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DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND DISORDERS

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS’ PERCEPTIONS OF CULTURAL AWARENESS AND CONTENT INCORPORATION INTO COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND DISORDERS PROGRAMS IN PENNSYLVANIA

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to understand how cultural content is being incorporated into undergraduate Communication Sciences and Disorders/Speech-Language Pathology programs across Pennsylvania, from the students’ perspective. In addition, this study is evaluating if the methods used by the undergraduate curriculums are effective, based on students’ responses to questions related to cultural awareness. ASHA, the American Speech-Language Association (2014) states that, “Programs must be specifically designed to prepare students for entry into professional practice and provide curriculum (academic and clinical education) that reflects current knowledge, skills, technology, scopes of practice, and the diversity of society.” ASHA also provides suggestions on implementation, but does not explicitly state how programs must include this content into the curriculum.

The endpoints of this study are to determine if CSD/SLP undergraduate students can identify that this content that is being incorporated into the curriculum. While also evaluating the most common practices in Pennsylvania for including cultural content into the curriculum. For this study, undergraduate students at the fourteen Pennsylvania programs that are approved by the Council of Academic Accreditation were recruited to participate in an online survey. In total, 310 surveys were completed at nine of the universities. The results indicate that most students had a CSD/SLP course that infused cultural content into a pre-existing course. There appears to be some variation of one’s definition of cultural diversity based on which university is attended. In addition, most students do not consider ‘disability’ when defining cultural diversity.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

In 2010, minority populations accounted for approximately 37% of the population (US Census Bureau, 2012). Projections from the 2010 United States Census estimate that in 2043, the United States will become a majority minority country for the first time. By 2060, minorities are expected to account for 57% of the total population, more than doubling the total to 241.3 million people (US Census Bureau, 2012). With an ever-changing population, there is a need for culturally competent employees. In 2013, The American Speech-Language Hearing Association (ASHA, 2014) reported that only 7.8% of its members identified as a racial minority and 95.1% of the speech-language pathologists were female. Due to the fact there appears to be a disparity between the two statistics, creating culturally competent speech-language pathologists is important to provide effective services to clients.

To evaluate how cultural content is being incorporated into the Speech-Language Pathology curriculum, research has evaluated graduate programs from the program directors’ views (Hammond, Mitchell, & Johnson, 2009), faculty and clinical supervisors’ perspectives (Stockman, Boult, & Robinson, 2008), graduate student opinions (Godsey, 2011), and a curriculum review (Lubinski, 2008). From a review of the literature, there has not been a study that evaluates undergraduate students’ perceptions of cultural awareness and how programs are starting to prepare undergraduate students to be culturally aware speech-language pathologists.

ASHA states that in order to be a certified speech-language pathologist a set of standards must be completed by the end of a student’s graduate studies (Council for Clinical Certification
in Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology of ASHA, 2013). Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD)/Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) departments receive their certification at the graduate level. To get this certification, they must show how they are meeting the ASHA standards. At the undergraduate level, some of these standards are met and are put toward the graduate requirements, but the undergraduate curriculum is not as widely studied.

For this study, undergraduate students attending CSD/SLP certified programs in Pennsylvania were asked to complete a survey asking about their academic experiences and perceptions of culture. The purpose of this study is to identify common methods of instruction to prepare students to work with culturally and linguistically diverse clients.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

Defining Cultural Competence

According to Cross et al. (as cited by National Center for Cultural Competence, 2007), cultural competence requires organizations and individuals “Have the capacity to (1) value diversity, (2) conduct self-assessment, (3) manage the dynamics of difference, (4) acquire and institutionalize cultural knowledge and (5) adapt to diversity and the cultural contexts of the communities they serve.” Cross et al. (as cited by National Center for Cultural Competence, 2007) posits that cultural competence is a process that takes time for one to develop. Because cultural competence takes time to develop, starting to develop it during the undergraduate and graduate years is important to prepare students to enter the workforce.

The fields of speech-language pathology and audiology have defined cultural competency in a more relevant and specific manner for the field. ASHA defines cultural competence for SLPs as having, “Sensitivity to cultural and linguistic differences that affect the identification, assessment, treatment, and management of communication disorders/differences in persons” (ASHA, 2004).

Cultural Competence in Speech-Language Pathology

Current ASHA member demographic information is deviant from the US population
trends. Of all ASHA members, 4.9% are males, 7.8% identified as members of a racial minority, and 4.6% identified their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino (ASHA, 2014). These numbers can be compared to the 2010 US Census, 27.6% of Americans identified as members of a racial minority and 16.3% identified their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino (Census Bureau, 2012). ASHA (Multicultural Issues Board, 2004) acknowledges that it is impossible to match a client with a clinician based on a cultural and linguistic basis, given there are multitudinous factors that create one’s background. Because of the infeasibility, the need for speech-language pathologists to be culturally aware and competent is critical.

ASHA recognizes this need by mandating that speech-language pathologists provide culturally/linguistically appropriate services regardless of the SLPs’, “…Personal culture, practice setting, or caseload demographics…” (2004). ASHA (Multicultural Issues Board, 2004) proposes that SLPs must work to develop the knowledge and skills to give appropriate services to culturally and linguistically diverse clients because these are the services clients rightfully deserve. The ASHA document outlines cultural competence, language competencies of the clinician, language, articulation/phonology, resonance/voice/fluency, swallowing, hearing/balance, and defines terminology (ASHA Multicultural Issues Board, 2004).

