

ENGLISH LANGUAGE USE AMONG FIRST GENERATION ADULT LATINOS IN A
LATINO COMMUNITY IN COLORADO, USA

by

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Abstract

This case study investigates the use of English among first generation Latinos in a Latino community in Colorado. The research question was: What is the presence of the English language in the daily lives among the adult Latino community in Colorado? I used two methods to collect data, a questionnaire and observations. The observations were carried out both in and outside the Latino community. I compared the results from the questionnaire with the observations and wrote stories participants told me as they were filling out the questionnaire. The results show that there is more Spanish use than English use in their everyday life in and outside the Latino community. Even though participants express why the acquisition of English is important, they are unable to put words into actions for their own “progress and integration” into the USA.

Resumen

Este estudio de caso investiga el uso del inglés entre primera latinos de generación en una comunidad latina en Colorado. La pregunta de investigación fue: ¿Cuál es la presencia del idioma inglés en la vida cotidiana entre los adultos de la comunidad latina en Colorado? Utilicé dos métodos para recoger data, un cuestionario y observaciones. Las observaciones se realizaron dentro y fuera de la comunidad latina. Comparé los resultados del cuestionario con las observaciones y añadí historias que los participantes hicieron a medida que llenaban el cuestionario. Los resultados muestran que hay más uso del español que del inglés en su vida cotidiana dentro y fuera de la comunidad latina. A pesar de que los participantes indican que aprender inglés es importante, no son capaces de poner en práctica sus palabras para su progreso e integración a los Estados Unidos.

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Can a woman forget her nursing child, and not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, yet I will not forget you. See, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands; your walls are continually before Me. (Isaiah 49: 15-16 New King James Version)

First and above all, I want to thank God because He has blessed me immensely and given me health, strength, courage, and intelligence to be where I am today. As the verse I cite says, He has always brought to my life someone or something to help me whenever I am in need; He has never abandoned me and never will.

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List of Abbreviations

CO- Colorado

USA/US- United States of America

SLA- Second Language Acquisition

ESL- English as a Second Language

IRB – Institutional Review Board

Gov- Government or Governmental

L1- Mother Tongue

L2- Second Language

GED - General Educational Diploma

HD- High Definition

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Chapter I: Introduction

The first time I visited Colorado, I was happy and thought it would be a perfect opportunity for me to practice my English. Coming from a small island where Spanish and English are the official languages, English is seen as negative but at the same time you are deemed intelligent for knowing it. Therefore, finding moments to use it are scarce. My first four years of school were in a bilingual school which used the immersion method to teach. I learned English, and today I consider myself bilingual. In my home town, some of the opportunities I had to speak and interact with English were in my classes and among some classmates, while my everyday life was conducted in Spanish. Since we have family in the US, we used to travel at least every other year to visit; on those trips, I was the official translator between my parents and the English speaking world. My younger sisters know English, but as the oldest, I was always the one who translated for my parents.

Going to Colorado once again I expected to become a translator in an English speaking world. Well, I was wrong. In many places I visited, the majority of the people were Latinos predominantly Mexicans, who spoke Spanish. The American Heritage dictionary defines Latinos as “A Latin American. A person of Spanish speaking heritage, esp. in the U.S.” (1994, p. 472 A); and Hispanics as “A Spanish speaking person” (1994, p. 397 B). This did not allow me to interact in English as I had expected. Furthermore, I was staying near an entire Latino community where the majority of the members of the community were Mexicans who owned or ran stores and supermarkets. Almost anything can be bought in this community, and community members rarely have to go elsewhere. I did see Latinos using English outside the community, but they were few. There were a few occasions when I had the opportunity to use English, but these places were sites for tourist, and places far from the Latino community. Then

I wondered, to what extent Latinos use or need to use English in their everyday lives? In what places do they use English?

Latino immigrants come into the United States daily and most are not fluent in English. Many settle in long-standing or more recently established Latino areas (Valdes, 2001). Because many can conduct their everyday lives in Spanish, they do not find an immediate need to learn or use English. Hence researchers indicate that living in these enclaves affects the acquisition of English (Allen, 2005; Chiswick and Miller, 1997; Dicker, 2006; Dryden-Peterson, 2007; and Redstone, 2007), however, they suggest further research must be done in this area.

Even though this is an important topic for the United States, it is also significant to point out that this is a phenomenon which happens in many places and with all minority groups. One example is a Lithuanian community in the apartment complex where I live. There are approximately six employees in the apartments and three are Lithuanians; two men and a woman. The two men work for maintenance and the woman works in the office. All three speak fluent English. I have heard them use their native language and English to communicate among themselves. Additionally, there is also a considerable number of Lithuanians living in the apartments; many are seniors. All of them speak their language when talking to each other, and rarely speak English. Even though younger Lithuanians also use their native language when speaking with people of their same country, they also speak English when speaking with everyone else. The phenomenon is not that foreigners speak their native language among themselves, the concern comes when they do not acquire the main language, in this case English, to be able to interact with the people of their new country of residence.

Colorado

Location.

The state of Colorado is 103,718 square miles, and it is located in the western United States (Appendix A). Colorado, which in Spanish means the color red, got its name from the Colorado River (Appendix B) which runs through the Colorado Canyon. The Colorado River is born in the Rocky Mountains, and feeds the Colorado River which travels all the way to the Gulf of California. In the late afternoons the river and the canyon turn deep red, reflecting the state's name. As you travel through these areas you see the color of the canyons, in places like Red Rocks Canyon, the Garden of the Gods, and the Colorado Canyon (Appendix B). Colorado is bordered by seven states: On the north by Wyoming and Nebraska, on the east by Kansas, on the south by New Mexico and Oklahoma, and on the west by Utah.

Colorado is known as the "Centennial State" because it joined the United States in 1876, 100 years after the Declaration of Independence was signed. It has topography which varies, from high mountains to flat grasslands. Its average elevation is 6,800 feet above sea level, which makes it the highest state in the United States; Mount Elbert is the highest peak in Colorado at 14,433 feet above sea level. Colorado's major cities are:

- Denver: Colorado's capital and its largest city. It is known as the "Mile High City" because it is 5,280 feet above sea level. Its population is 588, 349.
- Colorado Springs: Home of several important military installations. There are bases 2,000 feet underground inside a mountain. Its population is 376,427.
- Boulder: Home of the University of Colorado, and a sports oriented city. Its population is 93,552.

History.

The first people believed to have lived in Colorado were the Anasazi, or Ancient Puebloans. They settled in the southwest of the state, what today is Mesa Verde County. In 1539, Estevanico, a North African, made an expedition led by Marcos De Niza, an Italian priest who was searching for riches in the legendary Seven Cities of Cibola. Estevanico established good relations with the Native Americans and opened the southwest to foreign expedition. In 1540 Francisco Vazquez de Coronado also came into the southwest in search of the Seven Cities of Cibola. But when the Spaniards did not find gold, they departed.

After the Spaniards came the French. The French came from the north in search of beavers. In Europe, the latest trend was to wear hats, pelts, muffs (tubes of fur worn by women to keep their hands warm), and coat collars made of beaver. Beavers were scarce in Europe, and as a consequence millions of beavers were being trapped in Colorado. In 1682 a French explorer named Roberto Cavelier claimed the land between the Rocky and the Allegheny mountains as property of France, and named it Louisiana for King Louis XIV. The territory included two-fifths of what today is Colorado; while the southwest of Colorado was claimed for Spain by Juan de Uribarri in 1706, becoming part of New Mexico.

In 1803, the French sold the Louisiana territory to the United States. With this purchase the United States doubled in size and also acquired part of Colorado. By the early 1840s, the US decided to expand all the way to the Pacific Ocean; this was known as Manifest Destiny. The Mexican-American War, which started in 1846, and ended in February 1848, with the signing of the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the payment of \$15 million to Mexico for the territories of western Colorado, California, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, Wyoming, and Utah.

In 1859, gold was discovered near Pikes Peak, located in what is known today as Colorado Springs. As a consequence, in 1860, many Americans came from the east and pushed out the Native Americans. Colorado grew because of the promise of gold, but almost half of those gold seekers came back empty-handed. In July 1876, Colorado became the 38th state in the United States.

People.

Colorado mixes Old West and a rich cultural heritage with a modern international flair. Many Coloradans can trace their ancestors back to Mexican settlers, east Coast prospectors, Native American groups, or early Chinese immigrants. Later, Cambodian, Hmong, Laotian, Vietnamese immigrants came from Southeast Asia to start new lives in Colorado after the Vietnam War. Each group has contributed to Colorado's rich cultural mix. (Somerville, 2008, p. 67)

As Somerville describes in her book, Coloradans have a rich heritage consisting of Caucasians, which are the largest group, African Americans, Native Americans, Asians, Pacific Islanders, and Latinos. As shown in Table 1, Latinos are the largest minority group, which constitute 20.2 percent of the population, for a total of 735,601 Latinos in Colorado (total population in Colorado 5,024,748). This 2008 data comes from the US Census Bureau. Even though the Census was not in 2008, the Census Bureau explains this is updated data according to the number of births and deaths throughout the years.

Table 1

Minority Groups in Colorado According to the 2008 Census

Black persons	4.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native persons	1.2%
Asian persons	2.7%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.2%
Persons reporting two or more races	2.0%
Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin	20.2%

As the data suggests, in Colorado, Latinos outnumber all other minority populations combined. But they are not distributed equally in the state. Table 2 provides data from the 2000 Census on the three counties with the highest Latino population. The first County is Denver County, the capitol, followed by Adams County, and the third is El Paso County.

