COMMUNITIES AND TECHNOLOGIES: NEW IMMIGRANT YOUNG LATINAS IN
THE NEW MILLENIUM

DISSERTATION

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By

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Latinos/as constitute the largest minority group in the United States. In the Latino/a community the drop-out rate has been very high not only in the states that have been traditionally known for a significant Latino/a population, but also in states with new Latino immigrants like Ohio. The drop-out rate has been almost the same in the last 20 years making the Latino/a population the most undereducated subgroup in the US; therefore, this is a national problem, which requires we find effective ways of reaching out to the Latino/a population. In relation to new technologies, there are factors that indicate that Latinos/as in this country are experiencing the impact of the long and complex “digital divide,” despite the possession of computers in their household like the majority of the American society. Problems of connectivity and real physical access to these new technologies still exist. In the last decade, information communication technologies like the cellular phone, the computer and the Internet have started to affect the way people communicate, the way they learn, and the way they do business. These types of technological tools and the associated skills are becoming more and more important to the success of students, in their education, home use of computers, and on-the-job training. In this context, this study attempts to add insights to the understanding of how young Latinas immigrants access and use new information communication technologies in their lives.
This qualitative research is intended to inform and contribute to the understanding of how computer technology use and access among young Latinas in Columbus affects their sense of identity, success in school, role in the workplace, and communication networks. In interviews and observations with twelve Latina high school students and four teachers from a public school in Columbus, Ohio, the participants were asked to share their views and experiences in relation to new information technologies.

The research data were analyzed using N.U.D.I.S.T, a qualitative analysis tool, and the results were reported in two separate chapters, the former addressing the data in a narrative style telling the stories of the participants and the latter focusing on the responses to the questions of this study. Some of the findings include the importance of access and type of technology available with the capacity of connectivity, involvement and uses in the lives of Latinas. In relation to the construction of identity in cyberspace, they consistently changed their names and sometimes, nationality, age and gender. Additionally, Spanish and English languages differ when finding school information or communicating in the web, and some uses of ICTs by my participants include: study, gathering information, communication and entertainment. I hope these findings contribute to our understanding of the "digital divide” and the Latinos/as involvement with new technology and will motivate future research in this interesting area of work.
To my mother, my grandmothers, my aunts, my sisters and my nieces,

wonderful women who have shaped my life with their teachings,

love and examples of courage and bravery to

look and find their own dreams.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1.- Background

Latinos/as\(^1\) are the largest minority group in the US. This has strong implications for and effects on the quality of the future labor force and the demand for public services (Contreras, 2002; Cummins, 1986). Many communities that in the past did not include Latino/a immigrants are experiencing a change in their population demographics. In the Midwest, Latino immigration is increasing significantly. Educators in this area are struggling in adapting themselves to these new ethnic group realities and this has implications for policies and programs relevant to the community (MacLaughlin, 2002).

The Latino/a population has very complex economic, cultural and educational issues; therefore, it is vital to identify the risk and the success factors in the new Latino/a communities in Ohio in order for educators to understand and serve this minority group.

\(^1\) There is an important distinction between the terms Latino/a and Hispanic. Latino/a is a more inclusive descriptor, encompassing African, Indigenes, and Hispanic ethnic groups (Maurya, 1991). Hispanic in a broad perspective refers to people in the U.S. who came originally from Spanish-speaking countries (including Spain). "Hispanic" is the official designation of the United States Census used to track population changes and trends. Many Latinos do not like being called Hispanics. Because it is an English word and does not identify their gender like the words "Latino" or "Latina" do. Some don't like it because it refers to an old empire and Spanish conquerors. When a designation is necessary, it is most appropriate to use the term chosen by the individual or the group. (DeNeve, 1997). In this study, the researcher will use the term Latinos instead of Hispanics because there is not a single Latino/a community following any set cultural, economic, or political mold. Rather, there are thousands of distinct communities in which Latinos live and work, in virtually every corner of the US. Latinos make up what can best be described as a vast, dispersed, heterogeneous, multi-racial, multi-class, and multi-lingual population.
In Ohio, The Commission on Hispanic/Latino Affairs finds a very high percentage of (49%) of Latino/a students drop out of school; in some districts as many as 70% drop out (NuestroOhio, 2002). In the US, Latinas\(^2\) are a high-risk population for drop-out from the education system. The US Census reports the dropout rate for Latinas between the ages of 16 and 24 is 30% compared with 8.2% for white females. The Latino/a high school students’ completion rate is 72.2%, the lowest of any major ethnic group: this compares to a rate of 93.1% for whites, and 76.9% for African Americans (U.S. Department of Education, 2001b). On the academic front, in general, Latinos/as today are not doing any better than they did a decade ago. Their academic achievement has remained static and very little progress is shown in high school completion rates across the country (Espinoza-Herold, 2003). The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES, 2001) states that high school completion rates have not changed significantly from 1972 through 2000. Latinos/as as a group are more likely to be high school dropouts than any other ethnic group.

Frey and Lindsay (2002) found that immigrant Latinos/as have a higher drop-out rate in high school than Latinos/as born in the United States. They are industrious workers in low-skilled jobs, earning more than other youth in their age group. However, other youth in their age group are working only part-time, since they are also enrolled in school. Their economic situation might suggest Latinos/as are doing well when the reality is that they will be limited to low-paying jobs while their counterparts in school will

\(^2\) Following the Spanish rules of linguistics, the term Latino/a allows genderization, Latina/as when is only the female population include it (Shorris, 1992) It will be The role of gender has deep roots in Hispanic culture, from domains of privilege and power to domains of identity. It is embedded in all aspects of the culture. There are many stereotypes of women in latinos culture, which marginalize and essentialize women. However, their roles are quite complex and their influence is perhaps misunderstood both from an emic and an etic perspective.
graduate and enter a higher skilled, higher paying workforce. Generational analyses of Latinos/as must be sensitive to: ethnicity, linguistic abilities, and gender.

Within the educational system, lower expectations persist for many Latino/a students (US. Department of Education, 2001). Minority students receive less encouragement from their teachers who have doubts about their abilities (Gandara, 2000; Ferguson, 1998). Therefore, I think new technologies can give another option to the teachers to communicate with the minority students and perhaps it may help the students to become more fully integrated into their classrooms.

A global view of information and communication technology (ICT) is that it connects one with one’s own culture and with other cultures; it empowers through information and educational access. One important pathway to technology based information access and communication is the Internet. A 2001 study in California by Spooner and Rainie found that nearly half of the Latino/a population was using the Internet and 61% of these internet users were under the age of 34. They also found that in the two-year period 2000-2001, 52% of new Latino/a Internet users were Latinas. Their study found that Latinas used the Internet more for information gathering and Latinos used it for entertainment purposes.

Immigrants live out much of their lives in the context of families. Usually families have facilitated the migration process creating strong ties among family members in their nuclear and extended families. Foner (1999) focuses on family culture among first generation immigrants. She explains that new immigrants do not expect to reproduce exactly their old cultural patterns when they move to a new land, but these patterns continue to have a powerful influence in shaping families' values and norms. Previous
experiences operate as a filter through which immigrants view and create new lives in their new country. Latina immigrants must deal with many factors in their lives: multiple languages, multiple cultural roles as helpers in the house (Orillana, 2001) and establishing their identities. The mix of the old and the new culture brings a new set of cultural circumstances (Amit-Talai, 1995) for the young Latinos/as and their parents to handle. The conflict for young Latinos/as in school is especially acute as they attempt to distance themselves from their old culture in an effort to be accepted in their new culture while still being very tied to their cultural roots. Conflict with their parents often arises in the push toward education for advancement with the awareness that education will create a gap between the two generations. As their children learn English, language barriers for the parents often leave them on the outside, widening the gap with their children and the education system. As a growing minority in the U.S., Latinos/as face a series of challenges: creating a new identity, assimilating a new culture while preserving the old, succeeding in a foreign education system, acquiring a new language and developing the skills to function, work, and communicate in a technological society.

According to Manuel Castells (2001), the Internet now constitutes the fabric of our lives. It is not the future, it is the present. The Internet is a medium for everything, interacting within the whole of society especially in countries like Canada and the United States. Therefore, new technologies like the Internet are more than a set of machines, cables, skills, etc., but include new ways of relating symbolic and imaginary representations. This position claims that there is an interweaving of new technologies and new ways of representation such that neither one can be understood without the other. Then, what does this situation implies for communities such as the Latino/a
community? How can young Latinos/as really be part of this, if there are issues that involve technology and culture like inequality of appropriate access and knowledge? Perhaps, a better understanding of how culture and technology can and do affect minorities will help to create ways of breaking down the continuing digital divide among ethnic groups.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The question addressed in this study is how computer technology use and access among local Latinas in Columbus affects and is affected by their sense of identity, success in school, role in the workplace, and communication networks. More specifically, I want to investigate and analyze the use of communication technology and related new technologies in the young Latina population.

How do connection to and disconnection from information and communication technologies (ICTs) affect the way young Latinas think about themselves, the world, and their place in the world? What type of technology (ICT) and what modes of access are available to Latinas in the schools and in the work settings? What are the social and personal implications of new information and communication technology in their lives in different learning environments (school, libraries, work, home)? Do they construct a sense of community, or identity in these new environments? Do they identify with cyberspace communities? Do they integrate these identities with their cultural identities? Is there an enlarging of power or an artificial power that becomes contracted in the everyday world?
1.3.- Purpose of the Study

The "digital divide" goes beyond access to technology. It includes education, training and resources to derive benefits from technology; without the understanding and knowledge to tap the power of technology and without the equipment for high-end use, access alone will not bridge the divide (Damarin, 2000). These technologies can provide an essential connection for isolated communities such as Latinos/as to participate more fully in the larger world. The proposed study is designed to look more closely at how young Latinas in particular understand, conceive, use, and visualize new technologies in their lives. What makes it possible or likely that Latinas will or do use technology effectively for themselves? And how can technology help them keep the desire for learning?

1.4.- Significance of the Study

The population of the United States has been changing rapidly in the last 25 years, with minority groups becoming an important and growing segment of the population. In the decade from 1990 to 2000, the U.S. Hispanic/ Latino/a population increased by 57.9 percent, from 22.4 million in 1990 to 35.3 million in 2000, compared with an increase of 13.2 percent for the total U.S. population (U.S. Census, 2000). In Ohio, the Latino/a population increased by 55% (Ohio Hispanic Coalition, 2002). In a press released of the U.S. Census Bureau (2006) expressed that “Hispanics/Latinos/as continue to be the largest minority group at 42.7 million. With a 3.3 percent increase in population from July 1, 2004, to July 1, 2005, they are the fastest-growing group”
One way of helping to cope with the commensurate increases in ethnic and cultural issues is through education. This is especially true in K-12 education where teachers are in daily contact with students who come from different ethnic and racial backgrounds. Therefore, students and teachers should be aware of cultural differences in both learning and teaching styles. In addition, the U.S. must prepare future teachers through experiences to help them to cope with the different multicultural and multilingual populations that live in the US. There is a need to investigate and build knowledge of differences within the Latino/a population in the U.S. The Latino/a population of the United States is a highly heterogeneous population that defies easy generalization. Therefore, it is important to take into consideration the contradictions and tensions around class, race and ethnicity that often separate them. “What does an English-speaking third generation upper-class white Cuban American in Florida have in common with a Maya–speaking recent immigrant from Guatemala?” (Suarez-Orozco and Paez, 2002 p.3). Latinos/as experience distinct and changing realities that determine the nature and extent of their cultural and linguistic diversity. Multiple identities are present even within one family or a network of friends. The lifespan of the hybrid identities that young Latinos/as acquire as members of overlapping communities offers uninvestigated possibilities (Zentella, 2002).

1.5.- Organization of the Entire Document

This initial chapter began by introducing and giving the background of the research problem as well as its discussion and the purpose for this study. Chapter two explores the literature pertaining to the research objectives of this study. Chapter three
lays out my research methodology. My epistemological approach and questions lend themselves to a qualitative research project using case study methods and feminist standpoint to collect and analyze data. Chapter four presents a collection of girls and teacher’s narratives to start the data analysis. Chapter five offers data analysis of the interviews with N.U.D.I.S.T., a qualitative analysis computer program designed to code and assess large amounts of data. Finally, Chapter six provides the summary of this study, important findings and related issues, implications pedagogical and methodological, reflection of the research process and the research role, limitations, and recommendations for future research.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In chapter one, I established the research questions, discussed the significant of the study and provided an overall introduction to this study. In this chapter two, I conceptualized the literature review under three main categories. First, I considered research related to digital divide which include definition and importance, Latinos/as and the digital divide; and education and digital divide. Second, I reviewed the literature regarding Latinos/as in the United States in relation to their immigration history, the impact of culture focusing on the strong influence of family and community for Latino/a youth, cultural identity development in Latinos/as; The intersection of this identity with ethnicity and gender. Third, I synthesized the review with the different subjectivities involve in the social construction of technology including the following themes: The Internet, cyberspace and identities; Intersections of race, gender and class with technology; and Latinos/as’ relation with information communication technology.

2.1.- DIGITAL DIVIDE

2.1.1.- Definition and importance

Digital divide is a term that was created to describe the growing disparity between the “haves” and the “have-nots” in the current digital revolution (Mack, 2001).
Information technology (IT) has made fundamental changes throughout society and has been instrumental in the shift from an industrial age to a network age. We now live in a society in which the production, acquisition and flow of knowledge drive the economy and global information networks represent key infrastructure. Also, information technology affects the construction of responses to social problems such as poverty and inequality. Servon (2002) discusses how the technological gap is only one link in a causal chain that has bound certain groups repeatedly to disadvantage, calling the digital divide a symptom of a much larger and more complex problem of poverty and inequalities.

Widespread access to and use of technology will not solve these large problems, but it can help to show the way out. Used wisely, technology provides new ways to address these persistent problems. Yet, Light (2001) explains, "policies that encourage the adoption of technologies subtly shift the problem of social inequalities and segregation, redefining them in technological terms" (p. 724). Because it is not practical to believe that access to computers will even out societal disparities, the digital divide should not be looked at in strictly "technological terms" but should be further examined as a social issue.

The U.S. government “discovered” the digital divide in 1995. That year the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) issued the first of four reports under the title “Falling through the Net” These reports documented the existence and particulars of a digital divide in America that separates people with access to information technology from those without it. Along lines of race, socioeconomic status, education level, household type, and geographic location (US Department of Commerce, 2000), the 2000 report found that the problem persists and that deep divides
remain between those who possess the resources, education and skills to reap the benefits of the information society and those who do not. Also, it found that the gap between men and women seemed to be disappearing.

Servon’s (2002) concept of digital divide involves three dimensions: access to the technology, training or information technology literacy, and content. She divides this last dimension into two, the first being content related to the needs and demands of different groups and the second content that is created by them. Given Servon’s concepts, people will simply not embrace computer technology on a widespread basis until it is also shown to be relevant to their daily lives (Mack, 2001). It must reflect the interests and needs of diverse population in order to attract minority groups (Castells, 1999).

The cellular telephone has reached near universal acceptance because people from all walks of life can appreciate the convenience of communication anytime and anywhere. The relevance of cell phone technology is transparent to the average person. Computers on the other hand, do not exhibit the same transparent relevance. They are often perceived as difficult to understand, expensive to acquire and maintain, a potential portal for unwarranted invasions of privacy, and an irrelevant nuisance. Given these perceptions, Mack (2001) said that to be able to narrow the digital divide requires more than making computers widely available to undeserved populations, it is necessary to take into consideration the historical issues of race that have played a significant role in the current inequalities.

Narrowing the digital divide is important for political, economic and social reasons. Wilson (1996) makes the important connection between the movement from a manufacturing to an information economy and the increase in concentrated poverty in the
U.S. inner cities. Much of the manufacturing activities have moved to rural areas and to less developing countries, where production costs are cheaper. New technologies have made it easier for corporations to move many of their operations to the suburbs, resulting in a decrease in jobs for low-skilled urban people. These economic changes have exacerbated the problem of persistent poverty and made the technology gap a more pressing issue. Servon and Horrigan (1997) give a sociopolitical argument for why the gap in access should be closed. They conclude that information is a public good to everyone in society and everyone should have access. Information Technology is increasingly a gatekeeper to a whole range of information resources that “serve [s] to facilitate democratic decision-making, assists citizen participation in government, and contributes to the search for roughly egalitarian measures in the economy in large” (Schiller, 1996, p. 35). Ensuring universal access, and coupling it with appropriate training and relevant content is the first step toward enabling all people to benefit from the information society. Technology is a tool that has the potential to provide people with skills and information that they can use to move beyond a focus on day-to-day survival. But, it is the means, not the end (Servon, 2002).

2.1.2.- Latinos/as and the digital divide

Information technologies are not neutral in themselves; they are situated, and therefore engrained in specific historical, political, social, and economical circumstances that impact not only education but also the sociocultural practices of a particular community.
Interesting data in relation to the content on the Internet was gathered and analyzed by the Children’s Partnership Report (Lazarus and Mora, 2000). Some of the findings are that online content is not fully benefiting low income and underserved American communities because of the following barriers: literacy barrier, language barriers and lack of cultural diversity. According to the study described in this report, most of the textual content on the Internet is written for those who have average or advanced literacy levels. Yet, nearly half of the adult population functions at low levels of literacy (Lazarus and Mora, 2000). Almost all of what is on the Internet is in English and approximately thirty-two million Americans cannot take advantage of this benefit because English is a language they do not read well. Despite gains in access and use, there is still little content that is developed by or geared to most ethnic communities. The Internet largely caters to middle class white Americans, for whom English is the first and only language.

In 2001, a report from the Pew Internet & American Life Project (Spooner and Rainie, 2001) found that half of all adult Latinos/as in the U.S. use the Internet and email. The number of Latinos/as online grew by 25 percent in the year 2000, as more women, young people, and those on lower incomes gained access to the Internet. About 78 percent of Latino/a Internet users go online three to five times a week. Latino/a Internet users are more likely than white users to have used online banking, browsed the net for fun, downloaded music, played online games, and sampled audio and video clips. They are as likely as majority whites to have bought stocks online, but less likely to have bought goods or services online, or bought or sold items on an online site. While, Latinos/as have the fastest growth rates in Internet usage in the United States (26 percent
annually in 2001), they still represent the smallest group online with only 31.6 percent of Latinos/as connected, compared with 60 percent of white, non-Latinos/as. This study was done by phone survey; therefore, we have to take into consideration that not all Latinos/as who are in this country have access either because they do not have a phone or because they do not fill the requirement to apply for one. Although valid, statistics like these fail to answer the question, why is there such a disparity between these groups? When looking at these numbers, one must also think about what they are not saying; the qualitative history of the disparities between these groups. Only when considering this factor can one understand the low computer and Internet use attributed to minority’ populations, in this specific case the Latino/a population, which is so broad in relation to class, education level and historical reasons for immigrating to this country.

A recent study by The Tomás Rivera Policy Institute addresses more of these differences mentioned above but only very briefly and modestly. One finding is that non-user Latinos/as do not use the Internet due to lack of knowledge of the different uses and the lack of bilingual sites and culturally-specific Internet content. These are important pieces to building a bridge across the Digital Divide, but the report said that low- or no cost computers and free Internet access are crucial to bridge the divide. The report cited four key barriers to Latino Internet usage: lack of computer hardware and software; fear and misconceptions about the Internet; language barriers; and lack of Latino-oriented content. Many non-users also cited their concern about online security as a reason not to go online. They are concerned for their family's safety (for reasons such as child pornography, identity robbery, breakdown of the family, and lack of interest in traditional styles of learning). Non-user participants feared the loss of family interactions and
sociability, both of which the report cites as important Latino/a values (Gonzalez, Macias, Ospina, and Shejavali, 2002). Surprisingly, the same study found that culturally specific and bilingual web sites do not motivate the Latino/a Internet non-user to get connected. It is only after Latinos/as gain access that availability of Latino/a content becomes important. "Online content is a critical component to increase the value of the Internet to Latino/a communities," (p. 8) Dr. Elsa Macias, co-author of the report, commented. The more experienced users used the Internet primarily as a way to save money on domestic and international telephone calls to family and friends. Internet uses such as education, research, entertainment, leisure, news, and shopping were also common.

Many studies have shown the importance and relevance in bridging the digital divide that still exists with underserved Latinos/as with physical access to the technology and cultural relevance teaching, because community and cultural content will allow them to identify and feel more comfortable in using this technology (Tornatzky, Macias, and Jones, 2002; Lazarus and Mora, 2000).

The majority of the Latinos/as who come to the US are from poor and developing countries; a great majority of this population does not have the privilege to get on-line, which places them at a disadvantage when competing with “elites” who hold the power of access and information. Discrimination in Latin America is more obvious in relation to class than race: therefore, many of the people who come here are already in a disadvantaged position, feeling disempowered and intimidated by these new challenges. However, many of them try to find the dream of success that this country represents for this minority group (Rodriguez, 1998 ).
Libraries and museums can provide a full range of tools to bridge the Digital Divide that separates the “haves” from the “have-nots” in the Information Age. Librarians who are well trained can become information navigators who help people find the information they need and want. McClure, Bertot and Ryan’s (2001) study found these four essential tools that are required to bridge the Digital Divide: literacy, the foundation for all information use; access to free public information; training to empower individuals to find and use information effectively; and content, the rich source material that is needed to make the Internet a truly powerful information resource.

2.1.3.- Education and Digital Divide

Income and education are highly correlated with Internet access at home, usage of computers and the Internet in school systems; for Latinos/as and African American students from low income SES this correlation becomes even more critical (Moore, Laffey, Espinosa and Lodree, 2002). Schools in inner cities that serve minority student populations can assist with narrowing the digital divide. Many teachers in these schools struggle to maintain order in their classrooms and have low expectations of minority student achievement. In this context, it becomes increasingly difficult for children to develop confidence and a positive attitude toward their educational abilities. Another issue is that teachers are not prepared and are not able to use technology effectively within classrooms. The data from 1999 (U.S. department of education cited in Swain, 2003) includes that only 20% of in-service teachers felt well prepared to integrate educational technology into their daily classroom instruction. Many teachers do not feel comfortable using computers or do not understand how to use technology to assist in
providing engaging and meaningful learning environments (Moore, Laffey, Espinosa and Lodree, 2002). Besides the lack of support for teachers to integrate technology and planning, the lack of equitable access to technology in schools is another huge issue that will continue to challenge policy makers and school administrators in the future. As the rapid advances of technology continue, so will the gap between the “haves” and the “have-nots”. As educators, we cannot overlook this fact when considering the functions of computers in the classroom. We need to be aware of the biases in the technology discourse involving inequalities related to power, race, and socioeconomic status. In addition, we could make a difference with regards to the digital divide. Damarin (2000) coined the term “digital differences” versus digital divide as an option teachers have to help bridge the gap between the “haves and the have-nots.” This option implies assisting students in making the most of the technology available to them in and out of school. Damarin (2000) suggests the existence of other “possibilities” such as “joint ownership” where individuals, through clubs, condominium, or extended families, can share the costs of computer access (p. 18). She also suggests the use of community resources such as libraries, community centers for e-mail and even “Kinko’s” (p.18). In addition, Damarin proposes five principles that can serve as a guide for teachers’ decisions in implementing instructional technology from an equity perspective. Taking into account these principles can help teachers to make a best choice in regards to accessibility. The principles are: parsimony, accessibility, multiplicity, separability, and full utility of whatever technology is available. It is up to the teacher to “negotiate” in order to choose what fits the students’ needs and instructional task at hand.
Slavin and Calderon (2001) accomplished a long review of effective programs for Latino/a students. They found that programs, from preschool through elementary, that were based on community and parental intervention and the use of cooperative learning and hands-on work with teachers would help Latinos/as to gain educational achievement and success in their academic life. Teachers working with Latinos/as are encouraged to work with __culturally responsive pedagogy__ in which teachers:

- Believe every student has the ability to achieve, and they communicate this belief to the students, parents and colleagues;
- Provide a caring environment in which students are viewed as the most valuable resources of the school (for example, what students are thinking, what the students know, and what they consider to be important);
- Empower their students by providing opportunities for experimentation, innovation, discovery and problem solving. As a culture of caring is established, students begin to be exposed to activities that involve discovery, that help them to construct their own knowledge or contribute to another’s knowledge; and
- Make use of two ways “instructional conversations” with students that encourage goal-directed activity and the use of higher-order thinking skills on the part of students; and teacher uses students’ funds of knowledge as the basis of their instructional strategies.