ASHA explains, “Individuals shall engage in only those aspects of the profession that are within the scope of their competence, considering their level of education, training, and experience” (ASHA Ethics, 2010). However, “Individuals shall not discriminate in the delivery of professional services” (ASHA Ethics, 2010). Thus, ASHA’s (2004) document serves as a guide for SLPs to continue to develop and refine the skills needed to provide linguistically/ culturally appropriate services. ASHA has made it a priority to provide members with resources
on these issues, including a "Multicultural Affairs and Resources" page with resources for students, faculty, SLPs, employers, etc. Resources include a self-assessment for cultural competence, information of cultural and linguistic impacts on services, as well as information on serving diverse populations. Given the 2004 ASHA statement and the available resources through the ASHA website, the growing awareness and preparation to serve culturally and linguistically diverse clients is a forefront issue within the field. Although these are valuable resources for ASHA members, more information is needed on the specific preparations at the undergraduate and graduate level to foster cultural competency.

Multiple studies support that there has been an increase in the amount of training on cultural and linguistic diversity (CLD) topics in speech-language pathology from 1994-2005. Roseberry-McKibbin, Brice, and O’Hanlon (2005) compared two surveys- one from Roseberry-McKibbin & Eicholtz in 1994 and a 2001 survey. There was a substantial increase, from 23.6% in the 1990s to 73% in 2001, of SLPs who received instruction on providing services to bilingual children. It is important to note that during this decade, including CLD topics was not a requirement at more than two thirds of the accredited graduate programs (Nigam, Lloyd, & Haynes, 2000, as cited in Hammond et al., 2009). This shows that during their academic preparation, these SLP opted to increase their knowledge on this subject, suggesting more people see this as an important topic.

In addition, a 2004 survey of SLPs in public schools indicated that approximately half of the responders received some instruction on CLD at either the undergraduate or graduate level (Hammer, Detwiler, Detwiler, Blood, & Qualls, 2004 as cited in Hammond et al., 2009). Hammer et al. (2004) also found an increase in the amount of instruction on CLD content when compared over a nine year period. Lubinski (2008) identified two priorities within the field of
speech-language pathology: 1. To attract more cultural diversity to the profession 2. Increase SLP cultural competency to give the best services to clients. Lubinski (2008) states that to better prepare future SLPs, faculty need to be sensitive and trained on the topic. Battle (2008, as cited in Lubinski, 2008) stated:

"[Multicultural] issues are quite complex and could lead to furthering the unintentional development and/or reinforcement of stereotypes and biases if each of the issues is not handled with care. If faculty members are not prepared to handle the issues, the first order is to have them confront their own limitations and seek ways to become culturally competent themselves."

Helping students to develop cultural competency at the undergraduate and graduate level will require careful consideration and planning by administrators and course instructors.

**Academic Preparation to Work with CLD Clients**

Because of the increases in SLP knowledge, investigating the academic and clinical preparations to develop cultural competency would be insightful. Generally, there are two main methods of instruction used to incorporate multicultural/multilingual issues (MMI) into the curriculum, across professions. ASHA’s Office of Multicultural Affairs (2015) supports these two models which are: 1. Infuse the MMI content into pre-existing content courses 2. Dedicate a course on the topic. Although speech-language pathology programs must prove that they have met the ASHA standards to be a certified program, ASHA does not specifically state how programs must teach these topics.

Across professional disciplines, the most common practice is infusion of MMI content into pre-existing courses (Gay, 1997). Research within the field of speech-language pathology
has supported this finding. A survey of faculty, administrators, and clinical supervisors of ASHA certified SLP/Audiology departments, found that 56% of programs solely used an infusion model (Stockman et al., 2008). This percentage was statistically significant, occurring more than all of the other responses combined. The other responses were: 1. Specific course and infusion 2. Specific course only 3. Other. A study by Hammond et al. (2009), supported the findings that instruction on CLD topics was delivered mainly (59.4%) by integrating the content into pre-existing coursework. Less popular methods included a required course (25.4%) or an elective course (7.6%) (Hammond et al., 2009).

Undergraduate curriculum often consists of an array of general education courses, encouraging students to take classes in psychology, sociology, linguistics, education, and health. Departmentally, coursework emphasizes the scientific and social foundations of communication and disordered communication (Lubinski, 2008). In addition, undergraduate students may study abroad and volunteer with diverse populations. Although undergraduate coursework must provide a foundation in communication and its disorders, preparing students to work with diverse clients and beginning to develop cultural competence should be a priority, although it is not required until the graduate level.

At the graduate level, programs foster cultural competence in both academic course work and clinical experiences. Regardless of the infusion or dedicated course model, Lubinski (2008) identified common teaching tools as:

“(a) Assigning a cultural/linguistic group to each student as part of a semester assignment, (b) including clients from diverse backgrounds as case discussions or as clinical presentations, (c) guest speakers from diverse backgrounds (clients or clinicians), (d) readings on diversity and specific communication disorders, and (e) audio visual
To assist programs, ASHA provides model syllabi and example assignments for instructors on topics such as accent dialect modification, communication disorders in multicultural populations, etc. to assist in incorporating CLD topics in the classroom (ASHA OMA- Faculty Resources, 2015). Despite these resources, there appears to be a preference among administrators, faculty, and teaching clinical supervisors of the relevance of including MMI instruction on certain topics than others (Stockman et al., 2008). Topics such as, “Speech and Language Development, Developmental Language Disorders, Professional Issues, Articulation/Phonological Disorders, Descriptive Phonetics, Audiologic Rehabilitation, and Augmentative and Alternative Communication,” had the highest frequency of responses as infusion classes (Stockman et al., 2008).