Table 2

Latino Concentration From the 2000 Census by County

Denver County	31.68%
Adams County	28.19%
El Paso County	11.30%

As Valdes (2001) indicates in her book; Latinos continue to arrive in the United States from different places and for different reasons. Latinos are present in many ways and they influence life in Colorado and the US.

Latinos and Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

“Second language acquisition (SLA) or L2 acquisition, generally refers to the acquisition of a second language by someone (adult or child) who has already acquired a first language” (Fromkin, Rodman, Hyams, 2003, p. 374). SLA among Latinos in the United States is a topic that has been researched extensively (Allen, 2005; Butler and Witt, 2000; Chiswick and Miller, 1997; Dryden-Peterson, 2007; Fishman, 1978; and Saville-Troike, 2006). Some studies focus on motivations Latinos have to learn the language (Dennis, 2006), language use in the community as a unit (Worthy, 2006), and as an individual within that society (Lanteigne and Schwarzer, 1997). Throughout the literature, immigrants describe how they feel not knowing the language. For example, Worthy (2006) reported one participant who felt as if she was missing an arm, while others felt left out of their children’s lives because they did not know the language. Others wanted to learn English to be able to understand what was happening around them (Olsen, 2000).

However as a Spanish saying goes, “*Del dicho al hecho hay un largo trecho*,” meaning that between what a person reports and what a person does, there is a long stretch. Like others Lanteigne and Schwarzer (1997) and Worthy (2006), I have observed a discrepancy between what immigrants report they do and what they actually do. As Redstone (2007) argued, “The multicontextual use of English among first generation [immigrants] is an aspect of integration that has received little attention” (p. 931). Some important research that has been done in terms of ethnic communities and the acquisition of English among Latinos are Chiswick and Miller, (1997), Dryden-Peterson, (2007), Redstone (2007), and Worthy, (2006). As Redstone stated, limited research has been done in the context where Latinos use English. This is the area that I

focused on. As Redstone explained, this research is important and relevant because it provides insight into the assimilation of Latinos to US culture.

Many people feel apprehensive and resentful at what they perceive as the possibility that recent immigrants will not learn English or integrate into U.S. society.... Much of the public concern is rooted in the lower average educational levels in many of the sending countries and the individuals' apparent likelihood to reside in ethnically concentrated neighborhoods. This raises doubt for some U.S. natives about the economic welfare of these immigrants, whether they will place a financial burden on the native population, whether they will learn English. For all of these reasons, the study of English use among recent immigrants is both timely and relevant as it provides key insight into integration levels. (Redstone, 2007, p. 952)

Redstone suggested further research should be done on "...how ethnically concentrated neighborhoods influence language behavior" (p. 953). Even though I include in my research the effects ethnically concentrated neighborhoods have on the acquisition of English, it does not exclusively concentrate on this. I also observed what happens outside the Latino community concerning language use. Other authors who agree with Redstone on the importance of this type of research are Chiswick and Miller (1997) who, citing data from the 1990 U.S. Census, revealed that

...as many as 25 percent of the foreign born aged 25-64 lack English language fluency. This English language deficiency is likely to impede the immigrants' economic, social and political adjustment. Understanding the reasons why immigrants differ in their propensity to learn dominant languages is therefore a research topic of considerable interest. (p. 3)

In the small amount of time which I spent in Colorado, I noticed this. In the Latino community, English was not used as frequently. Once outside the Latino community, more English was heard and used. This is an important issue because by looking at the uses Latinos have for the English language in and outside the Latino community, teachers may be able to create relevant lessons for their students' social environment and the uses these learners have for the language in different contexts. This study also adds to the literature on adult ESL classes where researchers suggest we need to investigate how adult learners are using the language and where, so these classes can be relevant to them (Cray and Currie, 1996; Currie and Cray, 2004).

Research Questions

In this research I observed Latinos' English interaction in and outside the Latino community, and the language used in written text, oral text, and the media (Chiswick and Miller 1997). Several researchers who have also focused on some aspects of the acquisition of English by adults are Allen (2005), Chiswick and Miller (1997), Lanteigne, and Schwarzer (1997), Lee and Sheared (2002), McHugh, Gelatt and Fix (2007), Mettler (1987), Olsen (2000), Redstone (2007), Saville-Troike (2006), and Worthy (2006).

As previously stated, there are studies that point to adults not learning English due to enclaves or ethnically concentrated communities where many Latinos settle (Chiswick and Miller 1997; Redstone 2007). Therefore, it is hard to acquire a language in an environment where the target language, as Saville-Troike defined it, is the language to be learned (p. 194), is not used. In my case, I experienced this learning basic Italian. I have tried to learn a third language and I can understand some of the frustrations and barriers Latino adults face when trying to acquire English. I tried to learn Italian in a community where I did not need or use the language or have anyone to practice with, similar to some Latinos who try to learn English in a

community where they rarely use it and rarely have anyone to practice it with (Chiswick and Miller, 1997; Worthy, 2006). Even though they live in the United States where the predominant language is English, in their community the language most commonly used by community members is Spanish. Even outside the community non-Hispanic employees learn the necessary Spanish needed to communicate with Latinos while they are in the store, besides the many other bilingual store employees who help their Latino customers in fluent Spanish. Spanish is widespread in and outside the Latino community, thus reducing the opportunities to use English.

In this research I studied language practices among Latino adults in and outside Latino communities in Colorado. The research question for this study is:

- What is the presence of the English language in the daily lives among an adult Latino in a Latino community in Colorado?

The sub-questions are:

- With whom do they use English?
- In what contexts as adults are they exposed to English?
- What are Latinos doing to acquire English?
- Do they think English is necessary to live in the US?

This research shows both what Latinos report they are doing regarding their language use and what is actually happening in their lives with language. Chapter II provides a review of the literature related to English use and acquisition among immigrants, their acculturation process, and the factors which increase or decrease their learning opportunities. Then, Chapter III describes the methods used throughout this research to collect data, describes the research site, and describes the participants and how they were chosen. Chapter IV shows the results of

the questionnaire. Chapter V presents and analyzes the observations collected and compares them to the results participants gave in the questionnaire. Additionally, I compare my findings to the results in the literature in chapter II. Finally Chapter VI provides the conclusion and limitations of this study and makes suggestions for future research.

Chapter II: Literature Review

Second language acquisition (SLA) research is an area which has generated an ever increasing body of literature. Not only is SLA important, but it is also important to study the factors that influence positively and negatively language acquisition by minorities in the US. One of those factors is how ethnically concentrated communities influence the language acquisition process of minorities, in this case, of Latinos. Redstone (2007) notes that an area of SLA which has not been explored is the context where Latinos use English and the effects ethnically concentrated communities have with regard to language acquisition. Even though these communities influence Latinos' language acquisition, there are also a number of other factors which have as much influence as living in these communities.

Some of the factors which influence the acquisition of English are time of arrival in the US, length of residence, age of arrival, education background, the use of the media, and even the attitude towards learning the language. This chapter is divided in to four sections: the first is *Are Immigrants Acculturating*, where research explains some of the barriers and dilemmas immigrants experience when acquiring English. The second section is, *What Influences the Acquisition of English?* The third section is *Latinos in Context*, which consists of the studies of two Latino communities, their members, and their experiences while acquiring English. And the last section is *That was Then* which consists of studies which focus on first generation immigrants and English acquisition.

Are Immigrants Acculturating?

Olsen (2000) reviewed previous studies by Olsen (1998), and Olsen and Chen (1988), on high school immigrant students with limited English proficiency in California. She used students' quotes of their experiences learning English and themes of those studies to analyze the

pains and dilemmas immigrant youth go through when learning English in school. These students explained that “becoming an English speaker is the same as becoming American. English is not just a vehicle for communication; it is the social and political marker of affiliation and belonging” (p. 197). Even though they wanted to learn the language, these students became discouraged by many barriers and dilemmas which they confronted daily. As students report, some of their daily barriers are hostile attitudes towards them when they enter the school, the lack of people with whom to practice English, losing their first language, and an inadequate command of English to communicate. Despite the obstacles, some of the reasons students gave for their interest in learning English were, they did not want to be ridiculed by native speakers of English. They did not want to feel embarrassed or ashamed for using their first language, and they wanted to know what was happening around them and be a part of it. Olsen points out that proper help to solve these dilemmas will not occur until society changes their ways of looking at immigrants. This topic is of considerable interest because Americans believe “English is threatened by the presence and use of other languages” (p. 201). Therefore, immigrants are expected to acquire the language for the unity of the nation.

Another study on immigrants’ experiences learning English was done by Mettler (1987). She reviewed previous research and studied the problems of acculturation, communication apprehension, and language acquisition confronted by Caribbean adolescent and adult immigrant students in the US, with a focus on New York. She explained, “...there is the need to acquire language, Standard English, for survival and socioeconomic upward mobility; in affective terms, there is the need to preserve ethnolinguistic bonds in an environment which is at best unpredictable and at worst hostile” (p. 97). When arriving into the United States, immigrants are expected to acculturate, “the process of adjusting to a nonnative culture”

(Miranda and Matheny, 2000, p. 306). In addition to having to overcome their obvious *language barrier*, not being able to understand or communicate in the new culture's language, they also need to acquire local practices such as nonverbal elements which are also known as *behavior barrier*. Additionally to these two barriers, there is a third, the *affiliation barrier*, "which the immigrant should negotiate both as an individual and as the member of an ethnolinguistic group," and decide to live in collaboration, coexistence or conflict with the dominant culture. "Acculturation is the negotiation of these three barriers (p. 101). Similar to Olsen's (2000) study, for these learners, the process of learning the language would increase or decrease depending on the feedback immigrants received from Americans. Thus immigrants who receive positive feedback from North Americans will be more encouraged to learn English while immigrants who receive negative feedback will be affected in their learning process. Mettler provides some recommendations to teachers on how to help these limited English Proficient students. She says teachers can help immigrant students to:

- Develop cultural awareness
- Make explicit the unstated cultural norms
- Make local culture accessible
- Create a population specific curriculum
- And not treat Interlanguage, the non standard language spoken by the learners in the process of acquiring the target language, as something wrong, but as a stage of the acquisition ladder.