In other words, culturally responsive teaching is structured to empower students and members of their various social networks and in the Latino/a population. Slavin and Calderon (2001) found that this type of teaching is crucial for the success of this community.
Gay (2000) found that cooperative learning in areas like mathematics and literacy is a very appropriate strategy for different minorities, including Latinos/as students. She references noted educator, Jaime Escalante, a mathematics teacher who works with Latinos/as in California, who through cooperation, camaraderie, caring, and hard work and ethnic pride among the students, helps his students to succeed in something they never thought possible, like taking the Advanced Placement course tests in calculus. We need teachers who share with Escalante the belief that giving students’ knowledge of where they are from and hope to try to dream is a great combination for succeeding in life. Research has shown that when teaching and learning are filtered through the cultural frameworks of minority’ students, their achievements improve dramatically (Gay, 2000; Slavin & Calderon, 2001). The question becomes, how can we integrate technology with these pedagogical practices taking into consideration their cultural backgrounds? And can we increase expectations and appreciation of the work of Latinos/as?

2.- LATINOS IN THE UNITED STATES

2.2.1-Immigration to the U.S. since 1970-Trends and Issues with New Immigrants

In the last census, 35 millions Latinos/as were living in the US with projections that in 2050 Latinos/as will constitute 25% of the US population (Gonzalez, 2000; Rodriguez, 1999; Lopez, 1999, Guzman, 2002). The history of Latinos/as is very important to understand the complexity among the Latino/a communities when we are talking about Latino/a Immigration trends in the U.S. This discussion covers the history of Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans and Cubans until the latest Central and South American immigrants in the last 20 years.
Rodriguez (2002) cites many researchers in explaining that Mexican-Americans became a minority not by immigrating or being brought to this country as a subordinate people, but by conquest. This was the result of Mexico losing the northern territory in the Mexican war (1846-1848). Mexicans were settling again in the Southwest states slowly between 1900 and 1930, increasing the Chicano population. Chicanos and Mexican had to adjust to the new cities and the depression in order to survive the economy problems and the lack of job opportunities. During the 1940’s the agriculture sector was growing and there was a bigger demand for workers, leading to a bracero program between Mexico and the United States until 1964 (Rodriguez, 2002). In this period, Mexican immigration was a great boom to American agriculture; capitalists preferred Mexicans because they could be paid cheaper wages and transportation and housing was easy (Samora and Simon, 1993). At the same time, it was the beginning of a consistent flow of Mexican undocumented workers that has been going on to the present time. However, Mexican Americans today have moved from unskilled labor jobs to blue-collar jobs during the last 30 years (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000). Mexican-Americans/Chicanos are the majority of all Latino/a immigrants.

Until World War II, Mexican-Americans were the most familiar Latin Americans in the US (Gonzalez, 2000). By 1960, more than a million Puerto Ricans were in this country. Puerto Ricans are the only ones from all Latin American who arrive as U.S. citizens, without the need of a visa or resident alien card. In 1946, Puerto Ricans started to settle in New York in what they called El Barrio in the northern part of Manhattan. During the 1960s, Puerto Rican agricultural workers were recruited to several eastern and Midwestern states, especially by Ohio and Pennsylvania entrepreneurs, and with the
expanding U.S. economy and the availability of inexpensive commercial flights to the mainland, Puerto Rican immigration increased markedly (Cockcroft, 1995).

The other large-scale migration from Latin America to the U.S. was the Cuban middle and upper classes fleeing Castro’s Communism. Cubans were able to combine their class resources and refugee status into substantial success (Lopez and Stanton-Salazar, 2001). Cubans have had four major migration waves into the United States since 1959. The first wave was from 1959 to 1962 with refugee status. Many of these immigrants were from families of upper socioeconomic status. The second wave lasted from 1965 until 1973, as the Cuban government allowed their exiled citizens to reunite with their relatives by bringing them to the U.S. This wave was called “freedom flights” (Perez, 2001). The third wave took place in the 1980, when under pressure for immigration once again, the Cuban government opened a port for emigration by boat. It was called the Mariel boatlift wave. This was the first time that there was a considerable representation of Cuba’s lower socioeconomic sectors and its non-white population. The fourth wave is not so clearly marked in time but it is considered to start in 1994, when the Cuban government decided not to detain anyone trying to leave Cuba in a raft or other vessel. Thirty seven thousand people were rescued by the U.S. Coast Guard and taken into Guantanamo Bay U.S. Navel Base by 1996. After this crisis, the U.S. government agreed to admit 20,000 Cubans through the normal visa process during that period (Gonzalez, 2000).

Another Caribbean immigrant group has been the Dominicans who settled in the Upper West Side of Manhattan. They came first in 1960, many of them from rural and urban lower-middle classes as well as left political activists (Guarnizo, 1997). During
that period, New Yorkers began to mistake Dominicans who speak Spanish like Puerto Ricans for blacks. During the 1980s and the 1990s, Dominicans from all social, cultural and educational backgrounds started a large international migration especially to the U.S. Dominicans are evolving into a social group whose social and cultural territory transcends national borders keeping a double nationality. Many of those who originally came from a lower class have tried to go back to adjust their class position because of their relative economic success abroad. The upper Dominican society, with the political power and traditional privilege, try to prevent this social mobility in legitimizing their power (Gonzalez, 2000; Guarnizo, 1997). Migrants’ relationship with the U.S. and Dominican mainstreams are not static but dynamic. Changes in both societies, as well as migrants’ economic, social, and political notions, are modifying, and will modify such relationships. But as long as power relations remain unfavorable and socioeconomic differences between the two countries persist, Dominicans will continue constructing their own unique identity combining two different realities.

Central Americans started to be seen as an important part of the Latino/a immigrant population of the U.S. during the second half of the ’70s when there was an exodus of Salvadorians, Nicaraguans, and Guatemalans in response to vicious civil wars and social chaos (Gonzalez, 2000). Most Central American migrants who arrived in the United States were escaping violence, repression or persecution at home. They came at the beginning with refugee visas. Even when they could no longer obtain legal visas to come, they continued to come as undocumented or illegal aliens. They have settled in San Francisco, Houston, New Orleans, Chicago, Miami and New York (Hamilton and Stolz-Chinchilla, 1997).
South Americans were the last wave of immigrants that the U.S. has had through its history until the mid 80’s. Dictatorships in Argentina and Chile, drug dealers and guerrillas in Colombia and Peru, a huge economic crisis, a natural consequence of corrupted government, and an incredible imbalance of economic and social inequalities made Latin Americans from the south consider immigration to the north in search of a better life with personal and economic security (Gonzalez, 2000).

Like the other immigrant workers through history, Latinos/as have been significant producers in the making of the United States. Latinos/as’ skills have been fundamental for the development of the mining, forestry, railroad, construction, ranching and food producing and processing industries and have had other culture influences in food and music through the U.S. (Cockcroft, 1995). The 1996 amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act repealed the egalitarian intent of the 1965 amendments by introducing new income requirements, which now disproportionally prevent reunification of low-income families in the U.S. This law has made it harder for new Latino/a immigrants to live in this country. However, they are still coming to be with their loved ones, to escape extreme poverty, and to look for the American dream using unauthorized entries to this country (Suarez-Orozco and Paez, 2002).

The Latino/a influences, especially Mexican, historically have had a significant impact on the cultural and economic geography of the United States (Samora and Simon, 1993). The American cowboy and the ranching (rancho) industry owe much of their existence to the Mexican vaquero (buckaroo). Many of the tools and vocabulary of the cowboy originated in Mexico: chaps (chaparejos), mustangs (mesteños) and rodeo (rodear), to name a few. Mexicans have also influenced music and contributed much of
the “Western” to Country & Western music (Lopez and Stanton-Salazar, 2001). In south Florida, the “Miami sound” is influenced by Caribbean rhythms and the Spanish language (Perez, 2001). Mexican food, which has always been popular in the West, is now common throughout the United States and “salsa” now outsells ketchup (Gonzalez, 2000). There is a saying among Latino Musicians of Salsa or Merengue that if he or she has been successful in New York, then they can say they made it (Flores, 2002). The increasing number and wider distribution of Latinos in the United States means that the Spanish language is more widespread now than it has been historically, and many phrases such as “hasta la vista”, “mañana”, “mano a mano”, and “no más” have entered the popular vernacular (Lopez, 1999; Guzman, 2002).

2.2.2.- The impact of culture focusing on the strong influence of family and community for Latino/a youth.

Immigrants live out much of their lives in the context of families. Usually families have facilitated the migration process creating strong ties among family members. Foner (1999) focuses on family culture among first generation immigrants. She explains that new immigrants do not expect to reproduce their old cultural patterns exactly when they move to a new land, but these patterns continue to have a powerful influence in shaping families values and norms. Previous experiences operate as filters through which immigrants view and create new lives in their new country. In a different reality, they face many new circumstances, beliefs, values and cultural symbols as well as behavior patterns when immigrants start to change however, this does not mean they are fully assimilated into America Culture.
The most basic of Latino/a values is the primacy of the familial relationship. Grandparents, uncles, aunts, “primos hermanos” (first cousins) are all considered close relatives; and indeed, there seems to be a great deal of social interaction with such persons throughout life. In family system terms, family connectedness is the obligation to care for and support one another. This is one characteristic of extended family life. Sometimes even though some relatives are absent, they have deep intergenerational bonds between country and family. When they are physically present extended family can influence the transfer of knowledge, cultural exposure and instruments of help (Falicov, 2002). For some Latinos/as, family members’ rituals might be very important especially to those still connected with their country of origin. One example is the “quinceañera” party (fifteenth birthday party) that could be very important for the mother but not for the daughter. “The enactment of life cycle rituals in the midst of cultural transformation can be construed as reflecting dual lifestyles”. (p. 280). Latino/a students, in general, and Mexican immigrants in particular, tend to identify their teachers as members of an extended family. This respect for the role and authority of a teacher impedes their questioning the decisions teachers make during instruction (Gonzalez, 2000).

People’s belief systems or the meaning they make of their lives and experience, comprise a social construct that can help to understand a family’s ability to deal with adversity, their culture’s tolerance for ambiguity; fatalistic and optimistic stances are likewise embedded in culturally based systems of meaning (Boss, 1999). Some Latino cultural beliefs promote acceptance of life’s adversities, tempering the need to find answers and definitive solutions to losses (Falicov, 2002). Roman Catholic beliefs value
acceptance of suffering, destiny and God’s will. A belief that little in life is under one’s control is also related to conditions of poverty and decreased power (Falicov, 2002).

Orellana (2001) points out the work immigrant children do as active agents in supporting and sustaining their families, households, and schools. I believe she intends to expand the information about immigrant children as a problem or a challenge for education and for society while overlooking their contributions to family and school. Through her article, we can hear other voices of Mexican and Central American immigrant children living in California and their experiences and description of their everyday life as helpers at home and school. We can see with these stories how these jobs or work can be understood in many ways--as volunteerism, as opportunities for learning, and as acts of cultural and linguistic links between their homes and the outside world.

Solidarity has been an important value among Latino/a immigrants across ethnicity. When they come together, they try to establish a common social agenda, integrating religion, culture and economic values (Joseph, 1995; Suarez-Orozco and Paez, 2002). Latinos/as try to make a strong connection in their barrios (neighborhoods) and within their local community. Especially low-income immigrant consolidation settlements in communities have been made by women who assume more active public and social roles. As a result, they feel an improvement in their status as a family in the Latina U.S. immigrants use social and financial services available by the new society where they live. Also, they see the importance of using social networks to build communities (Pessar, 1999)

In 1995, the mainstream society only one percent (1%) of all television programming is aimed at or about Latinos/as with only twenty-five Latino/a regulars
appeared in comedy or dramatic series broadcast by the six largest networks (Graves, 1996). Almost all of the dramatic regulars are adult male detectives on fictional police shows. A recent study by UCLA’s Chicano Studies Research Center expressed that although Latinos make up 13 percent of the U.S. population and represent the largest minority group, the percentage of Latino regular characters remained constant at 4.1 percent (La prensa San Diego, 2004). These are some finding of the study: The number of all minority regular characters increased slightly from 23 percent in fall 2002 to 25 percent in fall 2003. Nevertheless, slightly fewer programs, or 60 percent, featured minority regular characters in fall 2003, compared with 63 percent in fall 2002. “Luis” and “The George Lopez Show” were the only Latino-themed programs and accounted for 30 percent of all Latino regular characters on prime time. Latino regular characters appeared on only five out of 12 genres: crime, situation comedy, drama, science fiction and sports. They were absent from other genres such as teen, medical, musical, and news and reality shows.

Usually, shows present them as unmarried or divorced, even though most Mexican Americans marry between the ages of twenty and twenty-one, and 68 percent of all Latino/a children live in two-parent households (Foner, 1999). Three-quarters of Latino/a families in this country’s inner cities are husband-wife teams. That’s the largest percentage of traditional homes within any population group in the U.S. (Espinoza-Herold, 2003). Latina mothers care about the negative images of their children on the media. The most familiar stories on these TV programs of inner-city youths include gangs, yet most minority youngsters are not gang members. This is an important issue of misrepresentation. The news media’s stigmatization of minority youngsters scapegoats
them by making them appear to threaten traditional family values. But Latinos/as are the most likely Americans to be living these traditional values (Pessar, 1999).

2.2.3.- Cultural Identity Development in Latinos/as

Latino/a cultural identity is based in many grounds. Some of these are country of origin, class, language struggle between Spanish and English dominance and value of community. Many of the first and second generations of Latinos/as have come to this country from rigidly stratified social systems where race has played a major role in shaping social personality, values and attitudes that are reflected in interclass relations today as in the past (Joseph, 1995; Gonzalez, 2002). One important cultural identity as Latinos/as as a group has been the assumptions that all the subgroups share substantial religious and linguistic (even if symbolic) similarities that facilitate political cooperation between these subgroups at the national level (Lopez, 1999). There have been many critical considerations that have been omitted when combining this pan-ethnicity identity like political history and social placement among of the groups. Usually it is limited to cultural commonalities and language background (Flores, 2002; Lopez, 1999). Therefore, many authors agree that we have to talk more about multiple identities in relation to Latinos/as (Gonzalez, 2000; Lopez, 1999; Shorris, 1992).

“Loosing your Spanish will help you to get mainstream.” This was a value for many families who came to this country since the 1970’s with the dream that through education their kids would have a better life (Gonzalez, 2000). It was necessary for the Latino/a families to be part of the melting pot. In many areas of the United States, Spanish and other non-English languages are used more frequently and many established
residents resent this situation. They perceive foreign language as a threat not only to English but also to American Culture in general. In some cases language differences may even cause tension between groups from the same part of the world region or the same culture. For instance, some U.S. born-Latinos/as may avoid social settings where interactions are carried on mainly in Spanish (Rodriguez, 1999).

A study in Georgia (McLaughlin, Liljestrom, and Lim, 2002) found that new Latin American immigrant students were confused about how to relate with teachers and other students during class, given their likely familiarity with a different classroom environment, and highlighted the need for teachers to consider both risk and success factors for immigrant students and to understand that family economic pressures, prior educational experiences, linguistic differences, and cultural conceptions of schooling may influence both students' school experiences and the nature of communication between teachers, students, and parents. Many Latinos/as must exist between at least two cultures, a Spanish or Spanglish world at home and English-speaking world at school (De la Rosa & Maw, 1991).

2.2.4.- The Intersection of This Identity With Ethnicity And Gender.

Race is very confusing for many Latinos. Racial mixing has never in itself destroyed racial privilege, as the place of Africans and natives throughout nearly all Latin American countries has proved (Sanchez, 2002). Moreover, new racial informations of mixed-race people were created. The following examples illustrate this concept of racial mix among Latinos/as: In the case of Mexican-Americans, those who fit the Mestizo/Indian phenotype, who look “Mexican” cannot escape racial stereotyping (Lopez
and Stanton-Salazar, 2001). The small percentage that looks essentially Euro-American
has at least the potential to pass as white. This situation becomes more complicated when
people said “you do not look Mexican” leading sometimes to lack of ethnic pride. Other
ethnic groups have similar race conflict but with other colors. Puerto Ricans in the
beginning of their first and second generations needed to choose a racial identity
(Gonzalez, 2000). This implied abandoning their native language and culture and
assimilating into either the white or black world. Furthermore, Cubans’ racial identity
perception changed from their first wave of being Hispanic descendents, well-educated
and from an elite class to a more multicultural race more similar to the Puerto Ricans who
at the beginning felt envy of these newcomers (Shorris, 1992; Gonzalez, 2000).

In relation to gender, domestic activities were very different. Second generation
girls are expected to come to their homes after school. There, they were supposed to help
in caring for siblings and help their parents at home while their brothers were allowed to
“hang out” with friends (Smith, 2002). As a result, girls were more likely to study than
boys in spite of the lack of time. Valenzuela (1998) notes that girls are more likely than
boys to tutor their parents and to help them negotiate with different social institutions like
school, banks, etc., which helps them to develop a soft skill required in the service sector
in the mainstream economy.

For Latinas the role of motherhood is very important and valued for them through
history. Many Latinas in this country have found that the intimate spaces of “el hogar”
(home) and “comunidad” (community) were the places for them to claim their dignity
and "educated" identities in possessing and imparting to their children the most important
kind of education, a moral one. These mothers tried to construct their children’s identities
and themselves through what they believe is a sense of "self" and community against interlocking structures of oppression that publicly positioned them in positions disadvantaged by racism (Villenas, 2001)

Mothers continually function as teachers to their own children in their daily activities. These home-based teaching interactions provide a basis for later school success. Lesar, Espinoza, and Diaz (1997) have shown the discrepancy that exists regarding what some Latina minority mothers teach at home and what their children are expected to learn and do in the classroom. Many of these differences in educational goals appear to be the result of different cultural, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. Many Latinas feel they have this double role here in their communities “invisible/visible,” invisible as "ghost" workers, yet highly visible as families needing education and health care (Villenas, 2001).

Zavella (1997) said that to understand Chicana culture it is very important to know the settlement and history background, class, racial physical features, and generation. These can have implications for the use of language, religion, cultural background and process of identification, and sexuality. Whether these women establish lesbian, heterosexual, or bisexual relationships is central to their identity and experience within the Latino heterosexual society. All of these subjectivities can be indications of social inequality and reflect power relations in Chicanas or in any Latina who has similar social location. Zavella found that the majority of Chicanas need to struggle with their Roman Catholic heritage in which religious rituals and practices are supposed to be the center of women controlling their social and sexual lives, allowing the stereotype of the
polar opposition between the macho male who is given aggressive sexual license and the passive ideal of female chastity.

Guzman (2002) and Arana (2001) are powerful examples of Latinas who embrace all they were to construct their own identity. They talk about how important it was for them through their lives to accept their multiple identities as Latinas-born to find success. In Guzman’s case, she identifies herself as Puerto Rican descendent but she really embraces the pan-ethnicity term of Latina that in her case was a better definition of who she was because as a Puerto Rican American, she can sometimes feel more close or related to a Chicana, Tejana, Cuban-American than to a person that still lives in Puerto Rico Island and does not have the same experiences. Guzman also expressed that “English was like a glue to keep one different background together” (p.3). At the same time she shares the importance of embracing Spanish, English and Spanglish, whatever language that person felt more comfortable speaking as well as all the hybrid combinations that, as Latina, she has in regard to food, religion, family and gender roles. In Arana’s (2001) case, she discovered the importance of creating a bridge into two worlds, with an Anglo-American as a mother and a Peruvian as a father. She portrays beautifully in her narrative the power of understanding that she did not have to decide on one of the two worlds but that she can be the bridge that connects them.

2.3.- THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF TECHNOLOGY

2.3.1.- The Internet, Cyberspace and Identities

The Internet began in 1969 as a Department of Defense Project called ARPAnet to create a computer network that could survive a nuclear attack. The system was
structured so that any computer on a network could access any other; they could have access from each other because of the design of the same software and hardware capacities. Now the combination of these independent networks is referred to as the Internet (Wise, 1997). The Internet and the World Wide Web initially developed as mechanisms for the unrestricted interchange of information within the academic world. Individual users generally were not charged for connecting time for access to web sites, or transmission of e-mail messages. In the mid-1990s, the Internet started to experience a rapid commercialization and a much wider range of online products and services development. As a consequence, the culture of the Internet began to change rapidly. One consequence of this is that general access to the Internet is no longer equal for everyone because you usually need to pay a higher speed connection or are required to own specific hardware to download the information needed (Mitchell, 1999). Thus, when access to jobs, and service requests, or other needs delivered electronically are needed, those who have good network connections are at an advantage whereas those with poor service or no service are disadvantaged and marginalized. An example of this is when you pay bills, everyone could pay on-line but who is really using this advanced information technology? Which social group is the one having the majority of benefits? It is the group of people that have enough economic resources to have the infrastructure to fulfill this new constructive behavior of our society.

Fabos and Young (1999) explained that one of the main foci that information communication technologies have as tools for cultural understanding is the notion of an “invisible” online environment. In other words, it has been found that this environment
can be more comfortable and equitable for participants because traditional social cues are covert. Lai (1996) said,

“In face-to-face interactions such as in a small group discussion it is often difficult for people to have an equal chance to contribute, especially when the interacting persons are of unequal status… it is more likely that people will pay more attention to the content of the message, thus creating an environment of equal opportunity and reciprocity in roles” (p.3)

Some studies about cyberspace or the web provide very interesting issues of racism on the Web (Nakamura, 2002; Rajagopal & Bojin, 2002). This media can serve as the producer and also as a product of social inequality, through hate sites, images or cartoons that demean people of color, chat rooms and e-mails where people can recreate what is happening in their social context. Cyberspace allows people to socially construct themselves, exploring, expressing or playing with multiple identities and communities where they feel comfortable in sharing information and codes (Bell, 2001; Nakamura 2002; Turkle, 1999). Nakamura (2002) talks about the lack of studies about race and cyberspace citing a study that explores the possibility to disappear completely and utterly or erase people of color as a result of the assumption of color blindness, ignoring the question of race in cyberspace, suggesting the whiteness of this space. What are the implications for exploring questions of social or cultural identities through the lenses of race, class and gender?

