

CHAPTER 2

Bicultural Identities in a Diverse World

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In recent years, there has been a surge of interest in the study of biculturalism and bicultural identities. Broadly speaking, bicultural individuals may be immigrants, refugees, sojourners, indigenous people, ethnic minorities, those in inter-ethnic relationships, and mixed-ethnic individuals. More strictly defined, bicultural individuals are those who have been exposed to and have internalized two cultures (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005; Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2007). In this chapter, we reflect on the reasons for the increasing appeal of biculturalism research, present acculturation and identity theories as the foundation for research on bicultural identity, introduce Bicultural Identity Integration (BII; Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005) as a way to understand individual differences in bicultural identity organization, explore the diversity of the bicultural experience through concepts such as segmented assimilation, discuss the implications of biculturalism, and suggest future directions and applications of biculturalism.

WHY BICULTURALISM?

Several factors may have contributed to the rise in interest in studying biculturalism. First, bicultural individuals increasingly comprise a significant proportion of the world's population. In the United States alone, bicultural individuals may include the 13 percent who are foreign-born, the 34 percent who are non-white, and the 20 percent who speak a language other than English at home (U.S. Census Bureau, 2006). In addition, children and grandchildren of foreign-born U.S. Americans are often also bicultural, as are U.S. Americans who have lived or worked in other countries.

Second, biculturalism has garnered attention due to societal-level events such as the civil rights movement, immigration, and globalization. For instance, the civil rights movement resulted in a resistance to assimilation into the dominant Anglo-Protestant American society (Arce, 1981; Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1989; Cross, 1978) and the development of pride in the other (i.e., racial, ethnic, cultural) side of one's identity. During this same period, the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 permitted immigration into the United States by Asians, Latinos, and Eastern Europeans. Because they are phenotypically different from Anglo Americans, immigrants from these parts of the world have a more difficult time assimilating and blending into the dominant U.S. American society; thus, biculturalism seemed a more feasible identity model for these individuals. More recently, globalization has allowed for greater intercultural contact via work, travel, and the Internet, resulting in increasing numbers of people who are exposed to cultures other than their own and thus may identify as bicultural. Hence, globalization refers to the cultural, economic, political, technological, and environmental connections among people around the world. These and other events in contemporary U.S. society have affected the perceptions of biculturalism, which in turn has promoted research on this topic.

Third, a call for more scientifically rigorous methods in cultural research has highlighted bicultural individuals as an ideal population for conducting experiments in cultural psychology (Hong, Morris, Chiu, & Benet-Martínez, 2000). By virtue of having two cultures that can be independently manipulated, bicultural individuals give researchers a quasi-experimental design ideal for the study of how culture affects behavior (Hong et al., 2000). In addition, previously identified cross-cultural differences can be replicated in experiments with bicultural individuals (Sanchez-Burks et al., 2003). Furthermore, these cross-cultural differences can be examined while controlling for variables that confound national comparisons (e.g., gross national product) by using bicultural individuals in a within-subjects design.

Clearly, recent sociopolitical and historical developments, along with new research interests, have drawn more attention to biculturalism. It is an increasingly common and important social phenomenon that has implications for understanding basic psychological processes, such as identity. Before turning to theory and research on bicultural identity, we first briefly review theories of acculturation and identity from which bicultural identity theories took their roots.

UNDERLYING THEORIES: ACCULTURATION AND IDENTITY

Acculturation at the individual level is defined as the psychological and behavioral changes that occur in people who are exposed to more than