As mentioned by Mettler, immigrants have to overcome a *language barrier*, in order to progress. Allen (2005) makes a direct connection between education, language acquisition and economic status. He analyzed social science research, and observed how successfully

immigrants and their children adapt to the local culture in California (p. 9). He studied first-generation immigrants, “the people who come from another country to live in the U.S.” (p. 9), their economic status, and adjustments in school by the second generation. For the first generation, Allen explained that when they were well educated, they were more likely to have better jobs, take more ESL classes, and to be able to certify their degrees in the USA. The second generation’s acculturation process was different because they came as children and have attended US schools; therefore they are less likely to accept low-paying jobs. Allen argued that although first generation Mexican immigrants were not assimilating, their children were. Therefore, the higher education they have the better the job opportunities they will find and the better the pay; but those with lower education have fewer job opportunities and less income. Allen also pointed out there is another factor which influences this, time. When immigrants arrive in the US, they need to take whatever job they can, due to their limited English skills. Those who do come educated acquire English in order to validate their degrees and progress, which takes time. Allen further indicated, “indeed, socioeconomic status and having intact families and high educational expectations have been shown to be important in predicting school success, but these factors do not explain fully the low levels of Mexican-American education” (p. 23). As Redstone (2007) and Chiswick and Miller (1997) also pointed out, Allen stated the acquisition of the English language was faster outside the ethnically concentrated communities. Allen concluded by explaining that “Mexican-Americans stand out among immigrant groups for their large numbers and average low education achievement” (p. 27). Therefore, they earn low incomes, and he suggests that a “Mexican-American underclass might be forming” (p. 27).

Hakuta, Butler, and Witt, (2000) reviewed data from previous studies and investigated the length of time language minority students, from elementary and middle school “need special services, such as English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) and bilingual education” (p. 1). The sample included students from four school districts, two in San Francisco and two in Canada. The results show that school-aged children take from 3 to 5 years to acquire oral proficiency and 4 to 7 years to acquire academic proficiency. But these learners do not catch up with their native speaker peers because the amount of time students spend in class is not enough for them to catch up. Therefore, they concluded that sheltered English immersion programs are not working. According to the data, Hakuta et al. concluded that “linguistic competence is complex, and that even the most privileged second language learners take a significant amount of time to attain mastery, especially for the level of language required for school success” (p. 3). This research is parallel with Redstone (2007) in that both reported language fluency increases with two factors: age of migration and length of residence. In other words, the younger children arrive in the USA, the more English they will acquire. Also, the longer they have been in the USA, the faster they will acquire English. One problem the researchers found in the process of language acquisition is that some students dropped out of school before they acquired academic fluency. Hakuta et al. suggested more data on these students should be collected to follow and record their progress. They also suggested curricula should pay attention to acquisition of English and the academic needs of minority students.

What Influences the Acquisition of English?

Dryden-Peterson (2007) examined immigrants in general and ESL classes. She is not in total agreement with other research related to the acquisition of English, such as living outside immigrant enclaves, long periods of residence in the US, commitment to living in the US,

higher levels of education in the US, marrying someone with English-dominant background, wider social networks, and holding technical or professional jobs. She questioned whether going through these experiences help immigrants acquire more English, or are the immigrants who know English the ones who go through these experiences. Even though that has not been assessed yet, she believed ESL classes should also consider these elements of integration as well. She argued that most of the curricula of ESL classes are aimed at teaching survival English, “which provides immigrants with language basics such as how to greet their neighbors and shop for food but which does not prepare them for the work force” (p. 519). She suggested more ESL programs should be created and the already established ESL programs should also “incorporate building social connections,” (p. 519) where immigrants can use the language.

Redstone, (2007) reviewed previous studies to analyze English use among first generation immigrants in different contexts in relation to the time they had been in the US. She pointed out the following factors: “... as immigrants become more integrated into the United States the more their use of English increases” (p. 930). She concluded, the longer they lived in the United States the more their English increased. But the age of arrival was very important; younger people acquired more English while older people acquired less. Age of arrival influences all aspects of language learning and use of the language; in other words, the older immigrants are at arrival, the less likely they are to learn English, and therefore language is used less in all contexts. Other important factors in the acquisition of English were the spouse and children; whether they got married before or after they arrived in the US, or if the spouse’s mother tongue or (L1) is English, these are all factors which will influence language acquisition. Mother tongue, as Saville-Troike (2006) defines it is the language or languages “assumed to be...acquired during early childhood.” Another factor she also mentioned is that school age

children, who could bring English home, provide parents access to the language. She mentioned another factor which influences language acquisition among Latinos is clustering in ethnically concentrated neighborhoods, "...Hispanic immigrants may have low levels of English usage due to the large existing communities that may obviate the need for English" (p. 937). However because she does not concentrate on this topic, she suggested further research should be done on "how ethnically concentrated neighborhoods influence language behavior..." (p. 953), and how these communities influence the acquisition of English among Latino immigrants.

Many of the factors that influence language acquisition which Redstone (2007) studied were also looked at by Chiswick and Miller (1997). They used data from the 1980 and 1990 Census and previous research done on language acquisition among different immigrant groups. Chiswick and Miller (1997) wanted to understand why immigrants differed in their propensity to learn the dominant language. They indicated that data from the 1990 U.S. Census revealed that as many as 25 percent of the foreign born aged 25-64 lack English language fluency and continue to say that, "This English language deficiency is likely to impede the immigrants' economic, social and political adjustment" (p. 3). The researchers explained there were three variables for English language fluency: exposure to English prior to and after immigration, efficiency in language learning, and economic incentives for learning English. As Allen (2005) also pointed out, Chiswick and Miller also reported that people who speak English earn more than those who do not know the language. Chiswick and Miller (1997) stated that "The statistical analysis shows that English language fluency among immigrants is greater the higher the respondent's level of schooling, the longer the duration in the United States and the younger the age at immigration" (p. 50). Other factors which influence English acquisition are: exposure

to the dominant language, the probability of return migration, (which is whether or not an immigrant plans to return to his or her country of origin), marriage, (whether the spouse is or is not a native speaker of English), children, (only for women: one child will increase English acquisition, whereas more than one will not), institutions, (such as governmental agencies, and educational institutions), enclaves, (ethnically concentrated communities), for Latinos, media, (whether they are exposed only to Spanish media, such as radio, television broadcasts, newspapers). Because Latinos have media (radio and television) available in Spanish in their everyday life, they analyzed this and concluded that Spanish media has an effect on Latinos in the USA and their acquisition of English.

Latinos in Context

Lanteigne and Schwarzer (1997) carried out a case study of a Mexican family with a focus on Rafael from the Argentine district of Kansas City, Kansas. The research question was: how did Rafael--and his family--progress in English and family reading? Rafael was in his early 50s', he was married, and the father of six. He came to the United States in 1987 and at the time of the research, Rafael was attending ESL classes in a nearby library in his community. Rafael lived in an ethnically concentrated community; Spanish was spoken almost everywhere. There were few opportunities where he could use the language. Rafael worked in a bakery in a Latino community. Like many immigrants, he knew learning English was very important for him to help his children in school and to understand other people. The researchers explained Rafael had a lot of interest and motivation to acquire the language. The researcher was giving an ESL class in the library which Rafael was attending. Rafael took his children to the library for class, and each child picked books they wanted to take home. Rafael had reading sessions with the researcher, using children's book. The researcher also tried to help him read to his

children, which he did while she was there. The researchers used Rafael as a “model” to try to make people “reevaluate frequent prejudices about Mexican immigrants” (p. 43). The two stereotypes researchers tried to argue against were first, “that Mexicans are lazy and, by implication, stupid or unintelligent” (p. 43), and second, that they do not want to learn English.

This was also seen in Worthy (2006), where participants reported that since they lived in ethnically concentrated communities, there was no need to learn English (p. 143). This study was conducted in an ethnically concentrated, low-income community in Texas where the majority of the population was Mexican. Worthy interviewed 16 parents of a fifth grade class in relation to their children’s English literacy. The parents reported positive attitudes towards the language; some reported attending ESL classes and programs to acquire the language. All were motivated to learn the language and all acknowledged the importance of learning the language; but only 2 out of 16 were attending school infrequently and two were using audio or video programs occasionally to acquire English. The parents explained they depended on their children to act as language brokers to interpret for their parents whenever they needed to use the language. The children explained they felt proud helping their family, but at the same time it was frustrating for them and at times exhausting. Even though parents were not making much progress, children were acculturating and assimilating at the same time they were “losing Spanish in bits and pieces” (p. 151), and parents felt shut out of their children’s lives “including language, social and emotional development, and education” (p. 151).