2.3.2.- Intersections of Race, Gender And Class With Technology

The discussion of race, gender and class is very complex when a person wants to conceptualize it in the same framework because it involves the individual and collective
identities. Berger (1992) explained with an illustrative example that it is like speaking many languages inside you but you reduce them to a single and simple language. Is this really possible? Can I reduce my identity as a woman only, without considering my ethnicity, race, class and culture? Race and gender are socially constructed processes that are overlapping, intertwined, and inseparable. Hanor (1998) suggests that understanding differences in the way that people learn, get information, and how they use it can help to create multiple ways for understanding the world through the use of technology. Some research on gender and learning reveal that girls and women often prefer learning in which they can feel personally connected with the subject matter or, at least, can see the usefulness of what they are supposed to learn (Belenky, 1986; Rosser, 1989).

Characteristics like authentic and realistic in information communication technology applications can be assumed to contribute to gender inclusiveness (Volman and Van Eck, 2001). Women and people from ethnic minority backgrounds are featured in only a limited number of mostly passive and stereotypical roles in software, not in positions of power or as active computer users. According to Volman and Van Eck (2001), the restricted and stereotypical way in which ethnicity and gender are presented in many programs conveys a negative message to students and can have an alienating effect on students who cannot identify with the characters in the software or media (Voithofer, 1996). At school, boys are supposed to be good at the subject of computer technology, this is part of their gender identity; therefore, if these boys do not know something, it is difficult for them to ask for help even from their peers. They have to present themselves as experts in the subject (Volman, 2001). On the other hand, girls help each other without feeling incompetent; they usually do not have pressure from their
teachers who assume they need help unlike the boys (Hanor, 1998). In her study about
gender and class and their attitude toward computers, Shashaani (1994) observed that
children, particularly girls, from lower SES families were less interested in computers
than children from high SES families. What implications does this bring to this situation
among girls? What impacts can this have on the lack of interest on computers for the girls
future?

The role of technology has been socially constructed since its beginning for
different reasons. Historically, the virtual exclusion of women from most areas of
technological research and design has been ignored because of a male perspective
shaping modern technology (Turkle, 1988; Lockhead, 1985). To support this statement, a
study in the UK shows socioeconomic research on technology, including social shaping
research, has been “gender-blind” (William and Edge, 1996), therefore, the idea of
computer culture as being neutral cannot continue after all. Conceptually, Turkle (1995)
criticizes technology for its androcentric design, reproduction and reinforcement of sexist
ideologies which is opposed to the ways in which women are socialized to process
information, that is, by using cognitive and affective styles that are concrete, associative
and non-linear in nature, connected knowledge in relation to self and others. Damarin’s
(1998) study found “evidence that both deep and superficial characteristics of

technologies are determined by the socially and culturally-based assumptions of their
designers and developers” (p.12). If women or minorities were in charge of the design
and development of technology, they would include in their design their own
assumptions and experiences to the development of technology.
2.3.3.- Latinos/As’ Relation With Information Technology

In relation to the complexity of how Latinos/as construct technology, it is a requirement or a condition to address the inclusion and/or exclusion generated by a discourse of multiple intersections with race, class, gender, and language and the dominant hierarchies among these subjectivities which are usually ignored when analyzing data or results from different studies.

A study in the 70’s of middle-school, predominantly Mexican-American, students from a low social economic status showed that the computer was perceived to be fairer, easier, clearer, more likeable, and better than the teacher (Sutton, 1991). Latino/a students are seen as underachievers and teachers do not have higher expectations about them (Marquez, Caney & Hernandez, 2002; Gay, 2000). Using computers can provide a collaborative environment where students of different levels of language proficiency interact meaningfully (Gonzalez-Edfelt, 1990). In relation to Latinos/as who have different language level skills, this is very important to take into consideration when having the alternative to use computers. The possibilities through new technologies to give options for Latinos/as to be heard with all their voices immersed in a diverse classroom are extraordinary. A study using hybrid language practices in an after-school computer club (Gutierrez, Baquedaño-Lopez, Alvarez, Chiu, 1999) shows the importance and empowerment for those students using Spanish and/or English. This was reflected in their bilingual e-mail exchange from the students to El Maga, who is a cyberspace friend that can be accessed only through e-mail. This representation assists and interacts with students in helping them to feel comfortable with their linguistic and cultural baggage using computer technology as a resource. This study allows the teaching and learning
process to explore and create discourses and positions in which everyone is very comfortable with who they are.

Bohlin and Bohlin (2002) found that while a large majority of the Latino/a students in their survey believed that knowing how to use computers would increase job opportunities in general, the students believed that on a personal level they would not benefit from this knowledge; they did not have computer-related confidence. Another interesting finding was that Latino/a families surveyed who did not have a computer, expressed themselves as not needing this technology or/and were not familiar with computers. The lack of clarification of what types of subjectivities are embedded in this sample of Latinos/as allows a strong generalization of the technology literacy of Latinos/as and their relation with computers.

Fishman, Kupperman, Marx and Soloway (2001) narrate the different ways Latino/a families interact and use NetTV (Web through TV). They found that if economic barriers to access were removed, it was not a correlation between socioeconomic status and the Internet use. However, race, gender and generation did have a significant correlation with Internet uses. How did Latinos/as use this new technology? At the beginning, they had some technological problems because of the NetTV box. The children and teenagers of the families use the Internet for personal communication more than the adults do. Some parents saw NetTV as a children’s world. Others used it to search newspapers in Spanish. Other functions were doing homework by themselves and, in some cases, with parents’ involvement. This was difficult sometimes because of linguistic and academic barriers, but the predominant use was for recreational activities.
Spooner and Rainie (2001) found that nearly half of the Latino/a population was using the Internet, and 61% of which them were under the age of 34. They also found that in the two-year period 2000-2001, 52% of new Latino/a Internet users were women. Their study found that Latinas used the Internet more for information gathering and Latinos for entertainment purposes. And Fishmans et al. (2001) gave, at the end of his research, the statement that Latinos/as have less access to the internet than other minorities, and far less access than the majority white population. The apparent contradiction of many of the researches of Latinos/as is because of lack of clarification of the other subjectivities involved with this complex minority group.

2.3.4.- Latinos/as’ relation with the media

In everyday life, TV still plays the principal place in media in shaping people’s lives. Therefore, Graves’ (1996) research about diversity on television gives a general idea of how Latinos/as are represented in regular network stations nationwide (ABC, NBC, CBS). The Latinos/as’ representation in comparison to Anglo-European American and even African Americans was very low in TV programs and commercials. In relation to roles, they usually have secondary characters, and portray negative messages as lawbreakers or victims, especially with respect to women. Another interesting finding is how the occupational jobs are portrayed, with 40% as white collar, 35% as blue collar and 20% in public safety jobs. Intergroup interactions are usually portrayed as job related, not as social or recreational activities. The viewers get the impression of an invisible minority group, racial stereotypes, and minorities as social problems. The social
constructions of Latinos/as through the media create ideas about this social group and the nature of interactions with this group.

As a separate issue, implications of how Latino/a television has helped to shape and construct Latino/a culture in the U.S. Latino/a TV started here in the U.S. in the 70s, with a very famous television station - Televisa - in Mexico (Davila, 2001). In the TV and media industry, executives prefer highly educated and bilingual Latinos/as whose ethnicity does not present a problem to Anglo clients. Language has always been a very important part of the social construction of the Latino/a identity on TV. There are a lot of biases among the Latino/a media industry in which they feel that Spanish-dominant speakers are the ones with a strong Latino identification. On the other hand, the English-dominant Latinos/as almost have erased their identities. In the beginning, standard Spanish language was only spoken on TV, as a continuation of a cultural identity. Now, you can see new Spanish channel that uses Spanglish, English and/or bilingual programs as part of regular programming. These new constructions of identities have developed in the last five years. The linguistic differences involve issues of ethnicity, power, and class (Davila, 2001). Recognizably ethnic images are shown on commercials or programs when they want to present signifiers of cultural authenticity, never of beauty or general appeal. However a few people in this industry are starting to think about the issue of race and representation, because in general they think that only a small percentage of Latinos/as are black, an assumption that I do not consider correct when we are talking about people from the Caribbean. A general snapshot of Latino/a values and cultural characteristic in this media is described as
“Latinos/as seeing themselves as part of a group, relying mostly on family, friends, and community, respecting elders, having obedient and dependent children, upholding defined and hierarchal roles, and characterized by male dominant or machismo in contrary of Anglo in other words, American middle class. (Davila, 2001 p.70)

The Latino/a TV and media industry has used the representation of Latinos/as as positive characters achieved by conjuring and inverting the social meanings of the stereotypes and social hierarchies pervading their representation within U.S. society. Stuart Hall (1997) has warned us of the binaries and polarized extremes that characterize stereotypes and the representation of minorities. He states that not only do stereotypes work by reducing people to fixed types, ignoring the range of variation and difference, but these types are in turn constructed through binary oppositions that reduce the complexity to two extremes. Positive images take a meaning in relation to their opposites and can simultaneously invoke them.
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

This qualitative study is intended to understand the experiences of high school Latinas using computers for their formal and informal education, and the meaning of those experiences in their lives. The researcher uses case study methods because I do not want to make generalizations, I want to understand “a snapshot of reality”, “a slice of life”, “an episode,” or a “depth examination of an instance” (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) of the lives of twelve high school Latinas students. This design accommodates different assumptions and also takes into consideration the research perspective suggested by Haraway that the researcher is part of her research (Haraway, 1997). The research and participants interactions and the meaning out is an important part of this study. In addition to this, feminist epistemologies influence not only the researcher’s way to collect and analyze data, but also the methods and techniques that she uses to explore and understand the research problem and findings.
3.1.- CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CASE STUDY

Merrian (1998) concluded after many years of research that the single most defining characteristic of case study research lies in delimiting the object of study to the case. The case then could be a person, or “a group such as a class, a school, a community; a specific policy and so on” (p.27). A case study method seemed to meet this study’s requirements because this study does not pretend to represent the world, but to represent a case by using qualitative approaches that emphasize thick description.

Stake (2000) discusses three types of case studies: intrinsic, instrumental and collective. An intrinsic case study “is undertaken because, first and last, the researcher wants better understanding of this particular case…in all its particularity and ordinariness, the case itself is of interest” (p. 437). An instrumental case provides new generalizations about an issue; it is examined in depth, its contexts scrutinized, and ordinary activities detailed. In the collective case study, “a researcher may jointly investigate a phenomenon, population, or general condition…it is an instrumental study extended to several cases” (p. 437). For this study, the collective case study approach is ideal because there are twelve adolescent Latinas and four High School teachers. Data collection explores young Latinas’ perceptions of the use and meaning of technology in their lives. The researcher uses techniques such as participant/observation, and structured and informal interviews. The case in this study is young (14-18) Latinas in Columbus.
3.1.1.- How To Get Validity In This Study

Reality in qualitative research is concerned with the negotiation of 'truths' through a series of subjective accounts (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Whereas quantitative researchers attempt to disassociate themselves as much as possible from the research process, qualitative researchers have come to embrace their involvement and role within the research (Creswell and Miller, 2000). For quantitative researchers this involvement would greatly reduce the validity of a test, yet for qualitative researchers denying one's role within research also threatens the validity of the research (Winter, 2000). Creswell and Miller (2000) suggest that the choice of validity procedures is governed by two perspectives: the lens researchers choose to validate their studies and researchers’ paradigm assumptions. The validity procedures that I use in this study are: triangulations, researcher reflexivity and prolonged observation. Triangulation is used to provide corroborating evidence collected through multiple methods, such as observations, interview; member checking is a validity procedure that shifts verification from the researchers to participants in the study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe member checks as “the most crucial technique for establishing credibility” (p. 314) in a study. This type of validity procedure allows the participants to make sure that their voices have been translated from oral to written material correctly. Researcher reflexivity, is where to self-disclose my assumptions, beliefs, and biases. I also want to spend a prolonged period of time and, I hope, through repeated observation, to build trust with participants, and establish rapport. When participants are feeling comfortable, they can open up and give deep information. My identity as a Latina may contribute to this.
3.2.- DESIGN AND PROCEDURE

This study aims to tell stories from a group of Latinas high school students. It is concerned with making visible, understanding and reflecting among all the subjectivities in this group rather than generalizations of the Latino/a population in the U.S. Thus, to conduct this study, the principal investigator and the researcher obtained approval during the spring of 2003 from the Human Subjects Review Board. The university’s liaison to the public school system received the research proposal and assisted with the school approval. The proposal assured that interview sessions and communication with the girls of the study would not disrupt the daily functions of the classroom either by limiting contact to their lunch time or after school only.

3.2.1.- Access

In April 2003, the researcher received approval from the school to start the research. Immediately the researcher contacted with the vice-principal who provided the list of all the Latinos/as at the school. She met with each of the grade sections that had any type of computer classes and explained the study to the students. After handing out more than 30 consent forms the day of the visit, the researcher thoroughly explained the study and showed each student where to sign their names on the form and where their parents should sign. The form was in Spanish and English. The form was to be turned in by the end of the week. After two weeks, she received official informed consent from 12 Latinas respondents and their parents for participation in the study and the consent forms
from 4 of their teachers. Naturalistic inquiry instructs the researcher to gather data about participants in their normal, everyday setting, thus, with regard to this study, the researcher describes the research site.

3.2.2. High School

This is a Public High School located in Franklin County and is part of a suburban school district adjacent to Columbus. The rationale for choosing this school was its high concentration of the Latino/a population who had arrived in Columbus district during the last 10 years. This High School educates approximately 1,650 students and is populated with racially mixed students from mostly low socio-economic backgrounds. High School houses grades 9 through 12.

The research was conducted between April and June of 2004, coming back for a month in September. The researcher observed the participants’ classes in which they used computers, the school’s computer labs, lunch area, library and recess. From the end of September until the beginning of January of 2005, the researcher met with the students in their homes for the last interview.

The researcher conducted a first interview for a rapport and ice breaking with each of the participants in a small conference room at the school. The interviews were conducted in the language preferable to the subject, primarily in Spanish with some English moments. Before the research process began, each participant selected a pseudonym to ensure privacy. The assurance of confidentiality was very important; therefore, no names used in this study are real.
3.2.3.- Sample and Selection

The study’s participants were selected from heterogeneous—males and females—classrooms. The participants needed to be female and of Latina ethnicity. Homogeneous groups of ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth grade girls were selected from the high school for the study. The overall study required twelve participants from the school, with at least one participant from each grade level of the high school. The final number of participants from each grade was: four participants from 9th grade, three participants from 10th grade, two participants from 11th grade and three participants from 12th grade. The participants are from different ethnic groups: Mexican, Dominican and Ecuadorian first generations and a Mexican-American second generation. A brief description of each participant is presented below in a table format:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Owns a computer</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daniela G.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Mexican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kika C.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Mexican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karolina R.</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Mexican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yliana R.</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Mexican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alejandra C.</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Mexican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gloria S.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Mexican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isabel B.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Ecuadorian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabriela R.</td>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Mexican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adriana S.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Mexican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cecilia C.</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Dominican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria H.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Mexican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juanita L.</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Mexican American</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1: Description of each participant
3.2.4.- Understanding Diverse Experiences

Knowledge of the lived experiences of individuals is critical to research inquiry; for example, understanding the social, cultural and political aspects of an individual’s history, struggles and lifestyles is key to understanding the experiences of others. Understanding the experiences of others requires that the researcher contend with their insider and outsider issues. In negotiating insider and outsider status, the researcher may have similar experiences with participants. Participants who identify with the researcher’s background, whether based on culture or gender, are likely to engage in a more open dialogue than if the participants do not identify with the researcher (Foster, 1994) The researchers can never fully understand the experiences of their participants; however, they are encouraged to know as much as possible about the participants before the study begins through literature review and research about that cultural group in that context.

As a Latina researcher who worked with Latinas’ girls from different socioeconomic classes and ethnicities in this study, the researcher had insider and outsider issues to consider. The researcher had insider status because the researcher and respondents belong to the same race and share the same mother tongue; however, because of the age differences, the girls may see the world somewhat differently. Due to this difference, the researcher acknowledged an outsider status that placed her outside the girls’ everyday experiences.
3.2.5.- Researcher as Interpreter

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2000), “The interpretive bricoleur understands that research is an interactive process shaped by his or her personal history, biography, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity, and by those of the people in the setting” (p. 6). As a Latina who researched the experiences of young Latinas aware of race, gender, class and culture in her study, I integrate all of these subjectivities into the interpretation of the participants’ responses. My educational background, parental upbringing, and the transition from world-lived middle-class values inevitably colored how I, as the researcher, framed the young girls’ stories. The researcher creates something of a montage to interpret data, increasing the rigor of the findings. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) states,

“Montage invites viewers to construct interpretations that build on one another as the scene unfolds. These interpretations are built on associations based on the contrasting images that blend into one another. The montage concept weaves together the methodological, theoretical and interpretive aspects of a study” (p. 5).

For example, in order to understand the social, cultural, and political underpinnings of participants’ experiences, the researcher incorporated several methods to interpret the interviews and observations. While a research study can have many methodological components, the researcher must be equipped to analyze findings from a wide range of sources. In the case of this study, the researcher used visual arts, cultural studies and feminist theory to analyze respondents’ narratives.
3.3.- DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Data collection methods involved individual interviews, class and home observations with the Latinas teenagers. Four teachers were also interviewed about stereotypes uncovered and perceptions in relation to the students’ use of technology and school acculturation. The researcher asked the students a series of questions relating to the representation of race and gender in relation to technology. Field notes were taken during both school and home interviews and observations, and the researcher recorded instances of what was spoken as well as what was not.

3.3.1.- Latinas students’ interviews

Each of the twelve participants in the study had three interviews and class and home observations. In the school, they had two individual in-depth, informal open-ended interviews either at lunchtime or after school. In addition, the researcher observed the computer lab and/or computer classes in which each student was enrolled, taking field notes in a personal notebook during these observations. The first individual interview was in the school setting like the library or any room provided by the school for that purpose; here the teenagers were asked background and general information and agreed to participate in two other interviews. The length of this interview was approximated 10 minutes. These are some of the open-ended questions:

- Where are you from?
- How old are you?
• How many brothers and sisters do you have?

• In which grade are you?

• Do you like your classes here in this school?

• What was your approximate age when you first used a computer?

• How did you learn to use computers?

In the second interview in the school, the researcher engaged the girls and teenagers in casual conversation about background information in relation to their use of technology, the Internet and computers. The length of this interview was between 25-35 minutes. This interview was in different places of the school where the students would feel comfortable like a bench at the garden or library or social areas in the school. Some questions of the semi-structured second interview are presented below. The researcher continued asking questions depending of their students’ answers.

• How many computer courses have you taken?

• How do you rate your confidence in using computers?

• Do you feel motivated to use technology? How?

• What do you think about the Internet? How do you think your life will be if you do not use it or use it depending on the case?
The third interview was in their house and/or a coffee shop near their home. The actual interview was typically held in the kitchen or dining room area of the house for approximately 30 minutes. The open-ended questions were related to other uses of the technology in their house and in their family. In many cases, the mother was introduced to the researcher and then withdraws to another part of the house giving privacy to the participant and the researcher; however, usually at the end, either the mother and/or father came to chat for a while with the researcher. Out of the school, the researcher continued with observations in any of these places. All the interviews were audiotaped then transcribed. In all the transcriptions, pseudonyms are used. In-depth, informal open-ended interviews were instrumental in gathering data.

- What type of new technologies do you use in your house?
- What does your family say in relation to education and using the computer?
- Do you do any type of family activity together? If yes, it does involve the computer or any new technology?
- Do you believe that the use of the computer has had impact on your sense of cultural identity? Or tastes?

3.3.2.- Teachers’ interview

Four teachers had one individual informal open-ended interview after the first set of interviews with the students. The interviews were in each of their classrooms inside the school during either their lunchtime or free time. The researcher asked their opinions,
perceptions and ideas in relation of their Latinas students’ interactions in the computer lab and in the use of new technology at the school. The teacher contribution gave a broad understanding and knowledge of their Latinas students. The beginning of the teachers’ interview was with fixed questions, following specific questions about the students. All the interviews were audiotaped then transcribed. In all the transcriptions, pseudonyms are used. Some of the questions were:

- How do you use the Internet in class? And your students Latinas?
- Do you use any virtual rooms, chat rooms, discussion boards? Explain.
- What type of computers and devices do you use in your classes?
- How is the computer accessed in the school by the students?
- What do you think the Latinas students think about the different activities where you use technology?
- What do you think about the Latinas’ participation in the computer lab?
- Do you think their language barrier interferes with their computer classes? How?
- In relation to other minority groups how do you consider the Latinas’ interactions in class?

3.3.3.- Observations

For the duration of the research at the school, classroom observations were made in each of the grades the students were enrolled, at least twice per student. During the observations, notes were taken regarding the participants’ interactions, the classrooms’ culture and interactions among them. I focused on the use of technology, language preference between Spanish and English and non-verbal language.
3.4.- DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

The data analysis started by composing a profile, a story in a narrative way of each of the twelve students and the four teachers. Each narrative was tailored around the salient issues evoked in the interviews, and observations; therefore, they do not follow any fixed format, nor did they all cover the same points. But each narration brings together the most interesting points, issues, quotations and experiences from the interviews.

The researcher decided to transcribe each of the interviews. Despite the tremendous amount of time it took, the researcher believed that doing this helped her to stay closer to her data. The interview data were transcribed and analyzed in the language in which they were conducted either Spanish and/or English to prevent any potential distortion and/or gap resulting from the translation. The transcripts from the interview sessions were being analyzed with N.U.D.I.S.T., a qualitative analysis computer program designed to code and assess large amounts of data. The analysis program helped the researcher identify commonalities and differences based on participants’ responses. With the program’s assistance, the researcher worked to identify coding relationships.
CHAPTER 4
NARRATIVES OF TWELVE LATINAS TEENAGERS
AND FOUR TEACHERS

In this chapter, responses by twelve Latinas adolescents are presented as meaningful and reflective. Respondents’ natural conversational style of speech has been maintained. The narratives are presented first the Latinas’ student and subsequently the teachers’ narratives. Each narrative materialized from field notes, school interviews and home interviews, personal reflections, and teachers’ interviews.

