants, at least when comparing them to their second generation counterparts. Perhaps, cognitive flexibility does not dwindle until third, fourth and subsequent generations of immigrants. Again, it was originally surmised that first generation immigrants would be more inclined to integrate both the culture of origin and the new culture to produce an increased ability to understand and differentiate cultural identities and situations, but the results of this study have demonstrated otherwise.

The third hypothesis postulated that first generation immigrants would score higher than second generation immigrants on biculturalism. It was contended that second generation immigrants have a harder time internalizing two cultures and thus are less apt to develop multicultural perspectives because they have been socialized to a large degree in a single culture.

It was predicted that second generation immigrants would not score as high on the biculturalism scale, on the belief that they would favor assimilation over integration. A study by Dennis, Baseñez, and Farahmand (2010) contributes to this speculation. This study looked at the acculturation gap between immigrant generations and mentioned that Latino families are often composed of parents who are less acculturated to American society than their second generation offspring who have been educated in American schools and institutions. Often times, these second generation individuals feel conflicting pulls from their parents and a desire to be a part of American culture. It was claimed in this study that the acculturation gap would be maladaptive and stress-inducing, as found by Szapocznik & Kurtines (1993). Dennis, Baseñez, and Farahmand (2010) found that there was more intergenerational conflict between first and second

generation immigrants, suggesting that the offspring of Latino immigrants would be more inclined to assimilate or separate, and thus not score high on biculturalism. In the present study, the first generation immigrants were outscored on the measure of biculturalism by their second generation counterparts, suggesting that their exposure to the American school system and institutions combined with the exposure to their cultural heritage within the home, church, etc. generally contributes to a bicultural, rather than monocultural orientation. Contrary to the original line of reasoning, second generation immigrants, more so than the first generation, are better able to integrate components of their first and second culture (Buriel & Saenz, 1980).

There is existing literature that could potentially explain why second generation immigrants were more inclined to embrace biculturalism, at least among Latino samples. For example, Keefe and Padilla (1983) and Romero and Roberts (2003) found that although knowledge of their parents' original cultural heritage dwindles, the ethnic loyalty of second generation immigrants does not decline, which supports the results of this study. Accordingly, second and third generation immigrants often remain involved enough with their ethnic cultural heritage to demonstrate an integrative/bicultural acculturative style, as confirmed by Ramirez (1983), and Phinney (1996), who found that the acculturating individual will maintain their original cultural values while simultaneously being involved with mainstream American culture.

A brief discussion will be offered in regards to the subscales of the AMAS. With the exception of the sub-scales of Spanish language competency and Latin cultural competence, second generation immigrants scored higher than their first generation counterparts on every dimension of the abbreviated multidimensional acculturation scale. In regards to both language sub-scales on the AMAS, Preston (2007) noted that the majority of Hispanic immigrants are not competent in speaking English; in fact, only 23% of first generation Latino immigrants claim to

be competent English speakers. In turn, 88% of second generation immigrants claimed they spoke English very well (Preston, 2007). This raises the concern that first generation Latino immigrants are failing, or refusing, to adapt to American culture. Perhaps in order to cope, first generation Latinos cling to their native culture without making a genuine effort to become a part of the host culture. In this way, number of years living in the United States and age of arrival to the U.S. are likely to have implications for how first generation immigrants score on measures of biculturalism. Related to this issue of language competency and retention, Tran (2007) demonstrated that speaking Spanish at home with parents and with Hispanic friends does not hinder acquisition of the English language, but does encourage the maintenance of Spanish-speaking abilities.

