



# Got Culture?

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## Two-Way Students' Cultural Competence: Implications for Instruction

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# Rationale

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- Although two-way immersion programs aim to promote positive cultural attitudes or cultural competence, little information is available on this important topic
- What we call 3<sup>rd</sup> Goal – cultural competence
- Do heritage language students (Hispanic English speakers) differ from non-heritage (Other ethnic background English speakers)?



# **WHAT IS CULTURAL COMPETENCE?**

**The capacity to interact effectively  
with people of different cultures**

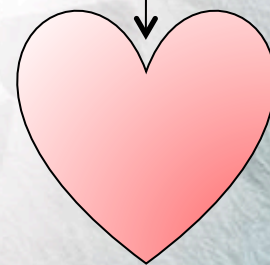
# WHAT SKILLS ARE NEEDED?



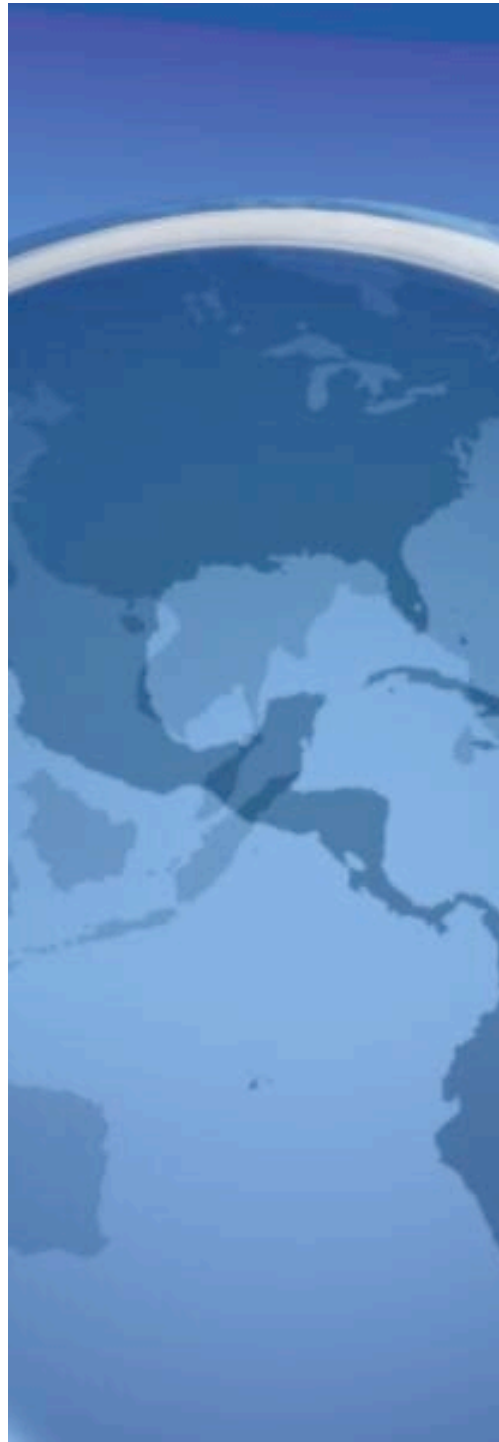
Knowledge  
of Culture

Attitudes –  
About Others

Communication Skills  
Bilingual









# Students in the Study

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403 Students in Grades 4-8 @ 4 schools

- ! 3/4 90:10      1/4 50:50
- ! 89% Hispanic/Latino; 8% Euro; 2% other
- ! Ethnic x Language Background
  - ! 73% Hispanic/Latino Spanish speaker
  - ! 16% Hispanic/Latino English speaker
  - ! 11% Other ethnic English speaker
- ! 71% free lunch



# Data Collected

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- Students completed a questionnaire with questions about their language proficiency, attitudes toward bilingualism, cultural interest and attitudes, cultural knowledge
  - Some items -- student read a statement & indicated level of agreement -- disagree strongly, disagree, agree, strongly agree
  - Some items asked students to select a response from the alternatives