4.1.- Students’ narratives

4.1.2. - Isabel: age 16, tenth grade

Isabel is from Guayaquil, Ecuador. She is the middle child of three siblings, one elder sister and one younger brother. She came to this country six years ago knowing very little English as she expressed in this phrase "Very little, I took some English there, but the English that you learned there is not the same than here.” The majority of her extended family is in Ecuador. The first time she used a computer was in Ecuador when she was 10 years old, but as she explained "not a lot."; it was only when she was in seventh grade that she had a class in which she used a computer more regularly. Now, she
has a computer at home, but her Internet connection does not work now because “I have a problem with the CPU, so I use my sister computer when I need the Internet”. She uses e-mail to communicate with friends in Ecuador but "now I do not talk too much because they are older than me and they are at the university”. She uses PowerPoint sometimes in her math class and in French uses the Internet to find sites in the language. She feels confident in using computers: "I think it's pretty good." And she feels motivated to use technology for leisure like games on the Internet, but she does not like games like Game Boy "my brother is the one who likes those games I like the games in the Internet". She has used chat rooms without changing her identity, one from Ecuador and a Christian chat. But now, she said to me that she uses more Latino chat in general "they speak a Spanish different than here and I am used to the Spanish of here not the one from Ecuador, sometimes I did not understand”. She said that she uses the Internet everyday either to study or to play. She has three e-mail accounts and she also uses instant messenger but she prefers the chat rooms. She feels very confident in English and Spanish, and looks for pages in both languages; however, for games she uses more English and when writing to her friends or in the chat she uses Spanglish because the Spanish of some people is different so it is easy to use some English words that everyone knows. She enjoys when her teachers use technology that is not so frequently because "there are things they know that I do not know that they could explain to me". I asked her if she would like online classes, to which she replied “I think I would not like online classes because I will be bored in front of the computer for the whole day. I cannot stay for more than two or three hours. I like coming to class at my school”.
She has explored other technology and had a cellular phone but she lost it. She used it for her friends and emergencies, at some times using text messenger. She felt that without computers she may have bad grades and it will be boring in her house. Also, she thinks her life would be very different because she would not have access all the time she wants it or needs it.

She changed school because she moved with her family to a very nice neighborhood in a more affluent suburb; they have a two-storey house, with more than one computer at home. She loves her family and together they live in a middle-class neighborhood that is “nice, quiet, and clean.”

Her parents support whatever she decides to do, if she decides to study or to work. She does not feel pressure from them. Since she was little she wanted to be an architect, therefore, now that she is in this new school, a technical school, she feels that she has to take advantage of this opportunity. One thing that she does not like at this new school is that she feels teachers are not used to Latinos/as "they treat me different because there are not many Latinos here and then they think that I do not understand then but I do understand". In one class, her teacher asked her to read less than her classmates "I felt bad because I think he thinks I do not know how to read and he excludes me from the rest". However, she likes her new school a lot even though she misses her friends from the other school a lot because “here there are not many Latinos, there are Somalis, African American and whites only a few Latinos”.
4.1.2. Gabriela: Age 17, Eleventh grade

She is from Michoacan, Mexico. She has one elder brother and a younger sister. She lives with her family in a low income neighborhood. Her father came here alone first for many years then the brother and at last the females from the family came directly to Columbus by bus from the border. She was 15 years old when she came two years ago. She said she did not have a *quinceañera fiesta* or a sweet sixteen celebration. Since, Gabriela came she has been in ESL classes; however, she already has regular classes as well. She never used computers in Mexico, only when she started the school here in Columbus. Gabriela does not have a compute at home, but she wants to buy one soon. At the beginning in the school, she almost did not use the computers, but now she uses them all the time in her Business class. She enjoys using the Internet to put together her papers. Gabriela said that she felt more comfortable in the classes in where I use computers than the other ones. One reason was “*Sometimes if I do not bring my dictionary, I go inside the Internet and find the word and translated it*”. However, she feels her level of confidence using the computer is so-so… “*I do not write very fast*”. She really likes the Internet not only for her school, she uses it to communicate and to entertain herself, with chat rooms in where she used her same gender and sometimes she changed her name and/or age for an older person. Also, she uses her e-mail a lot to communicate with friends here and in Mexico, they send each other “*photos, letters, postcards….with happy things and smiley faces*” and sometimes to meet people even “*to look for boyfriends*” and play games. One
chat that she feels like part of a community is a youth catholic chat in Spanish in where everyone is from different countries.

Gabriela’s access to computers is basically at the school because she does not go so much to the community library to use the computer. She does almost everything in the two classes that are in computer labs. She does not have cellular phone or pagers.

Gabriela is not sure about what she wants to study, but she wants to study something like business. She really enjoys her business classes and is looking forward for an internship that she will do in a bank.

In her school, Gabriela has friends from different groups but she spends more time with her Latinos/as friends. Sometimes in class, she feels that she is treated differently than the rest and she feels bad because she does not know why. Also, when she has classes with other Latinos/as they tend to separate them…she said “we do not talk so much, I do not know why they do this”. She went back to Mexico for summer vacation and she said that she felt sad (using Spanglish to describe this). She made a comment that all her friends in Mexico are married who have around her same age (16-18). She said, “I am the only one left out of the rest”.

She enjoys watching TV with her sister and love traditional American shows like the O.C. (TV-series) and American soap opera. They own a VCR and DVD but they usually do not rent movies, but buy them especially her sister. Her mother and father always said to Gabriela “your work is to study and later you will work”. However, they think it is better for her to look into technical institutes to study sometimes rather than college because it is too expensive to study in college. She feels she has a lot of support from her family to do whatever she wants in her future.
She does not use her messenger so much “*because you cannot use it anymore in the school*”, and she varies in what type of pictures she sends to the people she meets online. Sometimes “*I send pictures of actresses...ha-ha*”. When I asked her how she takes her own pictures, she said a friend with a camera cellular phone, but “*now he does not have the phone anymore; they took it from him at the school.*”

4.1.3.- Adriana: Age 16, eleventh grade

Adriana is from Puebla, Mexico and came to the U.S. four years ago. She is the second child of six siblings that all live here in the US. Since she came she has gone to school at Columbus. She enjoyed her middle school experience more than high school. She said “*this school is too big and there are a lot of Latinos/as*”… “*I am usually with the Latinos boys but not with the girls. They do not like me, I do not know why.*”. Her female friends are from other minority groups like Somalis and African Americans. She used a computer for first time when she arrived at her middle school in the US. She just moved to a new house in a middle class neighborhood. She has a computer but it is not connected to Internet in this new house. Adriana said that her father wanted to buy a new computer because this one was not working so well but he has not yet done it. She used to have an e-mail account to e-mail her cousin in Mexico and some friends she met in chats Spanish rooms. She lost her account because of the lack of use lately and is planning to open a new one when she gets a new connection. In the chats, sometimes she changed her age to 18 years old and sometimes she changed her name. Adriana basically
uses the computer for school papers and communication purposes but she prefers to use it at home rather than in the school because she thinks they are too strict about the use of the computers. Adriana also uses the Internet to see how her hometown has changed since she came to the US. However, because of necessity, she now uses the computer at school when she wants to communicate with her family and friends. One reason she said she used the chat was “Because you feel free, you do not feel ashamed of anything you are talking about because you are in your room alone ... writing everything you want”.

In her house, she has cable and this allows her to watch TV in Spanish “I think TV in English is too boring”. However, she prefers to hear her music when she comes from school. Even though she likes her computer, she does not really miss using it at home right now… “My life is basically the same and I do not miss it”. However, she prefer when the teachers use computers in the classroom, she feels more motivated to learn and she thinks it is easy to understand. “You find everything easier than in books” (referring to the Internet).

Adriana works in a chain restaurant in the kitchen like the rest of her family; she goes there four days a week only. When she comes from work, she studies for a while. She is not in ESL classes anymore and she feels “I understand almost all the time only sometimes when the teacher speaks very fast I get only half”… “then sometimes I ask her again”. Now, Adriana takes all the same exams in English like the rest of her classmates without any special consideration. She is not sure about what she will do after finishing high school. She is not planning to take the SAT exam because she is not sure she can go to the university until she fix her immigration papers. In the meantime, her father told her to study a one year course in where they do not ask her for the papers and if she cannot
find this, she wants to go back to Puebla to study at the university. However, her mother said “no...you there and we here...no” but the father encourages her to do whatever she wants to do “do not worry we will not abandon you, we will help you always...go for that”. In Mexico the universities are less expensive than here in the U.S.

Adriana uses cellular phone and text messenger well she said “I receive but I do not send ...ha-ha”. She also uses digital cable in her house with a Spanish channel, but when she comes from work “I watch TV in English because I like those programs a lot at that time. However, usually my family watches TV in Spanish”.

In relation to how different her life will be without the access of computer, she thinks it will be more difficult to communicate with her friends and complete her class assignments. But she does not feel the Internet has changed her cultural identity at all, but rather facilitates her to knowing more Latinos from different parts of the world.

As a family, they go out on weekends for soccer practice games, and then to eat. She feels her mother is a little strict sometimes in relation with her going out alone, she has to go out with her brother to parties, and she cannot go with her only female friends. Adriana’s father is always encouraging and motivating her to reach her goals. In the past when the computer was working, she assisted her father to find information on the Internet about sports or other stuff “look here... do that” he wanted. In general she feels comfortable here in the US because she is with her whole nuclear family even though she thinks “everything here is enclosed, there are not places to go everything is boring...after school I prefer to go to work because there is not anything else to do, at least there I can talk with people...here people do not talk so much with their neighbors”
She feels that speaking English has been a great improvement for her. Now in her worked she can defend herself and not allow her coworkers to make her feel bad. An example was when they said to her you are not taking the right order now she can take action and give them the appropriate respond “the manager does not bother me, are the other ones but now I do not have to be quiet and I can defend myself...now I speak their same language”.

4.1.4.- Yliana: age 15, ninth grade

Yliana is from Michoacan, Mexico, and is from a family of five her: father, mother and two elder siblings; she is the youngest. She lives in a low income house with her family in a community in which the majority are Latinos descendents. Yliana arrived two years ago and she has been in three different schools already. The first time she used a computer was in seventh grade when a teacher asked her to translate words that she did not understand and then later on her math class. She really enjoys her math problem on the computer more than in paper “you can make mistakes and then get better at the same time”. Now she is using computer in two classes her ELS class and a typing class. “I think the programs are too slow ...and sometimes I do not have the ability to type the words yet”. Yliana uses the Internet basically to find information for papers but also she likes sometimes to find music and/or information about countries or things that are happening in places where her friends are from “if I have a friend from Arizona, I want to know about that place. So I can share and know him or her better”. She does not have a
computer at home, she only use the one at the school or at the library. She wants to open an e-mail account one day but she is not in a hurry. She does not like to use chats “it is boring to talk with people you do not know”.

In relation to her level of comfort with computers, she said “I like and feel very comfortable using a computer. I am not afraid of them, and the only thing I want to improve is how to type faster. I hope with the class I will learn how to do it”. However, she knows there are many more things she can learn and she is going to take other computer classes in the future at the school. Yliana likes to use video games but not the ones about fights she loves the one with car race, she plays with her siblings at home. On TV, her family only watches English Channels because they do not have cable. They also watch a lot of DVD movies.

She went back to Mexico during the summer and now she is taking a building class “I am in a contest about how to build a bridge and we want to win but I am afraid that will not work”. In the beginning all her classes were ESL but now she only has one tutoring and the rest with American students “Now, I feel I understand everything …the difficult part is to talk”. Yliana is motivated to learn and is very persistent “I try and try until I am able to do it”. Yliana’s parents support her to go and finish at least high school then later they will see if she can go to a technical school “I want to do something like no more than two years and then you are ready to work like cosmetology”. She thinks everything she is learning with computer can help her in the future when she wants to find a job “I can fill out applications online and be ready to work with machines that use little computers inside. I feel that if I know more things this will help me to find a better jobs and it will not be difficult”.

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4.1.5.- Maria: age 18, twelfth grade

Maria is from Michoacan, Mexico, and came to the U.S. four years ago. First, she lived in California where she started using computers for the first time at her school. She feels that she got her confidence in the California’s school “I learned with lessons about the Internet and different applications, but it was after a class about resources that I really learn how to use them”. Now, she feels very confident to use computer and explore them. The technology motivates her to learn more and know new things. Now in Ohio, Maria is taking a business class in where she is learning the whole MS Office suite; this class meets everyday for three hours, “I really enjoy using PowerPoint because of the animations and transitions and also I really enjoyed Publisher when I created flyers and cards, etc”. She also uses a computer in her math class, “half of the time we use the computers”.

Maria has a computer at home but now it is not working “I have to fix it or buy a new one because this computer is too slow”. At the beginning when she bought the computer she used it everyday to surf the web and to chat “I used it to chat with people...always in Latino chats” She has changed only her name sometimes but never her gender or age “No...never...if, I do not like what they are saying to me I said I have to go and I leave”. Now she does not use so much the chat rooms because “they want to start talking too personal and I only want to talk with someone nothing more”. She has an e-mail account that she uses only with friends that she has met in the U.S. as her family in Mexico does not have e-mail. Also, she uses her instant messenger to chat with her
friends. Maria does not have a cellular phone, or any other new technology. For her to have Internet in the house was very important because it helped her to find all kinds of information and also “you are entertained by it with all the things you can do”. Now that her computer does not work she feels her life is more boring than before “I hope that I can fix the computer soon because I like to download music and find information about my favorite’s singers and actors”.

Maria gave me a great general opinion about the Internet she said, “It is like a window to the whole world. Because it is being wherever you want to be in the world right there with your Internet”. She is a senior who is graduating this year; her plans are to start working more to save money to be able to go to college or a technical institute “I want to study something with business or computers”. She would like to take online courses in the future because she thinks “because if I do not have time to go to classes I can do it from my home”. In her actual school, she has had a lot of help from teachers and she feels everyone treats her very nicely; she only had one incident where she felt discriminated against because she was a Latina “in general I do not talk so much because I am shy but I see how they treat other of my friends and everyone is very nice...even with me they are nice”. Her daily interactions are with her Mexican and Latinos/as friends “also other nationalities like Somalis”. She feels her English is not perfect but she can communicate with her teachers and understand the class well.

The second interview that I had with Maria was in her new house to which she moved with her boyfriend and she is pregnant. She is working in a condominium office in charge of all the staff of the cleaning area. She is very proud that she found this job because she has her high school diploma and her English “I am the connection between
the employees and the boss”. She will take only a couple of months for her pregnancy leave and then her mom will help her to take care of her kids “I hope I can continue to study but I do not know if I will be able to do it... hopefully.... I can do some courses about the Internet and web page so I can work later at home”.

4.1.6.- Kika: age 15, ninth grade

Kika is from Tabasco, Mexico, has three females siblings, she is the third child in her family. Her eldest sister is still in Mexico and the rest of the family came together from Mexico to Columbus a year ago. They live in a very clean and organized townhouse in a working class neighborhood where not many Latinos live. In her high school, Kika has ESL classes almost in all her classes, the only one that it is not ESL is a keyboarding class “I like this class because it is helping me to learn how to type on the computer faster”. However, she thinks sometimes it is overwhelming to have many projects and you can only do the projects there in the lab and sometimes you cannot finish. Kika thinks her English this year has improved a lot; hopefully after the summer she will not have so many ESL classes, “I have improved a lot”. At the school, she also makes use of computers in her ESL English class to learn vocabulary, she likes this because she can see how she is doing.

Her first computer class is the keyboarding class and since six months ago she has a computer at home. Kika uses her home computer to check e-mail, to find information about her favorite’s artists and to be entertained. She enjoys and feels comfortable using it however now, she is upset with the computer “because now she has problems and it is
very slow, I think it is too full...when I go to my e-mail it takes for ever and I turned off”. She does not feel her life will be different, if she did not have a computer at home...because “I really do not use it so much only in my free time”. Sometimes, She plays car race video games with her sister but not for so long “after a while my head hurts me”. Kika has only used the chat environment with her family through instant messenger “sometimes it is difficult to find time because everyone works but we try our best”. From time to time, her friends send her postcards and images. She really feels the e-mail helps her to keep in touch with her family and friends “we share gossip from there and here and we do not have to spend so much money in phone calls. This is one reason I like to have a computer and e-mail”.

Kika has a lot of support from her family, she does not have to work outside the house and she only helps a little in the house “My work is to study and help my mom in some things with my sisters”. In her house she has DVD, and video recording and as a family they watch a lot of movies “in the movies that they have Spanish subtitles we put them but if not we use English subtitles to see the words in the below part of the TV”. Her parents bought her a cellular phone to be able to reach her when they need to, she only uses the phone to talk and never uses text messenger. Her parents and she want her to learn good English “because I could get a good job later with a better salary. A better life, I think so”. After the summer when she had another interview, Kika had started to use chat rooms “I go to Latinos Chat and I like to change my age and nationality but not always”. She thinks what motivated her to start the chats was to see “what it is inside there, it gives me curiosity to see what they are talking about...sometimes I read only”. She has not met in person anyone from the Internet “my only friends are from the
school”. Now the parents bought a program for everyone in the house to help him or her with English specially pronunciation and definitions. As a family, they do not watch so much TV; they do not have Spanish channel but they rent movies. In addition, as a family, they go out on weekends to the mall and they always eat together. She said that she feels very secure when she goes out and has never felt discriminate against. Her mom works during the morning when the kids are in school and her father works the whole day. In addition, her sister now is working because she finished high school. She and her younger sister are the ones who use the computer most. Her mom and sister only use it once in while to e-mail only. “I help my mom because she does not know so much…and with my dad he asking me sometimes to find addresses of new places then he said now I know how to get there then he leave the room”

At the time of the last interview, Kika is in a new grade and she feels great she thinks her teachers are very supportive of her “they ask me if I understood all the time…they are nice”. In relation to her academics, she feels occasionally that she could have done more or asked more in class…perhaps “I sometimes do not give enough time to my studies”. In general, she thinks she is trying harder in these new classes “these are more difficult than ESL classes but I liked them”. Now, she feels she is with Americans more, but she only has one class with two Latinas friends “it is nice”. She shares her frustration that she does not know how to fix her computer because it has been not working well lately, “I will like to know what’s happening with the computer, why it is working like that. Hopefully one day I will know”.

Kika wants to learn more and more English so when she finishes high school she will go to law school. “I want to help people to know things that are value for their rights
“and to protect them to injustice like when a husband hits a pregnant woman”. The last time I talked with her over the phone Kika told me she was pregnant and she was going to move out with her boyfriend a man of 25 years and that she will need to stop her studies for a while but that “I will go back, I promise you”. In her culture, Kika did not have options other than to have her baby and she is doing it as a trooper and very happy. She wants a good life for her kid, so she will continue studying so she does not lose this school year”

4.1.7.- Gloria: age 17, tenth grade

Gloria is from Oaxaca, Mexico and came to the U.S. 10 years ago. She is the youngest of four siblings. She lives with one of her siblings’, a brother, and her mom in a trailer area. They are renting half of the trailer and share it with two men from Mexico. She lived first in California around four years and because of the family economy they moved to Ohio. She has another brother and sister that live in Columbus, both of them married. Gloria has nine nephews and nieces; her extended family is very close.

Gloria started to go to the school here in the US, that is the reason she feels more comfortable writing and reading in English than in Spanish. Gloria is very fluent verbally in both languages. The first time she used a computer was in the California school and since she came to Ohio she has taken two classes of computers. Gloria feels that using computer motivated her “because I can find all the information faster than in books”. She used computer basically to get information for her papers and school work and her level of confidence is very good. She has a computer at home that she shares with her brother
to finish her school work, e-mail, chatting and downloading music “well I am not so good in storing the music, my brother is an expert”. The type of chats that Gloria uses are Latinos chats in Spanish and sometimes in English like AOL. She does not use her instant messenger much because she does not really know how to use it, “I prefer to use my e-mail and/or the chat from the pages”. She uses nicknames but never changed her age or sex. However she feels her life will not be so different if she did not have Internet at home “if I do not have Internet at home I could go to the library to find information but If I did not have computer my life would be difficult to do school papers and could not download things”. She expends an average of one hour per day on the computer. Sometimes she also uses it to play games.

In relation to her school friends she said “in classes I am more with Americans but at lunch or at recess I am with Latinas. I have five good friends”. She likes this high school more than her other school because of the teachers “they are nice people”. I have never had a discriminatory experience here; however, “I have seen some teachers treating other students with discrimination”. Gloria takes regular classes because her English is very good. In her school the only way you can use the computer, it is if the teacher gives you a pass.

Gloria and her mom go out shopping and also watch TV together a lot. They have cable and in the evening “from seven to nine we watch telenovelas (Spanish’s soap operas) and then we switch to regular networks to watch CSI or Law and Order”. Gloria’s mom does not use the computer only asks Gloria and her brother when she needs some things. Her mom does not push her to study “she always said to me I will like you to study but you decide”. In relation to her father, Gloria has not met in person her father “I
am waiting to have my papers to go to Mexico to meet him, we talk over the phone, he is the one who always tell me you have to study to be better than me.” He is a policeman in Mexico.

After the summer, in the new school year, she is taking a new computer class in which she is competing for a national mathematics conference. “I feel if I put my heart on this, I will be able to go”. Gloria is very motivated now with her new computer class “I am learning all the things related to business skills”. She feels if she did not have her computer at home she may feel frustrate it that she cannot use her e-mail.

She drives and comes alone from work and she said “I feel scare sometimes because the other day my brother was kidnapped and they robed him everything he has. They had him for two hours in an apartment. He was able to escape”. She tries to take only the big streets and be very careful. She does not have a cellular phone yet “I want to buy one in case of emergency”. Her eldest brother lives in the same trailer area “this is very good because we feel more protected”.

4.1.8.- Alejandra: age 16, tenth grade

Alejandra is from Distrito Federal, Mexico. She came first to Texas then moved back to Mexico and then she came to Ohio with her whole family three years ago. She is from a family of five siblings and all lives here in a townhouse in the west side. They have picture everywhere of her quinceañeras (fifteen birthday) “it was a very important day for me”. She does not work her parents support her and her siblings. They want them
to go to the university. She hopes one day she will go “I am not sure where I will go here or in Mexico, even here they are good school I will like to go back to my country”.

Alejandra speaks English very fluently, she is very confident in both languages. “I go to the Internet and I can search in both languages, in general I look in English for the school and in Spanish for personal stuff, everything in my AOL is in Spanish”. She uses the Internet for her school project but also to communicate and be entertained “I love to download music; I do not e-mail a lot. I prefer to talk over telephone with friends and family”. For her, the Internet is like a huge encyclopedia to find information and the technology makes life easier but she thinks “sometimes the kids become lazier because if the use of technology…because we need to put our brain to work”. When I asked her in relation to the chat rooms, she said she does not use them but she has a lot of friends who do “they like to change their name, age and lie a lot about everything.” She does not trust the information people will give her. “I prefer to meet people in person”. She feels that people in Ohio discriminate because they are not use to diversity “it is not like in Texas, they are not familiar with the Latino population”. However, she said that she has never felt it in herself but she has seen it with others. In the school, she is more with Latinos than the other minorities at the school and in classes “if I have Latinos students I work with them if not with any one I am very sociable”. One thing that she has noticed in her school is that sometimes when one girl student breaks a rule like wearing a short skirt “if it is an American like a cheerleader, they do not say anything. But, if it is a Latina, they bring her to the office and ask her to wear a long t-shirt to cover her” She thinks this situation is not fair and for her it is some type of racism.
In relation to having access to computer and the Internet, she expresses her happiness at having one at home even the printer is not working “we have to save it and go to the library or Kinko’s”. To have a computer has made a big difference in their academic life and in the beginning everyone wanted it to use it using the Internet and communicate with family and friends “but now we do not have Internet because we just moved, we are going to find a good one soon”. In the last year, she has used the computer more at the school than at home “I do not have so much homework”. Now she has a cellular phone that she uses conscientiously because “it is too expensive”. She has used the instant messenger of MSN and AOL but not so frequently because of the problem with her computer. She now said to me “I will tell you the truth, we disconnected the Internet because it was so expensive. We tried a free trial and then we send a disconnection request but they said they did not get it …so the bill is huge now…I do not know when it will work again”.