As mentioned, second generation immigrants have been found to be less aware and knowledgeable than their parents on their ethnic origin, but just as loyal to their shared heritage (Keefe & Padilla, 1983; Romero & Roberts, 2003). Due to this loyalty and the desire of Latino parents to educate their offspring on their culture of origin, children are often socialized in a dual cultural environment (Padilla, 2006). Furthermore, the first generation is generally not linguistically functional or confident enough to truly immerse themselves into American culture. These results suggest that second generation immigrants may be more inclined to integrate both cultures, thus contributing to higher scores on all three measurements. Also, Bialystok (1999) discussed the bilingual advantage and discovered that bilingual children demonstrate advanced cognitive development in comparison to their monolingual counterparts. For instance, 88% of second generation immigrants claimed they spoke English very well (Preston, 2007), with only 23 % of first generation immigrants claiming competency in English. Furthermore, Dewaele & van Oudenhoven (2009) found that multilingualism predicted cultural openness. Thus, it seems

that lack of linguistic abilities is a recurring explanation of the results of the present study. The fact that first generation immigrants demonstrated minimal English speaking capability could be a detriment to higher levels of intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility.

The final hypothesis predicted that there would be a positive correlation between intercultural sensitivity, cognitive flexibility, and biculturalism. The results of several above mentioned studies involving acculturation and cognitive benefits led to the formation of the fourth and final hypothesis; however, there was only a moderate correlation found between these three variables.

Acculturation research led by Berry (1980, 1997) has resulted in a taxonomy with four possible acculturation strategies, known as assimilation, integration, separation, and marginalization. Integration is considered to be the most adaptive strategy (Berry, 2008; Berry & Sabatier, 2010) and is often equated with biculturalism, because it involves simultaneously maintaining the original culture while also interacting with members of the host society. Based on the definition by Buriel & Saenz (1980) that biculturalism involves “an integration of the competencies and sensitivities associated with two cultures within a single individual” (p. 246), the researcher surmised that as biculturalism increased, so would cognitive flexibility and intercultural sensitivity.

In addition, this premise was based on several concepts and studies that found that embracing biculturalism facilitated greater adaptation (Szapocznik & Kurtines, 1980; Padilla, 2006). LaFromboise et al. (1993), found a positive relationship between second culture acquisition and bicultural competence, which is marked by knowledge of cultural beliefs and values of both cultures, a positive attitude toward both groups, and communication competency, among other factors. This argument was supported in the following testimonial noted in a study

by Kim et al. (2003), [being bicultural] “is definitely an asset because we can mold ourselves to fit into our surroundings and it makes us more open to accepting other cultures that are hugely different than American culture” (p.164). In a related manner, Ramirez (1974) and Padilla and Gonzalez (2001) highlighted the academic advantages that can result from the bicognitive development of immigrant students, where immigrant students have often shown to outperform their U.S.-born counterparts in several areas of academic achievement. These findings contradict previous suggestions that U.S.-born children of immigrants assimilated into the mainstream would be more successful in academic settings (Padilla & Gonzalez 2001). Thus, it was speculated that the statistical correlation between these three measurements would have been more prominent.

A study that partially aligns with the results of the fourth hypothesis looked at the relationship between leadership, biculturalism, and cognitive complexity, where the researchers considered bicultural individuals and cognitively complex individuals to have the same characteristics (Rivera-Alicea, 2003). This study also used the abbreviated multidimensional acculturation scale (Zea et al., 2003) to assess biculturalism. Surprisingly, a strong relationship was not found between cognitive complexity and biculturalism; in fact, little to no relationship was found between these two constructs. Although the current research was investigating cognitive flexibility, the characteristics of cognitive complexity are very similar, where cognitive flexibility has been associated with the ability to differentiate, articulate, and integrate multiple ideas (Benet-Martínez, Lee, & Leu, 2009). Cognitive flexibility was defined by Endicott, Bock, & Narvaez (2003) as “the ability to understand, consider, and weigh multiple frameworks, or schemas” (p. 415).

A final explanation for the results emerging from all four hypotheses is borrowed from Portes (1997), who discussed the idea of transnational communities, linguistic shifts, and segmented assimilation among immigrants. Transnational communities are often formed by immigrants in attempt to advance politically and economically without giving up their original cultural heritage. In line with this notion, it would make sense that first generation Latino immigrants often form communities composed of individuals from their original cultural heritage as support groups, without having to truly immerse themselves into the host culture.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This study assessed the impact of intercultural exposure on intercultural sensitivity, cognitive flexibility, and biculturalism. Potential limitations of this investigation will now be discussed. In the current study, the cognitive flexibility scale demonstrated an internal reliability of  $\alpha = .71$ ; although this is an acceptable range, the instrument is not as reliable as it should be and may not be an accurate indicator of the construct. Moreover, the statistical significance that resulted from using this scale was minimal, thus generalizing this data is limited. Finally, Padilla and Perez (2003) mention the difficulty of measuring cognitive components of acculturation, as “cognitive and behavioral changes do not always follow the same time progression when we are examining changes due to intergroup contacts” (p. 39).