# Bilingual Skills

## Differences:

I would say that I am \_ Bilingual

■!VERY Bilingual differs by language group

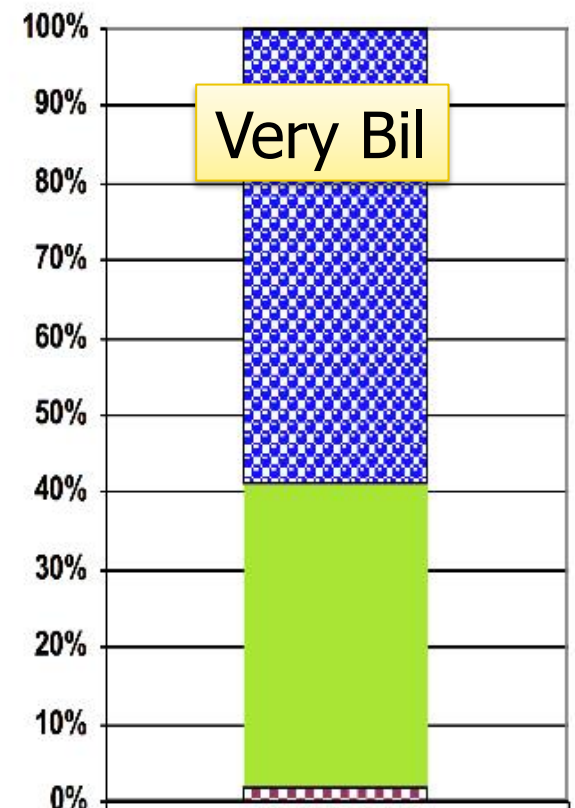
- !73% of R-FEP
- !57% of EL
- !58% of EP

■!VERY Bilingual differs by model

- !90:10 67%
- !50:50 43%

■!Significant relationship between students' rating as bilingual and teachers' ratings of bilingual proficiency.

Student Rating:  
Very or somewhat  
bilingual = 98%



Very	59
Somewhat	39
Not very	2



**BILINGUALISM**

**SER BILINGÜE**

**FUN!**

**Special  
Especial**

**Fascinante Fascinating**

**Yo me siento orgullosa  
Proud**

**...me hace sentir muy, muy, muy, muy feliz!**

**I love being bilingual**

**More intelligent**

**Es demasiado importante**

**Es genial It is awesome!!! Super awesome! Cool**

**Maravilloso**

**Magnífico**

**It feels good**

**Es un privilegio**

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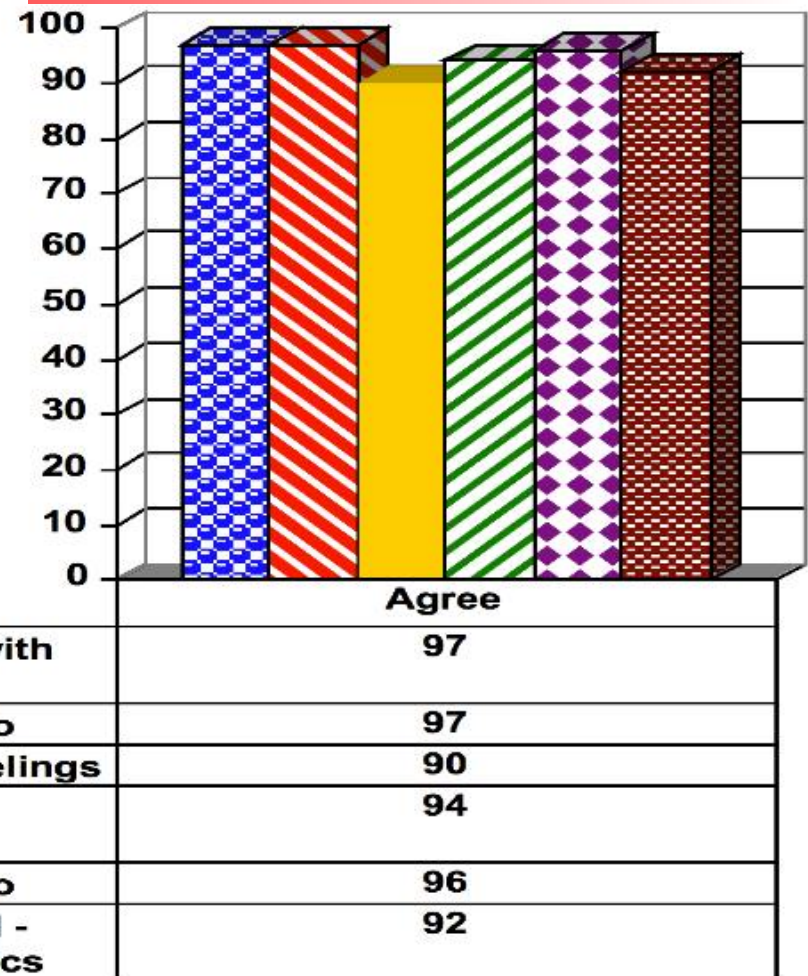
# Student Ratings of their Oral Spanish Skills