At the time of publication, Stockman et al. (2008) stated there was no previous research on the MMI instruction models utilized to prepare SLPs and audiologists to work with culturally and linguistically diverse clients; and, no studies evaluated the effectiveness. Because this topic is relatively new in the ASHA standards, there is a need for more research regarding MMI instruction models and their effectiveness within speech-language pathology. Though Stockman et al. (2008) provided valuable insights regarding the popular methods of instruction and the perceptions of faculty members, student insight regarding the amount and effectiveness of instruction on this topic at the graduate and undergraduate level was neglected. Gaining insight on cultural competence and content incorporation from faculty and students views’ would help identify strengths within the field and areas of improvement when teaching CLD topics. This information could help educators make adjustments in order to best prepare future SLPs to be culturally competent.
Administrators and Faculty Perceptions of Student Preparedness

With the available resources through ASHA, understanding faculty and administrator perceptions of the above strategies would help to support the effectiveness of the ASHA suggestions. Stockman et al. (2008) created a survey for administrators, faculty, and teaching clinical supervisors at ASHA certified speech-language pathology and audiology programs in the United States to probe the instructional methods used for multicultural/ multilingual issues (MMI) and their effectiveness. The survey was distributed to 3,076 faculty members across the United States and Puerto Rico. There were four focuses for the questions: “Instructional preparation, strategies, effectiveness, and obstacles/needs” (Stockman et al., 2008). There was a 23.8% response rate with responses from 79.6% of the 231 Council of Academic Accredited programs.

The results showed that a majority of responders felt that more than incidental coverage during infusion courses was necessary. However, over half of responders stated they gave only minimal time to MMI instruction in non-dedicated MMI courses (Stockman et al., 2008). If instructors are dedicating minimal class time in non-dedicated MMI courses, the amount of knowledge imparted to students on MMI issues should be questioned. Perhaps the lack of time spent on MMI instruction in non-dedicated courses, explains why only 42% of instructors felt students were either adequately or exceptionally prepared to work with diverse populations (Stockman et al., 2008). Of the 42%, only 4% felt students were exceptionally prepared which compares to 65% of MMI specific course instructors stating students were adequately or exceptionally prepared. Stockman et al. (2008) suggest that current faculty members face a challenge in incorporating MMI because there is no precedent of effective teaching methods. In addition, for some faculty members, this content was not covered in their curriculum. If less
than half of instructors felt students were at least adequately prepared to work with CLD clients, the effectiveness of the infusion model or the amount of time spent on MMI issues should be addressed.

Hammond et al. (2009) evaluated the perceptions of program directors of CAA accredited programs regarding student preparedness to work with culturally and linguistically diverse clients. Hammond et al. (2009) contacted all ASHA accredited speech-language pathology graduate programs in the contiguous United States for a total of 235 program directors. The survey assessed 113 program directors' opinions of graduate student preparedness to serve CLD clients, yielding a response rate of 48%. In addition, the United States was broken into six geographic regions and each region was represented, for a total of 36 states.

When asked to consider what they most thought of regarding the term “culture” the top three responses were: ethnicity (94.7%), language (85%), and race (77.9%) (Hammond et al., 2009). Understanding how program directors respond to defining "culture" could give insight to what areas of "culture" are emphasized in instruction. When asked about the amount of academic instruction on CLD, 100% of program directors stated that graduate students at least received some training. The median score was 5 on a 7-point Likert scale (1= none; 7= a lot). When this question was analyzed by geographic region there were significant statistical differences (Hammond et al., 2009).

Regarding student preparedness to assess CLD clients, directors responded, on average, with a 5 on a 7 point scale (1= not at all; 7= extremely prepared) with no significant differences based on geographic location. Referencing the instruction on specific CLD topics, 89.4% of program directors said that students had course work on the assessment of CLD clients, 86.7% had course work on intervention with CLD clients, 85% studied bilingualism/multilingualism,
83.2% studied cultural differences in beliefs about communication, and 75.2% learned about second language acquisition (Hammond et al., 2009).

For graduate students’ clinical practicum experiences, no program director indicated that students did not have experience with CLD clients. There was no statistical difference in the amount of clinical practicum experience with CLD clients based on geographic region - the amount of experience was rated a 5 on a 7-point scale. Although program directors perceptions are beneficial, Hammond et al. (2009) suggested that further research is needed regarding student and faculty views of preparedness to work with CLD populations because their opinions might not be the same as the program directors.

Graduate and Undergraduate Students Perceptions of Cultural Awareness

Levey’s (2004) study examined English speaking SLP undergraduate and graduate students’ knowledge on cultural and linguistic differences of other dialects and languages. Gauging student knowledge on this topic is critical because as future SLPs, students will need to readily identify the difference between a language disorder and a language difference. A language difference are the typical differences that occur from the influence of the first language on the language being learned (Roseberry-McKibbin, 2007, pg. 140). Levey (2004) suggests that a lack of awareness of language differences may cause someone to misinterpret typical differences as characteristics of disorder. Of the 167 participants, 41 were graduate and 126 were undergraduate students attending college in the New York City metropolitan region. The survey included four foils, describing typical linguistic behaviors in both native English speakers and second language speakers. The foils were not used in data
The experiment questions were similar to the foils, providing an explanation of the statement.

Levey (2004) found that about half of the participants were unaware of many bilingual differences. The scores of students who had taken a bilingual class did not differ significantly from those who had not had a bilingual course (Levey, 2004). Levey (2004) suggested that it is vital that there is more instruction on cultural and linguistic diversity at both the undergraduate and graduate level. She explains this is necessary because of the growing number of English language learners in the United States, some of whom will be referred for services. If SLPs are not aware of language differences, a person may be misdiagnosed as having a language disorder. In addition, SLPs interactions with the client's family could be negatively impacted if there is a lack of cultural awareness. To promote cultural competence, Levey (2004) suggests that textbooks should be chosen based on the inclusion of cultural/linguistic diversity topics. An example textbook is, "Language disorders in children: A multicultural and case perspective" by Celeste Roseberry-McKibben (2007).

Unlike Levey's (2004) study, Godsey (2011) strived to understand how students perceive cultural competence, as opposed to gauging their understanding of a particular aspect of cultural competency. Godsey (2011) evaluated the development of professional identity and cultural competence by interviewing second year graduate speech-language pathology students. The rational was that if it is known how students identify culture, professors could better understand how to facilitate the development of cultural competence (Godsey, 2011).