Her motivation to study comes from her parents “they make a big effort for us, they came to this country for a better life, they work a lot and want us to study to succeed more than them”. All her family members have a lot of extra curriculum activities and her mom is in charged of taking them “everyone has something to do and we do it”. During the weekend they try to spend time together, they go to each other’s games sometimes “we go to a movie but we watch movies in cable also. We have cable in Spanish and in English”. 
Karolina is from Acapulco, Mexico, and came to Columbus one year ago with her whole family. Now they are two siblings and one on the way as her mom is having a baby in a few months. She lives in a one-bedroom apartment and they hope to move soon. She does not have a computer at home and she only used it at the school and sometimes at the community library. Her cousin opened an e-mail account for Karolina that she uses basically to communicate with her and some friends but “I do not use it so much because it is difficult at school”. She has never used the chat by herself but she has been with her cousin when she does it. She thinks it is very funny but she is a little afraid of not knowing who can be there and also she thinks that the internet is useful and good but “again and again you are reading something and then suddenly something bad happens and it is not nice all of those windows opening”.

Karolina’s confidence level using the computer is not high and she knows she still has a long way to learn. She hopes to get a computer soon; she has not used instant messenger because at the library it is blocked and at her school is it prohibited. She tried to go on Fridays with her cousin to the library to search the Internet. For her “the internet is for distraction and to learn new things basically”. She wanted to share her only experience in which she had a kind of chat experience, “well only one time, my male cousin told me to continue writing to a girl he was chatting with in the moment he needed to leave, it was funny I acted like I was a man and told her beautiful things the ones a woman wants to hear...later he was upset with me for the reason that the girl look for him all the time on the chat room”.

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Karolina expresses the importance of computer as vital to find a good job even as a secretary now you need to know how to use a computer. Even though she has had only one computer class in her school “a keyboarding class to learn how to type fast”, she has also used computer in two other classes and she thinks in the future she will take more computer classes “in my ESL class I think when we use the computer I really like it because it is more fun and I can see how much I am improving” In her biology class “the professor brought a computer program that simulate the earth movement, it was very interesting at least more than her bad drawing”.

Her family goes out together but they miss Acapulco a lot “especially the beach and the sea and of course my family and friends”. Finding a job in Acapulco is difficult for a woman of her mom’s age they are looking for women of 25-30 years old, her mom’s feels she is to old to find a job there even though they had a house there and were more comfortable everyone with one bedroom they decided to come to America. Also, her mom said that they made the decision to move here for a better future for everyone but especially her kids but now she is worried because they do not have immigration papers and maybe Karolina cannot continue with her education after the school “I want her to be a professional, be someone. I said to her if you do not study I will send you back to Mexico”. Karolina will be ready for college in three years and she wants to become a Medical Doctor.

After the summer, Karolina is taking a class that has a project in which she has to put music and images together “I am so exited to be learning how to do this”. Now in the school they said that next semester she will not have to take more ESL classes “everyday I feel I learn more and more English”. Her parents do not want her to work until she
finishes her study “Karolina has to help in the house but only after she finished her homework”. I asked Karolina and her family how they felt here in this country “we feels okay people are nice but they are always inside it is a little boring but it is safer than in Mexico”. Karolina expressed that her teachers treat her very nice and that she has never had any bad experience at school but she has seen students that other students do not allow them to walk for a corridor because they are different “they do it because in Ohio, they are not use to people like us”.

4.1.10.- Cecilia: age 18, twelfth grade

Cecilia is Dominican and she has been in this country for three years. Her father brought her and her siblings for a better life. Her mother stayed in Dominican Republic. She and her two brothers came to live with their father and stepmother. Now the father is divorced so they live only with him. Cecilia missed her country happiness and loudness as well as her mom. Cecilia is a senior and she is going to graduate. She wants to go to college to study business.

The first time Cecilia used a computer was when she was 14 years old in Dominican Republican; at her school there in a computer class. She said that they had the same technology there as here. Since she came to the US, she has taken two classes of computers. “I enjoyed them but sometimes they are boring”… “waiting to open the windows and accessing the internet.” On the other hand, she said she thinks the internet is useful because saves you time and it is practical to use it. Cecilia listens to music in
her house and at her work when she uses the computer and it is fine to use it, but in the school she cannot because she has to do homework. She used her e-mail and chat with her instant messenger with her friends a lot here and in Dominican Republic “also now in the whole college application process, I use the e-mail a lot to do that and the internet to find information and apply.” She expends an average of two hours daily on her home computer and at the school she has a long business ed. class for two hours daily. She feels that the internet is a great tool but if you do not have it at home the only thing you have to do is to plan your activities ahead “in the past people send letter to communicate and went to the library”. She just got a cellular phone because she started to drive a couple of months ago “to protection when I am there on the street and if my dad or brothers need me”.

Cecilia works in a Mexican shop as the cashier, she thinks she got the job because she knows how to use computer and was in her senior year of high school. She goes to work five of the seven days from 4-10 pm “I am very busy with my classes and my job”. Cecilia has had many of interactions, she uses chats in both languages even though she prefers to use one from Dominican Republic. “So, I understand all the slang people uses and it is nice”. Once in a while, she changes her gender especially when she see many women in the room “to see how they react and interact with a man, but I never change my age”. Also one time in her business class they need it to find a discussion board in a webpage and post a message as if the student was a buyer of any item they wanted “I found in AOL a site for selling houses and I posted like I wanted to buy it, then they reply to me later”
After the summer, I met with her again for her third interview and I found out she could not pass her proficiency test and she is planning to take it again and at the same time she is taking more classes at her high school to improve her GPA. “They (the school) have been very nice with me and they are helping me to feel ready to go to college in the future. I am going to start taking some classes at Franklin”. At the beginning, she was very frustrated but now she thinks it is good for her to continue studying and not give up. Last year was a very difficult year for her “with all the classes and job plus some family stuff, I was always very tired, I did not have time to go to have lunch during the school”. Cecilia has friends across ethnicity and gender “I am friends of everyone”. She said she likes that sometimes in her lunch table seems like the world “one from Somali, one from Mexico, one from China, one from Ukraine, and American and myself, it is nice”. In relation to discrimination in and out of school, she said that sometimes the African Americans want to have their loud attitude with her and she explain to them “I am not a white American for them to treat me like that, so they changed their attitude”. Sometimes in the school people confuses her for being an African American and she explained them she is a Latina. She shared some stories about also confusion of her raza in Mexican stories “One day I was talking in English with my cousin and we went inside the shop and when we pay I spoke in Spanish. They look at me surprised then I said to them I speak Spanish like you because I am Dominican”. I asked her if she has felt any type of discrimination among Mexicans through her she said never, “I have felt surprise but never discrimination. We are a minority so everyone share and support each other a lot”. Cecilia has lean how to dance Mexican music and she really enjoyed. She loves all kind
of music and to dance “I am always listening to music in my room and practicing new steps. Now I am very good in la quebradita (Mexican dance)”.

As a family when they have time they go to the movies and to eat. Also, she has an aunt in Columbus “occasionally we buy some steaks and we make a barbecue with them and have a little party”. Cecilia’s father is strict and told her that he will not accept from anyone of his kids to quit studying “he got very upset with me when I failed the exams but I promised him I was going to continue”. She thinks he is a good Dad “you know he cares but he is not going to tell you nice things like, I trust you, he is not like my mom that she is always saying positive things to us…they complement as parents”.

Cecilia sees herself in five years with her business degree and perhaps engaged “I will never get married until I finish studying then I will buy a house here, have a family and go to spend vacations in Dominican Republic”.

4.1.11.- Daniela: age 19, ninth grade

Daniela crossed the border by herself eight months ago because she wanted to learn English and to be with her sister. Her life changed a lot five years ago when their father abandoned them. Because of the health of her mom, her sister decided to come to the US, all her siblings have been in the university, she is the youngest of five. Before when their parents where together “we never worried about money we were not rich but we were able to buy things and even one time my parents gave me a computer”. Her father always said to them “you have to study to become someone, your job is to study. I
provide the rest”. She learned how to use a computer in Mexico not only in the school but also with her siblings and friends. Daniela does feel she is an expert and she wants to learn more and more “but I can defend myself and try everything I am not afraid of the computer”.

Now, Daniela lives with her sister in a one-bedroom apartment in the west side of the city. In Columbus, she registered herself in the high school near her house; they told her that she needed it to be in ninth grade because of her English barrier “I was disappointed at the beginning but what could I do. Also I saw that many of the kids that were with me where in other levels also”. She said that all her teachers said to her “why you are here in this level if you know everything, you should be in a higher level”. In her high school, she has not taken a computer class yet; however, in two of her ESL classes she used computers as part of the curriculum. She feels that for her using computer is motivating “I really like to use the programs in math classes and in English because I feel it helps me to communicate with my teachers also”. In relation to the Internet, Daniela thinks that her life would be very different without her computer at home “I chat with my family all the time, I keep in touch with my friends in Mexico and for school it is the big help”. She also uses public chat because she likes to meet people from everywhere “I always ask them questions about the place they said they are from to see if it true”. She said that at the beginning she always gives other names until she feels comfortable enough and then she gives them her e-mail. She has changed her age but only until 25 years only and one time she passed for a 50 years old woman “I think no one believes me and the person who was talking with me I am sure he was lying too”.
By the fall of the next year, Daniela left the school and when I asked her why, she said to me: “first, I need to tell you the truth. I finished high school in Mexico so it was too boring for me and I wanted to learn English before going home because it is impossible for me to go to the university here”. She has been very depressed because everything is very difficult and she is not used to having so many problems “I want to go back and study law in Mexico and if I speak English well that will help me to find a good job in Mexico”. Daniela has a very strong opinion about why people discriminate against Latinos “one of the hardest act of discrimination is when they stare at you and say things like why are you in my country. Some people think I am very harsh with my own raza but I think it is the fault of many Mexicans who are ignorant and celebrate all kinds of things without knowing why they are doing that. They do not want to learn English, they have all kind of excuses, even there are a lot of support from different institutions...still in ESL classes if they know the teacher speaks Spanish they do not make any effort to learn English to communicate with the teacher”. I asked her why she felt she was so different from other Mexicans and she answered very fast “the majority comes from Oaxaca, a much poor part of Mexico and there is a lot of corruption there in the government and their province system is awful”.

4.1.12.- Juanita: age 18, twelfth grade

Juanita was born in East Los Angeles, her parents are born Mexicans. They lived in Los Angeles until five years ago. She has five siblings from both parents and two more for her father’s side. She is very close to her family and they share many moments
together during weekends. Every year, her father goes back to his town in Mexico
bringing Santa Claus presents for everyone there and one time he brought an ambulance
from the US to Mexico “everyone in the town calls him by his name and recognizes him
and also to me they say she is the daughter of Julian”. Juanita is very proud of her dad.
He owns a construction business and he wanted to become an architect but he could not,
“however he had added a new wing to our house”. They live in a beautiful neighborhood
and have a second house for rent. After she finishes her high school, she will study
architecture.

Juanita is an A student who has been accepted to the university and she is looking
forward to entering. She has a scholarship because of her grades and being a minority, “I
am very proud of being a Mexican American. Mexican for my parents and American
because I was born here and this is a great country”. She feels this country gives a lot of
opportunities and she has seen really what poverty is. In her house her parents have
taught them the value of being bilingual; during meals “we speak Spanish because of my
dad but among the siblings we speak English and a kind of Spanglish”.

Juanita used computers in California but never had a class until she came to Ohio
where she had her first computer class in high school. She has had many computer
classes now. In her senior year, she took business education and drafting 1. This class
was mechanical basically but they introduced her to drafting applications.

In relation to the Internet, she has a computer at home but it is not working right
now “it has a virus but we are going to fix it soon”. However, she said that having a
computer at home it is great for her classes to be prepared for everything she needs. She
used the Internet essentially to find information and to check e-mail and only from time
to time does she chat especially in English “in the Spanish chats people is usually older than in the English chats”. Juanita expressed that she likes Columbus a lot, “people here are more focused there is not so much drug use as in LA”. But one good point of LA is the diversity and as a consequence people there are less discriminatory than in Columbus “they are not used to having school as diverse as mine right now so every time we go to a school for a game people look at us like these people have all the colors”. She has a cellular phone that she uses only to communicate with her family for them to know where she is. She has never use the text messenger inside.

In our last interview, she is now an undergraduate students of architecture and she is a little overwhelmed with all the e-mail and online information she uses for her courses “I expend an average of two hours in the computer if not more responding e-mails and doing assignments”. Also the size of the classes, she has one lecture class of two hundred students, she considers herself a very conservative and timid girl “so for me it is difficult to find friends, hopefully slowly I will meet people who will become my friends. People are nice and smile to me but I do not have friends yet”. She still living with her parents and usually eats at home too “perhaps this situation is not helping my social life also”.

Now Juanita share with me a big news: her sister is pregnant, Juanita’s sister is younger than her but she said her family is supporting her so she can continue study and does not quit “the baby is in her belly so we need to help her for their future”. She sees herself in a couple of years having an architecture studio designing houses, buildings inside and outside. “I really enjoy the part of learning how to manage the spaces and create harmony in a bigger space”. She is very grateful to God that she is here at the university because this was the only university she applied but her teacher from the high
school encouraged her to register because she had everything, grades and being a minority. “They were right, I am so happy I listen to them because I did not believe I was able to do it. But, they believed in me. So, I did it”. Her parents always taught her to follow her dreams that they will support her always “To become an architecture is my dream and their dream, they want to see their kids to grow and be someone in life”. In the next sentence, Juanita articulated that her motivation is her parents and that she has to look forward because “I always say that I do not want to be like them with that difficult and hard lives they had. Now they are giving an opportunity they did not have so I have to take it”. She feels usually great about her studies however sometimes she believes she could have tried harder “but most of the time I feel proud”.

4.2.- Teachers’ Narratives

4.2.1.- Mr. K: English teacher

Mr. K is a tutor teacher who helps students that finish with his ESL classes but still need support with their classes. He believes that the students who have a better knowledge of their native language learn faster the second language. He does not have any program in his classroom to help students with their English proficient but the students use the only computer he has in the classroom when they need information for their papers. He allows his students to go to the school library to do research in any subject when they have a project due. He believes the drop out rate is not really so high
“sometimes the kids change school because they move some times they are in the same district so they become transfer students not drop out”.

Mr. K thinks in relation with the Latinas students that come to him “they cannot work by themselves academically. We need to help them with homework and projects”. He said that the students’ grades are usually C or D. Also regarding the Latinas students he made this remarks “they do not work so hard or are lazier, they do not want to come if they do not have to...however, lately I have had more boys than Latinas...these are difficult years for them”. He has one general opinion about the Latinos/as students “if they do not get better grades it is not because of the language skills it is because they are lazy. They do not bring homework sometimes and that impacts their grade”…“I do think the main problem is not the language is their attitude, their school background, their culture, these kids come from different background. It is cultural, I do not know how important education is there”. He shared with me one last remark “cars are important for them...it is status for them not only for the Latino/a students but also for Ukraine’s too”. Mr. K. thinks that his Latinos/as students do not get into fights with anyone in class “they get fine with everyone”.

4.2.2.- Mr. Cool: Keyboarding Teacher and Business Technology Teacher

Mr. Cool believes that Latinos/as students are like the rest of the students’ population in relation to research techniques. However, in relation to basic skills they have a variety of skills “A lot of these students are in this country only for three moths they do not manage the English language so well and we put them in front of a computer.
So there are more barriers for them to pass”. He thinks new immigrants should learn first the English language and then they can have regular classes “of course we have to consider individual cases but in the majority of the cases it is better if they could get a couple of years of English first”. He has a strong opinion about Latinos and Latinas students “they all appear to be hard working in general one difference between genders is that female’s students have the best fingers in typewriting”. Mr. Cool explains to me that any students who want to come to the computer lab can come during their study hall or after school when he signs them permission slips “there are a lot of opportunities for them to finish their work”. At the library also they need passes from their teacher to use the computer there and it is supposed to be related to a project. Every year, he makes a survey asking students if they own a computer, which is 35%, do not have a computer at home and the majority is minority students.

4.2.3.- Mr. H: Drafting Teacher

Mr. H explains to me that they use the Internet to search for papers and in this class they are using old PCs, but the more advanced classes of drafting using Window’s XP and Mac platforms. He explains that in the school they have not use any virtual environment or chats rooms or discussion boards. They use specific applications for engineering and drafting and the Internet to research topics. Mr. H expresses “for the most part I find them (Latinos/as) above average abilities. First, they have problem with the language that makes them learn a little slower because it’s more difficult to understand but after that is fine”. He does not think any students have any technological
problems, they may have problem in keeping the writing or reading materials. He used an example of two Latinos students he has now in other drafting class in which these students are failing basically because of they have a big language barrier “this language barrier is huge across all subjects you need how to read and write the technology cannot dig you out of that”. He only uses the support of an interpreter or the bilingual support if he has more than 6 students. But usually he has two or three students and the ones that speaks English better help him to translate for the rest.

Mr. H has a high opinion of the Latinos/as work ethics “their sense of character is very different...I do not know if it comes from home because we see it and feel it in meetings that education is considered something important for their parents”. He said that they do not get the same family support from other ethnic groups, “it is a sense of appreciation that you do not see across the board”. Mr. H thinks his Latinos/as students are average or above average, most of them have a good attitudes specially when you can get together at least 3 students together to discuss “when they work together they work pretty well because they like to discuss things together”.

In general, he thinks the Latinos/as integration into the school is like any other ethnic group, the students develop relationships with time, “at the beginning of the year you see them with their peers but later in the years you see them interacting with different groups they are very friendly, it’s like adults in a party you look first for people who look like you to feel comfortable and then you mix with the rest of the party”. In relation to the use or access to this type of lab, Mr. H says that it will depend on individual cases usually they finish their assignment in classes “we do not tell them not to come, but it is better that some teacher is here to assist them”. In this class, they use a textbook but it is not
like history or English. “One reason why our English proficiency students will do well in this class, it is because they do not need the language as much as in other classes... and also the technology motivated them”. In general, you do not get many female students in drafting but the ones who have attended, he thinks were wonderful students and are continuing with their education. “Now my three best students are Latinos/as”.

4.2.4.- Mr. Cr: Teacher for Business Education

Mr. Cr is a first year teacher in this school. He teaches skills for the workplace in which the majority of the students are seniors. The year is divided into semesters. He had one Latina girl in each semester. He thinks about the Latinos/as students “they seems more quiet that the rest. They seem not as outgoing as the rest. They work better in a one by one basis. They call me over to their desk and ask me anything they need”. He thinks the students are very respectful and are the nicest students. In relation to their academic achievement, he thinks it will depend on their language skills “sometime it is difficult for them to understand everything and even when their work ethics is very high their grades will usually depend on their language skills”. He has noticed that his Latinos/as students help each other to understand the assignments and class. He only uses the bilingual support when he needs to know some information or background and how to interact with some of the students. He has never used chats or discussion board to communicate with his students; not even e-mail. In the lab that Mr. Cr uses they update the equipment every three years, “We got these ones last year”. He feels the Latinos/as students do not get in
trouble in his class because they are very quiet and they do their work “I think they have gained their respect and there are not problems like with some other groups”. He really thinks these students know their computer like any other students, “After they learn the language they are great”. In this class, they use LCD projector for PowerPoint presentations the students have to do at the end of the course.
CHAPTER 5
DATA ANALYSIS

The transcripts from the three individual interviews sessions, two at the school and one at home, were analyzed with N.U.D.I.S.T., a qualitative analysis computer program designed to assist in coding and assessing large amounts of data. The analysis program helped the researcher to identify commonalities and differences based on participants’ responses. With the program’s assistance, the researcher identified coding relationships. During coding, I created categories and sub-categories based on my questions and the assertions of my participants. The process of defining and identifying these central concepts, themes or categories was investigative and comparative.

Attending to the interviews and observations of the participants of my study with a careful ear assisted me in the development of the analysis utilizing a graphic, radial design (see figure 5.1), which corroborated and represented the findings.

The process of analysis included a systematic approach of coding and re-coding the Latinas’ interviews. Greater attention was given to the intuitive nature of this process as I recalled each of their voices and the cultural cues of the delivery that each gave when they discussed a subject which for some cultures could be considered to be a problematic topic such as “immigration status.” My goal has been trying to convey the oral interviews or stories into printed words while respecting each of the participants’ own culture.
Figure 5.1: Latinas' view of ICT in their lives
All of the interviews provided valuable information but the home interviews proved to be extremely beneficial to extend the knowledge of my participants’ lives. In the appendix C, we can find the same graphic used in the previous figure representing each of the twelve Latina participants.

I have checked with my participants to see if they feel represented correctly in the narratives of their stories I presented in chapter 4 and I felt relieved when they affirmed that I captured their ideas and opinions correctly.

The assertions discussed in this chapter were found to be significant for the twelve young Latinas’ lives in relation to technology and the Internet in the following learning environments: (1) School (2) Home, (3) Job and/or community.

Figure 5.2 (p. 92) shows the coded map that I created to introduce the categories and coding. These are reflective of the very issues that are interconnected into these Latinas’ use, access and connection to ICT technologies and others sub-categories of language, immigration status, educational values, social and family expectations which create a separate categories of social and cultural challenge of Latinos/as without taking into consideration the challenges of ICT technologies.

In general this study is looking at “how computer technology use and access among local Latinas in Columbus is related to their sense of identity, success in school, role in the workplace, and communication networks.” The main findings of this study are described below organized under the initial questions guiding the study.
Figure 5.2: Coded Map (Adapted from Ryan & Bernard, 2000)
5.1.- How do connection and disconnection to information and communication technologies (ICTs) affect the way young Latinas think about themselves, the world, and their place in the world?

In this study the participants understood ICTs as basically the Internet. They value the possibility of being connected from home through the Internet particularly to do their school work and for entertainment purposes. However, the majority of them felt that the impact on their lives was not so important as compared to the possibility of being disconnected from this technology. They felt they could find other ways to complement their lives.

“para mi yo creo que no seria tan dificil, el Internet es como una enciclopedia grandisima, pues si no la tengo iria a la biblioteca para buscar informacion y el telefono lo usaria para comunicarme con mis amigos, me gusta mas hablar.”
(Alejandra, interview)

to me, I believe that it would not be so difficult; the Internet is like a huge encyclopedia. If I did not have it I would go to the library to look for information and use the phone to communicate with my friends, I like to talk more.

