





Literacy and Cultural Considerations  
in Materials Development

Lourdes Baezconde-Garbanati  
Feb 9, 2011

## + TEAM Lab's Project Manager: Darrah Kuratani

## + This Presentation

- Culture, subcultures, acculturation
- Language
- Literacy and Health Literacy
- Tips for creating materials with culture and literacy in mind
- Translation of materials vs cultural adaptation
- Examples of materials that account for culture and/or literacy

## + What is Culture?

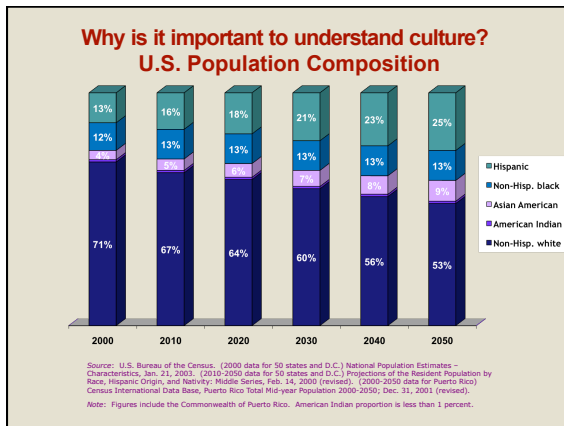
**"Culture is a complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, laws, customs and habits acquired by man as a member of a particular society."**

Source: Huff and Kline, 1999 p. 7

## + Defining Culture

- Culture represents the sense of identity of an individual based on common characteristics such as:
  - Ancestry
  - Ethnicity
  - National origin
  - Religious beliefs
  - Tribal affiliation
  - Linguistics
  - Lifestyle
  - Sexual orientation

Source: Huff & Kline, 1999



### + Subcultures

- Cultures within a culture. Subcultures can be more meaningful than the broader culture.
- A subculture is a group of people with specific behaviors, knowledge, beliefs, different from a larger culture they belong to.
- American culture (broader culture)
- Subcultures
  - Catholics
  - Rural
  - Punks
  - Nerds
  - Skaters
  - Gamers
  - Transgender
  - Navajo
  - Youth
  - Twitter Generation

### + Elements of Culture

<b>Rituals</b>	ways of doing things that are similar within a culture
<b>Values</b>	feelings about what is good or bad for a group
<b>Symbols</b>	verbal and non verbal language
<b>Heroes</b>	people who serve as behavioral models

Source: Hofstede (1994)

### + Acculturation

- Process of movement along different dimensions from one culture to another culture.
- In the process individual give up traits of own culture; adopting traits of the dominant culture.
- Understanding where your population is at in terms of acculturation will make a difference in the types of materials you develop and the messages you convey

Sources: Padilla, 1980; Huff & Kline, 1999; Oetting & Beauvais

### + Four Levels of Acculturation

1. Biculturalism – can function equally well in either culture (Usually are bilingual)
2. Traditional – individual holds on to most of the traits of original culture (May be monolingual speakers)
3. Marginal – Individuals who lacks traits from either culture
4. Acculturated- Individual has given up most of the traits of the original culture for the dominant culture (Could be bilingual, but may have lost language of origin and adopted new language)

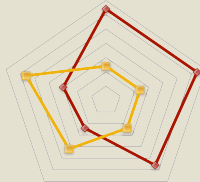
Source: Huff and Kline, 1999

### + Cultural Heterogeneity

- Country of origin
- Age
- Levels of acculturation
- Immigration status
- Levels of education
- Language issues
- Availability and Acceptability
- Literacy issues of resources and services
- Insurance status (access)

## + Cultures are changing in America

- Mixed ethnicity
- Processes of Acculturation
- Enculturation (host culture adopts norm of the new culture)



Source: Project RED (Unger et al., 2008)

## + Why is culture important?

- Culture helps us understand the dynamics of differences among people

- Communication style
- Religion
- Folk Medicine
- Dietary practices
- Health beliefs
- Gender roles
- Use of chemicals
- Smoking norms
- Body image
- Family rituals

- Culture influences the varied ways in how people interpret, understand, integrate, and respond to health messages

## + The Role of Culture

- Adherence to Traditional Cultural Values and Positive Cultural Experiences are Associated with Lower Risk of engaging in tobacco use
- Pro immigrant attitudes among H/L adolescents are associated with reduced risk

Source: Project RED (Unger et al., 2008)