## Differences: —

- !Model: 90:10 > 50:50
- !Ethnic x Language:
  - ! HSS & HES > OES or
  - ! HSS > HES > OES
- ! Language Background:
  - ! RFEP & ELL > EP or
  - ! RFEP > ELL > EP

HSS=Hispanic speaker  
HES=Hispanic English speaker  
OES=Other English speaker

**Almost all students think they have the Spanish skills to:**





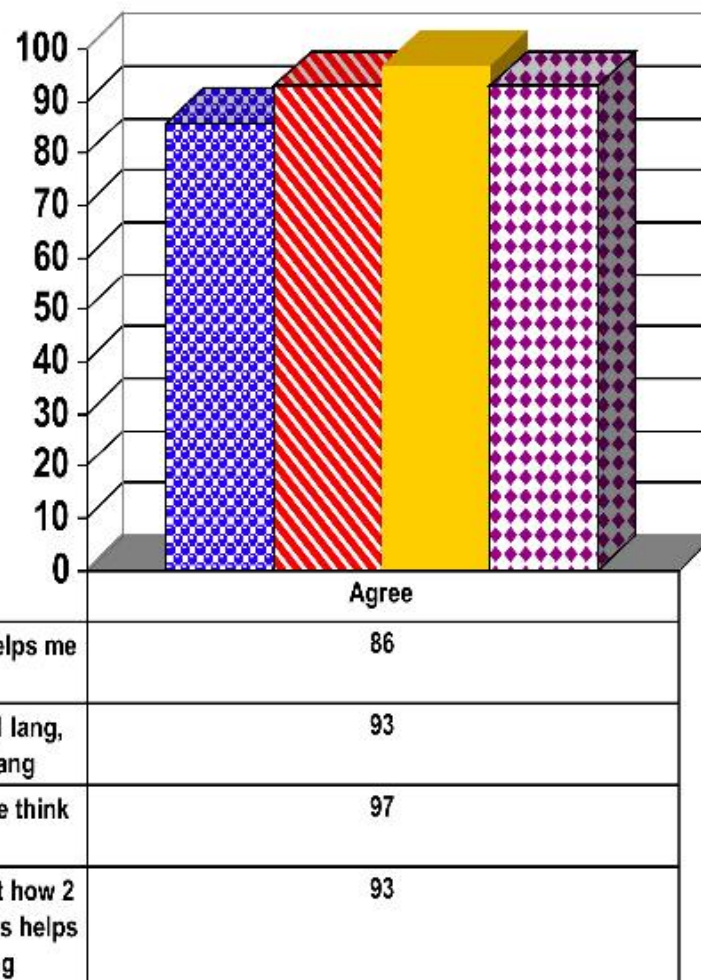
# Perceptions of Bilingualism

## Students Perceive Cognitive Advantages



Most students – cognitive advantages to bilingualism

- !Helps them learn better
- !Helps them figure out new or confusing material
- !Helps them think more creatively
- !No student background differences



**DOUBLE YOUR LANGUAGE,  
DOUBLE YOUR BRAIN!**

★! “I am also (I think) a lot smarter than all my friends that know only one language. I can read in one language and understand it in the other.”

★! “Knowing two languages can be an advantage because if you don’t know what something means in English, you can try to figure it out in Spanish and translate to English.”

★! “Also any other academic things that you do will be easier for you once you are bilingual, because another part of your brain is now functioning.”

★! “One more advantage is that knowing another language exercises your brain, which helps you learn in school better.”