In relation to how these Latinas thought their lives were affected by the use of ICT, I divided these uses into the following settings of home, school and job.

5.1.1.- Home:

One new communication technology tool that you can find in their homes is the cellular phone. In Latin America, cellular phones have given many people the opportunity to have access to phones in areas where regular land-line phones were not accessible (Gusmaz, 2002). Cellular phones are well distributed throughout the planet,
but this particular group of Latinas used cellular phones basically to communicate with their parents and friends without using the text messenger tool.

“nada mas para hablar y lo uso solamente en emergencies.” (Alejandra, interview)

*only to talk and I only use it for emergencies.*

Two of them have used text messenger with friends or received messages in their cellular phones. This text messenger exchange was done using the cellular phone hardware, however they have not used it with family members.

“yo no he mandado ninguno pero si me han mandado mensajitos.” (Adriana, interview)

*I have not sent any message but I have received text messages.*

“Lo usaba para hablar y a veces para escribir text messenger a mis amigos, pero se me perdió ahora.” (Isabel, home interview)

*I use it to talk and sometimes to write text messenger to my friends, but I lost it now.*

Another ICT tool the Latinas from my study use are synchronous interaction like chat rooms through the Internet. These are very popular across ages and gender, and in this group we find all kinds of answers in relation to this information communication media, ranging from not using it to using chat to communicate with others of their ethnic backgrounds or for religious chat.

“No no me meto en chat de desconocidos, pero conozco gente que lo hace pero no me gusta ..prefiero conocer a la gente en persona.” (Alejandra, interview)
I do not go to stranger chats, but I know people who used it but I do not like it…I prefer to meet people in person.

In relation to the effects in their social interactions in the chat rooms, they seem to be clear that these relationships created in the cyberspace are only temporary and that you do not really know them.

“ah…para ponerme chatting. Con mis amigas..disque mis amigas…porque no las conozco.” (Gloria, home interview)

to start chatting with my friends…disque my friends…because I do not know them.

One fascinating point concerning the place in the world in relation of their connection or disconnection to ICTs is how liberated some of these tools make them feel. Like a window to another world and that, even though you are here in a difficult reality you could dream about other realities.

“When estoy triste me meto en Internet y sueño con otros lugares y otras posibilidades diferentes a este pequeño apartamento.” (Daniela, home interview)

When I am sad, I go to the Internet and I dream of other places and other possibilities different from this small apartment.

The relativity of being anywhere in the world is something that they appreciate about the Internet; they can go to their home countries, their hometown and find out the latest information or event that is taken place there.

“es como una ventana a todo el mundo porque puedes estar en cualquier lugar que quieras estar con el Internet.” (Maria, second school- interview)
*It is like a window to the whole world. Because it is being wherever you want to be in the world right there with your Internet.*

In other words, they said many times that they could compensate for what they got with the Internet with other tools like library, phones and regular mail, but the majority felt it was an important acquisition to have a computer for their family in relation to getting information, being connected to your roots and as a communication tool.

“nos ayuda a terminar las cosa del colegio, porque como tengo cable me entero de cosas y despues las busco en el Internet. Te ayuda a mantenerte en contacto o informada de las cosas de tu pais.” (Alejandra, interview)

*It helps us to finish the things from school, because we have cable so when we heard things later we go to the Internet to find them. It helps you to keep in touch or inform about the things from your country.*

Disconnection meant, for some of my participants, being disengaged from the life of their friends and relatives from their country of origin.

“Te das mas cuenta de lo que esta pasando en tu pais, espero poder comprar una computadora para poder volver estar en contacto con mis amigos y familiares en la Isla.” (Cecilia, home interview)

*You notice more what is happening in your country and I hope to buy a computer soon so I can go back to be in touch with my friends and relatives on the island.*

Some participants expressed their opinions of how the lack of a computer at home and/or an Internet connection could impact their school life in different ways related to efficiency and behaviors.
“malas calificaciones and I don’t know…no tuviera nada que hacer en la casa. Cambiaría bastante mi vida porque yo para estudiar, para clase yo estudio más en el Internet.” (Isabel, second school-interview)

bad grades and I don’t know…I could not have anything to do in my house. It would change my life a lot because to study I use the Internet more.

The convenient part of having the technology at home was not to be dependent on others for authorization or permission and being in their home doing their school work.

“pues no tengo que salir a la bibliotecas y este no tengo que digamos pedir permiso si me la prestan o no me la prestan.” (Gloria, interview)

well, I do not have to go out to the library and I do not have to ask permission and wait if they will lend it to me or not.

In a general note, outside the world of the information and communication technologies, their dreams or expectations from their place in the world, I observed that all the participants had a high connection with the family expectations. The parent’s beliefs in them and parental effort were common denominators in the participants’ motivation to continue studying.

“Yo creo que a mí me motiva el…el ver a mis padres que ellos se esforzaron tanto para que nosotros pudiéramos tener un buen estudio y darle la satisfacción que puedan ver que nosotros nos hemos realizados como ellos tal vez no tuvieron la oportunidad y nosotros que la tenemos podemos aprovecharla para salir adelante en el futuro si queremos ser mejor que nuestros padres y seguir adelante adelante.” (Juanita, home interview)

I think what motivates me is seeing my parents. They made a big effort for us so we could have good studies. I want to give them the satisfaction to see that we have succeed like they did not have the opportunity and that we have a need to take advantage, to succeed in the future if we want to be better that our parents and continue to go forward.
Sometimes one belief in the Latinas’ lives in relation to motivation could be the expression of their parents’ guilt and need for their kids to be better than they did.

“mi papa siempre nos dice Estudien para que no sean como yo, o sea es asi como que te motiva a estudiar, el muy callado.” (Cecilia, home interview)

My father is always telling us “study to not being like me”, this is how he motivates you to study, he is very quiet.

5.1.2.- School:

In the school setting the students’ connection or disconnection to the ICTs are subordinated to the lab times and to the power of the librarians and instructors. Also, during the period that I was in the high school, the teachers used rarely technology to enhance their classes. I asked them if the teacher used any presentation software like PowerPoint in their classes and the majority of my Latinas participants expressed to me that they rarely or never used it.

“no, hasta ahorita ninguno.” (Isabel, second school-interview)

No, until now no one.

“Solo usan el pizarron y el proyector. Una sola vez fue usado el PowerPoint y fue en mi clase de keyboarding.” (Alejandra, second school-interview)

They only use the blackboard and the overhead projector. Only one time was PowerPoint used in my keyboarding class.

Nevertheless, my participants think they will be motivated if the teachers used more technology to enhance their classes because the few times they used computer software in biology or mathematics or ESL classes my participants felt motivated and they had a desire to use technology.
“Yo siento que deberiamos usarlas mas las computadoras, porque yo en mis clases son contadas las veces que las usamos, tenemos que usar un pase o ir con la profesora.” (Alejandra, second school-interview)

*I feel that we should use the computers more, because in my classes, there are counting times that we use them. We have to use a pass or go with the teacher.*

Once in a while they are connected in their classes to computers to enhance their classroom activities and when this happens the participants really like it because they think it is easier to learn and understand.

“que encuentras todo mas claro y es mas facil de entender y luego buscas las cosas.” (Adriana, second school-interview)

*It is easy to find everything clear and it is easier to understand and later look for things.*

In relation to the impact of disconnection from the Internet in their lives, many of the students felt that they did not have to make important adjustments or alterations if at least they had the school computer access.

“yo creo que es suficiente en la escuela porque en si en si …cuando estaba en instant messanger con mis amigos entonces si hablaba y nos mandamos email pero después que lo deje de usarlo ya no tenia tantos emails.” (Alejandra, home interview)

*I believe that it is enough with the school because really, when I was in Instant Messenger with my friends then I talked with them and we send e-mails but after that I stopped using it, I do not get many e-mails.*

5.1.3.- Job:

Until now, information communication technology tools are very far away from their work place because of the type of workforce activities they do. However, all of them
identify their knowledge of using the Internet and computer as improving their future in the workforce.

“Yo quiero trabajar en el futuro haciendapaginas webs o trabajando en el Internet, yo creo que es bien comodo.” (Maria, second school-interview)

*I want to work in the future making web pages or working in the Internet, I believe that it is very convenient.*

They think they may have a variety of possibilities in any of the areas in which they will go to work in the future not only the immediate job opportunity but after going to study and get a career.

“Si yo se bastante de como usar los programs en la computadora y en el Internet, voy a conseguir un trabajo mejor del que tengo ahora., por eso, yo siempre continue aprendiendo nuevas cosas” (Daniela, second school-interview)

*If I know a lot about how to use computer programs and the Internet, I will find a better job than the one I have now; because of this, I always continue learning new things.*

5.2.- **What type of technology (ICT) and access is available to Latinas in their home, schools and in the work settings?**

5.2.1.- **Home:**

During the first interview many participants responded affirmatively to my question “Do you have a computer at home?” I believed this would be a valuable opportunity to see how this group of new Latinas immigrants access and use this technology in their homes. However, when I went for the home interview, I realized the real conditions of many of their computers. The majority of the computers had been disconnected from the Internet provider or had some kind of virus or other problems. All
of the computers had windows XP as the operating system, and some of them were
Pentium 4 or 3, but with limited memory. Also, the peripheral equipment like printers
were either not working or absent. Therefore, when they needed to make or print school
papers they either went to the library or, in the majority of the cases, used the school labs
and the school library computers and printers.

“Ahora no la estamos usando porque no tenemos el Internet pero a veces cuando
queremos para typing y despues lo llevamos a imprimir a la escuela.” (Alejandra,
home interview)

Now, we are not using it because we do not have the Internet but sometimes we
use it to type and then we take it to print at the school.

One explanation that was repeatedly offered in relation to why the Internet was
dischonected was a financial decision on the part of either the participant or her family.
The Internet providers were dial-up trial offers at the beginning when they bought the
computers. After they ended and the service started to run regularly they felt it was too
much money and were not clear why it was so expensive.

“La desconectamos porque nos estaba llegando el bill carisimo”...“entonces no la
estabamos usando y la teniamos que estar pagando. Y decidimos desconectarla.”
(Maria, home interview)

We disconnected because the bill was becoming very expensive...then we were
not using it and we had to continue paying for it. So, we decide to disconnect it.

“I like to use it more at home because at the school they are very strict, but now we
have it disconnected.

Only one of my participants had three computers at home and not all of them
were working. All the time at least one of them had Internet connection. With respect to
the importance that the participants and their family had in keeping the Internet
collection update, this is embedded or connected partially with educational and
economic opportunities and backgrounds from their home countries. In addition, some
previous computer knowledge of any member of their family about computers before
coming to the U.S. was significant in keeping this connection.

“Mis hermanos me han enseñado mucho como usar las computadoras y mis
amigos, desde Mexico yo usaba la computadora y sabia buscar en Internet. Todos
en mi casa han ido a la prepa y la U.” (Daniela, home interview)

My siblings have taught me a lot about how to use computer and also my friends,
since Mexico I used computer and knew how to search the Internet. Everyone in
my house has gone to college.

Another type of technology they have in their house is video game equipment like
Nintendo or Game-Boy. Many of my participants said that their siblings, especially their
brothers, are the ones that use these types of games more but the participants use Internet
games or computer games with frequency either to entertain themselves or to practice
learning skills.

“(risas) soy malisima jugando video games me rio mucho y siempre pierdo…mis
hermanos se molestan. A veces juego uno en el Internet que es de matematica que
es bien bueno porque uno resuelve cosas para aprender.” (Alejandra, home
interview)

(laughs) I am very bad playing video games I laugh a lot and I always lose...my
brothers get upset with me. Sometimes I play an Internet game that is in math. It
is very good because we resolve things to learn.

Television is an important part in the life of Latinos/as in this country, especially
cable or satellite, which provides access to two Latinos networks in the U.S. These keep
them informed in their own language and help them staying in touch with their cultural
habits from their home by watching “telenovelas” or Latin-American soap operas. I was able to observe that the responses of my participants in the preference of a Spanish Channel or English Channel was evidenced in two conditions: the access of cable TV which usually included Spanish channels and/or the length of time of being an immigrant.

In the case of one of my participants’ homes, the father did not allow his children to watch TV in Spanish so they could learn the second language more quickly.

“No lo vemos mi papa al principio cuando llegamos no nos dejaba ver canales en español para aprender mas rápido. Y de verdad que valió la pena Si imaginate que se nos olvida que tenemos los canales en español..y mi papa dice ahora para poner noticias y nosotros no..porque hay otro programa más interesante.” (Cecilia, home interview)

We do not see it (TV in Spanish). My dad at the beginning when we arrived, he did not allow us to see Spanish channels to learn faster (English). And really it was worth it. Yes, imagine that we forgot that we had Spanish channels and my dad says no to watch the Spanish news and we say no...because there are other interesting programs.

5.2.2.- School

In school they have access to computer at the library and there are a variety of computer labs and classrooms throughout the school. And if students are taking any classes in these labs they could have access to these computers when the teachers are there or during assigned times. The computers at the school vary from old PCs that are used for running language programs, keyboarding programs and educational software to PCs that were changed in 2003 for the computer classes in business education and drafting, with one Mac computer lab for designing and image developing.

“en todas las clases para hacer papers, nos llevan a la biblioteca para hacer research.” (Kika, first school-interview)
In all the classes to do papers, they take us to the library to do research

“ahorita no puedes utilzar las computadoras antes de que llames al maestro y no puedes usarlas si no llevas tu ID.” (Adriana, first school-interview)

now you cannot use the computers before you call a teacher and you cannot use them if you do not bring your ID.

A common response on the subject of the school computer access was that all participants wanted to have more freedom to use the computers. They all agreed that if they asked for permission to use them, they always got it.

“si pido permiso si, si me dan pase para ir a las computadoras las puedo usar usualmente sin problema para hacer trabajos.” (Yliana, first school-interview)

If I ask for permission they give it to me to go to the computers. I can use them usually without any problem to do class work.

5.2.3.- Job

In this group of Latinas, the participants’ job did not use information and communication technological tools. The participants’ actual jobs are in different areas like daycare assistant, cashier in food store, cleaning personnel, and textile factory. Their work duties did not require many technological skills. The only technological tools available were the cashier register, sewing machines, and the price scanner gun.

“Yo trabajo en Wendy’s en la caja registradora me pusieron ahi porque yo aprendi rapido solo de verla, es como una computadora.” (Daniela, home interview)

I worked in Wendy’s as a cashier. They put me there because I learned fast only seeing it. It is like a computer.
5.3.- What are the social and personal implications of new information and communication technology in their lives in different learning environments?

5.3.1.- Home:

The biggest implication everyone shared with me was how this technology makes their lives easier especially when they had to do research or papers as homework. Overall, when at home, my Latinas’ participants used the computer to get information, to entertain, to communicate and to study.

“yo la uso principalmente para terminar trabajos que no termino aquí, buscar cosas en el Internet, como diccionario de palabras que no conozco.” (Alejandra, home interview)

*I use it principally to finish papers that I did not finish here (school). Also I look for things over the Internet like dictionary of words that I do not know.*

One remark in relation to why they sometimes do not perceive the computer world as vital for them was because they did not grow up using computers. In other words, they did not have a computer culture background in their life. They think this could definitely have affected their motivation sometimes in exploring and employing this technology more in all the aspects of their life and not basically as a practical tool.

“Yo realmente no fui criada con computadoras entonces no me hace una gran diferencia, es bien practico hacer papers en la computadora es más fácil buscar información en el Internet.” (Juanita, second-school interview)

*I really was not raised with computers, then for me, it is not a big difference. It is practical to do papers on the computer and easier to find information.*

One participant shared how other members of her family use the computer at home in different ways than the participant uses it.
“No…mis hermanos si juegan bastante, yo la uso para musica y para las cosas del colegio.” (Alejandra, home interview)

No...my brothers play a lot, I use it for music and for school stuff.

One thing many of them are learning to do is to download music and images. They learned from their friends and elder siblings.

“Mi hermana baja musica y fotos todo el tiempo yo estoy aprendiendo solamente, ella sabe mucho.” (Isabel, home interview)

My sister downloads music and photos all the time. I am just learning. She knows a lot.

The participants in this study use the different information communication technology tools in many ways, like instant messenger, e-mail, chat rooms, therefore, the implications varied a lot for each of them. One implication is definitely being in touch with friends from their home country or within local friends, sometimes being interrupted basically for the lack of the Internet access at home making these communication interactions complex.

“Antes nos mandábamos fotos y postcards todo el tiempo pero ahora no porque ya no tengo la computadora de mi prima…solo hablamos después en cuando puedo conseguir una computadora.” (Cecilia, home interview)

Before we sent photos and postcards all the time, but now no, because I do not have my cousin’s computer (before she had it in the house)...only talk when I can find a computer.

Another social implication the participants felt had to do with communication and entertainment purposes. One participant’s clear response encloses the main idea of the rest of this group. The games are more in English sites and the chat rooms they use are in Spanish basically.
“Para chatear, jugar juegos en el Internet.” (Gloria, second school-interview)

To chat and play games in the Internet.

“Me encantan los juegos de nickelodeon en el Internet y the cartoon network y los chat a los que voy son Latinos chats.” (Isabel, home interview)

I love to play Nickelodeon games and Cartoon Network games on the Internet and the chats I go to are Latinos.

5.3.2.- School

The Latinas in this study felt that they were motivated when they use technology in their classes or they had the opportunity to work with a computer. It was easier and faster to do school work. In the school they used the computers basically for typing, research, and finding specific information.

“En mi clase de business usamos el Internet para buscar informacion del cambio de monedas.” (Gabriela, second school interview)

In my business class we use the Internet to look for information to exchange money.

They do not see as many social impacts from using ICT in their school but from the real life school environment. They gave me many examples of the social impact of being part of a school which is very diverse like their high school which has a very multicultural school with Somalis, Ukrainians, Latinos and African Americans and white Americans. In one way, this environment is helping them to develop an appreciation of the value of this multiculturalism.

“Esta escuela tiene muchas nacionalidades, verdad? Y entonces cuando vamos a jugar con otras escuelas es… no es chistoso pero es curioso ver como este equipo de diferentes nacionalidades y todo esta jugando con un equipo de puras americanas.” (Alejandra, second school interview)
This school has a lot of nationalities, right? Then when we go to play with other schools, it is not funny but curious to see how this team of different nationalities and all is playing with the team of only Americans.

“entonces...tampoco no nos dicen nada ni comentario pero yo creo que es divertido jugar entre todas...ves la diferencia de un equipo de multiculturas y un equipo de puros americanos.” (Alejandra, second school-interview)

then ...neither they say anything nor a comment but I think that it is funny to play between us...you can see the difference between the multicultural team and the American team.

5.3.3.- Job

As stated previously, in relation to their workforce options in this group, they did not interact particularly with information communication technologies, however, all of them use the cellular phone as a safe tool to be in touch with their family in case of emergencies. This makes them feel comfortable in driving their cars to work and in coming from their jobs to their home late at night.

“Cuando yo vengo del trabajo y tengo el celular me siento tranquila de que si pasa cualquier cosa yo llamo y me van a ayudar.” (Gloria, home interview)

When I come from work and I have my cellular phone, I feel more relaxed. If something happened, I could call and they will come to help me.

5.4.- Do they construct a sense of community, or identity in these environments? Do they identify with cyberspace communities? Do they integrate these identities with their cultural identities?

Although they used the Internet, none of the participants felt they were part of an online community. Nevertheless, many of the chat rooms chosen by my participants where parts of larger communities like Latino/a, and religious communities.
“Yo no pertenezco a ninguna comunidad en el Internet.” (Juanita, home Interview)

I do not belong to any Internet community.

“si tengo dos amigos que chateo todo el tiempo, el me mando unas fotos yo no he podido enviarle uan foto. Es un chat latino y nunca doy mi nombre solo doy mi nicknames y despues que los conosco les doy mi nombre verdadero y mi e-mail.” (Daniela, second school-interview)

I have two friends that I chat with all the time. One sent me some photos and I have not been able to send a photo to him...it is a Latino chat and I never give my name I only use nicknames. Later when I know them I give them my real name and my e-mail.

5.4.1.- Home

In their homes they can relax and participate in the chat rooms because in schools or the library it is more difficult because of restrictions. It was fascinating to hear very naturally that some of them change their identities in relation to age, nationality and definitely names very easily when they are in the chat rooms and also they enjoy being an observer many times.

“Yo voy a Chat Latinos y yo me cambio la edad y la nacionalidad pero no siempre...al principio me preguntaba que habia adentro, me dio curiosidad para ver que hablan...aveces me la pasaba leyendo solamente.” (Kika, home interview)

I go to Latinos Chat and I like to change my age and nationality but not always...at the beginning I asked myself what was inside there; it gave me curiosity to see what they talked about...sometimes I read only”.

Language plays a very interesting part in the lives of these newly bilingual Latinas. There is a relationship between their proficiency in the English language and the time they have spent here.
“Todo en my AOL esta en Español pero las cosa del colegio las busco en Ingles y las personales las busco en Español para entenderlas major.” (Alejandra, interview)

Everything in my AOL is in Spanish but all the school stuff I found them in English and the personal I looked them in Spanish to understand better.

In the United States, around 13 million teenagers used Instant Messaging (IM) and this techno-communication has a key place in many of their lives. Talking to buddies online has become the information-age way for teens to hang out and/or be entertained. However, in my study only a couple of students use a lot this new technology, the majority knew about it but did not utilize it.

“si, tengo messenger cuando los veo me pongo a platicar con ellos, porque como estoy solita aquí con mi hermana solamente. Entonces lloro y me rio con ellos.”

(Daniela, home interview)

yes, I have Instant messenger when I see them I started talking with them, because I am alone with my sister here. Then I start crying and laughing with them.

Many of the Latinas of this study know about IM and they have screen names but they do not really use them, either because the lack of Internet connection at home and/or it is prohibited to make use of the instant messenger at the school.

“In AOL tengo screen names pero no me meto mucho si ellos me escriben..al principio si me metia mucho, pero no ahora.”

(Alejandra, home interview)

In AOL I have screen names but I do not go in so much if they write me only...at the beginning I used a lot but not now.

5.4.2.- School

The school is already a socially constructed environment that has different issues involved. Every time we talked about identity, they immediately said that they have not
changed since they came. All of them had a sense of pride to be from either Mexico, Ecuador or Dominica. Even the Mexican American participant was proud of having the two cultural identities in her.

“Yo estoy orgullosa de ser mejicana, yo amo a Acapulco.” (Karolina, first school interview)

I am proud to be Mexican, I love Acapulco.

During our interviews, it was very interesting that when we talked about discrimination subjects, they always said “it was not with me, but….” And then they would describe a situation where they felt there was an obvious discrimination incident. The lack of knowledge of a culture has been one point in seemingly discriminatory behaviors and some of the participants of this study felt that way. Therefore, the interpretation or justification of why sometimes in Ohio there was discrimination against Latinos/as was remarkable and mature from my point of view.