A stratified sample yielded participants from six universities for a total of eighteen responses, fourteen one-hour interviews, six of which were used for analysis. Godsey (2011) asked interviewees to explain the culture of speech-language pathology, their own personal
cultural background, definition of cultural competence and their perceived level of cultural competence. When defining culture, participants most often used, “Ethnicity, nationality, geography/community, race, SES, occupation, religion, skin color, sexual orientation, and gender” (Godsey, 2011). In defining cultural competence, Godsey (2011) identified the statements showed knowledge, skill, and attitude of the underlying concepts of cultural competence. However, participants struggled to conceptualize the constructs of cultural competence.

Overall, students shared that their academic experiences were lacking on this topic and that they had few experiences with other cultures/diversity. One participant felt that “…[Multicultural issues are] always just something that gets glossed over.” Another student stated that “…Cultural competence generally gets tacked on as a lecture or two at the end of other subject areas” (Godsey, 2011). Godsey (2011) highlights that the participants mentioned it is impossible to learn about all cultures. However, if students are taught how to be flexible and consider the needs in interactions with cultural relationships, learning about a vast number of cultures would be unwarranted (Godsey, 2011). Although the sample size was small, the interviewees’ responses appear to differ from the perceptions of faculty and the program directors regarding their academic experiences and exposure to culturally and linguistically diverse clients.
Chapter 3

Methods

Participants

Participants for this study were selected based on their enrollment in an undergraduate Communication Sciences and Disorders or Speech-Language Pathology program in Pennsylvania. The programs included were certified by the Council of Academic Accreditation through the American Speech-Language Hearing Association. The participants had to be eighteen years or older to participate.

A survey by the Council of Academic Programs in Communication Sciences and Disorders (CAPCSD) and ASHA (2014) found that of the fourteen responding CSD/SLP programs across the commonwealth, total undergraduate enrollment was 2,594. Of the approximately 2,600 students available, 310 students began this study’s survey and 304 completed it.

Of these 304 participants, 252 (95.5%) were female, 9 (3.4%) were male, 3 (1.1%) did not specify. The remaining 40 participants skipped this question. These percentages can be compared to national enrollment of 93.85% female and 6.15% male (CAPCSD/ASHA 1, 2014). Pennsylvania’s undergraduate enrollment in CSD/SLP is 95.47% female and 4.53% male (CAPCSD/ASHA 2, 2014). Respondents identified their race as: 252 (93.3%) White, 7 (2.6%) Asian, 7 (2.6%) African-American or Black, 4 (1.5%) American Indian or Native American. These percentages can be compared to national enrollment of 79.6% White and 19.71% Racial/Ethnic Minority (Non-International) (CAPCSD/ASHA 1, 2014) and Pennsylvania enrollment of 93% White, 6.46% Racial/Ethnic Minority (CAPCSD/ASHA 2, 2014).
To compensate participants for their time, they had the opportunity to win one of five $40.00 gift cards. At the end of the survey, students were directed to click a link to a separate and secure form via Qualtrics to enter their contact information if they chose to participate in the giveaway. A separate form was used to keep students’ contact information separate from their survey responses. If a student did not want to participate in the drawing, they were not required to enter their contact information.

Materials

Participants completed an online survey instrument that was created via the Qualtrics Survey Software. The survey consisted of a maximum of twenty-six questions (Appendix A). Depending on how a student responded to certain questions, probing questions were asked. The first four or five questions asked participants about their academic information: university attended, credits completed by the end of the fall 2014 semester, if they attend a five year combined undergraduate/graduate program, and anticipated graduation date. The next section, composed of four to nine questions, asked about academic experiences regarding cultural content. For two of the survey questions, participants were given examples of courses that could have been used in the infusion model or as a dedicated course for MMI instruction. The examples provided are taken from Lubinski’s (2008) examples of course titles. The next six questions were based on survey questions written by Hammond et al. (2009). The questions that were modified and used in my study are Hammond et al.’s (2009) question two, three, nine, ten, eleven, and twelve. These questions were modified to adjust the questions to be asked to students as opposed to program directors. The remaining questions were
about demographic information. The question types included were single selection multiple choice, open ended, select all that apply, and 5 point Likert scales.

Upon completion of the survey, participants were directed to click a link that sent them to a separate form in Qualtrics. This form allowed them to enter their contact information if they wanted to have the option to be selected to win a gift card. The contact information form asked for participants name and email address.

**Procedure**

Prior to recruiting students for participation in this study, approval of the study was received from the Pennsylvania State University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB). To identify potential participants, department heads/contact persons at each of the fourteen CAA CSD/SLP programs were contacted via email to receive their agreement to allow their undergraduate students to participate in this research (Appendix B). The department head/contact person received copies of the IRB protocol, IRB approval, student recruitment letter, and the survey. If the directors agreed, they would send the recruitment letter to their undergraduate students via email (Appendix C). A follow-up email was sent to the departments approximately two weeks later, requesting that the recruitment letter be resent to their students. The principal investigator never contacted the students directly to ask for their participation in this study.

The student recruitment letter included a hyperlink to access the survey. Because the survey was accessed through a hyperlink, the participants chose when and where they would like respond to the survey. Prior to beginning the survey, students were informed by regulation of the Penn State Institutional Review Board, that they had the option to participate in the survey and
could discontinue the survey at any time. In addition, participants could skip any question(s) they did not want to answer. Participants were told their responses would remain anonymous; and if they entered their contact information, it would be stored separately and used only in the event they won one of the gift cards.

**Data Analysis**

After the survey closed, the responses were accessed through Qualtrics to collect the data. Data analysis was conducted through the Qualtrics Software and the IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (IBM SPSS). 310 surveys were started and recorded in the Qualtrics program. Of these 310 participants, only 304 would be used for data analysis. Six surveys were excluded because five students consented to participate but did not complete the survey and one participant selected their university but did not complete any other items. In total, 304 student responses were used in data analysis. For data analysis regarding the individual universities, 302 surveys were analyzed. Two respondents did not provide the name of the university they attend. The results were examined collectively, but also examined by university.
Chapter 4

Results

Student Information

Of the 304 students who completed the survey, there were participants from eight of the fourteen Pennsylvania undergraduate CAA certified programs. Over a third of the responses (N=108) were from undergraduate students at the Pennsylvania State University. The number of participants from the remaining universities ranged from 9-51 participants (Figure 1).