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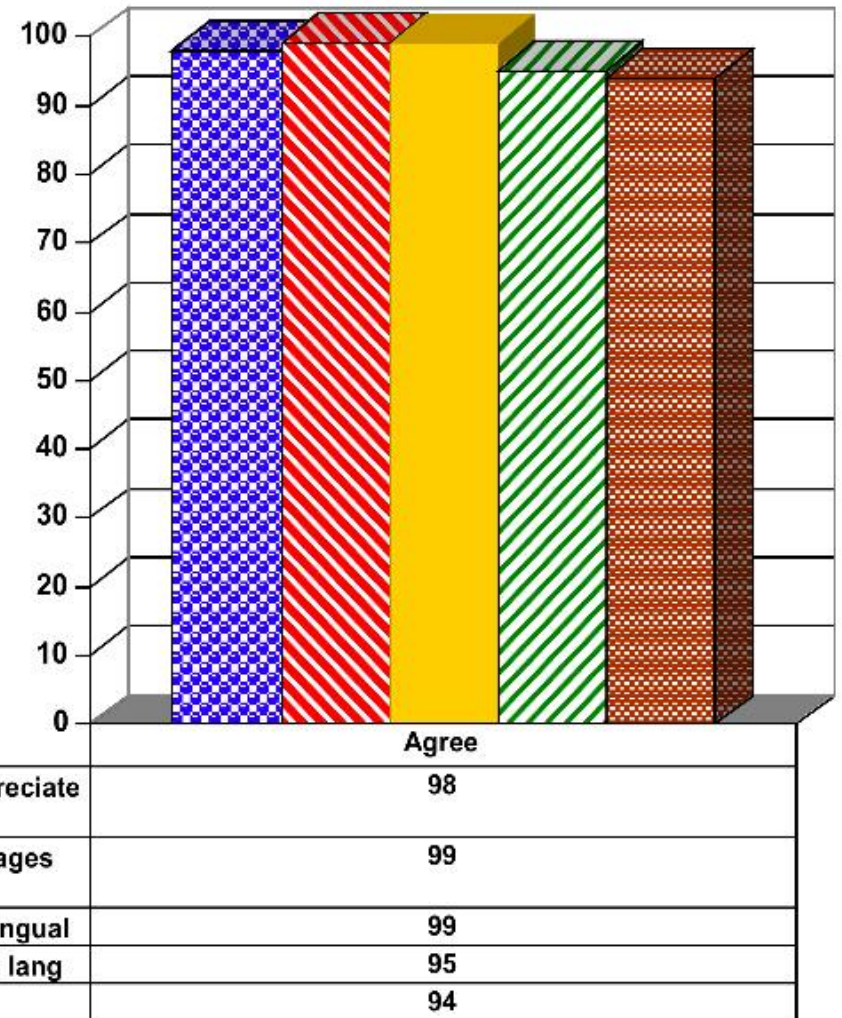


# Bilingualism Attitudes



Almost all students – positive attitudes toward bilingualism

- ! Appreciate other languages
- ! Important to learn other languages & be bilingual
- ! Enjoy studying through 2 languages and being in TWI program
- ! No student background differences





# Comments about Bilingualism

- ◆ “Bilingualism is a very strong word, because this will help you have a future.”
- ◆ “Now that I’m in this school I could talk to my family without saying ‘What does that mean?’.”
- ◆ “Being an 8th grader in this Spanish program, I find this extra class stretching the extra mile, although I find learning another language and culture all the more rewarding.”
- ◆ “Talking to my grandparents is important to me. They tell me many things. In order for me to communicate with them, I must speak Spanish. Not many of my cousins can speak Spanish, so now my grandparents have someone else to speak to. Being bilingual helps me by allowing me to speak to my grandparents.”

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# Culturas

# Cultural Knowledge



Ruta Cultural del  
Antiguo Perú



Resumen



# Bicultural Skills

## Differences:

I would say that I am \_ Bicultural

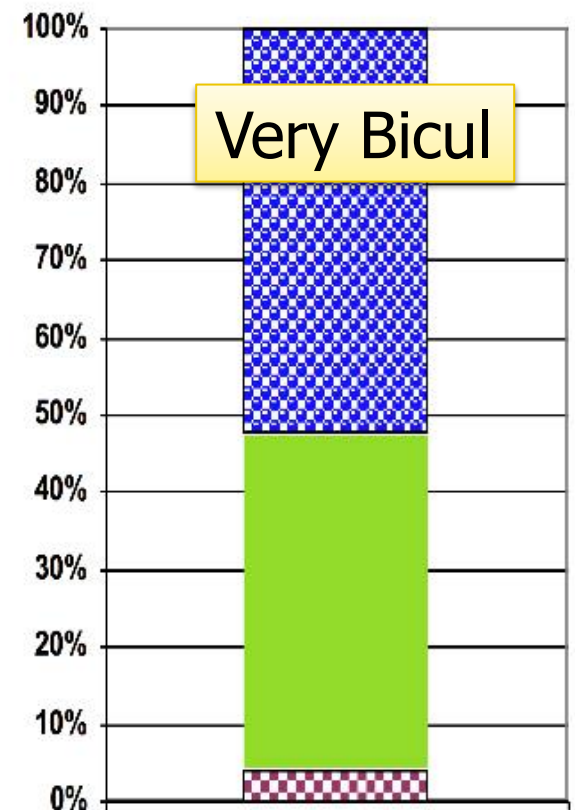
■!VERY Bicultural NOT differ significantly by language group or other student characteristics