one culture (Berry, 2003). In the past, psychologists viewed acculturation as a unilinear process, whereby all acculturating individuals would relinquish their ethnic culture in order to adopt the dominant culture. Currently, acculturation is viewed as a bilinear process, with acculturating individuals facing two key issues: (1) the extent to which they are motivated and/or allowed to maintain their ethnic culture and identity; and (2) the extent to which they are motivated and/or allowed to be involved in the dominant culture. Four acculturation strategies result from the negotiation of these two issues. An individual who does not want to or cannot maintain his/her ethnic culture and identity but seeks to have contact with the dominant culture is using the *assimilation* strategy. Conversely, an individual who seeks to maintain his/her ethnic culture and identity but does not have a desire to or cannot interact with the dominant culture is using the *separation* strategy. One who wishes to or is allowed to maintain his/her ethnic culture while interacting with the dominant culture is using the *integration* or *biculturalism* strategy. Finally, when one has no preference or opportunity for contact with either culture, he/she is using the *marginalization* strategy. There is considerable empirical support for the existence of these different acculturation strategies (e.g., Berry, Kim, Power, Young, & Bujaki, 1989; Tsai, Ying, & Lee, 2000; Ying, 1995), but integration/biculturalism is the most widely endorsed and used strategy by individuals undergoing acculturation (Van Oudenhoven, Ward, & Masgoret, 2006). In summary, acculturation theories offer the conceptual backdrop for theories and research on bicultural identity by highlighting how people change as a result of exposure to two cultures. Next, we turn to basic theories of identity, which have also informed the development of theories about bicultural identities.

Identity has been defined in many different ways by psychologists. It is a striving for continuity of personal character and maintenance of solidarity with the group's ideals and identity (Erikson, 1959); a core sense of self, a coherence of personality, a continuity of self over time, and a self in social context (Grotevant, 1992); the intersection of individual and society (Josselson, 1994); or a life story that has both biographical and social elements and can be used in making identity by emerging adulthood (McAdams, 2001). All of these definitions have a common component: identity is inherently social in nature. In other words, identity can be defined simply as the part of one's self-concept that is related to group membership.

VARIATIONS IN BICULTURAL IDENTITY

According to Phinney and Devich-Navarro (1997), "There is not just one way of being bicultural" (p. 19). Acknowledging that bicultural identity is not uniform across individuals, researchers have attempted to identify types of bicultural individuals. Through a review of

the literature, LaFromboise, Coleman, and Gerton (1993) identified two modes of biculturalism: alternation and fusion. Alternating bicultural individuals are highly oriented to both cultures and switch between cultures in accordance with the situation, whereas fused biculturals are highly oriented to an emergent third culture that stems but is also distinct from their two cultures (e.g., Chicano culture). Expanding on LaFromboise et al.'s (1993) bicultural types, Birman (1994) identified three types of bicultural individuals: blended, instrumental, and integrated. Blended biculturals are the same as LaFromboise et al.'s (1993) fused biculturals. Instrumental biculturals are those who use the integration strategy in terms of their behaviors and the marginalization strategy in terms of their identity. Integrated biculturals are those who use the integration strategy in terms of their behaviors and the separation strategy in terms of their identity. To test these theories, Phinney and Devich-Navarro (1997) interviewed African American and Mexican American adolescents. From their interviews, two types of bicultural individuals emerged: blended and alternating. Both types of bicultural individuals had positive attitudes toward both of their cultures. However, alternating biculturals perceived conflict between their cultures, whereas blended biculturals did not. Furthermore, alternating biculturals were more oriented to their ethnic culture than the dominant culture, whereas blended biculturals were more oriented to the dominant culture than their ethnic culture. One limitation of the terms "blended" and "alternating" is that these labels refer to two distinct but not exclusive domains of the bicultural experience: "blended" refers to bicultural individuals' merging of their two *identities*, whereas "alternating" refers to their change in *behavior* in response to different cultural contexts.

Bicultural Identity Integration (BII)

Building on the research cited above, with further analysis of the literature and new empirical data, Benet-Martínez, Leu, Lee, and Morris (2002) introduced the construct of BII, an individual difference variable that captures the phenomenology of managing dual cultural identities. Theoretically, BII may relate to similar constructs such as nonoppositional versus oppositional identity (Ogbu, 1993) and identity synthesis versus confusion (Schwartz, 2006), but these relationships need to be explored empirically.