Because this study was dependent on self-reported data, each participant’s responses on the measures of intercultural sensitivity, cognitive flexibility and biculturalism were dependent on accurate self-awareness. Self-reported data is susceptible to inaccurate responses and dishonesty, which affect the reliability of the measures. The emergent results of this study may in some way be a consequence of using self-reports; although, due to the nature of the study, it was difficult to avoid this limitation. In a related fashion, a convenience sample of Latino

immigrants (mostly of Mexican origin) living in the southeast is not necessarily representative of all Latino immigrants living in the United States. The majority of data came from members of Hispanic churches, which would lead the researcher to believe that the church members were still accustomed to their enclaves. In contrast, a portion of the sample was obtained from university students who are more likely to be classified as second generation immigrants, and are likely to possess higher levels of education and acculturation.

Another marked limitation is the inability to control for certain extraneous variables. For example, familial composition and function, religious beliefs, household experiences, and personality are difficult constructs to control, but are all probably related to how each of these participants responded to the instruments used in this study. For example, the demographics questionnaire asked for information regarding age, gender, ethnicity, etc., but cannot get a clear depiction of household composition and cultural practices. Other information could have been included on the demographics questionnaire, such as the educational level of each participant, as well as other items related to socioeconomic status. Furthermore, it would have been helpful to ask participants who they interact with most frequently (people from their heritage culture, Americans, both, etc.) spend much or most of their time with. However, these items were left out so that participants could complete the survey in a timely manner. Moreover, the educational systems in Latin American countries vary greatly.

Another issue deals with the myriad of circulating definitions of first and second generation immigrants. For example, Tran (2007) defined the second generation group as “natives with one or both parents born in a foreign country” (p. 2). Portes and Rumbaut (2005) defined the second generation as “native-born children of foreign parents or foreign-born children who were brought to the U.S. before adolescence” (p. 988). Padilla (2001) referred to a

second-generation individual as one who was born in the U.S. to immigrant parents, or moved to the U.S. before the age of 5. In the same study, Padilla considered a first generation immigrant as one who has moved to the United States after being born in another country, but does not further confine the definition to age of arrival to the U.S. As a consequence of not finding clearly defined terminology, the researcher operationalized these terms with little assistance from established parameters. This inconsistency is problematic because choosing to operationalize one definition over the other can have an impact on the results of a study. Initially, the 1.5 generation, individuals who possess characteristics of both first and second generation, were incorporated into the analysis.

Related to the above mentioned complication with operationalizing generational cohorts is operationalizing what a multicultural/intercultural experience actually encompasses. For instance, Leung, Maddux, Galinsky, & Chiu (2008) defined multicultural experiences as “all direct and indirect experiences of encountering or interacting with the elements and/or members of foreign cultures” (p. 169). In this case, second generation immigrants would technically have just as much, if not more, intercultural experiences as their first-generation counterparts, as they interact with Americans everyday at school and are assumed to have at least some exposure to their cultural heritage in their homes. This definition does not specifically dictate that an individual have intercultural experience in a culture outside of the United States. Consequently, stricter parameters should have been established in indicating what an “intercultural experience” actually encompasses. Measures and terminology of intercultural experience and adaptation should be further developed and made consistent.

Finally, English language deficiencies of the first generation cohort may very well be a confounding variable in this study, at least for the measure of biculturalism. Perhaps they are

less inclined to integrate or embrace biculturalism due to the fact that they are not competent in their verbal communicative abilities.

### **Conclusions**

As discussed in the introduction, the two divergent ideologies of pluralism and assimilation served as a framework to consider the ramifications of either maintaining or discarding one's culture of origin. It was surmised that second generation immigrants would orient themselves to the U.S. American culture by way of assimilation, and that the first generation of immigrants would adopt a more integrative approach.