- ! BUT R-FEP 63% vs EL 55% vs EP 56%
- ! BUT HES 63% vs HSS 57% vs OES 47%

■!VERY Bicultural differs by model

- !90:10 60%
- !50:50 35%

Student Rating:  
Very or somewhat  
bicultural = 96%

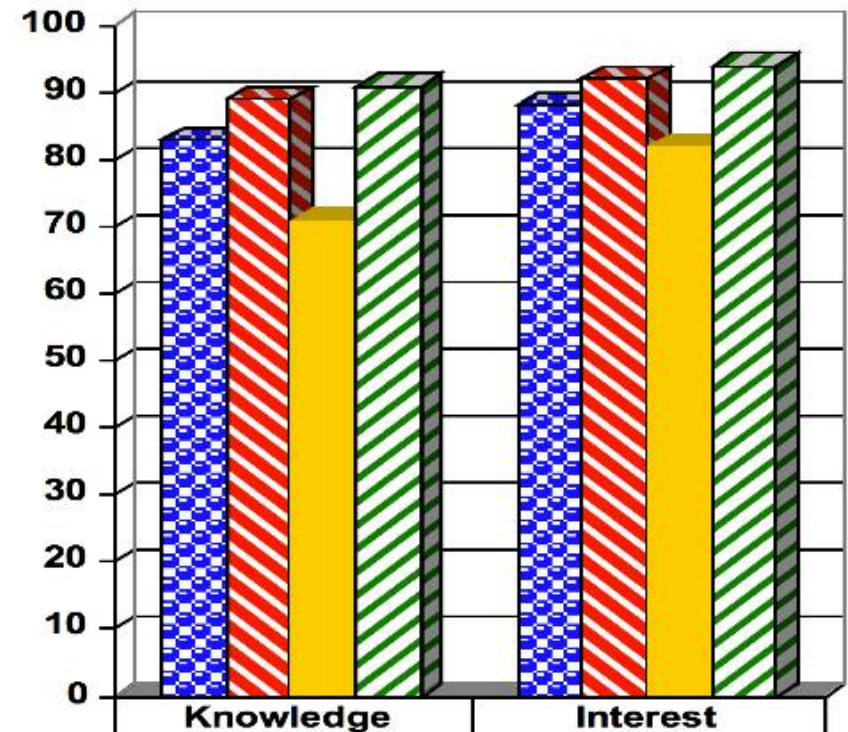


Very	53
Somewhat	44
Not very	4



# Student Ratings of their Cultural Knowledge vs. Interest

- !Most students have **interest** in Mexican, Latin American, Mayan, Aztec, or Spanish culture
- !Most students perceive they have **knowledge** in these cultural arenas



	Knowledge	Interest
music/film-singers	83	88
art - painters/artists	89	92
lit - authors/poets	71	82
cultural/historic events	91	94

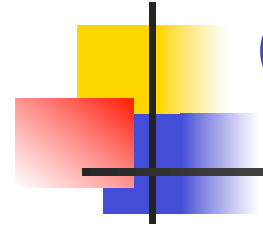


# Comments about CULTURE

- ◆! “It isn’t about learning the language, it’s about connecting with culture and learning as much as possible.”
- ◆! “You also have an open mind about other things. You’re more sensitive and understand people better.”
- ◆! “I understand more things about cultures.”
- ◆! “Over time I discovered another whole different culture. There was way more stuff in a culture and language than I every imagined.”
- ◆! “You will be able to read old stories in their original languages, like Don Quixote.”