![Graph showing number of participants from each university](image)

Figure 1: Number of Participants from Each University

242 participants reported that they attend a four-year undergraduate program while 52 are in a five year combined undergraduate/graduate program. Over two thirds of the students in a
combined undergraduate/graduate program were in their second or third year of academic study.
To determine students’ class standing, they were asked to identify how many completed credits they would have completed by the end of the Fall 2014 semester. 52% of participants responded having completed 84 or more credits and nearly 75% completed 66 credits or more (Figure 2). For reference, this roughly equates to a majority of respondents completing at least two years of college course work. These academic standings are supported by students’ responses to a question regarding their intended semester of graduation. Over 70% of respondents (N=213) stated they would graduate by Spring 2016, meaning most responses were from juniors or seniors.

Figure 2: Academic Credits Completed
Academic Instruction

When asked if their CSD/SLP program had a dedicated course on cultural issues, 295 students responded and 9 students skipped the question. Approximately 50% (N=149) stated that they did not know if there was a separate course within the major on a cultural topic. 34.2% (N=101) responded there was no dedicated course, and 15.3% (N=45) said there was a dedicated course within the major on a cultural topic. The 45 students, who responded yes, were asked further questions about the specific course. Over half of the students stated that the course was a graduation requirement (Figure 3) and common course topics included: Bilingualism/English Language Learners, Disabilities, Sociolinguistics, Cultural Difference/Diversity, Counseling, and a departmental study abroad program.

Figure 3: Requirements of Dedicated Course on Cultural Issues
Following this question, all students were asked if they had taken a course outside of the CSD/SLP department on a cultural topic. 50.5% (N=146) of the 289 respondents stated that they had taken a course in a different academic department on cultural issues. Conversely, 41.2% (N=119) students stated they had not and 8.3% (N=24) students selected they did not know if they had taken a course. The students who answered that they had taken a course in another department were asked to identify the department and the topic of the course. There were 174 text responses for this question. Academic topics included: Anthropology (N=17), Curriculum Instruction (N=9), Education/Special Education (N=17), Linguistics (N=12), Sociology (N=9), and various foreign languages (N=10). When asked why these students took the course, almost half were taking the course to fulfill a general education requirement (Figure 4).
280 students responded to the question regarding infusion of cultural content into a pre-existing course in the major. 73.9% (N=207) of students said that courses incorporated culturally/linguistically diverse content while 8.9% (N= 27) stated they did not, and 15.1% (N=46) were not sure. The students who responded, “Yes,” were asked to name the topic of the course within the department. Frequently occurring responses were: Phonetics/Phonology, Speech and Language Development, Transcription, Linguistics, and Augmentative and Alternative Communication.

Regarding the amount of academic instruction, the most frequent response was “Some,” which was a 3 on a 5-Point Likert scale (1- None; 5- A lot) (Figure 5). The closer students are to graduation the more likely they were to respond that they had more instruction on cultural and linguistic diversity. Seniors who graduated in Fall 2014 or Spring 2015 were more likely to respond with a 4 or 5 (Quite a bit or A lot) on a 5-Point Likert scale than students with an intended graduation of Fall 2017/Spring 2018. 27.0% students graduating Fall 2014/2015 responded with quite a bit or a lot of instruction while 8.1% of students graduating Fall 2017/Spring 2018 responded this way. There was a larger percentage of students who felt they had a lot or quite a bit of instruction the closer they were to graduating (Table 1).

![Figure 5: Amount of Instruction on CLD at Undergraduate Level](image-url)
Table 1: Graduation Semester and Amount of CLD Instruction

Graduation Semester and the Impact on the Amount of Instruction on CLD Topics

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>How much instruction regarding cultural and linguistic diversity have you received during your undergraduate program?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fall 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Attitudes and Beliefs


Students were asked to think about the importance of cultural training depending on the employment setting and location, as program directors were prompted to do in the Hammond et al. (2009) study. The median response was a 3.2 on a 5 point scale. 46.3% of students either agreed (N=72) or strongly agreed (N=46) that it is more important for speech-language pathologists in large cities to have clinical practicum experience with CLD clients than SLPs in rural areas. Conversely, 32.9% of students disagreed (N=66) or strongly disagreed (N=18) with the statement and approximately 20% (N=53) neither agreed nor disagreed. When asked if SLPs working in a medical setting, educational setting, or private practice should influence the need for clinical practicum experience with CLD clients the most frequent response on these questions was disagree, with 36.7%-43.5% of responses.
Regarding the level of diversity in the on campus clinic for students to observe, 18 responses were excluded because students identified that they did not have an on campus clinic. Of the remaining 200 responses, 76 students “Agreed” by responding with a 4 on a 5-Point Likert scale that there was a sufficient number of culturally and linguistically diverse clients who participate in the on campus clinic. Only 31 students disagreed or strongly disagreed while 80 neither agreed nor disagreed, and 13 strongly agreed. The majority of students (N=146, 55.9%) agreed or strongly that their university is in a culturally and linguistically diverse area while nearly a quarter (N=63) disagreed or strongly disagreed that their university was in a culturally and linguistically diverse area. The remainder of participants (N=52, 19.9%) neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement.