That was Then

Fishman (1978) studied language shift and language maintenance in the USA among different groups of immigrants from the 1940’s through the 1960’s. He concluded that

[e.] ... neither traditional intactness nor ideological mobilization is available to the second generation. "Revolts" are common when maximal claims are advanced for the first generation and become uncommon once such claims are no longer pressed. [f.] Those of second generation "outgrow" the fragmented ethnicity of the first but frequently retain an attachment to more marginal expressions of ethnicity via the Church, other organizations, and familial remnants of traditional ethnicity. While these have been insufficient for functional language maintenance, they have often preserved a positive attitude toward ethnic language and culture. This positiveness becomes more evident as the second generation advances through adulthood. [g.] The third generation approaches ethnicity with even greater selectivity, frequently viewing the ethnic mother tongue as a cultural or instrumental desideratum and viewing ethnicity as an area of appreciation or a field of study. De-ethnicized language maintenance elicits interest in the third generation although facility is rare. (Fishman, 1978. p. 396)

This goes along the same line as what Valdes (2001) reported:

In addition, immigrant bilingualism tends to follow a specific generational pattern. Bilinguals of different generations have different proficiencies in English and in the heritage language. [As Figure 4 illustrates], many first-generation immigrants will remain monolingual in their first language throughout their lives. Others will acquire some English and become incipient bilinguals, but will still be strongly dominant in the heritage language. By the second and third generation, most members of the immigrant community will have acquired English quite well. The majority of these individuals will be, if not English dominant, English preferent. Many, nevertheless, will continue to function in two languages in order to communicate with members of the first generation. Finally, by the fourth

generation, most individuals of immigrant background will have become monolingual

English speakers. Only a few will retain some competence in the heritage language. (p. 6-7)

Although Fishman's (1978) and Valdes' (2001) work are more than two decades apart, both agree that in general the first generation maintain their mother tongue; and acquire little English. Assimilation or acculturation to the US culture and the loss of the mother tongue is seen from the second generation on. Still today, in 2010, Latinos have created their own culture within the US culture, which includes radio stations, television broadcasts, and even newspapers. As Fishman (1978) described, from 1940 through 1960 many minorities in the US lived in ethnically concentrated communities and had access to non-English broadcasts, press, and churches. He also explained Latinos also had access to Spanish media, even more they were the only minority group with entire days of broadcast in Spanish. That is why Latinos are unique in their way, and as many suggest, should be studied further. In various studies, such as Lanteigne and Schwarzer (1997) and Worthy (2006), Latinos expressed that in their community English is not needed. Along the same line, Allen (2005), Chiswick and Miller (1997), and Redstone (2007) suggested ethnically concentrated communities influence the acquisition of the English language. In this study, I observed Latino language use in the Latino community, and how the community affects their need to use English. Because Latinos also interact with the world outside the Latino community, I have also observed the interactions and their need to use English outside the Latino community.

The following chapter, Chapter III, describes the methods used throughout this research to collect data; it also describes the research site, and the participants in this study and how they were chosen.

Chapter III: Who, What, Where, When, Why and How?

Case Study

According to Cohen et al. (2007), “case studies investigate and report the complex dynamics and unfolding interactions in a unique instance” (p. 253). My initial intention for this research was to observe the use of English among Latinos in one Latino community, but as I began the observations at the research site, the emphasis changed. I observed Spanish in places I did not expect. Therefore I investigated and reported the dynamics of the use of English among first generation adult immigrants in and outside the Latino community at a certain point in time. As Cohen et al. (2007) stated,

case study research typically observes the characteristics of an individual unit – a child, a clique, a class, a school or a community. The purpose of such observation is to probe deeply and to analyze intensively the multifarious phenomena that constitute the life cycle of the unit with a view to establishing generalizations about the wider population to which that unit belongs. (p. 258)

In this research, I observed a Latino community in Colorado. The phenomenon was the language used in and outside the Latino community. And the generalizations made are according to the observations and the information participants and the research site provided me at a particular point in time.

Participants

The sample for this research is first generation adult Latino immigrants. I chose this population because many immigrants come to the United States as adults, and they have already passed the critical period. According to Saville-Troike (2006) the critical period is “the limited number of years during which normal Mother Tongue (L1) acquisition is possible” (p. 187).

Fromkin, Rodman, and Hyams (2003) defined the critical period as “the time between early childhood and puberty during which a child can acquire language easily, swiftly, and without interventions. After this period, the acquisition of the grammar is difficult and, for some individuals, never fully achieved” (p. 579). Once this period has passed, it also influences the acquisition of a second language. Saville-Troike (2006) defined Critical Period Hypothesis as

The claim that children have only a limited time of years during which they can acquire their L1 flawlessly; if they suffer brain damage to the language area, brain plasticity in childhood would allow other areas of the brain to take over the language functions of the damaged areas, but beyond a certain age, normal language development would not be possible. This concept is commonly extended to SLA as well, in the claim that only children are likely to achieve native or near native proficiency in L2. (p. 187)

As Fromkin et al. (2003) explained

With some exceptions, adults do not simply “pick up” a second language. It usually requires conscious attention, if not intense study and memorization, to become proficient in a second language. (p. 379)

This is the reason why I am interested in this topic. While children “pick up” the language effortlessly, adults trying to acquire a second language must put a lot of time and effort into it. As Worthy (2006) indicated in her study, many people are not willing to spend the time it takes to learn a second language. Hakuta et al. (2006) concluded children “take[s] between two to five years to acquire oral proficiency” (p. 9). Taking into account what the critical period hypothesis says and what Hakuta concluded, it will take more than a few years before an adult can acquire a second language. Another reason for my interest in this population, which I explained earlier in the introduction, is the fact that when I first came to Colorado, I was not

expecting as much Spanish use. It was then I became interested in the use of English among Latinos. Even more, since my husband was part of this Latino community, it was easier for me to access.

The twenty five participants were chosen by convenience sample, also known as accidental or opportunity sample. According to Cohen et al. (2007), this means researchers “choose the sample from those to whom they have easy access” (p. 114).

The questionnaire included a page of sociodemographic information (Appendix J) which yielded the information that follows. The average age of the participants is 42 years old, 42 for the females (n=14) and 43 for the males (n=11). Table 3 shows participants’ age by gender, where the oldest female is 66 and the oldest male is 77.

Table 3

Age of Participants According to Gender

Age of Participants	Female	Male
18-25 years	0	0
26-35 years	20%	12%
36-45 years	20%	20%
46-55 years	4%	8%
55 years and over	12%	4%
N=25		

The country of origin of the participants in this study is distributed as followed: 72 percent from Mexico, 8 percent from Central America, and 20 percent from South America. Table 4 shows demographic data from the 2000 Census. As you may observe, most Latinos in

Colorado are Mexicans, making my sample somewhat representative of the current Latino population in Colorado.

Table 4

Hispanic Population in CO According to 2000 Census

Hispanics	Percent
Mexicans	10.5%
Puerto Rican	0.3%
Cuban	0.1%
Other Hispanics	6.2%

Of the 25 participants, 92 percent were married, four percent were divorced, and four percent were separated. A total of 48 percent were married before coming to the United States while 40 percent married after coming to the US, and 12 percent did not provide this information. All participants and their spouses have Spanish as their L1, and 20 percent of the participants reported knowing some English before coming to the USA. Even though all of the participants have children, only 68 percent of the children live with their parents. Eighty percent of the children study in public school, four percent study in private school, and 20 percent do not go to school.

Participants' education level varied from elementary level to a Masters degree. Even though, the highest level reported among the participants is a Masters degree, one participant indicated he started a PhD but did not finish the degree. Table 5 shows the highest level of schooling achieved by the participants. Close to half (44 percent) of the participants did not go beyond middle school, and more than half (64 percent) never attended college. These results

are similar to the level of schooling of Rafael in Lanteigne and Schwarzer's (1997) study.

Rafael only completed six years of education in Mexico. They are also similar to Worthy's (2006) study, where the participants' average level of education was sixth grade, while only two reached high school.

Table 5

Highest Level of Schooling Achieved by Participants

Schooling	Percent
Elementary School (6 years or less)	16%
Middle School (7 to 9 years)	28%
High School (10 to 12 years)	20%
Technical Degree	8%
Associates Degree (2 years of University)	4%
Bachelor's Degree (4 years of University)	16%
Master's Degree (6 years of University)	8%
PhD (8 or more years of University)	0%

N=25

I also asked participants if they had furthered their education once in the USA. Seventy six percent had not furthered their education and 24 percent did. From those 24 percent, four percent did their GED, eight percent did a technical degree, four percent did a tax preparer course and eight percent got their Master's degree. One of the two participants, who attained their Master's degree, almost finished a PhD; he was only missing two classes.

Before coming to the USA 69 percent of the participants were employed and 32 percent were not. At the time of this research 88 percent of the participants were working, eight percent were not working and four percent were retired. Table 6 on page 29, illustrates the jobs participants had in their home country and the jobs they have in the USA at the time of this research.

Table 6

Participants Jobs

In Their Home Country		In the USA	
Did not work	32%	Do not work	8%
Did not answer	4%	Did not answer	4%
Driver	8%	Retired	4%
Receptionist	4%	Mechanic	8%
Owned a business	4%	Hair stylist	8%
Work at store	8%	Cleaning	16%
Nursing	4%	Work at stores	24%
Teacher	4%	Construction	8%
Student	4%	Teacher	4%
Architect	4%	Interior remodeling	4%
Court clerk	4%	Gardening	4%
Administrative assistance	8%	Public Notary office	4%
Quality control	8%	Administrative assistance/	4%
Accounting assistance	4%	Tax preparer at a Latino store	

N=25

At the time of the study, four percent of the participants reported not having a car and 96 percent reported owning a car. Four percent (1 participant) reported having six cars, four percent (1 participant) reported having four cars, 12 percent (3 participants) reported having two cars, and 68 percent reported owning one car.