The results of this research indicate that the concepts outlined in the cross-cultural adaptation and acculturation literature (e.g. Kim, 2001; Berry, 2008, LaFromboise et. al, 1993) were partially supported in that biculturalism facilitated higher levels of intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility (both components of communication competence). However, it is difficult to determine the extent to which intercultural adaptation and intercultural experiences contribute to heightened intercultural communication competence because first generation immigrants have more tangible intercultural experiences, but were out-scored by their second generation counterparts on all three instruments. Second generation immigrants do have experiences with more than one culture in the confinements of their home and church, and through peers and media. Perhaps this exposure to the Latino culture is sufficient to develop a dual cultural identity and thus possess the characteristics of intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility. Furthermore, it seems likely that other demographic variables discussed earlier that were not assessed in this study may be implicated in the results.

Kim (2001, 2008) contended that the process of cross-cultural adaptation produced a new kind of person, one who, through the experience of intercultural communication and the adaptive

process, develops the potential for an intercultural personhood. The person who internalizes two cultures better understands similarities and differences between their original home culture and the host culture (Kim, 2001). It was thought that the increased amounts of intercultural experience obtained by first-generation immigrants would contribute to a better understanding of similarities and differences of their culture of origin and the host culture. As stated, this study demonstrated that it was the second generation of immigrants who successfully integrated both cultures because many of the participants classified as a second generation immigrant did undergo a degree of intercultural adaptation (depending on their age of arrival to the United States), this may be enough to contribute an increased ability to notice cultural similarities and differences, as well as an ability to be flexible in new and/or unusual situations. It is still somewhat surprising, however, that second generation immigrants surpassed their first generation counterparts in each measurement. As discussed in the literature review, the immigrant paradox holds that foreign-born immigrants, despite minority status and poverty, are generally better adapted in certain manners, especially in terms of health and criminal behavior (Nguyen, 2006). This may be true in certain respects, but in regards to the development of intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility, it was the U.S. born immigrants, or those who moved here before the age of 12 that scored higher on the above mentioned constructs. Although the hypotheses of this study were disconfirmed, the current research does point towards a difference between these two groups on biculturalism and the affective and cognitive components of communication competence.

The results of this research indicate that there are differences between first and second generation immigrants in terms of several dimensions of acculturation and components of intercultural communication competence. Furthermore, it was underestimated the fact that

second generation immigrants do indeed seem to be exposed to their original culture heritage by their parents, and that they embrace it, and do not reject it. In addition, the findings demonstrate a commonality among first and second generation immigrants in that both cohorts adhere to their Latin American identity very strongly (Keefe & Padilla, 1987). Adopting the notion that intercultural adaptation leads to heightened intercultural sensitivity, cognitive flexibility, and biculturalism, it was argued that the increased exposure to different cultures by first generation immigrants would contribute to this group scoring higher on measurements of intercultural sensitivity, cognitive flexibility, and biculturalism. The following section will address potential future studies in the area of intercultural communication that would be beneficial to pursue.

### **Further Research**

For scholars wishing to continue research on immigrant populations, adaptive processes, or other related concepts, there are numerous opportunities to pursue. Primarily, it would be useful to replicate the current study, with the addition of subsequent generations of Latino immigrants. Such investigations could use the same scales of this study to look at first, second, third, and fourth generation of immigrants, to gauge when intercultural sensitivity, cognitive flexibility, and biculturalism begin to phase out, if at all. In turn, the study could be replicated with the same samples groups, but with the use of different measurement scales. For example, to measure biculturalism, the Acculturation Rating Scale for Mexican Americans-II (ARSMA-II; Cuéllar, Arnold, & Gonzalez, 1995) could be used, or the Bicultural Involvement Questionnaire-Short Version (BIQ-S; Szapocznik, Kurtines, & Fernandez, 1980). Intercultural sensitivity could be measured using Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman's (2003) Intercultural Developmental Inventory.