More recently, a study showed that BII is not a unitary construct but, instead, encompasses two different and psychometrically independent components (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005): (1) cultural distance versus blendedness—the degree of dissociation or compartmentalization versus the overlap perceived between the two cultural orientations (e.g., "I see myself as a Chinese in the United States" versus "I am a Chinese-American"); and (2) cultural conflict versus harmony—the degree of tension or clash versus compatibility perceived between the two cultures (e.g., "I feel trapped

between the two cultures" versus "I do not see conflict between the Chinese and American ways of doing things"). BII theory emphasizes the *subjective* (i.e., perceptual) elements of distance and conflict between two cultures. This emphasis is a strength of BII theory, as a study of over 7,000 acculturating adolescents in 13 countries found that *objective* cultural differences do not relate to adjustment (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006).

Empirical studies suggest that these individual differences in bicultural identity, particularly BII, are psychologically meaningful and have expected relationships with dispositional factors, contextual pressures, traditional acculturation variables, and mental health. Specifically, as indicated by path analyses, cultural distance is related to having a closed-minded disposition, lower levels of cultural competence in and identification with the dominant culture, experiencing strains in the linguistic domain (e.g., being self-conscious about one's accent), living in a community that is not culturally diverse, preferring the separation strategy, and frequently engaging in behaviors associated with only one of the two cultures. On the other hand, cultural conflict is related to having a neurotic disposition, experiencing discrimination, having strained intercultural relations (e.g., being told that one's behaviors are too "American" or too "ethnic"), experiencing linguistic barriers, endorsing values from both cultures, and lower adjustment (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005; Benet-Martínez, Haritatos, & Santana, 2008; Chen, Benet-Martínez, & Bond, 2008; Nguyen, Huynh, & Benet-Martínez, 2008). In summary, cultural distance is particularly linked to performance-related personal and contextual challenges (e.g., cognitive rigidity, low linguistic fluency, culturally limited surroundings), while cultural conflict stems from strains that are largely intra- and interpersonal in nature (e.g., nervousness, social prejudice, and rejection). See Nguyen and Benet-Martínez (2007) for a further review of empirical findings regarding BII.

OTHER PERSPECTIVES ON BICULTURALISM

Biculturation

Bicultural individuals may learn their two cultures simultaneously, or they may learn one culture before the other (Padilla, 2006). That is, they may learn their ethnic culture first and the dominant culture later, or they may learn the dominant culture first and the ethnic culture later. For example, later-generation Mexican Americans may learn U.S. American culture first and Mexican culture later when they learn Spanish in school, befriend other Mexican Americans, or study in Mexico. Because bicultural individuals are not homogenous in the process of learning their two cultures, the term "acculturation" is too restrictive. Acculturation implies that the ethnic culture is learned before the dominant culture, and thus is more applicable to immigrants and refugees. In response to this, some researchers

prefer the term "biculturalization," which is the process of adapting to two cultures (Polgar, 1960; Sadao, 2003; Valentine, 1971). This concept is more appropriate than acculturation for many bicultural individuals, such as second-generation children of immigrants or refugees and mixed-ethnic individuals who learn their two cultures simultaneously (Birman, 1994; Padilla, 2006; Szapocznik, Kurtines, & Fernandez, 1980).

Due to later-generation bicultural individuals' biculturalization, the ethnic culture is difficult to define. Although an ethnic cultural orientation for first-generation individuals might include participation in cultural activities, ethnic loyalty (or preferences for the ethnic group), and cultural awareness (or cultural knowledge), an ethnic cultural orientation for later-generation individuals may include ethnic pride and ethnic loyalty, without ethnic participation or knowledge (Padilla, 2006; Tsai et al., 2000). Moreover, because first-generation individuals have lived in their ethnic country, their ethnic culture closely approximates the culture of that country. However, the ethnic culture of later-generation individuals might be a crystallized version of the ethnic culture that their ancestors (e.g., parents of second-generation individuals, grandparents of third-generation individuals) brought with them upon migration (Matsumoto, 2000). For example, a recent immigrant from Vietnam brings a Vietnamese culture that is probably reflective of contemporary Vietnam, whereas a second-generation Vietnamese American's Vietnamese culture might be the culture of Vietnam in 1975 (or other year of emigration) when his or her parents left Vietnam for the United States. Besides a crystallized ethnic culture, later-generation individuals' ethnic culture might be an emergent third culture. For example, the ethnic culture of many later-generation Mexican Americans is Chicano culture (a combination of Mexican and U.S. American cultures, but distinct from both) rather than Mexican culture.