Before coming to the USA 52 percent own(ed) a home, four percent own(ed) an apartment, 16 percent lived with family, 12 percent rented a home, and 12 percent rented an apartment. Thirty two percent of the participants reported owning other properties in their home country, and 32 percent planned to buy other properties in their country of origin. At the time of the study, 20 percent of the participants reported owning a home in the United States. Four percent lived with family, eight percent rented a home, and 68 percent rented an apartment. None of the participants owned other properties in the USA; however, 32 percent of the participants planned to buy other properties in the USA.

Among the participants there is a wide variation regarding years which they have lived in the United States. The least amount of time any of the participants reported living in US is two years while the most is over 25 years. Table 7 shows the years participants reported living in the United States.

Table 7

Years Participants Have Lived in the United States

1-3 years	8%
3-6 years	0
7-9 years	28%
10-15 years	36%
16-20 years	8%
21 years or more	20%
N=25	

The reasons for coming to the US are very diverse, but can be summarized by the following categories. Most of the participants (60 percent) came for personal reasons. Some examples of their answers in this category are: in search of a better life, safety, and others decided to follow a family member. The second category is for economic reasons with 24 percent. Some examples are to find a better job, status, and the pursuit of the American Dream. The third reason is children for 12 percent of the sample. These parents were concerned with their children's education and safety, and therefore decided to come to the United States. Worthy's (2006) participants also explained they were concerned with their children's education: "The most common reason parents gave for emigrating to the United States was to provide their children with better education and more job possibilities" (p. 141). The last three reasons reported by participants were that they came for vacation and stayed (eight percent), they were brought as a child (four percent), and four percent just indicated that their spouse is a US citizen.

Research Site

Case studies "can establish cause and effect, indeed one of their strengths is that they observe effects in real contexts recognizing that context is a powerful determinant of both causes and effect" (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 253). The context for this study is in one of the many Latino communities in Colorado. Latinos can be found in and outside the Latino community, in every aspect of life, such as work, shopping (which includes malls and supermarkets), housing, governmental agencies, as well as elsewhere. Redstone (2007) suggested in her future studies section that the study of ethnically concentrated communities has an effect on language acquisition; she explains

An important direction for future studies is to incorporate residential context.

Specially, being able to carry out an empirical investigation of how ethnically concentrated neighborhoods influence language behavior and choice will continue to illuminate this work. (p. 953)

In addition to recognizing the influence ethnically concentrated communities have on the acquisition of English, Latinos influence life outside the Latino community. For this reason I do not focus only on the ethnically concentrated community. Even though the presence of Latinos has a strong effect on the Latino community, it also has an effect in many other places outside the Latino community, such as banks, supermarkets, and stores.

The community I observed is similar to many other Latino communities in Colorado. The center of this community is on Main Street. The highest concentration of Latinos in this community extends over an area which is 7 miles long and 3 miles wide. The population in this section of the city is Latino, predominantly Mexican. The businesses are also predominately Mexican. Many of the signs in the Latino stores have Mexican names with the Mexican flag in the background. But there are also American stores such as Mc Donald's, Sonic, Little Caesars, Rent a Center among others. This community has one marked border, the county line, and the distinction is very clear. In the next county, the businesses' names are in English and there are very few Latino business. The population on the streets nearest to the Latino community is predominantly African American, followed by Caucasian. Also, there are many homeless people on the streets. Even though Latinos are present in this county also, they are not as present as in the Latino community.

The research site is in the northeast of Colorado, a state which previously had a section which belonged to Mexico (the southwest of the territory). There are many studies which focus

on language use in other places in the United States, such as California (Allen, 2005), Texas (Worthy, 2006), New York (Dicker, 2006), Alaska (Dennis, 2006), Canada, California, and San Francisco (Hakuta, Butler, Witt, 2000) among others. I chose this community because it is where I currently live. It is the place where I have had the opportunity to visit and observe language interactions.

Data Collection

In this research I used two methods to collect data: a questionnaire and observations. The time frame for this project was as follows: data collection began in April 2009 and concluded in December 2009. During this time period, I was an active member of the community, and I remained a part of the community even after the research was finished.

Questionnaire

The first method I used was a semi-structured questionnaire (Appendix H). As Cohen et al. (2007) explained, this kind of questionnaire has a clear structure and respondents are able to give their opinion on the topic. The questionnaire included open and closed questions. Open questions are questions where the participants can write their feelings or thoughts on the topic, or as Cohen et al. (2007) clarified, these are explanatory questions, to which the answers are unknown. Closed questions are straightforward, easier to put into categories, and do not allow further explanation by the participants. The questionnaire was anonymous and voluntary.

Before administering the questionnaire, participants were given a consent form which was printed on letter-size paper. One of the copies of the consent form was for participants to read and sign and for me to keep; the other copy was for them.

The questionnaire had a total of forty-six questions. In the first section, I asked the participants in what contexts they used English; this was followed by questions about the

language used with their spouses and children. The next section asked participants about their efforts to learn English, which included taking ESL classes, using audio-visual programs, computer programs, private lessons, or the use of media to learn English. This section also asked how frequently they used these programs and if these programs had helped them. In various other sections throughout the questionnaire, I asked participants what language they use when speaking to people they encountered in everyday life, such as family members, co-workers, friends, store employees, and governmental agencies. In the last section, I asked participants questions about their reasons for learning English and what it means to them. The last question asked if they considered that learning English was obligatory to live in the USA.

The first draft of the questionnaire was piloted in a master's class where we conducted our research on a smaller scale. I sent the questionnaire to my husband in Colorado, where he administered it to four participants, himself included. As soon as I got them back, I began studying them, and observed that they did not provide me with the information I needed or was looking for. My next step was to tweak it. This time I was as specific as I could be so I would get the information I was looking for. Subsequently, I created a longer but more specific questionnaire.

The second draft of the questionnaire was five pages long, plus the socio-demographic information, which took two more pages, for a total of seven pages. It was important to disguise the length of the questionnaire to the participants; therefore it was printed on legal paper and on both sides. This way it would only be three pages long, instead of seven pages on letter-size paper. Once more I piloted the questionnaire with my chairperson and my mother; minor changes were made. The last pilot conducted was with my husband since both of us are part of the population I am studying. His reactions and opinions were very important because

as he was completing the questionnaire he was complaining and talking to me about it. With my husband's input, I made some small and final changes to it.

Five of the questions of the questionnaire were voided for various reasons. Question 25 was voided because the wrong verb was used and this confused participants; I used a present verb instead of a past verb. Questions 8, 33, 35, and 37 were voided because participants misunderstood them.

Observations

The second method I used to collect data for this study was observations. "The case study approach is particularly valuable when the researcher has little control over the events" (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 253). If I tried to control any factor, I would have interfered with the data. I chose instead to be a complete participant. I did not tell participants they were being observed at any time, therefore making the research covert as I took on the role of participant observer documenting and recording what was happening.

The methodological framework used in this study is the naturalistic approach. "Social research should be conducted in natural, uncontrived, real world settings with as little intrusiveness as possible by the researcher" (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 166). My intentions were to observe the participants in their natural environment, doing what they usually do, by observing the "complex dynamics and unfolding interactions of events, human relationships and other factors in a unique instance" (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 253). The observations also provided insight into this community and describe the language use of real people in real life situations at a particular moment in time. I did not disclose to my participants more than they needed to know, and they were not aware I was observing them. Cohen et al. (2007) says, "The more participants know about the research the less natural they may behave, and naturalism is self-

evidently a key criterion of the naturalistic paradigm” (p. 174). A particular characteristic of a naturalistic study is that there is no guarantee it will yield the same results even if it is replicated in the same community because this study is a snapshot at a certain point in time, with particular people in particular social, economic, and political circumstances.

The physical settings where I conducted the observations were in unstructured and natural settings, meaning I had no control over these settings (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 408). These were places people of the community frequented for their daily life routine in and outside the Latino community such as supermarkets, restaurants, governmental agencies, banks, and shopping centers. I did unstructured observations which Cohen et al. (2007) define as going into a situation and observing “what is taking place before deciding on its significance for the research” (p. 397). I also looked for written texts such as newspapers, flyers, and signs that used Spanish. I collected any printed paper I found, such as library activity flyers, free newspapers, or pamphlets in Spanish and English. For signs, I would write down and describe any sign which used Spanish or both languages.

Originally, I had planned to carry out semi-structured observations, but when I discussed this with my advisor, she told me the following anecdote. Surprising Studies of Visual Awareness created a study which showed that if a person is focused only on what they are determined to find, they might miss out on other situations which could be important to what they are studying or observing. This video is used in group presentations and participants are asked to focus on either the team with white or black t-shirts and count how many times the ball is passed to each one in their group. When the short clip is finished, participants are asked how many times the ball was passed and then they check to see how their answers are different. Then the presenter asks if there was anything else. While the teams are passing the ball, a

gorilla enters from the right, stops in the middle and exits through the left. Many viewers did not see the gorilla because they were focused on the ball. My advisor indicated I should not go with a list of things to observe because there might be a gorilla in my face, and I might not see it because I would be too busy focusing on my list, i.e. counting ball passes. My intentions were as Cohen et al. (2007) stated to “go into a situation and let the elements of the situation speak for themselves, perhaps with no concern with how one situation compares with another” (p. 398).

The Role of the Researcher

Researchers are a certain kind of guests in a shared space, and some hosts are eager to be conversationalists... Each researcher, a person with overlapping identities, plays multiple roles as curious and note taker, audio- or videographer, and so on as we learn from informants or participants in a small part of the world we now call a case. We are the primary instruments of research relying on the curiosity, friendliness, and acceptance of those who regularly inhabit that world. (Dyson and Genishi, 2005, p. 58)

¿Y Quién Tu Eres? (And who are you?)