In a related fashion, this study could be replicated with immigrants coming from a non-Latino ethnic group. It would be worthwhile to investigate whether or not second generation immigrants with different ethnicities demonstrate the same adherence to both the host culture and their parents' culture. Assessing the acculturative strategies of first and second generation immigrants coming from Europe, the Middle East, and Asia would likely yield different results, or demonstrate more salient differences between the two generations on measures of biculturalism, intercultural sensitivity, and cognitive flexibility. The acculturation scale used in the current study would need to be revised for samples that are not of Hispanic ethnic origin. The intercultural sensitivity and cognitive flexibility scales could be used in their current format. It would be interesting to investigate the role that one's ethnicity plays on how acculturation strategies are implemented.

Another study could expound upon the concept of cultural frame switching, as studied by Benet-Martinez, Lee, & Leu (2006) and Benet-Martinez, Leu, Lee, & Morris (2002). Researchers trained in psychometrics could explore the cognitive ramifications of biculturalism and dual culture exposure by comparing Anglo-American monocultural individuals and immigrant individuals from various ethnic backgrounds, or by comparing first generation immigrants with subsequent generations. The relationship between cultural frame-switching and bicultural identity integration could be examined. Additionally, by adopting the experimental methodologies of the above mentioned authors, the subjective and sometimes inaccurate information gleaned from self-reported data would be less likely impact results.

In considering the different ideologies of assimilation (melting pot) and integration (pluralism) mentioned in the in the introduction, a study looking at host culture responses to immigrants who either integrate or assimilate would be insightful. For instance, a study

conducted by Van Oudenhoven & Eisses (1998) looked at immigrant acculturation in Israel and the Netherlands. Focusing specifically on the different outcomes achieved between immigrants who integrate, rather than assimilate, it was found that those who choose assimilation are viewed less negatively and prejudiced than those who integrate. However, the integrating individuals were shown to uphold their ethnicity more positively than those who assimilated. Thus, first and second generation immigrants could be administered any number of acculturation scales, such as the one used in this study (AMAS-ZABB, Zea et al., 2003) or Phinney's (1992) multigroup ethnic identity measure (MEIM) to determine the immigrant's acculturative orientation. In addition, an attitude measurement could be administered to U.S.-Americans to glean their opinions on immigrant orientation to the United States, such as the one designed by Van Oudenhoven & Eisses (1998), referred to as *the majority members' questionnaire*.

To assess the positive personality characteristics often associated with biculturals, it would be interesting to administer the multicultural personality questionnaire (MPQ), developed by Dewaele and van Oudenhoven (2009). This scale could be administered to immigrants and host culture individuals (monocultural individuals) to identify certain personality traits that emerge as a result of being exposed to two cultures. Furthermore, it could be determined which personality characteristics correlate with positive or negative patterns of adaptation.

Someone wishing to continue the investigation on how age of arrival and/or amount of time in two distinct cultures impacts cognitive and affective components, could separate immigrant groups as Padilla (2001) did in the following manner. He placed immigrant arrival to a new culture into the following three age categories: early (0-5 years of age), middle (6-10 years of age), and late (11+ years of age). Relatedly, it would be interesting to see how much cultural immersion time is necessary for participants to develop cognitive flexibility, intercultural

sensitivity, and a bicultural orientation. In relation to this, future studies should generate more in-depth demographic items that inquire about how cultural differences are managed and discussed by parents in the home. For example, are parents inclined to transmit their cultural heritage to their offspring while encouraging the acquisition of a second culture? Do parents encourage maintenance of the original culture while discouraging an adoption of the host culture? Answers to these questions are likely to paint a more accurate depiction of the differences and similarities of immigrant generations. Moreover, it may be helpful for future researchers to conduct ethnographic research, where a more profound understanding of cultural practices can be gained.

Finally, it may be useful to employ qualitative research on Latino immigrants for a number of reasons. First, many of the first generation immigrants have very low educational levels, thus conducting bi-lingual interviews with both structured and open-ended questions may yield more accurate and in-depth results, because the researcher can ensure that the participant understands the question. Furthermore, richer and more detailed responses could be gleaned that may not be captured from closed-ended survey questions.