Emergent Third Culture

An emergent third culture might be a variation of the ethnic culture to which later-generation individuals are oriented (as mentioned above), or it may be a completely new third cultural orientation (in addition to the original dominant and ethnic cultural orientations). For example, some acculturating individuals using the integration strategy may be oriented to both the dominant (e.g., U.S. American) and ethnic (e.g., Mexican) cultures, whereas others using the integration strategy may be oriented to a third culture created via a combination of dominant and ethnic cultures (e.g., Chicano culture). Because the blending and fusion of cultures is a characteristic of the cultural distance component of BII, these latter individuals may also be described as having low levels of BII distance (or high levels of blendedness). Furthermore, cultural blendedness may be reflective of simultaneously engaging in behaviors associated with two cultures (e.g., speaking "Vietglish," eating fusion food; Nguyen et al., 2008). Note that

when applied to adolescents who have lived in more than one country, that is, third-culture kids, "third culture" refers not to an emergent third culture, but to a cosmopolitan, "citizen-of-the-world" culture (Cockburn, 2002).

An emergent third culture is more than just a summation of particular elements from the dominant and ethnic cultures; rather, it often results from a dynamic and instrumental interaction between dominant and ethnic cultures. For example, Chicano culture is composed of Mexican culture, U.S. American culture, Mexican American culture and other cultures (Garza & Lipton, 1982). The notion of a new culture that emerges from a combination of existing cultures has also been referred to as ethnogenesis (Flannery, Reise, & Yu, 2001), transculturation (Comas-Diaz, 1987), and hybridity (Hermans & Kempen, 1998; Hutnyk, 2005; Lowe, 1996; Oyserman, Sakamoto, & Lauffer, 1998). Hybridity is the term most widely used across disciplines, and assumes that cultures are not pure, homogeneous, essentialist, static, or discrete (Anthias, 2001; Hermans & Kempen, 1998; Lowe, 1996; Mahalingam & Leu, 2005). Furthermore, hybridity has been proposed as an acculturating individual's response to pressure by the dominant group to assimilate. In other words, it is a compromise between adopting and resisting the dominant culture, whereby acculturating individuals adopt the dominant culture but modify it to reflect aspects of their ethnic culture (Hutnyk, 2005; Lowe, 1996).

The possibility of being oriented to an emergent third culture has important implications for research on acculturation and biculturalism. The currently accepted bilinear model of acculturation with ethnic and dominant cultural orientations might be replaced by a trilinear model, where the third cultural orientation is the emergent third culture (Flannery et al., 2001). Moreover, this trilinear model might be more applicable to later-generation individuals than either the unilinear or bilinear model of acculturation. As of yet, no study has examined a third cultural orientation or compared a trilinear model to the other models. In addition, future research is needed to delineate the differences between an emergent third culture and the cultural distance versus blendedness component of BII. Emergent third cultures are likely to become more common as the number of later-generation bicultural individuals grows and cultures interacting in the same space continue to fuse and merge.

Pan-Ethnicity

Due to the diversity of societies such as the United States, acculturating individuals, especially those in metropolitan areas and inner cities, might interact with people from other ethnic and racial groups. As a result, they might come to identify with a racial or pan-ethnic group rather than with their specific ethnic group (Rumbaut, 1994). Pan-ethnic labels such as "Asian" or "Latino" were created by U.S. institutions to classify groups of individuals who were seen as racially or phenotypically

homogeneous (Espiritu, 1996; Lopez & Espiritu, 1990). Pan-ethnicity is also known as panethnogenesis, or the creation of a culture based on race (Rumbaut, 1994). For acculturating individuals, a pan-ethnic cultural orientation might include behaviors and attitudes that tend to be common across the hyphenated ethnic cultures of that pan-ethnicity. For example, a pan-ethnically oriented young Vietnamese American might identify as "AZN" (shortened form of "Asian"), drive a modified ("tricked-out") imported vehicle, and drink *boba* (a tapioca drink invented in Taiwan). These behaviors are not found in Vietnam and are not unique to Vietnamese Americans; these same behaviors are found among other young Asian Americans, such as Chinese Americans and Korean Americans.