When I began this study, I was a master’s student at the University of Puerto Rico. I had visited Colorado for a few weeks at the time and I was a complete stranger to my research site. I was completely unaware of what was going on in the Latino community, its populations, its practices, and culture. When I was ready to begin the research, I moved to Colorado. I then became more than just a researcher. I became part of the community I was observing. I moved to Colorado, not just to do research, but I also got married, and I was moving to start a new life with my husband, making me, a first generation adult “immigrant” as well. Even though I am a citizen of the United States because I was born and raised in Puerto Rico, I consider myself an

immigrant. “In negotiating researchers roles, certainly age, gender, race, and language all matter” (Dyson and Genishi; 2005; p. 53). Now I am a researcher and a first generation adult Latino immigrant, who like other immigrants came to an unfamiliar and non Spanish speaking environment. The only difference between many of the Latino population and me is that I am a fluent English speaker. But for the Latino community, even though I am a Latina, I am also an American by birth. Therefore I am not part of the Latino community, but neither am I an American. I am Puerto Rican. The main factor which ties me to this community is my husband, a Venezuelan. Therefore, I am a Puerto Rican bilingual master’s student, married to a Latino, and a recent immigrant. I am a first generation bilingual immigrant; therefore I am similar to them, yet I am not part of them, until this day.

Another factor which identifies me with many Latinos is that as I was working on my thesis, I realized I still have a lot of English to learn. As I already mentioned, the opportunities where I could use English in Puerto Rico were only in my classes, and I do not know a lot of slang or colloquial language used by native speakers who have lived in the US for many years. When I arrived in Colorado, my husband and I had agreed we were going to continue visiting an English speaking church. My husband used to go to Latino churches, but for personal reasons and because we both were interested in learning more English by interacting with the world outside the Latino community, he visited a few American churches, and chose one before I arrived.

¿Y Para qué es Esto? (What is this for?)

I was concerned about how I was going to ask participants for their participation. To prevent biased answers and to simplify the research for the participants, I told them the study was about the use of English among Latinos. After some of the participants had read the

consent form, they would ask me “¿Y para qué es esto?” (What is this for?). I indicated that it was a part of my Masters program and part of my thesis. Then they would sign. Thus, for some participants I would be a student-researcher. For others, I would just be a friendly face who gave them a piece of paper to fill out. Some participants would tell me stories about themselves, their friends, and their language use while filling out the questionnaire.

For some participants, my presence and the paperwork startled them, but others did not mind it. This is why I would never carry a writing pad or write anything down while they were speaking to me. If I would have done so, I might have scared them, and the ones who talked might not have done so. “How one inserts oneself into the times and spaces of a site does matter...” (Dyson and Genishi, 2005, p. 54). I always dressed casually, and spoke with them in a friendly but serious tone to let them know this was serious for me. I dressed casually because as I was conducting my research I was also in my everyday life; I wanted to blend in. Besides, if I would dress professionally, the participants might have been more nervous. I did not want to scare participants in any way; I wanted them to feel comfortable with me, filling out the questionnaire, asking me questions, or even telling me anecdotes, as some did.

Ethical Issues

In every study there are ethical concerns which should be addressed. The first concern for this study was the covert observation. Because participants did not know they were being observed it may be considered an invasion of their privacy. However, as Cohen et al. (2007) pointed out, this type of observation is necessary for some researchers to have access to “marginalized and stigmatized groups.... or individuals that would change their natural behavior if they knew they were being observed” (p. 409). For this study, covert research was

necessary because if participants knew I was observing them, and what I was observing, I would not have been able to get a snapshot of language use among Latinos at that time.

The second concern was with the questionnaire. The questionnaire was time consuming, but before participants started it, they had to read the consent form (Appendix D) and sign it. The consent form included the time the questionnaire would take and its purpose. It also explained that they had the right to withdraw their participation at any time. The questionnaire was completely anonymous and confidential. The information they were providing would become part of a public document. They were not going to receive any compensation for filling out the questionnaire and they would not be submitted to any type of suffering, risks, physical or mental harm as a consequence of this study.

As is required with all research involving human participants, I needed to request permission from the Institutional Review Board (IRB). I did not collect any data until I received permission from the IRB (Appendix L) on April 16, 2009.

The next chapter, Chapter IV, presents the results for the questionnaire.

Chapter IV: Questionnaire Results

The questionnaire (Appendix I) focuses on the use of language in different contexts in the everyday life of Latinos. Some of the wording in some answers to the questions may seem odd because I tried to stay as close as possible to the original Spanish answers. Skipped questions are either discussed in Chapter III or were voided as explained in Chapter III.

English Use In/ Outside the Latino Community

When selecting participants for the study, their place of residence was not a criterion for choosing them. Question 1, contrary to my expectations, indicated that more participants in this sample live outside the Latino community, which may or may not necessarily be representative of the Latino population of Colorado. A total of 48 percent of the participants live in the Latino community, and 52 percent live outside the Latino community. With regards to the work place (question 2), the majority, 52 percent, of the participants work outside the ethnically concentrated community, 36 percent work in the Latino community, and 12 percent do not work. Generally, jobs are more abundant outside the Latino community; therefore I expect more English use in the workplace.

While jobs are more abundant outside the Latino community, shopping places can be found in and outside the Latino community. Thus, many of the Latino shopping needs can be fulfilled inside the Latino community. Therefore, more than half of the participants, 60 percent, reported going shopping both in and outside the Latino community, 28 percent reported shopping in the Latino community, and 12 percent reported shopping outside the Latino community (question 3). Only 28 percent of the participants of this study reported not needing to go outside the Latino community to satisfy their shopping needs.

Question 4 asked participants if they used English in the Latino community; 60 percent reported not using English in the Latino community and 40 percent reported using English while in the Latino community. Table 8 shows the places in the Latino community where participants reported using English. Participants could give more than one answer.

Table 8

Question 5: If You Answered Yes, in What Places?

(In the Latino Community)

Stores	5	50%
Church	4	40%
Work	3	30%
Hospitals	2	20%
School	1	10%
Street	1	10%
N=10		

The context with the highest percentage of answers is stores (50 percent), followed by church (40 percent), and work (30 percent). Even though more than half of the participants reported using English in the Latino community in question 4, in question 5, the low percentages of the answers indicate there is not a lot of English used in the Latino community. All three contexts, -shopping, work, and church-, will be discussed further in Chapter V.

I also asked participants if they used English outside the Latino community (question 6). Ninety-two percent of the participants said they did. As I expected, they reported using more English outside the Latino community. When I asked participants where they used English

outside the Latino community (question 7), the answer with the highest percent was at work (83 percent). The second highest percent was at stores; this includes supermarkets and malls, in one word, shopping. This may be due to the fact that working and shopping are the most frequent in their normal daily activities. Table 9 provides a list of places outside the Latino community where participants reported using English. Participants could give more than one answer to this question.

Table 9

Question 7: If You Answered Yes, in What Places?

(Outside the Latino Community)

Work	19	76%
Stores	15	60%
Hospitals	7	28%
Church	6	24%
School	4	16%
Bank	3	12%
Post Office	1	4%
Street	1	4%
People	1	4%
No answer	2	8%
N=25		

English Use in the Household

As already mentioned 92 percent of the participants are married, and 100 percent of the participants and their spouses have Spanish as their mother tongue. Question 12 asked if their spouse knew English; 20 percent answered *no* and eighty percent answered *yes*. Because I was not specific with this question, participants could have answered *yes* no matter their spouse's English level. But when I asked the participants if they spoke English with their spouse (question 13), only 40 percent reported speaking English to some extent with their spouses. In question 14, I asked participants how frequently they spoke English with their spouse. Table 10 shows the results to this question. The highest percent was 60 percent who reported never using English when speaking to their spouse, suggesting use of English in the household is not much.

Table 10

Question 14: How Frequently Do You Speak English With Your Spouse?

Never	15	60%
A little	1	4%
Occasionally	6	24%
Frequently	3	12%
All the time	0	0%
N=25		

I also asked participants about their language use with their children. All participants have children (question 15); but only 48 percent of the children speak English to their parents. Forty four percent of the children do not speak English to their parents and eight percent do not speak yet (question 16). Question 17 asked participants what language they used to speak to

their children and why. Seventy two percent of the participants reported speaking only Spanish to their children while 28 percent of the participants reported speaking Spanish and English to their children. These results also suggest English use in the household is not much.

The reasons why 72 percent of participants (n=18) choose to speak Spanish to their children are:

- My wife and I decided to speak Spanish at home
- We like to know both languages
- It is our mother tongue and my English is poor
- Because I do not want them to lose Spanish
- Because I do not want them to forget Spanish
- Because they are in Mexico
- Because in English they laugh at me
- It is the language I know more
- Because they speak Spanish
- My daughter speaks to me in English and I speak to her in Spanish
- I do not want them to lose their roots or their language. Outside the house people will speak to them in English.
- I do not speak English well and because I want them to speak Spanish, so they can communicate with the family and more job opportunities
- So they can be bilinguals
- It is very important to maintain it and improve it
- We understand each other better
- Mother tongue (2)
- They do not have patience and say they do not understand me

These answers can be summarized in the following categories shown in Table 11. Some of the responses were placed in more than one category because participants could write more than one answer.