## + The Role of Culture

- Negative cultural experiences are associated with increased use
- Acculturative stress
- Perceived discrimination
- For example: Erosion of cultural values helps explain smoking rates among Latino adolescents

Source: Project RED (Unger et al., 2008)

## + Language (example: Latinos)

- Not all Latinos speak Spanish
- Not all Spanish is the same (Spain vs Mexico)
- Words have different meanings
- Not all Latinos know how to read and write in Spanish
- For some first language is an indigenous dialect, not Spanish

## + Language

- Some groups communicate in multiple ways (written and non-written)



- Other groups do not have a written language.
- Some groups have an oral tradition passed on from one generation to the next

## + Culture and Literacy



### ■ Oral Cultures

- Use narrative, storytelling to relay message
- Symbols and imagery may have special meanings
- Retention of spoken information may be higher than for non-oral cultures

### ■ Low-Literacy Groups

- Limit use printed materials
- Written material - below a 5th grade reading level
- Use lots of Visuals to model desired behavior

## + Literacy

- Literacy is “a set of reading, writing, basic math, speech, and comprehension skills. We need these skills to function on the job and in society everyday.”
- Different levels of literacy – In Spanish as well as in English proficiency

Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/healthmarketing/resources.htm>

## + Health Literacy

- The Department of Health and Human Services' Healthy People 2010 report defined health literacy as

“the degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions”

## + Health Literacy

- 9 out of 10 adults lack skills to manage own health and prevent disease (2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy Study)
- Limited health literacy is greatest among:
  - older adults
  - low levels of education
  - minority groups
  - people in poverty
  - Individuals with limited English proficiency.

Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/healthmarketing/resources.htm>

## + Why is understanding health literacy important?

Identification of sources of health information and the functional health literacy levels of a target group allows health educators to better develop health promotion programs and materials that are increasingly culturally appropriate and successful in reaching the population and changing health behaviors.

Source: A Qualitative Study Examining Latino Functional Health Literacy Levels and Sources of Health Information; Denise H. Britigan, Judy Murnan, Liliana Rojas-Guyler (2009)

## + Tips for Creating Materials with Culture and Literacy in Mind

- Engage members of the target audience in the planning phase.
- Target audience can assist in
  - identification of messages
  - selection of images
  - understanding what works best within their culture
  - understanding what people can/will read



### + Tips for Creating Materials with Culture and Literacy in Mind

- Use familiar terminology
- Identify people as they wish to be identified  
(ex: Black Americans vs African Americans)
- Target messages for each cultural or subgroup in particular.
- Cultural groups differ:
  - needs
  - values
  - beliefs
 affect how they interpret your message.

### + Tips for Creating Materials with Culture and Literacy in Mind

- Account for large heterogeneity among minority groups
- Use pictures that represent those groups



### + Tips for Creating Materials

- Identify literacy levels in language (not just in English)
  - More can be found in "Learn How—Step 5" section of our website
  - To hear an example of how a readability test can be used, watch our "Best Practices for Testing Materials..." archived webinar in the "Get Trained" section
- Use literacy levels appropriate for the audience
- Incorporate values into the messages and picture selection
- Test messages with intended audiences

### + Tips for creating Materials with Culture and Literacy in Mind

- Develop materials in the original language
- Culturally adapt English materials, do not just translate
- Messages that work well with one English-speaking audience may not work for audiences who speak another language.
- Find out about your audience's values, health beliefs, and cultural perspectives through:
  - individual interviews
  - focus groups
  - secondary research (i.e., literature reviews)

### + Tips for Creating Materials with Culture and Literacy in Mind

- Understand the importance of geography
- Be clear on your population's demographic characteristics (socioeconomic status)
- Recognize heterogeneity (not all minorities are alike)
  - Understand within and between group differences
    - African Americans vs African Nationals
    - Cubans vs Mexicans
    - Koreans in LA vs Koreans in NY

### + Tips for Creating Materials with Culture and Literacy in Mind

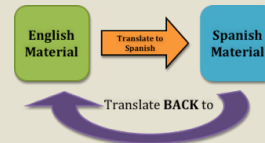
- Develop partnerships with trusted community organizations
  - Get advice from the community
  - Work with local groups
  - Community based organizations
  - Faith based groups

## + Tips for Creating Materials with Culture and Literacy in Mind

- Carefully select your translator.
- Choose a qualified translators.
  - The "Learn How—Additional Resources" section of our website has a list of translation service providers
- A qualified translator will not literally translate
- Address linguistic variations by country of origin of audience (Mexican-American and Cuban-American)
  - Have multiple translators check the translation.