“conmigo no, pero yo creo que la gente en ohio es gente discriminadora, no estan acostumbrados a nosotros, por eso son asi” (Karolina, second school interview)

with me no, but I think that people in Ohio are racist because they are not used to us. This is why they are like that.

One aspect that I saw integrated into their cultural identity as Latinas was that their race did not matter or their origin. Here they were Latinas, especially in the school environment in which there are other minorities groups.

“A veces creen que soy morena, y yo les digo que no soy, que soy Latina.” (Cecilia, home interview)

Sometimes they believe I am black, and I tell them no, I am not, I am Latina.
Another interesting point was the lack of knowledge they felt people here had about their home countries with stereotypes and incorrect information about important events in their countries.

“Algunos americanos tienen una idea de como los mejicanos son que son borrachos, sucios y que tiene sombreros, esa no es la realidad. El cinco de mayo muchos americanos piensa que es nuestro día de independencia, cuando eso solo fue una batalla de puebla y nada más. Yo trato de corregirlos porque no saben bien las cosas.” (Alejandra, second school-interview)

Some Americans have the idea that Mexicans are drunker, dirty and have a big hat, this is not the reality. May fifth, many Americans believe that it is our Independence day, which is only a battle celebration of Puebla and nothing else. I try to correct them because they do not know well the things.

Especially during classes, the majority of the Latinas from the study share that they had good relationship and interactions with the rest of the other ethnic groups.

“Antes tenía más, pero ahora en mis clases que tengo ahora no tengo ningún latino que está tomando las mismas clases que yo, ando con los americanos muy bien. Me siento cómoda, porque aunque soy minoría me tratan bien y siempre me ayudan los maestros y los alumnos.” (Cecilia, home interview)

Before I had more (Latinos friends), but now in my classes that I have now I do not have any Latino/a friend that is taking my same classes. I am hanging out with American very well. I feel nice, because even I am a minority they treat me well and the teachers and students always help me.

Language is a glue to integrate different ethnic or multicultural groups.

“Yo ando con latinos más, pero también ando con los Somalis y Ukranian porque el ingles es lo que nos une...también con americanos.” (Alejandra, second school-interview)

I am with Latinos/as more but also I hang out with Somalis and Ukrainians because English is what make us together...also with Americans.
In the United States, Latinos/as need to construct a new cultural identity different from the one they had in their home countries. In the case of my Dominican student, she is African Dominican, therefore, here she has to deconstruct herself because of her race and also because of her ethnic background. Then she negotiates these identities beautifully.

“A mi con the black people no me gusta a veces la actitud que tienen de hablarte alto. Yo les digo que yo soy morena como ellos que no me tienen que hablar así, no me tienes que hablar con actitud entonces ellos me dicen okay. Yo les explico para no enojarme con ellos y les explico que no soy una blanca americana para que me traten asi. Yo me llevo bien con ellos entonces.” (Cecilia, home interview)

I do not like sometimes the attitude that sometimes Black people have when talking loud. I tell them I am black like you that they do not have to talk me with that attitude, then they said okay. I explain them so I do not get upset with them and explain them I am not a white American for them to treat me like that. Then, I have a good relationship with them.

5.4.3. - Job:

Young Latinos/as go to work to help their parents and themselves. They struggle with schoolwork and job duties plus, in the case of Latinas, they have to help at home with household chores. This situation is often overwhelming for them.

“Estoy cuidando niños en el daycare, no es tan difícil y voy a poder hacerlo mientras estudio porque antes estaba muy estresada en mis clases para poder graduarme tenía 8 horas y también trabajaba…no me daba tiempo de hacer nada estaba estresada y con lo de la casa también, por eso creo que ahora si me voy a graduar porque tengo solo poquitas clases y enfocadas para mis exámenes mi tutoring es una maravilla yo he mejorad muchísimo.” (Cecilia, home interview)

I am taking care of children in a daycare. It is not so difficult and I am going to be able to do it (continue studying). In the meantime because I was so stressed when I was studying before I had 8 hours and also working...I did not have time to do anything. I was very stressed and also with the house. Now, I think I can graduate because I am taking only a few classes and I am more focused in my tests and my tutor is wonderful. I have improved a lot.
5.5.- Is there an enlarging of power or an artificial power that becomes contracted in the everyday world?

During the whole process of the interviews and observations, they never said directly if they perceived an enlarging power or special power to any ICTs tools, but I perceived that they considered knowing and having computer skills an important factor in fulfilling their actual and future studies and to get a better life.

“Es incredible como ahora en la Universidad todo lo hago por el Internet, revisas las tareas y te comunicas con tus profesores por ahí, cada día es más necesario para uno usar el Internet.” (Juanita, home interview)

*It is incredible how now at the university everything that I do is in the Internet, review homework and communicate with professors through there, every day it is a necessity for us to use the Internet.*

The majority of these participants perceive the Internet as something that could help you to have a better future, translating into a better job.

The high school of the study does not yet have online courses; nor does it use any course management system for classes. I asked the students what they thought about the idea of online courses. These are some of their answers:

“a mi si me gustaría. Porque me sentiría cómoda con la información y la computadora y estaría tranquila en la casa.” (Adriana, home interview)

*I will like it because I will feel comfortable with the information and the computer and I will be tranquil in the house.*

“yo pienso que estaría bien, pero me gustaría más las clases tradicionales porque me gusta la interacción de la gente…ver las caras.” (Alejandra, home interview)

*I think that it would be fine, but I like more traditional classes because I like to interact with people...to see their faces.*

“Seria un poco mas facil, si…pero like, me gusta estar aquí (escuela)...I don’t know porque me aburriría enfrente de una computadora todo el día...por eso es
It would be a little easier, yes…but like…I like to be here (school)...I do not know because I will be bored in front of a computer the whole day...that’s why I stay only one, two or sometimes three hours.

I was able to observe that for those participants whose immigration status was not clear, they felt a desire to go back to their home country to study. They also felt that knowing a second language was an important acquisition for their future.

“I would like to return to Mexico partly because it is my native land...the education here is very good but I would like to return also...to study. Also if I study a lot of English I could go to Mexico and give English classes.

“Quizas voy al colegio aquí o si me regreso para la escuela en Mexico, tengo una prima alla y podriamos ir juntas a la Universidad.” (Adriana, home interview)

They felt the power of ICTs in their professional future reflecting the possibilities to see different environments or going to different places, including becoming part of the larger mainstream picture.

“We have a competition and if you win, you go to California to compete. If I give everything, I can win.” (Gloria, home interview)
Social cultural issues in relation to Latinos/as like immigration status are a significant part of the reason why these students cannot continue with their education as well as teenager pregnancy. In this study, we can see how my young Latinas had dreams of studying to become lawyers, medical doctors, business women, architects, or cosmetologist. Although at the end, they were working to get money for the day when they would get their papers, it would seem to represent an illusion and, in some cases, an impossible dream.

Some of my students’ comments in relation to discrimination issues were very interesting and empowering. They felt basically that they did not have to change their habits to be accepted by the mainstream. They also said that sometimes you may allow yourself to be mistreated because you feel less than them and this is not correct.

“con otras personas que tal vez que no serian capases de decirles algo verdad? … a responder algo y decirle el comentario no estuvo bien o algo no? Pero yo siento que son asi hacia la gente que esta como mas abajo o piensan que estan mas abajo y no son capaces de decirles algo.” (Alejandra, second school-interview)

with other people that may be not capable of responding back, right?...when responding something and telling them that their comment was not correct or something, no? But, I feel that they are like that with people they believe they are lower and not capable of defending themselves.

Language in relation to cultural interactions and participation is very important because it makes you feel that you can defend yourself and be treated like anyone else.

“Aja, porque un americano con un americano si se va a voltear y le va a decir y no se, se van a poner a dialogar pero un hispano no le puede decir tal vez tanto sino “ok” y voy a la oficina y me cambio y ya.” (Alejandra, second school interview)

Because an American with another American will turn around to respond and I do not know but at least they will dialog. But a Hispanic cannot tell him anything, only okay and they will go to the office and do whatever it was ask to do.
Members of the same ethnic group give you a level of comfort in environments in which you are not used to interacting.

“y tambien la gente al verlo uno, se le hace raro ver a Hispanos por esos lugares pero cuando vas a tiendas normales donde hay Hispanos como que te sientes con mas confianza.”  (Alejandra, home interview)

*Also when people see you they think is strange to see Hispanics for those places but when you go to normal stores in where there are Hispanics you feel with more confident.*

Also, it is very interesting how they interpreted situations with other Latinos/as. In some circumstances, if these situations happened in other environments or with other ethnic groups, they could be considered as racist remarks.

“En algunas tiendas latinas cuando ando con el pelo suelto y me pongo hablar con mi prima en ingles y después a pagar les hablo en español se sorprenden y me dicen yo crei que tu eras morena. Y yo les digo no chica yo hablo español como tu porque soy dominicana”…“yo no he sentido discriminación, sino sorpresa de parte de los mejicanos, como todos somos minoria todos nos apoyamos bastante y compartimos.” (Cecilia, home interview)

*In some Latinas/os store when I leave my hair untied and start talking with my cousin in English, then when I paid I spoke in Spanish to the cashier, they get very surprised. They said to me, I thought you were an African American. And I told them, no I speak Spanish like you because I am Dominican…I have not felt discrimination, only surprise from part of the Mexicans, we all are minority so we support and share with each other.*

One aspect in the Latino/a culture is that even as they are become more integrated as one ethnic group, there are still differences related to ethnic origins that are obvious for them. The Dominican participant expressed this situation in a very friendly way.

“Pues ellas piensan que yo soy muy loca porque tu sabes que uno se la pasa moviendose de un lugar a otro, que no podemos estar sentadas y no hablando, yo
siento que voy a explotar si no hablo…y les digo que quieres que haga que este como tu que parece que el novio salió.” (Cecilia, home interview)

Well, they think I am crazy because you know that we spend all the time moving from one place to other, that we cannot sit down and not talking. I feel I will explode if I do not talk...then I tell them what do you want me to do be like you that seems like the boyfriend left.

Nowadays, the single household situation is very common across classes and races but in this ethnic group I found that the lack of one member is usually because of the distance, therefore, the idealization of that member is very strong.

“Yo hablo con mi papa todo el tiempo por teléfono y espero que cuando se me arreglen los papeles lo pueda ir a conocer…es mi sueño.” (Gloria, home interview)

I talk all the time with dad on the phone and I hope that when I fix my papers and I can go and meet him. This is my dream.

“En general, me siento sola porque no tengo a mi mamá que me este apoyando en todo. Tengo que estar yo sola diciéndome sigue adelante, aprende inglés, me voy a sacar la licencia de manejar, etc.” (Cecilia, home interview)

In general, I feel very lonely because I do not have my mom that is supporting me all the time. I have to be alone telling me to go forward, learn English, get your drive license, etc.

In relation to living in Ohio, they had different opinions from loving the calm and tranquil city to not enjoying the lack of diversity. But a common thought was that it was a safe place to live.

“Aqui me siento comoda y por ejemplo, en otros estados de EEUU que a mi me gusta mucho el estado de Ohio porque es muy tranquilo…mas que California.” (Juanita, second school-interview)

Here I feel more comfortable than other states in the U.S., I like Ohio a lot because it is very peaceful ...more than California.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1.- Summary of the study

In the beginning of the new millennium, information and communication technologies have started to interweave our lives in powerful ways to create alternatives to conventional communication, entertainment and information options. There has been a discourse in which societal leaders exhorted educators to adopt and integrate digital tools on a large scale in their teaching activities and their student-parent communications (Castell, 2002). In 1998, people began to discuss the digital divide and how the gap between the haves and have-nots could be reduced (Noll, 2000).

A report from the U.S. General Accounting Office (2001) expressed that the "Digital Divide" may have serious economic consequences for disadvantaged minority groups as information technology skills become increasingly important in the labor market, and that the Internet is "expected to become a primary medium for communications, commerce, education, and entertainment in the 21st century" (U.S. General Accounting Office, 2001). As of 2003, Hispanics/Latinos/as have officially surpassed African Americans as the United States' largest minority group, according to figures released by the U.S. Census Bureau (2003). In the same report, it was expressed
that the Latino/a population has been extended or growing not only in metropolitan America, but changing demographic patterns in new locations such as in the Midwest.

It was in this context that this study originated with an intention to add insights to the understanding of the Latino/a community especially in relation to young Latinas and how the use of communication technology and related new technologies in the young Latina population interact in their home, school life, and workplace. Taking into consideration the social and cultural background of this group of Latinas and my own identity as a Latina led me to the decision to choose case study qualitative research methodology to be able to make their voices heard in showing the different realities in ICT connectivity, uses, and all the sociocultural complexities like language, family values and immigration status. All the data collection through observations and interviews was collected primarily in Spanish at their school and homes.

6.2.- Important Findings and Related Issues

The research data were analyzed using N.U.D.I.S.T., a qualitative data analysis tool, and the findings were reported in two different levels. In Chapter 4, the results were reported as narratives giving a whole picture of each of the participants and in chapter 5, the actual words of the participants were reported according to themes and categories that surfaced in the analysis and the initial questions guiding the study. In this section, a few important findings discussed in the previous chapters will be highlighted in an effort to position them in the context of related literature of which this study is a part.
6.2.1.- Access and Type of Technology

Access to technology is very important to considerations of its use. Physical access, proximity to an Internet-enabled computer, mobile phone, television or other ICT device, is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for access. It is, however, important to determine the quality of such access. In this study, more than half of participants own a computer (PCs), all of them had a TV and DVD at home and some of them had cellular phones. However, the quality of this access in the majority of the households was poor, with lack of Internet connection and bad functioning of the machine due to either poorly maintained or old equipment. The participants’ most effective access was either at the library, at the community center or at the school. Moreover, in their actual work environments, they had access only to the new technology tools of a computerized cash register and bar code scanners.

6.2.2.- Construction of Identity and Sense of Community

All the participants responded negatively to having a sense of community in cyberspace but later when they were asked if they used chat interactions with strangers, the majority of them responded positively. As a noteworthy point, all of them have a preference for chat rooms for people of the same ethnicity (Latino/a) or same religion (Catholic/Christian).

In the construction of their identities in cyberspace, in all cases, they changed their name and in some cases they tried changing their nationality and age; only in one case did one change her gender. Also, it was very worthy of notice that even the Latinas who have been here only a couple of months expressed in different ways that they were
part of a bigger community, Latinos/as, although, they have never lost their appreciation of their individual ethnic group. In some cases like the Dominican participant, she had to negotiate her race identity with other minority groups and as well as with her own ethnic group.

6.2.3.- Social and Personal Implications of ICT

Eamon (2004) has a very interesting finding in his study analyzing a national data sample of more than a thousand young adolescents; he found that low income youths who own a computer use it more often for non-academic purposes than they do academics. My results are different. Even though my participants also use it for personal purposes, the main purpose was always to fulfill school work first and then later for entertainment, communication and information functions. This may be a gender effect, or it may happen that after they get a better Internet connection they will follow the Eamon study results.

Another social implication could be related to family income explaining roughly the gap in Internet use conditional on having a home computer, because even though they use chat rooms, and e-mail interactions, the majority did not grow up in households with a lot of resources making the first computer interaction typically at their schools. Now, the majority of them are discovering as a family the uses and importance of the Internet in their lives; some of them help or are helped by their siblings and parents to explore this cyberspace for different purposes. But, so far none of them uses the Internet with banking, purchase or selling intentions.

Language barriers may be important in explaining computer and Internet uses among Latinos/as. As well as preferences in what to find on the Internet, the students
who were really bilingual used sites in both languages for different purposes like games and school activities in English and chats in Spanish, at least, with persons of the same ethnicity.

The majority of the Latinas in this study felt that the new technology made life easier in relation to finding information for their school work and in general the participants felt motivated to study and learn during either their school activities inside the school or outside when using computers especially the internet to study and/or get information to complement any of their school assignments. Also, new technology kept them in touch with their relatives and friends either from their home countries or from here with e-mails and chats rooms. Another important personal implication was safety issues in relation to having cellular phones. They felt secure in working late and being able to communicate with their relatives when they had any difficulty.

In addition, adolescents frequently use IT for recreational purposes such as playing video-games (Fairlie, 2002) and in this case only two of the participants really said that they played video games on the computer a lot for that purpose but their siblings, especially their brothers used it more, not only on the computer but also with video game machines. The games the Latinas enjoyed the most were games of racecars and solving problem.

6.2.4.- Connection vs. Disconnection of ICTs

Connection refers to hardware and software that will allow the users to interact with any information communication technology. In the majority of the cases, the students used browsers to get started on the Internet. The Latinas in my study had the
possibility to use computers in the school library lab and in rooms where they had any
class. The students who took ESL classes used the computers to practice
vocabulary and improve their grammatical structure but those computers did not have
Internet connection. In the majority of the other computer labs used at the school, they
had Internet connection but the students were able to use the Internet only if they had to
do research or complete a homework assignment.

The Internet connections in the school were very important for the schoolwork of
many of the Latinas of this study who do not have computers at home or whose
technology was integrated into the curriculum. Some uses were simulations,
keyboarding and PowerPoint presentations. Also, they used computers for Internet-based
research during lessons as well after their classes for homework assignments.

Many of my Latina participants have or have had Internet connection at home; the
majority felt that if at least they had the possibility of being connected in the school that
was enough. They felt that if they were disconnected at home there were other
possibilities to fulfill the Internet activities they did at home.

Another ICT tool offering them the alternative to be connected was cellular
phones. In this case, they used them primarily to communicate verbally and rarely or
never used text messenger.

Connection to the Internet represented for some of the Latinas participants the
possibilities of creating other realities. For some of them this means only other places
different from their home and in some cases it means the possibility to interact with other
people. One interesting finding was that they had an awareness that the Internet
relationships were different from real face-to-face interactions. They did not feel they were really friends until they had many interactions and proof of identity.

6.2.5- A Bigger and/or Artificial Power to ICTs

In Eamon’s (2004) study, teenagers thought that owning a computer was critically important, and more than 80% of these youths believed strong computer skills and IT knowledge were necessary for them to make a good living in the future. My participants expressed similar perceptions. The Latinas in this study felt that computer knowledge and the acquisition of a new language were powerful tools in their professional future giving them the possibility not only of good jobs but also to explore other environments.

Although my participants never had the experience of online interaction with their teachers at school, they thought that the idea of online courses was a very appealing alternative to regular classes. From their responses, I think they would prefer blended courses which offered you face-face interaction also.

6.2.6.- Social and Cultural Challenges in the Lives of Latinos/as

Immigration status is one of the biggest challenges of this Latino/a community. This situation can definitely change their educational future after high school. When they go to the university or college they have to use their social security number to register; therefore, if they came to this country without a visa they cannot get a social security number which means that they cannot register for any financial aid or university admission. As a result, they try to get in any technical institute that does not ask for those requirements and/or start working in factories, chain restaurants, or any job in which they
do not do an extensive check of their legal papers. From this group of Latinas, I only have one citizen and one legal resident with a green card. So far, only these two students have been able to begin the next level in the education system. The rest are waiting for their legal papers and some of them have the idea of perhaps going to their country of origin to continue their educational life.

Language acquisition is a challenge for new immigrants because they have to live between two or more different languages. Being able to speak fluently in a second language allows learners to interact with the mainstream society and not only with their own ethnic group. Also, it gives the new learner a sense of empowerment when he or she is able to express their ideas, needs and desires. The participants who were bilingual since they were little do not really understand the problems of being fluent in your second language; however all the participants that have been aware of the acquisition process of the second language notice the empowerment and benefits that they get when they become fluent in English.

In relation to family values, it is important for my participants that in coming to this country from other places their parents sacrificed to give them opportunities that would be difficult for them to get in their countries of origin. Therefore, the majority of my participants felt that they had to contribute or respond to this sacrifice by studying and trying to have a better life than their parents had. In some cases, they had to work also to contribute to their family financial situation; in other cases they were asked to study only now and after finishing their study to work. The Latinas of this study help their mothers with the household chores and the one who lives with her father is in charge of the majority of the household chores.
6.3.- Implications of the study

As researcher, I hope to contribute to the literature on new immigrants Latinas and Information Communication Technologies (ICT). This research was done with the idea of including race, gender and technology in an area that is still rarely explored with one of the biggest minority groups in the United States.

In relation to the digital divide, there is now an alternative argument that although the most obvious divide (the degree to which those using the Internet are demographically unrepresentative) may be closing, other more subtle divides are emerging. These relate to the quality of access, the ability to use the Internet effectively and the way Internet use affects access to goods and services (Warschauer, Knobel, & Stone, 2004; Damarin, 2000). In this study, we can see how the new immigrant Latinas deal with the factors of access and uses of the Internet in their lives. Many of these differences are associated with patterns of advantage and disadvantage between social groups; in this small group we can see that these patterns are represented in the different social, and educational backgrounds of the participants and their families. Liff and Shepperd (2004) see technology as a potential route out of exclusion, such as through access to jobs, and hence express concern that its absence will reinforce disadvantages. In this study the Latinas interpretations of the quality of their future possible jobs and the better quality of life are similar, and one thing is added, that is, the importance of language acquisition and performance.

Latinos/as are a heterogeneous group. It is well known, for example, that economic and educational outcomes differ greatly across Latino/a groups (Fairlie, 2003).
And this study was not an exception to this situation. This is important not to forget in relation to this community. Knowing how they use information communication technologies can help to integrate Latinos/as into the advantaged group using these technologies in different areas like education, software development, the workforce and business.

6.3.1.- Pedagogical Implications

I hope this study’s pedagogical contribution is to explore some issues that concern a population such as the Latinas with substantial complexities. As teachers, we need to find ways of helping to bridge the gap between the minority students and the mainstream students. They have different needs and issues evolving in their homes in relation to language, and cultural adaptation to a new environment. I hope that this case study will contribute with information of how Latinas uses and access the Internet so their teachers can see how these students can be reached in other ways.

One example is how much the participants were motivated by using PowerPoint to have a greater engagement through multimedia. If we think we are competing in the education field with the outside world of hours filled with images, video, sound, music, and animation, it is unrealistic to expect students to give up all these things when they walk through the school door. I agree with Warschauer (2006) when he says that working with multimedia on a daily basis in school creates higher levels of student engagement and engaged students spend more time on task, work more independently, enjoy learning more, and take part in a greater variety of learning activities at school and at home.
6.3.2.- Methodological Implications

I chose to tell the stories of these twelve Latinas in a qualitative research respecting their voices, and trying to give as much detail as possible for the reader to feel they were part of this descriptive process, it was a beginning hopefully of a long commitment on my part in this research area. The level of complexity of the findings of this study would not have been possible to obtain through quantitative research. I hope that this study will create other possible research options to obtain more details in the area of Latinos/as and technology not only qualitative studies but also quantitative studies.

6.4.- Reflections on the Research Process and Researcher Role.