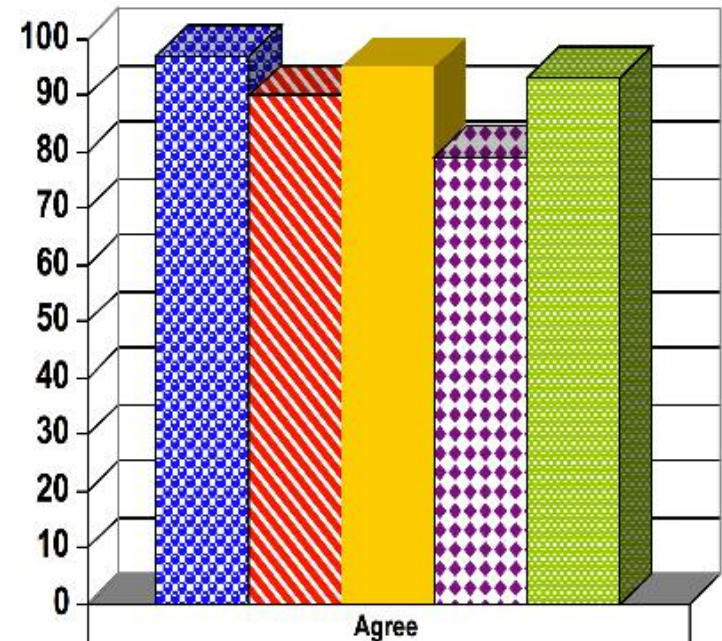
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# Other Perceptions of Cultural Attitudes & Knowledge



Most students – express interest and positive attitudes toward culture

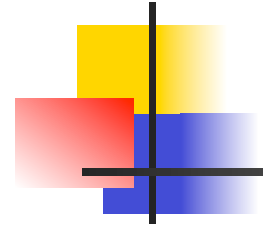
- ! Better understanding of culture
- ! More interest in culture & appreciation for other cultures
- ! Some attend cultural activities outside of school
- ! No student background differences



Program - greater apprec for other cultures	97
More interest in history/soc st topics re LatAm because I understand lang/cult	90
Better und culture cause of readings/studies	95
Attend cultural act outside school	79
Underst aspects LatAm culture	93

# Other Perceptions of Culture

## Attitudes Toward Others



Most students – express positive attitudes toward others

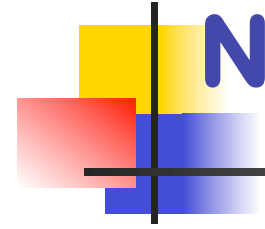
- ! Better understanding of others (Spanish speakers, those of other cultures)
- ! Feel comfortable around people different from themselves
- ! No student background differences





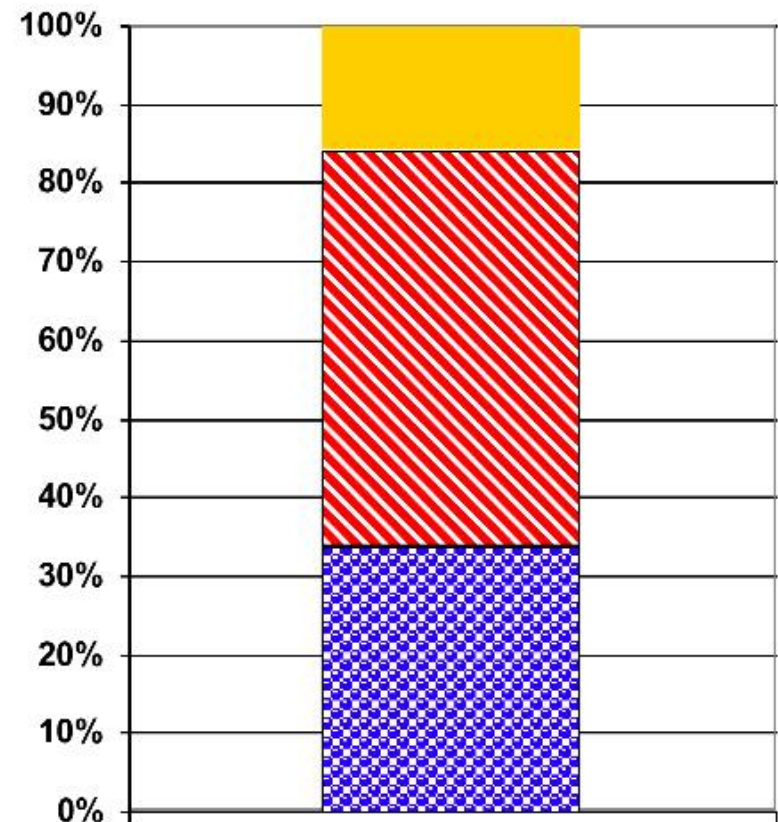
# Other Perceptions of Culture

## Negative Attitudes Toward Others



I think that I have \_\_\_\_ prejudice toward people of other groups compared to most of my peers