Whether an individual is likely to identify with a pan-ethnic group is better predicted by structural factors (such as race and class) than by cultural factors (such as a common language or religion; Lopez & Espiritu, 1990). Other predictors of pan-ethnicity include being second generation or beyond and having experienced or perceived discrimination (Masuoka, 2006; Rumbaut, 2005). Furthermore, pan-ethnicity is associated with greater pride, social support, political strength, and intergroup interaction (Espiritu, 1996; Okamoto, 2003). Future studies should include a measure of pan-ethnic cultural orientation (e.g., Asian or Asian American) in addition to measures of dominant cultural orientation (e.g., U.S. American) and ethnic cultural orientation (e.g., Vietnamese) when examining acculturation. With increasing diversity in the United States, bicultural individuals might not merely be negotiating how their ethnic culture fits with the dominant culture; rather, they might be negotiating how their ethnic culture fits with other cultures within the United States (e.g., through pan-ethnicity).

Segmented Assimilation

According to Berry's (2003) framework, individuals using the marginalization strategy are neither oriented to the dominant culture nor their ethnic culture; however, it is difficult to consider any individual as being cultureless (del Pilar & Udasco, 2004). Perhaps, these individuals are oriented to a different culture, a culture that has not been given much attention within psychology. Within sociology, the acculturation process most applicable to these individuals is termed "segmented assimilation," and the culture to which these individuals are oriented is the culture of an impoverished, under-privileged, lower-class, inner-city, and reactive racial-minority segment of dominant society (Portes & Zhou, 1993). (Note that sociologists use "assimilation" to mean acculturation or cultural orientation, and not to mean a high dominant cultural orientation in combination with a low ethnic cultural orientation.)

Whereas pan-ethnicity refers to an identity that is determined by race, segmented assimilation refers to an identity that is determined by both race

and class (Rumbaut, 1994). That is, acculturating individuals participating in segmented assimilation are those experiencing discrimination based on their race or skin color, those experiencing economic and class inequality, and those living in poverty-stricken inner cities (Portes, Fernandez-Kelly, & Haller, 2005; Portes & Zhou, 1993). Segmented assimilation is some second-generation individuals' response to racial discrimination, the employment barriers that their parents encounter (e.g., limited job access), and rejection from the dominant, mainstream society (Portes & Zhou, 1993). Some correlates of segmented assimilation include dropping out of school and involvement in criminal activities (Portes et al., 2005).

Based on the above descriptions of and findings regarding segmented assimilation, there is reason to believe that at least some, if not all, individuals using the marginalization strategy are also those participating in the segmented assimilation process. For example, like segmented assimilation, marginalization is the acculturation mode for individuals who have been discriminated against due to their race and those who have been unsuccessful at becoming fully assimilated into dominant society (possibly due to rejection; Berry, 2003). Furthermore, as with segmented assimilation, marginalization has been found to be associated with dropping out of school, delinquency, substance abuse, and maladaptation (Berry, 2003; del Pilar & Udasco, 2004; Ward & Kennedy, 1994). Therefore, individuals using the marginalization strategy might not be without a culture; rather, they may be oriented to a culture that is not measured with typical acculturation scales. Future research is needed to determine whether segmented assimilation and marginalization are one and the same, and whether the cultural orientation of marginalized individuals is the culture of disadvantaged, under-class racial minorities in inner cities. Besides pan-ethnicity, segmented assimilation is another way for bicultural individuals to negotiate how their ethnic culture fits with other cultures within a diverse society. In summary, researchers have begun to recognize that biculturalism takes many forms, and the many theories and perspectives on the diversity of the bicultural experience have and will continue to generate new, exciting research on this topic. Particularly as later-generation bicultural individuals increase in numbers, the above concepts of biculturalization, emergent third cultures and hybridity, pan-ethnicity, and segmented assimilation will attain greater relevance and importance.