I think I have learned a lot about myself as a researcher. When I first started this study I was clear that I wanted to make my dissertation in the are of Latinos/as and technology, however, living in the Midwest it was very important to find a school if not with a high percentage of Latinos/as at least with a considerable percentage rate. In my case, I began looking for that school and finally I found one. After, I had all the paper work including IRB approval was done, I started going to the school to observe and begin the collection of the data. After being there the first time and interacting with the students I realized I was going to confront many issues that even though I was also a Latina who shares the same language, I had not anticipated. I had a very different up-bringing than the majority of my participants. Therefore, when we started the interview process I felt that I had to win their trust. Language was a very important part because the majority of the participants were from Mexico and Spanish was their mother tongue, if I did not
understand something I could ask them to use a synonymous to help me to understand. This is a very common issue that many Latinos/as experience in this country because Spanish is very broad and wide in vocabulary.

During the whole process of the collection and analysis of the data, I think I understood why people say that qualitative research is a way of letting all the voices be heard. I believe that in qualitative research there is an important part that is told that cannot be told in any other way. I felt that through me these young Latinas where telling their realities, which perhaps is the same reality of many other young Latinas here in the U.S. I felt I had some advantage in doing this research because, like the participants, I am a woman, Catholic, Latina and newcomer to the U.S. However, during the process of doing this research I was constantly reminded of my privilege of being white in Latin America.

Even in my country I felt this a little, though never so strongly until I was conducting the interviews. In Latin America we maintain that skin color is not a privilege. But this is not true. It is different than here because we are a Mestizo society. Even in my own family, we have a combination of ethnic group indigenes, Spanish, Italian, Scottish, German and African descendents.

I also saw myself interpreting things differently because now I have a different lens from the past. I saw myself analyze the interviews, and the school interactions as Latina who has white privilege in her own country but here she is a woman of color with all the implications of being a minority. During this whole process, I had a critical postcolonial point of view: How much of what we have denied ourselves has affected us emotionally, intellectually and socially? Seeing them behaving with me at the beginning,
with respect and distance, was like seeing myself acting a part with some white Americans. I had to gain their trust looking for the similarities in language and family values, which I felt was very open and trustworthy. Also, the postcolonial woman that is in me reacted the same way that these women reacted to me. But being aware of that helped me to understand other issues and it was possible to create a connection with them because of this awareness.

Being immersed in this community and the accepted behaviors toward women made me feel very strongly why I decided to study and have a different life. Yet, I also saw the beautiful warm Hispanic spirit that I miss so much and I felt a purpose for me to stay here and begin this line of research.

6.5.- Limitations of the Study

In my country there is a saying that even if you contribute with small drops that’s enough because a lot of them will fill a glass of water. Therefore, even though there are many ways that I would do again this dissertation process I will say that I am aware of the limitations of a case study for generalizations but this was one reason why I chose this type of methodology. I wanted a snapshot of the reality of one community. Only two participants were here long enough to be a citizen and a legal resident, half of the participants where new immigrants of no more than 3 years. Therefore, even though I think this is important study because this is an example of one of the realities that involves the Latinos/as minority group it does not perhaps represent well the rest of Latinos/as who are second, third and fourth generations in this country. Nor does it
represent Latinas from other ethnic backgrounds that were not represented in this study, such as Puerto Ricans, Cubans, Colombians, and others.

Now that access to high-speed connections, such as DSL and cable modems have incredible rates, this may represent an emerging dimension of the digital divide. Perhaps now with the more competitive contracts that we can get because of the reduced rate, Latinos/as could be more connected to the Internet, not like in my study where for all the participants who had Internet, the connection was dial-up.

6.6.- Recommendations for Future Research

It will be important to create more research in which to examine whether ethnic and racial differences in the most likely "suspects" -- family income, education, occupation, gender, and family structure -- have independent effects on disparities in home computer and Internet use. To date, we know very little about the importance of these potential causes.

While this study intentionally limited the participants to High School Latinas, performing similar research for different educational background characteristics will be interesting.

A follow-up research study of the same participants would be an interesting study, with more time spent in the U.S., more ICT experiences, and possibly higher linguistic proficiency to see their new uses and connectivities with new technologies and the impact in their lives.

Under a qualitative methodological framework, this study limited the research participants to twelve Latinas students so as to maintain close distance between the
researcher and the participants throughout the study and delivery. While generalization to a larger number of people has never been intended, researchers seeking for it may choose to utilize the results from this study. Using the findings of this study, one could develop a questionnaire and conduct a survey study of larger sample size.
REFERENCE


http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue7_1/castell/


Slavin, R. E & Calderon, M. (2001) *Effective Programs for Latino Students*


APPENDIX A

RESEARCH LETTERS AND INFORMED CONSENT
RECRUITMENT LETTER

Dear Parents:

Ohio State University researchers, Dr. Suzanne Damarin and Luisa E. Lara are interested in conducting a study on how ethnicity and technology influence the lives of young Latinas. Dr. Damarin is a professor at Ohio State University; she is the principal investigator and Luisa is a graduate student.

With your permission, we would like your daughter to participate in this research study. The requested time for her participation is 10 hours over a span of two months. The two months involve two individual interviews with each girl and a focus group interview with all the participants of the study. If you allow your daughter to participate, we also ask that she write in the journal provided for a month. In the journal, she can write thoughts and feelings about the Internet or any other technological device. Her thoughts and feelings can be a single word, a single sentence or more than one sentence or a drawing.

Luisa will audiotape the interviews which will take place in the school’s conference room and at the usual location where she uses the Internet outside school. For the interview, she should bring her journal. Luisa will be the only person who will read it. We assure you that her journal and interview responses will be kept confidential. Following the interview, transportation will be provided so your child can get home safely.

If you allow your daughter to participate, she should return the consent form by Monday, ___________. If there are large numbers of girls interested in the study, participants will be randomly selected thus your daughter may not end up actually participating in the study. I am, however thanking you in advance for your show of support.

If your daughter is selected, her participation is voluntary and she can stop at any time without penalty. All responses will be kept confidential and no names will be used in the final documentation. If your daughter does not have access to a home computer, that is perfectly fine.

I will arrange a convenient time with you and your child as the interview weeks approach. If you are interested in having your daughter participate, both you and your child should sign the attached consent form. I will contact you if your daughter is selected. If you have any questions, you can contact me at (614) 291-6845 or Dr. Damarin at (614) 292-7845.

Thanks for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Luisa E. Lara
CARTA DE RECLUTAMIENTO E INFORMACION

Estimados Padres:

Los investigadores de la Universidad del Estado de Ohio, Dra. Suzanne Damarin y Luisa E. Lara están interesadas en conducir un estudio en cómo la etnia y tecnología influyen la vida de jóvenes Latinas. La Dra. Damarin es una profesor en la Universidad del Estado de Ohio; ella es la investigador principal y Luisa es una estudiante graduada.

Con su permiso, nosotros querríamos que su hija tome parte en este estudio de investigación. El tiempo solicitado para su participación es aproximadamente 10 horas sobre un espacio de dos meses. Los dos meses implican dos entrevistas individuales con cada chica y una entrevista del grupo focus con todos los participantes del estudio. Si usted permite a su hija participar, nosotros también pedimos que ella escriba un diario proporcionalmente durante un mes. En el diario, ella puede escribir los pensamientos y los sentimientos acerca de la Internet o cualquier otro aparato tecnológico. Sus pensamientos y sentimientos pueden ser una sola palabra, una sola oración o más de una oración o un dibujo.

Luisa grabará en audiotapes las entrevistas que sucederán en la escuela y en la ubicación usual donde ella utiliza la Internet fuera de la escuela. Para la entrevista, ella debe traer su diario. Luisa será la única persona que lo leerá. Les aseguramos a ustedes que las respuestas del diario y las entrevistas serán mantenidas confidencial. Siguiendo a la entrevista, si es necesario el transporte será proporcionado para que su hija pueda llegar a casa segura.

Si usted permite a su hija participar, ella debe devolver la forma de autorización para el lunes, _________. Si hay muchas chicas interesadas en el estudio, las participantes serán escogidas aleatoriamente quizás su hija no pueda acabar por tomar parte en el estudio. Sin embargo, les agradezco de antemano por su apoyo.

Si su hija es escogida, su participación es voluntaria y ella puede parar en cualquier momento sin castigo alguno. Todas las respuestas se mantendrán confidenciales y ningún nombre se utilizará en la documentación final. Si su hija no tiene acceso a una computadora en la casa, eso es perfectamente normal.

Arreglaré un tiempo conveniente con usted y con su hija para las entrevistas. Si usted esta interesado que su hija participe, ambos usted y su hija deben firmar las formas de consentimientos. Yo lo contactaré si su hija es escogida. Si usted tiene cualquiera pregunta, usted me puede contactar en el (614) 291-6845 o a la Dra. Damarin en el (614) 292-7845.

Gracias por su consideración. Espero saber pronto de usted,

Luisa E. Lara
STUDENT RECRUITMENT LETTER

Dear Students,

I am writing to you because I am very interested in understanding how you use and learn through the Internet, how you use technology in your life and what type of communication devices you use. I have been approved for my research on “Communities and technologies: Young Latinas in the new millennium” by your school. I am Luisa Elena Lara, a doctoral student at The Ohio State University. My advisor is Dr. Suzanne Damarin.

I am looking for participants for my research and would like to invite you whether you can participate in it. Participants of my study will participate in having two individual interviews with me, a focus group and keeping a log journal. All interviews will be conducted either in the school, public library, community center or your home. I will use all of this data for the academic purpose of this research. You have a right to require me not to use them or parts of them if you decide that it is a private issue.

I am looking forward to your participation. Please, talk with your parents and make a decision voluntarily. Please, don’t hesitate to contact me (Tel. 614-292-3699) if you have any questions.

Thanks for your consideration.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Luisa E. Lara
CARTA DE RECLUTAMIENTO DEL ESTUDIANTE

Estimados estudiantes,

Les Escribo porque estoy muy interesada en comprender cómo utilizan y aprenden en el Internet, cómo utilizan la tecnología en su vida y qué tipo de aparatos de comunicación utilizan. Mi investigación “las Comunidades y las tecnologías: Latinas Joven en el milenio nuevo” ha sido aprobado por su escuela. Soy Luisa Elena Lara, una estudiante doctoral de La Universidad del Estado de Ohio. Mi consejera es la Dr. Suzanne Damarin.

Busco a participantes para mi investigación y quería invitarle a usted en tomar parte en ella. Los participantes de mi estudio tomarían parte de la siguiente manera: dos entrevistas individuales conmigo, un grupo focus y mantener un diario. Todas las entrevistas serán conducidas o en la escuela, la biblioteca pública, el centro de la comunidad o su hogar. Utilizaré todos estos datos solo con el propósito académico de esta investigación. Usted tiene el derecho de pedirme no utilizarlos ni las partes de ellos, si usted decide, que es un asunto privado.

Espero su participación. Por favor, hable con sus padres y tomen una decisión voluntaria. Por favor no vacilen en contactarme (Teléfono 614-292-3699) Si usted tiene cualquiera pregunta.

Gracias por su consideración.

Espero saber pronto de usted.

Sinceramente,

Luisa E. Lara
CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH

Protocol title: Communities and technologies: Young Latinas in the new millennium
Protocol number: 2004B0078
Principal Investigator: Dr. Suzanne Damarin

I consent to my child's participation in the research being conducted by Luisa Elena Lara of The Ohio State University under the direction of Professor Suzanne Damarin.

The investigator has explained the purpose of the study, the procedures that will be followed, and the amount of time it will take. I understand the possible benefits, if any, of my participation and my child’s participation.

I know that my child and I can choose not to participate without penalty to me or my child. If we agree to participate, we can withdraw from the study at any time, and there will be no penalty.

I consent to the use of audiotapes and/or videotapes. I understand how the tapes will be used for this study.

I have had a chance to ask questions and to obtain answers to my questions. I can contact the investigators at 291-6845 or 292-7845. If I have questions about my rights as a research participant, I can call the Office of Research Risks Protection at (614) 688-4792.

I have read this form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

Print the name of the participant:

_______________________________________________________________

Date: 

Signed: ______________________________________

(Person authorized to consent for participant)

Signed: ______________________________________

(Principal Investigator or his/her authorized representative)
AUTORIZACIÓN PARA LA PARTICIPACION EN UNA INVESTIGACION SOCIAL Y CONDUCTISTA

Título del protocolo: Comunidades y tecnologías: Jovenes Latinas en el nuevo milenio
Número del protocolo: 2004B0078
Investigador Principal: Dr. Suzanne Damarin

Autorizó la participación de mi hija en la investigación conducida por Luisa Elena Lara de La Universidad del Estado de Ohio bajo la dirección de la Profesora Suzanne Damarin.

La investigadora ha explicado el propósito del estudio, los procedimientos que se seguirán, y la cantidad de tiempo que tomará. Entiendo los beneficios posibles, si cualquiera, de mi participación y de mi hija.

Sé que mi hija y yo podemos escoger no participar sin ningún castigo a mí ni a mi hija. Si aceptamos en participar, podemos retirarnos del estudio en cualquier momento, y no habrá castigo alguno.

Autorizó el uso de audiotapes. Entiendo cómo que las cintas se utilizarán para este estudio.

He tenido oportunidades de hacer preguntas y obtener respuestas a mis preguntas. Puedo contactar a los investigadores en 291-6845 o 292-7845. Si tengo preguntas acerca de mis derechos como un participante de una investigación, puedo llamar a la Oficina de Protección y Riesgos de la Investigación al (614) 688-4792.

He leído esta forma. La firmo libremente y voluntariamente. Una copia me ha sido entregada.

Imprima el nombre del participante:

________________________________________________________________________
Fecha: ____________________________________________________________________
Firma: ___________________________________________________________________
(Persona autorizada para consentir la participación del sujeto)

(Investigador Principal o su representante autorizado)

________________________________________________________________________
STUDENT ASSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH

Protocol title: Communities and technologies: Young Latinas in the new millennium

I agree to participate in the study being conducted by Luisa Elena Lara of The Ohio State University under the direction of Professor Suzanne Damarin.

She has explained to me all the parts of this study. Also, she has made clear to me what my participation will be like and how much time it will involve for me.

I know that I can choose not to participate without punishment for my family or myself. Even though I am agreeing to participate, I can quit the study at any time, and there will be no penalty.

I agree to the use of audiotapes and to writing in a journal. I understand how the tapes will be used for this study.

I have had a chance to ask questions and to obtain answers to my questions. I can contact the investigators at (614) 291-6845 or (614) 292-7845 if I have any question.

I have read this form. I sign of my own free will. A copy has been given to me.

Print the name of the participant:

______________________________________________________________

Date: ____________________________  Signed: ____________________________

Signed:

(Principal Investigator or his/her authorized representative)
FORMA DE ACEPTACIÓN DEL ESTUDIANTE PARA PARTICIPAR EN UNA INVESTIGACIÓN SOCIAL Y CONDUCTISTA

Título de la investigación: Comunidades y tecnologías: Jovenes Latinas en el nuevo milenio

Acepto tomar parte en el estudio conducido por Luisa Elena Lara de La Universidad del Estado de Ohio bajo la dirección de la Profesora Suzanne Damarin.

Ella me explicó todas las partes de este estudio. También, ella me aclaró cómo mi participación será y cuánto tiempo implicará para mí. Sé acerca de los beneficios posibles, de mi participación, si hay alguno.

Sé que puedo escoger no participar sin ningún castigo para mi familia ni para mi mismo. Aunque, este de acuerdo en participar, puedo dejar el estudio en cualquier momento, y no habrá ningún castigo.

Acepto al uso de audiotapes y de lo que escriba en el diario. Entiendo cómo las cintas serán utilizadas para este estudio.

He tenido oportunidades de hacer preguntas y de obtener respuestas a mis preguntas. Puedo contactar a los investigadores en (614) 291-6845 o (614) 292-7845 si tengo cualquier pregunta.

He leído esta forma y firmó por voluntad propia. He recibido una copia.

Escriba el nombre del participante:

______________________________________________________________

Fecha:                                                                 Firma:

______________________________________________________________  (Participante)

Firma:

______________________________________________________________

(Investigador principal o su representante)
RECRUITMENT LETTER

April, 2004
Subject: Research Study

Dear Teacher:

Ohio State University researchers, Dr. Suzanne Damarin and Luisa Elena Lara are interested in conducting a study on how ethnicity and technology influence the lives of young Latinas. Dr. Damarin is a professor at Ohio State University; she is the principal investigator and Luisa is a doctoral student.

I am interested in having an interview with you in relation of what you think concerning your Latinas students interaction in the computer lab and in the use of new technology at the school. I think your contribution will give me a broad understanding and knowledge of your Latinas students.

The participation schedule is April - May, 2004. Your participation is voluntary and you can stop at any time without penalty. All responses are confidential and no names will be used in the final documentation. I will be more than happy to give you more information if you need it.

If you are interested in participating, please sign the provided consent form. If questions arise later, you can contact me at (614) 292-3699 or Dr. Damarin at (614) 292-7845.

Thank you,

Luisa Elena Lara
TEACHER CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN
SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH

Protocol title: Communities and technologies: Young Latinas in the new millennium
Protocol number: 2004B0078
Principal Investigator: Dr. Suzanne Damarin

I consent to my participation in research conducted by Luisa Elena Lara of The Ohio State University.

The investigator has explained the purpose of the study, the procedures that will be followed, and the amount of time it will take. I understand the possible benefits, if any, of my participation.

I know that I can choose not to participate without penalty to me. If I agree to participate, I can withdraw from the study at any time, and there will be no penalty.

I consent to the use of audiotapes. I understand how the tapes will be used for this study.

I have had a chance to ask questions and to obtain answers to my questions. If I have further questions, I can contact Luisa E. Lara at (614) 292-3699 or Dr. Damarin at (614) 292-7845. If I have questions about my rights as a research participant, I can call the Office of Research Risks Protection at (614) 688-4792.

I have read this form or I have had it read to me. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

Print the name of the participant:

Date: ________________________________ Signed: ________________________________

(Participant)

Signed: ________________________________

(Principal Investigator or his/her authorized representative)

Signed: ________________________________

(Person authorized to consent for participant, if required)

Witness: ________________________________

(When required)
APPENDIX B

CATEGORIES AND SUBCATEGORIES
CODING BOOK
Categories and Subcategories (coding)
1= Index Tree
2=(1) **DATA BASE**
3=(1 1) Nationality
4=(1 1 1) Mexican
5=(1 1 2) Dominican
6=(1 1 3) Ecuadorian
7=(1 2) Grade
8=(1 2 1) 9th
9=(1 2 2) 10th
10=(1 2 3) 11th
11=(1 2 4) 12th
12=(1 3) Computer
13=(1 3 1) Computer but not internet
14=(1 3 2) Computer with internet
15=(1 3 3) No computer
16=(1 4) First use of computer
17=(1 5) Generation
18=(1 6) Knowledge of computer
19=(1 6 1) Excellent
20=(1 6 2) Regular
21=(1 6 3) good
22=(1 7) family unit
23=(1 7 1) single parent household
24=(1 7 2) Two parents household
25=(2) **SCHOOL**
26=(2 1) Type of technology and access
27=(2 1 1) PC
28=(2 1 1 1) Old
29=(2 1 1 2) New
30=(2 1 2) Use and access
31=(2 1 2 1) Only in class
32=(2 1 2 2) Teacher permission
33=(2 1 2 3) teacher uses in class
34=(2 1 2 4) to make homework
35=(2 1 3) cellular
36=(2 1 4) IM
37=(2 1 4 1) family
38=(2 1 4 2) no really
39=(2 1 4 3) friends
40=(2 1 5) e-mail
41=(2 1 6) chat
42=(2 2) Social and Personal Implications ICT
43=(2 2 1) Social and family expectations in education
44=(2 2 2) Immigration Status
45=(2 2 3) Cultural identity
46=(2 2 3 1) Discrimination
47=(2 2 3 2) school interactions
48=(2 2 3 2 1) Latinos
49=(2 2 3 2 2) other minorities
50=(2 2 3 2 3) Caucasian
51=(2 2 3 3) Language
52=(2 2 3 4) influence Cultural identity
53=(2 2 4) attitude through education
54=(2 3) ICTs uses
55=(2 3 1) Information
56=(2 3 2) studying
57=(2 3 3) communication
58=(2 4) future studies
59=(3) HOME
60=(3 1) Type of technology and access
61=(3 1 1) own a computer
62=(3 1 2) go to library
63=(3 1 3) computer/video games
64=(3 1 4) TV
65=(3 2) Motivation to study
66=(3 3) ICT uses
67=(3 3 1) Communication
68=(3 3 2) Entertainment
69=(3 3 3) Information
70=(3 3 4) Studying
71=(3 3 5) family members
72=(3 4) Living conditions
73=(3 4 1) Apartment
74=(3 4 2) trailer
75=(3 4 3) house
76=(3 4 3 1) townhouse
77=(3 4 3 2) two story house
78=(3 5) Social and personal Implications ICT
79=(3 5 1) Social and family expectations
80=(3 5 1 1) trusting issues Chat
81=(3 5 1 2) feelings about Computer
82=(3 5 1 3) connection with friends-family
83=(3 5 2) Discrimination
84=(3 5 3) Identity
85=(3 5 3 1) no/changes in customs
86=(3 5 4) Language
87=(3 5 4 1) Spanish
88=(3 5 4 2) English
89=(3 5 4 3) possibilities for future
90=(3 5 4 4) translations
91=(3 5 5) friends
92=(3 6) Parents' job
93=(3 7) beliefs about studies
94=(3 8) family activities
95=(4) Effects of using computers
96=(4 1) disconnection
97=(4 1 1) partial
98=(4 1 2) no interest
99=(4 1 3) a problem/not
100=(4 2) connection
101=(4 2 1) future possibilities e-learning
102=(4 2 2) computer programs
103=(4 2 3) opinions
104=(4 2 4) identity change/no
105=(5) WORK
106=(5 1) Type of technology (ICT) and Access
107=(5 2) Job description and conditions
108=(5 2 1) Work vs. study
109=(5 2 2) Hours
110=(5 2 3) type
111=(5 3) social interactions
112=(5 4) language
113=(5 5) immigration status
APPENDIX C

TWELVE LATINAS GRAPHICS
Cecilia's view of ICT in her life

School
- Escuela
- Uses computer in Dominance

Type
- PCs

Access
- Business classes / Library

Uses
- Study Information

Personal implications
- "No quit studying"

Technology and Internet
- Cecilia

Type
- Cache

Social implication
- She wants to become a business woman

Job
- Trabajo / Mexican store

Connections
- Both languages
- Chat / Dominican also
- Change identity: gender

Access
- In the past: home, new library

Social
- IM / Chats with friends
Gloria's View of ICT in Her Life

School
- Escuela
- Has a computer in California

Access
- Only in classes-library

Use
- Study information

Personal Implications
- Motivation for future studies

Type PCs

Technology and Internet
- GLORIA

Job
- Trabajo
- Hosted in a restaurant

Personal Implications
- She wants to become a business woman using computers.

Access Home

Social
- Help mom to find info, taught her

Type
- Computer Clubs, Games

Uses
- Communication, Entertainment, Studying, Information

Personal
- Confident level: very good

If Disconnection
- "Difficult to finish school work and download music"
- "Frustration to not have e-mail"