- !Most students say same amount (51%), one third say less prejudice (34%) than their peers
- !No student background differences



More	16
Same	51
Less	34

# Interactions with Others





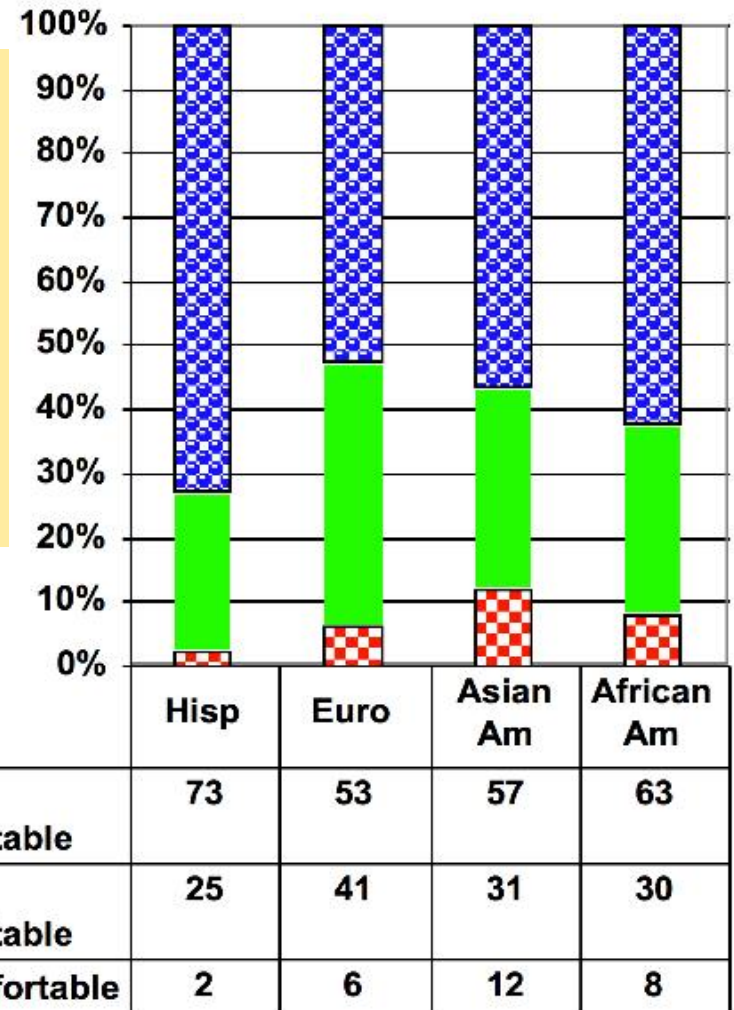
# Comfort in Interactions with Various Groups



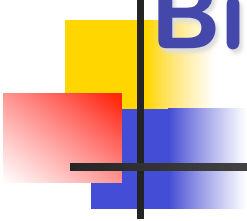
I would say that I feel very comfortable, fairly comfortable, UNcomfortable in interacting in situations/groups with mostly

- !Latinos/Hispanics/Mexicans
- !Asian American
- !African American
- !White/Euro-American

- ! Few students feel UNcomfortable in interacting with students from various backgrounds.
- ! Students feel most comfortable with Hispanics (sample has more Hispanics)
- ! Euro, African Am and Asian Am perceived fairly similarly