50.9% students who agreed or strongly agreed that their university was in a culturally and linguistically diverse area responded that they agreed or strongly agreed that there was a sufficient number of CLD clients who participate in the clinic. This can be compared to the 18.0% of students who disagreed or strongly disagreed that their university was in a culturally and linguistically diverse area and responded that they agreed or strongly agreed there was a sufficient CLD population at the campus clinic (Table 2). Note: .00 indicates students who responded that there was not a campus clinic.
Table 2: University Location Impact on Number of CLD Clients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>The area in which your university is located is culturally and linguistically diverse.</th>
<th>1.00</th>
<th>2.00</th>
<th>3.00</th>
<th>4.00</th>
<th>5.00</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.00</td>
<td>There is a sufficient number of culturally and linguistically diverse clients who participate in the on-campus clinic.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>213</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 5
Discussion

Limitations of Study

When interpreting this data, it is important to consider that approximately one third of the participants attend Penn State University. The larger number of Penn State students could be attributed to it being a larger university. However, the number could be explained by the fact the principal investigator attends Penn State, making students more likely to respond. Having one particular program account for 35.5% of the responses could cause the results to be more representative of that university instead of the universities collectively.

A potential limitation is the response rate for the survey. Of the approximately 2,600 students across the commonwealth, the departments were asked to distribute the survey to students who had completed at least a year of their academic study. However, this was not a requirement of the programs to do. If I account for all universities excluding first year students, there would be a roughly 1,850 students remaining. Therefore, the response rate would be 16.4% if freshman were not contacted. If all 2,600 students were contacted the response rate would be 11.7%. However, it cannot be determined for certain that all students received the email because 7 universities did not have any participants. This could be because students chose not to do the survey or because they did not receive information about the survey. This could
also alter the representativeness of the results when drawing conclusions about undergraduate Pennsylvania programs as a whole.

**Student Information**

A majority of responders attended a four-year institution instead of a five-year combined undergraduate/graduate program, which was expected. It was expected because ASHA’s EdFind (2015) program, a tool that helps students find masters, Ph.D., and AuD. programs, lists only 15 combined programs across the United States, 4 of which are in Pennsylvania. Having program directors distribute the survey to students who had completed at least a year of academic course work was beneficial because during the first academic year, most students are not taking classes within their major or are only having introductory courses. Because I was looking at students’ experiences in the CSD/SLP department, establishing respondents’ amount of college coursework and graduation year was necessary.

**Academic Instruction**

The finding in my study that most programs do not have a specific dedicated course on CLD topics supports the research of Gay (1997), Stockman et al. (2008), and Hammond et al. (2009). However, half of the students identified that they did not know if there was a specific course or not. The students who responded that they did have a dedicated course in the major identified that it was a graduation requirement. This is important to note because this shows that the schools with a dedicated course are making sure the course is taken by all students, instead of offering it as an elective. Because CSD/SLP shares similarities with other academic fields, it
was not surprising that half of students had taken a course outside of the major on a cultural topic. Because many students are taking interdisciplinary courses, these courses could be used as a guide for creating new courses within CSD/SLP programs.

The responses to my survey support the findings that infusion is a popular method. The text responses asking what courses infused CLD content were similar to those suggested by Lubinski (2008). This is likely due to the fact that as Stockman et al. (2008) identified, certain courses lend more opportunities to infuse CLD topics into the curriculum, as opposed to others, such as anatomy and physiology of the speech and hearing mechanisms. It is also important to note that most students were able to identify that they had covered cultural topics in their course work, which could suggest that, the methods used by professors in the infusion models were memorable.

Although this method seems to be effective, most students identified only having some content. This could be accounted for from students who are in their first or second year of college and have not had many courses in the major. Ideally, the responses for the amount of instruction would be “a lot,” but the lower amount of instruction should not be alarming because students are still in their undergraduate studies. The ASHA standards are not applicable until the graduate level, thus students will learn more on CLD topics in their classes and gain experience through clinical practicum. It is encouraging that undergraduate courses are including cultural content because cultural competence takes times to develop and will extend through one’s career. By starting to develop cultural competence in the undergraduate programs, students will be better prepared to provide the best and appropriate services for CLD clients.

When comparing the results of the amount of academic instruction with that of program directors (Hammond et al., 2009), it should be noted that a 7 point scale was used. The median
responses for the amount of instruction on CLD and amount of instruction on diversity topics was a 5 (Hammond et al., 2009). While these numbers cannot be directly compared because program directors were referring to graduate students preparations, the amount of time spent on academic instruction on CLD topics seems to be greater at the graduate level.

**Attitudes and Beliefs**

The following questions were based on the Hammond et al. (2009) study. A difference can be observed regarding undergraduates’ perception of where one needs more or less CLD experience. When program directors were asked if, “It is more important for speech-language pathologists in large cities to have clinical practicum experience with culturally and linguistically diverse clients than it is for clinicians in rural areas” (Hammond et al., 2009, p. 69), the median response was 2.00 (SD= 1.3) on a 5.00 scale which corresponds with “disagree.” Conversely, undergraduate students responded with a median score of 3.2 (SD= 1.22), or a neutral response. Because nearly half of the students responded with either a 4.00 or a 5.00, it appears that undergraduate students do not readily identify rural settings as diverse. This could be because students have not had experiences in rural settings to acknowledge that working in a rural setting includes diverse individuals. While academic instruction on CLD topics is just beginning, students should be able to acknowledge that rural settings are diverse places and one does not have to be in a metropolis to work with CLD clients. While undergraduates were less likely to acknowledge this, there is little difference between program directors responses and students’ responses regarding employment setting and the need for clinical practicum with CLD clients.
The top five responses that program directors and undergraduate students used to define culture were the same, in varying orders. The top two responses, ethnicity and language, were the same in Hammond et al.’s (2009) study as the undergraduate students. The following three responses were: race (3rd for directors; 4th for students), country of origin (4th for directors; 5th for students), and religion (5th for directors; 3rd for students). This shows that there is a general consensus of how culture is commonly defined. Knowing this can help to inform teaching so students can have a broader definition of culture. For example, at Penn State there is an emphasis on disabilities as differences, not limitations. There is a whole month dedicated to this cause known as, “Diversability Month.” Throughout the month there are various events from wheelchair basketball to presentations of assistive technologies. One of the options for defining culture was “disability” and I found that over half (31/61) of the respondents were from Penn State. While there are multiple explanations for this, it could be because of the school’s emphasis on disability as a difference. If this is the case, programs such as “Diversability Month” could have an impact on students’ outlook.