## + Translation of materials

- Conduct back-translations



- Field test materials with intended audience.

## + Posters – one simple clear message with few words



## + Pictographs – convey steps can use arrows pointing to desired behavior



## + Comic books

- Can create own storyline, work with a graphic artists or illustrator



## + Cartoon strips with tobacco cessation storyline



- + Display Boards (made of flannel, felt or sticky material to attach pictures)



- + Fotonovela: story told with photographs and dialogue (Latino)



- + Games: Bingo game/card game with a message/video-games



- + Photovoice: storytelling through pictures

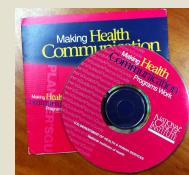


- + Puzzles (that convey a health education message)



- + Types of Materials that Account for Culture and Literacy

- Audio/visual materials
  - Interactive multimedia programs (younger populations)
  - DVD of a film (film culturally adapted)
  - CD with songs with a message (Rap music)
  - Radio docudrama (soap)
  - Interactive videos (low literacy pops)
  - Storytelling using pictures (American Indian audiences)



## +Types of Materials that Account for Culture and Literacy

- Models of objects (diseased lung)



- Props for storytelling

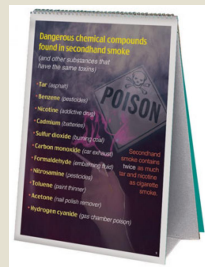
## +Types of Materials that Account for Culture and Literacy

- Word/picture associations – Using simple words to describe a desired behavior.



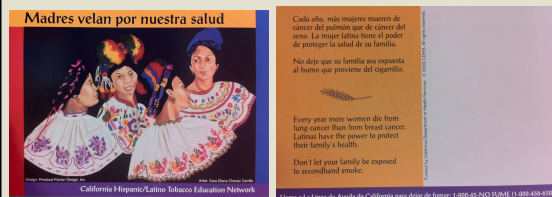
## +Types of Materials that Account for Culture and Literacy

- Talk Boards (posters without words that convey an action or behavior)
- Flip Charts (series of posters put together in sequence to tell a story)



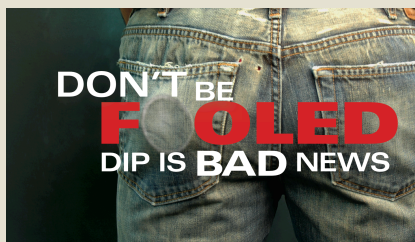
## +Postcards

- Created by California Hispanic/Latino Tobacco Education Network



## +Fooled Fact Card

- Rural Populations—piece submitted by Shasta County Health and Human Services



## +Tobacco Free Outdoor Events Postcard

- Submitted by the Sacramento Chinese Community Service Center



## + In Summary

- Culture is important
- Accounting for literacy level is important
- Developing materials that account for both culture and literacy is important
- We have provided specific tips for accounting for culture and literacy
- There are a variety of types of materials that can be produced which account for culture and literacy

## + Any questions?



Thank YOU!

\*Just as a reminder, the recording of this webinar and the powerpoint slides will be posted on our website by Friday, 2/11.

\*We also ask that you please complete the Training Satisfaction Survey. A link will be sent to you by email.

## + Next Webinar

### Social Media Webinar

Wednesday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2011

2:00pm to 3:00pm

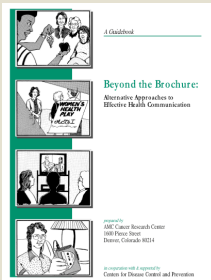
More details will be posted on our website

## + Thank you!

For more information, please contact:

- Director and Principal Investigator: Dr. Lourdes Baezconde-Garbanati, [baezcond@usc.edu](mailto:baezcond@usc.edu)
- Project Manager: Darrah Kuratani, [darrah.kuratani@usc.edu](mailto:darrah.kuratani@usc.edu)
- Team Lab Staff: Yaneth Rodriguez, [ylr@usc.edu](mailto:ylr@usc.edu)  
Christine Ricohermoso, [cricohes@usc.edu](mailto:cricohes@usc.edu)
- General Questions: [teamlab@usc.edu](mailto:teamlab@usc.edu) or (626) 457-6610

## + Resources



## + SOURCES

- Source: Simply Put – A Guide for Creating Easy to Understand Resources and Materials. Strategic and Proactive Communication Branch, Division of Communication Services, Office of the Associate Director for Communication, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, Georgia, April 2009, Third Edition