The results of this study have significant implications for the cultural, social, and political make-up of U.S. society. In considering the current movement towards globalization and the ever-increasing arrival rates of Latino immigrants to the U.S, the study of intercultural communication and the ramifications there of should be a priority for the academic community. Not only should there be a continued examination of various acculturation and adaptation strategies in Latino communities, but further studies should be done on individuals and groups from different cultural backgrounds as well.

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**APPENDIX**

Appendix A  
Demographics Questionnaire

Instructions: Circle answers that apply to you, and fill in blanks where needed.

**Gender:** Male/Female

**Age:** \_\_\_\_\_

**In what country were you born?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Where was your father born?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Where was your mother born?** \_\_\_\_\_

**If you were not born in the United States, at what age did you arrive to the United States?** \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix B  
AMAS-ZABB 20 (Short Version)

**Instructions:** The following section contains questions about your *culture of origin* and your *native language*. By *culture of origin* we are referring to the culture of the country either you or your parents came from (e.g., Guatemala, Mexico, El Salvador). By *native language* we refer to the language of that country, spoken by you or your parents in that country (e.g., Spanish). If you come from a multicultural family, choose the culture you relate to the most. Please mark the number from the scale that best corresponds to your answer. Place responses in the blank located to the left of the statement.

**Instrucciones:** La siguiente sección contiene preguntas acerca del *origen de tu cultura* y de tu *idioma nativo*. Al decir *origen de cultura* nos referimos a la cultura del país de donde tú o tus padres provienen (ej., Guatemala, México, El Salvador). Por *idioma (lengua) nativo* nos referimos al lenguaje/idioma de ese país, ya sea que lo hables tú o tus padres (ej., Español). Si tú perteneces a una familia multicultural, escoge la cultura con la que más te identifiques. De acuerdo a la escala, favor de marcar con el número que mejor corresponda a tu respuesta.

Response Options: 1= Strongly Disagree/Totalmente en desacuerdo  
2=Disagree Somewhat/Mas o menos en desacuerdo  
3=Uncertain/Incierto  
4=Agree somewhat/Mas o menos de acuerdo  
5=Strongly Agree/Totalmente de acuerdo

1. \_\_\_\_ I think of myself as being Latino/Me considero Latino.
2. \_\_\_\_ I feel good about being Latino/Me siento bien de ser Latino.
3. \_\_\_\_ I feel I am part of Latino culture/Siento que formo parte de la cultura Latina.
4. \_\_\_\_ I am proud of being Latino/Me siento orgulloso de ser Latino.
5. \_\_\_\_ I think of myself as being US-American/Me consider estadounidense.
6. \_\_\_\_ I feel good about being US-American/Me siento bien de ser estadounidense.
7. \_\_\_\_ I feel that I am part of US-American culture/Siento que formo parte de la cultura estadounidense.
8. \_\_\_\_ I am proud of being US-American/Me siento orgulloso de ser estadounidense.

Response Options: 1= Not at all/Nada  
2= A little/Un poco  
3= Pretty Well/Bastante bien  
4=Extremely Well/Muy bien

9. \_\_\_\_How well do you SPEAK English in general?/Qué tan bien HABLAS inglés en general?
10. \_\_\_\_How well do you UNDERSTAND English in general?/Qué tan bien ENTIENDES inglés en general?
11. \_\_\_\_How well do you SPEAK Spanish in general?/Qué tan bien HABLAS español en general?
12. \_\_\_\_How well do you UNDERSTAND Spanish in general?/Qué tan bien ENTIENDES español en general?
13. \_\_\_\_How well do you know popular Latino newspapers and magazines?/Cuán bien conoces los periodicos y revistas Latinos?
14. \_\_\_\_How well do you know popular actors and actresses from Latin America?/Qué tan bien conoces los actores y actrices Latinoamericanos más populares?
15. \_\_\_\_How well do you know Latin American history?/Qué tan bien conoces la historia latinoamericana?
16. \_\_\_\_How well do you know Latino or Latin American political leaders?/Qué tan bien conoces a los líderes políticos Latinos o Latinoamericanos?
17. \_\_\_\_How well do you know popular U.S.-American newspapers and magazines?/Qué tan bien conoces los periódicos y revistas populares de Estados Unidos?
18. \_\_\_\_How well do you know U.S.-American actors and actresses?/Qué tan bien conoces a los actores y actrices de Los Estados Unidos populares?
19. \_\_\_\_How well do you know US-American history?/Qué tan bien conoces la historia de los Estados Unidos?
20. \_\_\_\_How well do you know US-American political leaders?/Qué tan bien conoces a los líderes políticos de los Estados Unidos?