**University and Program**

Undergraduates reported a lower agreement that there are a sufficient number of culturally and linguistically diverse clients in the campus clinic than program directors did. This difference could occur because undergraduates might not be able to observe these sessions if clients had not agreed to allow students to observe or students may not have had the opportunity to observe these sessions due to their own schedule.
Chapter 6

Conclusion

In summary, the results from this survey support the prior research that infusion is the most common method of teaching cultural and linguistic diversity topics. While infusion was a popular method of instruction, undergraduate students are also taking courses outside of their CSD/SLP department that address CLD topics. Most students are taking these courses as a part of their general education requirements. While students are opting to take these courses to fulfill their requirements on their own, perhaps CSD/SLP programs could provide a list of general education courses that address CLD topics to encourage even more students to take them.

In addition, only 1.1% of students stated that they had no instruction of CLD topics. Nearly all undergraduate programs across the commonwealth are including CLD into the undergraduate curriculum, despite not being required to do so until the graduate level. While there is always room to improve the amount and quality of instruction on CLD topics, students appear to be learning about CLD.

While this study provides insights into undergraduate curriculums, further research is needed on a national scale to include various geographic regions. Also, more information regarding the specific academic strategies used within the infusion instructional model could identify the most effective practices. In turn, these could serve as a model for the development of more infusion based classes.

By starting to include cultural and linguistic diversity topics into the undergraduate curriculum, programs are acknowledging that preparing future speech-language pathologists to
be culturally competent is critical. Also, by starting to develop cultural competency at the undergraduate level students will become more self-aware going when they enter graduate school, and be more culturally competent as they become clinicians.
Appendix A
Survey Instrument

Default Question Block

Consent Form
Please click on the hyperlink above and read the file before beginning the survey.

☐ I agree to participate
☐ I do not agree to participate

Which undergraduate Communication Sciences and Disorders (CSD)/ Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) program do you attend? (Please select one)

☐ 

Are you in a five year combined undergraduate/graduate program?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Are you in the pre-professional phase (first through third year) in your undergraduate study?

☐ Yes, I am in my first year
☐ Yes, I am in my second year
☐ Yes, I am in my third year
☐ No, I am in the professional phase in my fourth or fifth year of study

At the end of the fall 2014 semester, how many credits will you have completed?

11 credits or less
12 - 29
30 - 47
48 - 65
66 - 83
84 - 101
102 - 119
120 credits or more
What semester and year do you plan on graduating?

- Fall 2014
- Spring 2015
- Fall 2015
- Spring 2016
- Fall 2016
- Spring 2017
- Fall 2017
- Spring 2018

Does your CSD/SLP program offer a separate course(s) in the major on a cultural topic? (e.g. Cultural/Multicultural Issues in CSD, Multicultural Aspects of Disability, Bi or Multilingual Issues, Learning, Literacy, & Culture, Language Disorders in Bilingual Children, Cultural Issues in Communication, Communication Disorders in Multicultural Populations, etc.)?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

If you answered yes to the previous question, please name the main topic or focus of the course.

[Blank line]

Are you required to take this course in order to graduate?

- Yes
- No
No
☐ I don't know

Have you taken a course on cultural topics that was offered through another department/major?
☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I don't know

Please name the focus/topic and the department in which you took the course.
Focus/topic
Department

Why did you take the course?
☐ Requirement for Major
☐ Elective Course
☐ General Education Requirement
☐ Requirement for a Minor
☐ Other
☐

Have any classes in your major incorporated cultural content into another course? For example, in Phonetics, Language Development, Professional Issues, Augmentative/Assistive Communication, Phonological Disorders, etc.
☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I don't know
Please name the main topic of the course(s).


Does your CSD/SLP department at your university offer any extracurricular activities that focus on creating cultural awareness or discussing cultural issues?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I don't know

Consider the term "cultural diversity" What do you most commonly think of when you think of "culture?" (check all that apply)

☐ Race
☐ Ethnicity
☐ Language
☐ Socioeconomic status
☐ Religion
☐ Country of Origin
☐ Geographic location
☐ Sexuality
☐ Ancestry
☐ Dialect
☐ Hearing
☐ Disability
☐ Mode of Communication
☐ Other__________________
How much instruction regarding cultural and linguistic diversity have you received during your undergraduate program?

1 = None  2 = A Little Bit  3 = Some  4 = Quite A Bit  5 = A lot

There is a sufficient number of culturally and linguistically diverse clients who participate in the on campus clinic for you to observe.

If your university does not have an on campus clinic, please select 0

0 = Not Applicable  1 = Strongly Disagree  2 = Disagree  3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree  4 = Agree  5 = Strongly Agree

The area in which your university is located is culturally and linguistically diverse.
It is more important for speech-language pathologists in large cities to have clinic practicum experience with culturally and linguistically diverse clients than it is for clinicians in rural areas.

1 = Strongly Disagree  2 = Disagree  3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree  4 = Agree  5 = Strongly Agree

1  2  3  4  5

It is more important for speech-language pathologists working in medical settings to have clinic practicum experience with culturally and linguistically diverse clients than it is for clinicians in other employment settings.

1 = Strongly Disagree  2 = Disagree  3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree  4 = Agree  5 = Strongly Agree

1  2  3  4  5

It is more important for speech-language pathologists working in educational settings to have clinic practicum experience with culturally and linguistically diverse clients than it
is for clinicians in other employment settings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 = Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>2 = Disagree</th>
<th>3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>4 = Agree</th>
<th>5 = Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is more important for speech-language pathologists working in private practices to have clinic practicum experience with culturally and linguistically diverse clients than it is for clinicians in other employment settings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 = Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>2 = Disagree</th>
<th>3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>4 = Agree</th>
<th>5 = Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is your sex?