IMPLICATIONS

Researchers have long touted biculturalism as an ideal, calling attention to the many benefits associated with having two cultures (e.g., Berry, 1997; Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, & Vedder, 2001). However, empirically, findings have been mixed as to whether biculturalism is positively or negatively related to adjustment, if at all. Recently, a meta-analysis

found that identifying with both cultures may have positive psychological and sociocultural correlates (Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2008). The study also suggested that the mixed findings from previous studies were probably due to how biculturalism was measured (i.e., acculturation as unilinear vs. bilinear), with bilinear measures of acculturation yielding moderate effects and unilinear measures yielding null effects. It is perhaps not surprising that bicultural individuals, who tend to have more social and cognitive flexibility (Benet-Martínez, Lee, & Leu, 2006; Tadmor & Tetlock, 2006) and wider behavioral repertoires and competencies, experience greater adjustment and less maladjustment. Conversely, acculturating individuals who do not have dual identities may feel incomplete, fragmented, and culturally homeless (Vivero & Jenkins, 1999), thus becoming the so-called marginal man proposed by early acculturation researchers (Park, 1928; Stonequist, 1935).

Biculturalism research also has implications for public policy. At the institutional level, biculturalism can be promoted via multicultural legislation in some societies. For example, Canada has had policies that encourage the maintenance of all cultures *and* support full participation in the larger society, making biculturalism a national policy since the 1970s (Berry, 2003). In contrast, policies toward immigrants and ethnic minorities in the United States and many other culturally plural societies have been more assimilationistic (i.e., melting pot ideology; Berry, 2003; Van Oudenhoven et al., 2006). Because the majority of acculturating individuals prefer the integration strategy (Van Oudenhoven et al., 2006), it is imperative that researchers study the effect of national policy regarding pluralism on the adjustment of immigrants and other acculturating individuals.

Because most societies are no longer ethnically and culturally homogeneous, biculturalism is an increasingly important worldwide phenomenon that deserves attention. It may be an asset for interpersonal success, corporate success, intercultural relations and communication, and so on. For instance, it is possible that bicultural individuals who are able to resolve intrapersonal cultural differences may also be equipped to resolve interpersonal cultural differences. It seems intuitive that individuals who can accept and appreciate two cultures within themselves would also be able to do so with other cultures and with people from cultures different from their own.

BEYOND BICULTURALISM

Research on the dynamics, components, and variants of biculturalism is relatively new. Beyond implications for understanding dual cultural identities, new biculturalism research and theory can be applied to other types of dual identities including gay, work, and religious identities (Fingerhut, Peplau, & Ghavami, 2005; Luijters, van der Zee, & Otten, 2006; Verkuyten & Yildiz, 2007). In addition, research on biculturalism and

other forms of dual identities must take into consideration multiple identities and multiple types of oppression (e.g., gender, race, class, ability, sexual orientation). Identity-relevant factors such as gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, class, and phenotype must be examined in conjunction with acculturation and identity development processes (Reynolds & Pope, 1991).

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

From this chapter, it should be evident that bicultural individuals are the key to uncovering the dynamics of culture and that the field of acculturation and biculturalism offer many new and exciting opportunities for future inquiries. For the past decade, the field has been transitioning from unilinear to bilinear models of acculturation (e.g., Flannery et al., 2001; Ryder, Alden, & Paulhus, 2000; Tsai et al., 2000), and from a focus on cultural differences and between-individual comparisons to an interest in cultural dynamics and within-individual cultural processes (Benet-Martínez, 2007). In addition, research has focused on outcomes and correlates of acculturation and biculturalism, with little expansion of Berry's (2003) framework. Fortunately, attention to variations in bicultural identity has propelled the field forward. Increasing research on BII has resulted from this theoretical movement. Although topics such as biculturation, emergent third culture and hybridity, pan-ethnicity, and segmented assimilation offer promising new directions to the field of biculturalism, they have remained relatively unexplored within psychology. Moreover, with increasing diversity, other dual identities, such as sexual identity, and the interaction of multiple identities, require more research. Biculturalism is a surprisingly new area of inquiry in psychology; therefore, there is much to be learned and many paths to travel, all with important implications for individuals as well as societies.

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