

The Power Processes Involved in Multilingual Counsellors' Experiences of Working in Different Languages

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1- Introduction

- In today's diverse world, marked by increased immigration and globalisation^{1,2}, it's common for therapists to conduct sessions in their second language and share multiple languages with their clients³.
- Literature shows that multilingual counsellors' multiple sense of selves by their languages can influence their identity, career development, and therapeutic work^{4,5,6}.
- This study combines two elements to contribute to the literature and practice: the working experiences of multilingual counsellors in the UK and socio-cultural historical context.

1. Burck, Charlotte. 2004. "Living in Several Languages: Implications for Therapy." *Journal of Family Therapy* 26 (4): 314-39.

2. Cenoz, Jasone. 2013. "Defining Multilingualism." In *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, edited by Charlene Polio, 33:3-18. Cambridge University Press

3. Nguyen, Bick P. 2014. "Identification: A Qualitative Study of the Experiences of Bilingual Therapists with Their Monolinguals and Bilingual Clients." *Psychodynamic Practice* 20 (4): 340-55

4. Kapasi, Zahera Danielle. 2013. "Exploring the Role of Language Switching in Psychological Therapy." the University of Leicester.

5. Rosenblum, Sofia Maia. 2011. "The Role of Language in Therapy: How Bilingual/Multilingual Therapists Experience Their Work with Bilingual/Multilingual Clients Bilingualism." Smith College, Northampton.

6. Skulic, Tomislav. 2007. "Languages of Psychotherapy: The Therapist's Bilingualism in the Psychotherapeutic Process." Auckland University of Technology.

2- Aim

- to examine the power processes involved in multilingual counsellors' languages and therapeutic practices in different languages.

3- Methodology

- One-to-one semi-structured interviews with 11 multilingual counsellors who provide counselling services in English and one or more other languages in the UK.
- Participants from various counselling services across the UK and diverse linguistic background; including languages from Germanic, Celtic, Slavic, Italic-Romance, Indo-Aryan, Semitic, Kwa, and Sinitic (Chinese) families.
- In-person interviews with 6 participants and online interviews with 5 participants.
- The interviews focused on participants' backgrounds, their training/supervision experiences in terms of multilingualism, the roles of languages in their counselling practice.

4- Next Step

- I will use Foucauldian Discourse Analysis to map underlying power structures in language use and their impact on counsellors' experiences across different languages. This analysis aims to reveal how different languages and contexts shape therapeutic dynamics.

5- Limitation

- All interviews were conducted in English, which may limit our understanding to only those experiences expressed in English. It's important to keep in mind that participants' experiences might be different if shared in their other languages.
- As a researcher who speaks English as a second language, my background could influence how the interviews were conducted and how I interpret the results. To be aware of potential biases, I used techniques such as reflexive journaling and 'bracketing' interviews.

6- Implications

- I hope that this research offers critical awareness on the role of language in therapy that could potentially enhance the quality and inclusivity of counselling training and provision in the UK.