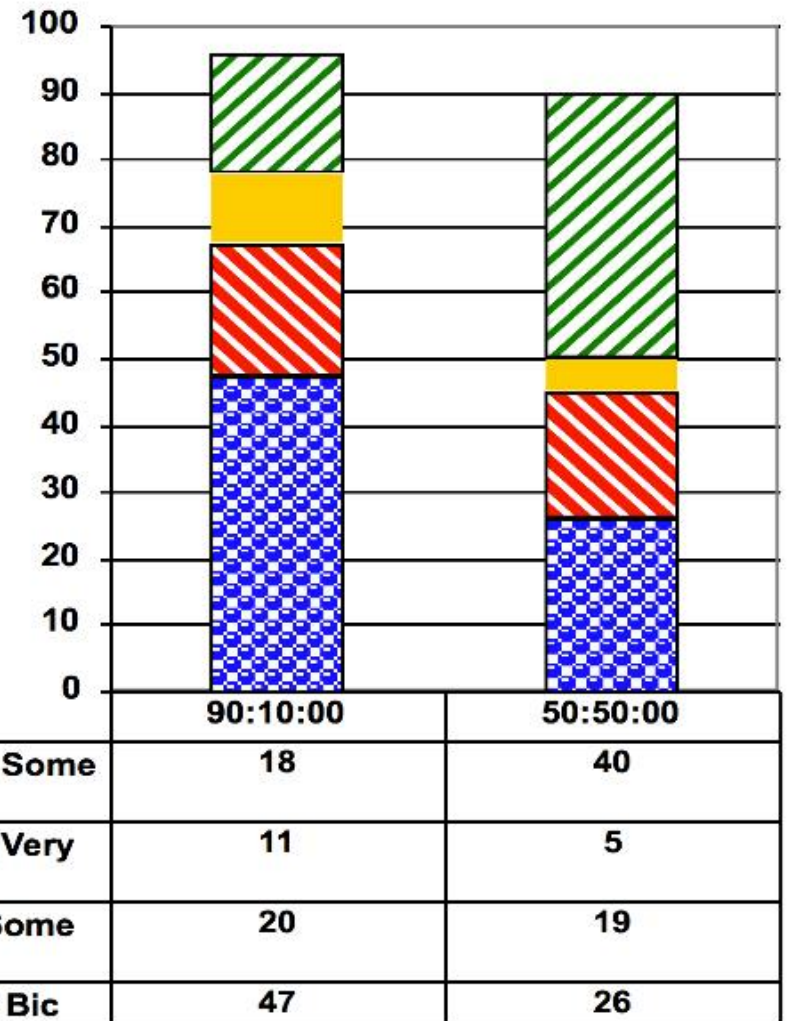
# Student Ratings of Bilingual x Bicultural Competencies



Significant Model difference

- !Very bilingual & very bicultural:  
47% 9010 vs 26% 5050
- !Somewhat bilingual & bicultural:  
40% 5050 vs 18% 9010

Most students are at least  
somewhat bilingual and  
somewhat bicultural







# Conclusions: Students have Cultural Competence Skills

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- ! Students have good communication skills – bilingual skills
- ! Students possess cultural knowledge and cultural interest
- ! Most students are at least somewhat *bilingual and bicultural*
  - ! *RFEP students most bilingual & bicultural*
  - ! *90:10 students more bilingual & bicultural than 50:50 students*
- ! Students have positive attitudes toward others
  - ! They feel comfortable interacting with people of different backgrounds than them



# Implications for Instruction

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- ! Communication skills – give students social/oral skills in both languages to communicate in social settings
  - ! Provide & practice socio-culturally appropriate customs & behaviors (e.g., greetings, some slang to interact appropriately with peers)
  - ! Provide opportunities for students to talk to each other about social things (family, community, friends, activities)



# Implications for Instruction

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- ! Cultural skills – ACTFL Standards for Foreign Language Learning around culture
  - ! Cultural perspectives – integrate variety of perspectives of culture as often as possible – students need to feel a part of culture, not just develop head knowledge
  - ! Cultural comparisons – need to compare and contrast different cultures and cultural perspectives (businesses hire consultants to teach people to behave appropriately in different cultures)
  - ! Be careful not to stereotype; cultural variations within groups



# Implications for Instruction

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## ■! Attitudes

- ! Provide opportunities for students to talk to each other to feel more comfortable with students from other groups
- ! Include stories of children from different backgrounds; discuss similarities
- ! Have school community activities so parents can feel more comfortable with other parents
- ! Class trip to Spanish-speaking country (at least community)





# Implications for Instruction

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## ■! Attitudes

- ! If school is mostly segregated (Latino students), provide opportunities for students to engage one-on-one with people from other backgrounds (field trips, classroom exchanges through visits or Internet, speakers)



# Implications for Research

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## ■! More research

- ! How can we effectively define cultural competence in a TWI program?
- ! How do we teach students these skills effectively so students do not self segregate by ethnic/language background?
- ! How do we help heritage language students to connect with their heritage language and culture? Help ELLs stay connected with their L1 language and culture? Help other ethnic/English speakers to connect with second language & culture?