Table 11

Reasons for Speaking Spanish Only to Children

Maintain Mother Tongue	8	32%
Parents want their children to be bilingual	5	20%
Parents do not have command of English	7	28%
Not applicable	1	4%
N=18		

The reasons participants gave for speaking Spanish to their children with the highest percent was maintenance of the mother tongue. At the same time, participants who answered that they spoke Spanish to their children because they want their children to be bilingual are also interested in maintaining their mother tongue. Therefore, at least 52 percent of the participants choose to speak Spanish to their children because they want to maintain their mother tongue.

The reasons why 28 percent of the participants (N=7) choose to speak Spanish and English to their children are:

- They speak almost all English
- Because I want them to speak both
- The times I speak in English is to learn to pronounce
- To practice my English and to teach Spanish to my children
- Because I want them to practice Spanish. They have command of both languages

- To be bilingual

Table 12 summarizes these answers in categories. The reason the majority of the parents gave why they choose to speak Spanish and English to their children is because they are interested in learning English.

Table 12

Reasons for Speaking Both Languages to Children

Parents are interested in learning English	3	12%
Parents want their children to be bilingual	2	8%
Children have better command of English	1	4%
No answer	1	4%

N=7

As I expected, a majority of the parents who choose to speak Spanish to their children do so because they want to maintain the mother tongue, and only a few are taking advantage of their children to learn English. Even among those parents who use both languages with their children, I see a strong desire to maintain Spanish.

Besides asking participants about their language practices in their home with their spouses and children, I was also interested in knowing what language they spoke outside their home. Question 18 asked participants to indicate the language used to speak to family members, friends, co-workers, bosses, store employees, which included supermarkets and all kinds of stores, governmental agencies employees, and strangers they might encounter on a daily basis. There were only three possible answers: Spanish, English, or both. I believe that not giving them options from which to choose forced them to reflect on their lives and write

down what they did, instead of just circling a letter from a list of options. This question helped verify answers participants had given in questions 14 and 17. Additionally, this question provides insight into their language use among different people and in different contexts. The results are provided in Table 13.

Table 13

Question 18: For Each of These Persons, Explain in What Language Do You Speak to Them?

	Spanish		English		Both		No answer	
Family	19	76%	0	0%	5	20%	1	4%
Friends	12	48%	0	0%	11	44%	2	8%
Co-workers	9	36%	7	28%	6	24%	3	12%
Boss	4	16%	15	60%	3	12%	3	12%
Store Employees	2	8%	10	40%	12	48%	1	4%
Government Employees	1	4%	15	60%	4	16%	5	20%
Strangers	4	16%	5	20%	12	48%	4	16%

N=25

As I had expected, the highest percent of Spanish only use was with family members, with 76 percent, followed by their friends, with 48 percent; similarly, also as expected, the contexts with the highest percentages of English use were with bosses and governmental agency employees with 60 percent each.

Learning English

I was also interested in knowing how many participants had looked for help to learn English. Therefore, question 21 asked participants if they had searched for any type of help to

learn English. More than half of the participants (68 percent) reported looking for help to learn English while 32 percent had not looked for any type of help. Question 22 asked how much time after they arrived to the United States they sought help to learn English. The highest percent is one year or less (28 percent) followed by two to four years (24 percent). Therefore, more than half of the participants reported looking for help to learn English shortly after they arrived in the USA. All of the results participants gave are shown in Table 14. In this question I did not provide any categories from which to choose; hence some participants (16 percent) gave me an answer that did not answer the question; therefore, I categorized them all under *other*.

Table 14

*Question 22: How Much Time After You Arrived in the
US did you Seek Help to Learn English?*

Immediately	2	8%
1 year or less	7	28%
2 to 4 years	6	24%
5 or more years	2	8%
Never	4	16%
Other	4	16%
N=25		

One of the ways immigrants can look for help to learn English is by taking ESL classes. Question 23 asked participants if they had taken ESL classes. More than half, 56 percent reported they had taken ESL classes while 44 percent had not taken any classes.

Question 24 asked participants how many courses they had taken. The highest percent of participants took only one class (36 percent). Table 15 illustrates the number of ESL classes participants reported taking. Because I did not give any categories for this question, 14 percent wrote something that did not answer the question; therefore I categorized them under *other*. Even though a majority of participants reported taking ESL classes shortly after their arrival in the USA, this question shows they have taken very few classes to learn English.

Table 15

Question 24: How Many Courses Have You Taken?

1 class	5	36%
2 classes	3	21%
3 classes	2	14%
4 classes	0	0%
5 classes	2	14%
Other	2	14%
N=14		

The next question (question 26), was an open-ended question, it asked participants if they planned to continue taking ESL classes. Fifty six percent answered *no*, 28 percent answered *yes*, four percent indicated they did not know, and 12 percent did not answer. In this same question, I also asked participants how many more classes they were planning to take. Table 16 provides the answers to this question. As you may observe, none of the answers is a certain answer; therefore I do not believe many will continue taking ESL classes.

Table 16

Question 26: How Many?

At least 2	1	10%
Do not know	2	20%
Until I learn	2	20%
The necessary	3	30%
What I can	1	10%
None	1	10%
N=10		

There is always more than one way to do something; consequently I asked participants in question 27 if they had used any audio, video, computer programs, or private classes to learn English independently. Forty four percent answered *yes* and 56 percent answered *no*. I also asked participants how frequently they used ESL programs. The answers are shown in Table 17. As you may observe, the highest percent is the category *a little* (45 percent). These results show that even though participants are reporting using ESL programs to acquire the language, the majority are not using the programs frequently.

Table 17

Question 27: How Frequently Do You use These Programs?

Never	1	9%
A little	5	45%
Occasionally	3	27%
Frequently	1	9%
All the time	1	9%
N=11		

Question 29 asked if any of the programs helped them learn English. Of the 44 percent who reported using ESL programs in question 27, 64 percent (7 participants) answered the programs had helped them and 36 percent (4 participants) answered the programs had not helped them. In question 29, I also asked participants how much the ESL programs had helped them. Results are shown in Table 18. The answers with the highest percent were *a lot* and *somewhat* with 43 percent for each category. This answer seems odd because in previous questions, a majority of the participants answered they used ESL programs *a little*; or it could be that the few people who use ESL programs find them very helpful.

Table 18

Question 29: If They Have Helped You, How Much?

Not at all	0	0%
Very little	0	0%
Somewhat	3	43%
A lot	3	43%
Always	1	14%
N=7		

I also asked participants who reported using ESL programs (44 percent) to explain how these ESL programs had helped them. Participants (N=11) answered the following:

- I use the translator
- In grammar it helps me a little, but not in the correct pronunciation
- To construct conversational phrases
- To improve my pronunciation and knowledge of vocabulary and the tenses
- To improve my vocabulary, the conjugations of verbs, to write
- It has helped me a little
- Pronunciation, expand vocabulary
- Because people speak and I do not understand words or phrases and they speak fast

Table 19 summarizes these answers in the following categories:

Table 19

Participants Areas of Progress Using ESL Programs

Grammar	2	18%
Vocabulary	2	18%
Pronunciation	2	18%
Construction of phrases	1	9%
Writing	1	9%
Not applicable	2	18%
No answer	3	27%
N=11		

The highest percent, 18 percent each, was for grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Keep in mind that even though participants reported the ESL programs have helped them, they also reported not using the ESL programs a lot. Therefore, even though they might have progressed in these areas, there is no way to determine how much progress they have made.

Overall, even though more than half of the participants reported taking ESL classes or using ESL programs, they also reported not using them very frequently.

The Media for Learning English

The three media I chose for this research were television and movies, radio, and music and newspapers. Television is a part of everyday life and nowadays it is available in English, Spanish, and many other languages, so each individual decides in what language to watch television programming. In question 30, I asked participants what language they watch

television; 44 percent indicated they watched more in Spanish than in English as shown in Table 20.

Table 20

Question 30: In what Language Do You Watch Television?

Spanish Only	2	8%
More Spanish than English	11	44%
Both languages equally	11	44%
More English than Spanish	1	4%
English only	0	0%
I do not watch television	0	0%

N=25

Even though 44 percent of the participants reported using both languages when watching television, at least half of their television use is in Spanish. Therefore, Spanish is used more when watching television.

Even though watching movies is similar to watching television, movies have options television may not have, such as changing the language of the audio and subtitles to Spanish or English, depending on the movie. I asked participants what language they watch movies (question 32) and the highest percents were equally divided between more Spanish than English and more English than Spanish with a 20 percent for each. Table 21 shows the answers for this question.

Table 21

Question 32: In what Language Do You Watch Movies?

I do not watch movies	4	16%
Spanish only	0	0%
More Spanish than English	5	20%
In Spanish with English subtitles	2	8%
Both languages	4	16%
More English than Spanish	5	20%
English only	3	12%
In English with Spanish subtitles	2	8%

N=25

Unlike watching television, results suggest Latinos use English slightly more when watching movies. The results suggest that English use (40 percent) is higher than Spanish use (28 percent) by approximately 12 percent.

The next media I considered in this research was radio and music. Both, radio and music are present every day and in many places. Music is present at home, in the car, at work, and even while doing exercise. Even I use my radio as an alarm clock so I wake up to music. Therefore, I asked participants in what language they listen to the radio and/ or music (question 34). As shown in Table 22, 48 percent reported listening to radio and music in both languages, but totals for Spanish use are higher than for English.

Table 22

Question 34: In what Language Do You Listen to Radio and/ or Music?

Spanish Only	5	20%
More Spanish than English	2	8%
Both languages	12	48%
More English than Spanish	4	16%
English only	1	4%
Do not listen to radio or music	1	4%
N=25		

Participants report using more Spanish (28 percent) than English (20 percent) when listening to radio and music. Nevertheless, while almost half use both languages; the results suggest that Spanish use is higher by approximately eight percent.