- Male
- Female
- Prefer not to answer

Which one of the following best describes the area where you grew-up?

- [ ] 
City/urban area
Suburban area
Rural area

Are you of Hispanic or Latino?
- Yes
- No

What is your race? Please check all that apply.
- American Indian or Native American
- Asian
- Black or African-American
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- White
Appendix B

University Recruitment Email

Dear (insert name),

My name is Alison Carson and I am a senior studying Communication Sciences and Disorders at Penn State University. As part of my graduation requirements from the Schreyer Honors College, I am conducting a supervised research project for my honors thesis.

The objective of my thesis is to get a better understanding of students’ perceptions of cultural awareness and how cultural content is being incorporated into the undergraduate curriculum, across the commonwealth. To meet this objective, I have created an online survey for undergraduate students. I am writing to you today, as the program director, to request your approval for the distribution of this survey to your undergraduate students and your assistance in sending it to them.

I am focusing on students who have completed at least one year of their undergraduate coursework because they will have a better idea of the concept of cultural awareness and have taken more classes in the department. If it is easier for you to distribute the email to all of your undergraduate students, as opposed to sophomores through seniors, you may do this. I will determine if a student meets the criterion from a question in the survey. If your students are in a five-year programs, please send it to students in the pre-professional stage.

Student participation in this study is voluntary with no foreseeable risks in a student’s participation. In addition, all responses will be kept anonymous and confidential. Students’ names will only be collected if they decide to participate in a gift card giveaway. If a student chooses to enter the giveaway, they will be presented with a link to a separate form to enter their personal information for a chance to win a gift card. Participation in the drawing is also voluntary. In addition, students’ responses from your university, will be reported anonymously with no way to identify the responses pertaining to your university.

For your viewing, I have attached a copy of the survey and the recruitment letter for your students.

If you have any questions, please contact me via email at alc5700@psu.edu or via phone at (717) 517-4148. You may also contact my advisor, Dr. Ingrid Blood via email at i2b@psu.edu or via phone at (814) 863-6131.

Thank you for your time and assistance with this data collection!

Sincerely,

Alison Carson
Undergraduate Honors Student

Ingrid Blood, PhD, CCC-A
Professor of Communication Sciences and Disorders
Appendix C

Undergraduate Student Recruitment Email

Dear student,

My name is Alison Carson and I am a senior studying Communication Sciences and Disorders at Penn State University. As part of my graduation requirements from the Schreyer Honors College, I am conducting a supervised research project for my honors thesis.

The objective of my thesis is to get a better understanding of undergraduate students’ perceptions of cultural awareness and how cultural content is being incorporated into the undergraduate curriculum across the state. To do this, I have created an online survey for undergraduate CSD/SLP students and would like to invite you to participate. To thank you for your time, you will also have the opportunity to win one of five $40 Visa gift-cards.

The survey should take about 5-10 minutes to complete. Your participation in this study is voluntary with no foreseeable risks in participating. All responses will be kept anonymous and confidential. You do not have to answer any question(s) that you do not want to answer.

Personal information will only be collected if you choose to enter in the voluntary gift-card giveaway. If you choose to participate, you will be given a link to a separate form to enter your contact information for a chance to win. This will keep your personal information separate from your responses.

Please take a few minutes now, if you are 18 years and older, to complete the questions in the survey with this link:

If you have any questions, please contact me via email at alc5700@psu.edu or via phone at (717) 517-4148. You can also contact my advisor, Dr. Ingrid Blood via email at i2b@psu.edu or via phone at (814) 863-6131.

Thank you for your time and consideration!

Sincerely,

Alison Carson
Undergraduate Honors Student

Ingrid Blood, Ph.D., CCC-A
Professor of Communication Sciences and Disorders
References


ACADEMIC VITA

Alison Carson
910 Stonebridge Drive | alc5700@psu.edu

Education
The Pennsylvania State University
- The Schreyer Honors College
- Bachelor of Science in Communication Sciences and Disorders, expected May 2015
- Minor in Special Education
Lancaster Catholic High School
- High School Diploma

Honors and Awards
1. Communication Disorders Award, Summer 2014
2. Dean’s List, all semesters eligible
3. The College of Health and Human Development Honors Society, Fall 2013-Present
4. Member of Phi Eta Sigma National Honors Society, Spring 2013
5. Published in Penn Statements, a student-writing journal, Volume 32, Spring 2013

Association Memberships & Activities
- National Student Speech-Language Hearing Association, Fall 2013-Present
- Pennsylvania Speech-Language Hearing Association, Fall 2014-Present
- Leader of the CSD Multicultural Interest Group, Fall 2014-Present
- Associate Dean’s Advisory Board, Fall 2014-Present

Professional Experiences
Teaching Assistant
- CSD 300: Developmental Considerations in the Assessment & Treatment of Language Disorders
- CSD 331: Anatomy and Physiology of the Speech and Hearing Mechanisms

Research Assistant in the Department of Human Development and Family Studies
- Coded qualitative information for a study aiming to identify the norms about various feeding practices and nutrition that parent-authored food blogs promote
Women’s Leadership Initiative Class of 2013-2014

- Selected as one of thirty women within the Colleges of Health and Human Development & Nursing based on leadership potential, academic achievement, and commitment to service
- Developed the core values, attitudes and competencies to build a strong foundation to be a life-long leader through service, education, reflection, and a mentoring program

Work Experience

The Pennsylvania State University - New Student Orientation (NSO) Check-In Crew
- Collaborated with ten team members to build trust, provide motivation, and establish successful communication to welcome 17,554 students and their guests daily
- Properly handled over 7,500 confidential student records

Marketing Works & Event Works - Works Team Member
- Cooperated with team members to prepare and tear down venues for private and corporate events

Community Involvement

The Centre County Down Syndrome Society - Volunteer with the For Good Performance Troupe
- Helped to run weekly rehearsals for a musical performance put on semi-annually for young adults who have Down Syndrome