Appendix C  
Intercultural Sensitivity Scale

Below is a series of statements concerning intercultural communication. There are no right or wrong answers. Please work quickly and record your first impression by indicating the degree to which you agree or disagree with the statement. Thank you for your cooperation.

- 5 = strongly agree
- 4 = agree
- 3 = uncertain
- 2 = disagree
- 1 = strongly disagree

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. I enjoy interacting with people from different cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \*I think people from other cultures are narrow-minded.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. I am pretty sure of myself in interacting with people from different cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \*I find it very hard to talk in front of people from different cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I always know what to say when interacting with people from different cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I can be as sociable as I want to be when interacting with people from different cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. \*I don't like to be with people from different cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I respect the values of people from different cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. \*I get upset easily when interacting with people from different cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I feel confident when interacting with people from different cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. I tend to wait before forming an impression of culturally-distinct counterparts.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. \*I often get discouraged when I am with people from different cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. I am open-minded to people from different cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. I am very observant when interacting with people from different cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. \*I often feel useless when interacting with people from different cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. I respect the ways people from different cultures behave.

\_\_\_\_\_17. I try to obtain as much information as I can when interacting with people from different cultures.

\_\_\_\_\_18. \*I would not accept the opinions of people from different cultures.

\_\_\_\_\_19. I am sensitive to my culturally-distinct counterpart's subtle meanings during our interaction.

\_\_\_\_\_20. \*I think my culture is better than other cultures.

\_\_\_\_\_21. I often give positive responses to my culturally different counterpart during our interaction.

\_\_\_\_\_22. \*I avoid those situations where I will have to deal with culturally-distinct persons.

\_\_\_\_\_23. I often show my culturally-distinct counterpart my understanding through verbal or nonverbal cues.

\_\_\_\_\_24. I have a feeling of enjoyment towards differences between my culturally distinct counterpart and me.

\*Items 2, 4, 7, 9,12,15,18, 20, and 22 are reverse-coded before summing the 24 items. Interaction Engagement items are 1, 11, 13,21, 22, 23, and 24, Respect for Cultural Differences items are 2, 7, 8, 16, 18, and 20, Interaction Confidence items are 3, 4, 5, 6, and 10, Interaction Enjoyment items are 9, 12, and 15, and Interaction Attentiveness items are 14, 17, and 19. Reprinted and used by permission of the authors.

Appendix D  
Cognitive Flexibility Scale

The following statements deal with your beliefs and feelings about your own behavior. Read each statement and respond by identifying what best represents your agreement with each statement.

Strongly Agree 5	Agree 4	Uncertain 3	Disagree 2	Strongly Disagree 1
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- \_\_\_ 1. I can communicate an idea in many different ways.
- \_\_\_ 2. I avoid new and unusual situations.
- \_\_\_ 3. I feel like I never get to make decisions.
- \_\_\_ 4. In any given situation, I am able to act appropriately.
- \_\_\_ 5. I can find workable solutions to seemingly unsolvable problems.
- \_\_\_ 6. I seldom have choices to choose from when deciding how to behave.
- \_\_\_ 7. I am willing to work at creative solutions to problems.
- \_\_\_ 8. My behavior is a result of conscious decisions that I make.
- \_\_\_ 9. I have many possible ways of behaving in any given situation.
- \_\_\_ 10. I have difficulty using my knowledge on a given topic in real life situations.
- \_\_\_ 11. I am willing to listen and consider alternatives for handling a problem.
- \_\_\_ 12. I have the self-confidence necessary to try different ways of behavior.

\* Items 2 3 6 10 are recoded