The last type of media which can be used to learn English that I inquired about is the newspaper. I asked participants in question 36 what language they use to read the news paper. Table 23 shows the results. Even though the highest percentages are English only and both languages (16 percent each), when you add the percentages of Spanish versus English, Spanish predominates. These results are similar to those reported for radio, music, and television.

Table 23

Question: 36: In what Language Do You Read Newspapers?

Spanish Only	3	12%
More Spanish than English	3	12%
Both languages equally	4	16%
More English than Spanish	1	4%
English only	4	16%
I do not read newspapers	9	36%
No answer	1	4%
N=25		

Overall, Latinos are reporting they use English to some extent, but percentages for Spanish use are greater than percentages for English for all three types of media: television, radio and/ or music, and newspapers.

Everyday English Use

In addition to knowing the language participants use with their spouse and children, I was also interested in knowing the language they choose when speaking with other people. Question 38 asked participants how often they use English during the week (Monday through Friday). As shown in Table 24, the category with the highest percent was *often* with 40 percent. When the last two categories are added, *often* and *always*, the results show that more than half of the participants (56 percent) reported using English *a lot* in a normal week.

Table 24

*Question 38: How Often Do You use English during the Week**(Monday through Friday)?*

Never	2	8%
A little	2	8%
Occasionally	7	28%
Often	10	40%
Always	4	16%
N=25		

Question 41, asked, how frequently they use English during the weekend. As shown in Table 25, percentages for categories *often* and *always*, decreased to 36 percent indicating participants needed less English on the weekend.

Table 25

Question 41: How Frequently Do use English during the Weekend?

Never	2	8%
A little	6	24%
Occasionally	8	32%
Often	8	32%
Always	1	4%
N=25		

I asked participants where they use English in a normal week (question 39) and where they use English during the weekend (question 42). The highest was 72 percent reporting the use of English at work during the week. The majority of the participants reported their job is the place where they use more English, followed by shopping places. Table 26 shows a complete list of places participants indicated they use English during the week and on the weekend.

Table 26

Places Where Participants Use English (during the Week and on the Weekend)

	Week		Weekend	
Work	18	72%	5	20%
Store	11	44%	11	44%
Church	4	16%	9	36%
Hospital	1	4%	0	0%
Bank	2	8%	1	4%
School	1	4%	0	0%
Street	2	8%	0	0%
Internet	1	4%	0	0%
Restaurants	0	0%	3	12%
Home	0	0%	1	4%
Other	1	4%	1	4%

N=25

The following questions asked with whom they use English during the week (Monday – Friday) (question 40) and with whom they use English on the weekend (question 43). As

shown in Table 27 the highest percent of English use in a normal week was 32 percent with boss and co-worker for each; while on a normal weekend, the highest percent was 32 percent for store employees. Once again, work place and shopping places are the places where participants reported using more English.

Table 27

People With Whom Participants use English (during the Week and on the Weekend)

	Week		Weekend	
Co-workers	8	32%	1	4%
Clients	7	28%	1	4%
Boss	8	32%	3	12%
Friends	4	16%	5	20%
People	1	4%	1	4%
Store employees	4	16%	8	32%
Family	2	8%	3	12%
Students	1	4%	0	0
Church members	0	0%	4	16%
Landlord	0	0%	1	4%

N=25

As shown in Tables 25 and 26, the work place, and shopping places are the contexts in which participants reported using more English. In these same tables you may also observe how English use decreases in the category of family and home. This contradicts results on question 13 (English use with spouse on p. 44), and 17 (English use with children on p. 45), where the

percentages for English use were higher than the results on Tables 25 (p. 60) and Table 26 (p. 61).

The Importance of English for Latinos

In the last section of the questionnaire, I asked participants three questions regarding the importance of the English language in their lives. Question 44 asked what the primary reasons to learn and/ or improve their English are and why. The reasons participants gave were the following:

- I need it in order to communicate with other people
- To understand my girls when they speak and help with their assignments and communicate with other people.
- To better myself and meet people. I like to meet different people and also for my kids
- To be understood
- Achieve my objectives at work and relationships
- Because we are in a country where it is the mother tongue and it is essential for all
- Work, my future
- Because we are in the USA and it is the main language and we need it a lot
- Personal growth
- To be able to communicate and because we live in America and have a better job
- Because it is important to learn it because we live in United States
- Because I need to better myself, it frustrates me not to speak it correctly, besides being able to help my children with homework.
- To have a better job

- To insert myself in society
- Communication, I live in an American country where English is spoken
- I want to communicate with the people that surround me
- To adapt to the US system and culture to improve and expand my culture
- To be able to have a job not hard and express myself better with people
- Personal growth, citizenship exam, internationalize my clients
- Develop better at my job and prepare myself to help my children making sure they do not forget Spanish.
- One main reason is to have better communication to understand better and be able to help my daughters with their homework.
- Be better, speak better English

In this question, participants could give more than one answer, therefore responses of some of the participants were broad and were placed in more than one category. The answers to these questions can be summarized in the following categories:

Table 28

Reasons for Learning English

Progress	12	48%
Communication	10	40%
Language of the USA	5	20%
Children	4	16%
Integration	3	12%

No answer 3 12%

N=25

The three answers with the highest percent were progress (48 percent) which means learning English can provide them with a better job and open doors. The second was communication (40 percent), which means the ability to communicate with people, children, and at work. The third was language of the USA, (20 percent), which means to accept the US culture and break the barriers of this country. As you may observe in Table 28, progress is the answer with the highest percent, indicating participants associate learning English with progress.

Question 45 asked participants what it meant for them to learn English. Participants answered the following:

- To be two people at once
- I speak English frequently
- I like the language and it means a lot or enough because of the simple fact of living in this country (USA). It also means a better job and better opportunities.
- An opportunity and a challenge
- Much needed, improvement
- It means a lot, break a barrier in this country and to be able to have command of a second language is a goal I have proposed to myself.
- Improve and expand my knowledge (2)
- To communicate and express myself (2)
- It is something very important
- Personal satisfaction

- Dedication and improvement
- Raises your self esteem
- Acquire the language of another country
- A lot because I can communicate with people
- It is something very essential we are in the USA
- Well a lot because it is very important to understand what my daughters say
- More doors will open for me
- It facilitates all types of communication at work and wherever you develop better in your life.
- A great need, because I have suffered bad experiences for not being able to speak English correctly.
- Integration
- To improve my grammar, conjugation in general
- A little more of improvement
- A success

In this question participants could give more than one answer, therefore some of their responses were placed in more than one category. These answers can be summarized in the categories shown in table 29:

Table 29

Meaning of Learning English

Progress	13	52%
Communication	4	16%
Personal Satisfaction	3	12%
Language of the USA	3	12%
Help their children	1	4%
Integration	1	4%
Not applicable	1	4%
No answer	1	4%

N=25

The reason with the highest percent for learning English was progress (52 percent). This is similar to the answer in question 44, where progress also had the highest percent. In other words, for the participants in this study, the acquisition of English is associated with progress.

In the last question of the questionnaire (question 46), I asked participants if they think it is obligatory to learn English to live in the US. Seventy one percent answered *yes*, and 29 percent answered *no*. The 17 participants who answered *yes*, said:

- Because it is the language of the country I live in.
- Because a person can communicate
- Because adaptation is easy
- Because it is the language of this country. To be able to have better job opportunities.

- It is the main language of this country, and because you cannot find everywhere people who speak Spanish. To be able to express yourself and say what you are thinking and feel of what is happening at the moment.
- It is necessary to communicate
- Because it is the main language
- Because it is the main language. To help other people who do not think like me. To be able to have an easy-going life.
- The Latino community needs to progress
- Otherwise, it is too hard to live here
- It is an international language
- Official language. Personal achievement
- Because English is the language spoken here
- Because you lose many opportunities if you do not speak English
- Because it is America and it is the language spoken here
- It is very necessary for everything
- Because the majority of the people here, their language is English, and one should adapt to them, because it was us who came to the United States.

Table 29 provides a summary of these answers in categories:

Table 30

Why Is it Obligatory to Learn English to Live in the USA?

Language of the USA	10	40%
Communication	5	20%
Progress	4	16%
Integration	1	4%
Personal Satisfaction	1	4%
N=17		

The category with the highest percent was “It is the language of the USA” with 40 percent. Participants who answered in this category are at different English fluency levels, that is, from fluent English speakers to people who have not done anything to acquire the language. Therefore, regardless of participants’ proficiency level, many feel it is appropriate to respond that it is important to learn English to live in the USA because it is the language of the USA. The next category with the highest percent of answers was Communication, with 20 percent, and the third was Progress with 16 percent.

Participants who answered *no* wrote the following (N=7):

- When an immigrant who does not know English arrives, it can take them a while until they can make themselves understood at work and be able to progress.
- It is not something anyone forces you to do; you are the one who gets stuck.
- It is not obligatory, but it is indispensable
- Because there is a lot of linguistic diversity
- No one can force someone to abandon their mother tongue

- The society where I live does not allow me to progress
- Because here in the USA, everyone lives how they want

The first three answers actually meant it is important to learn English in the US, but as I expressed before, the word “obligatory” gave it a different connotation. One observation is some participants see learning English as a threat to their Spanish and their identity.

Overall, the questionnaire results show Spanish is used more by these participants even though they see the importance of English for progress. Although participants recognize the importance of acquiring English to progress, there is resistance on the part of some immigrants to learn English. As the results in this chapter suggest, they are not doing much to acquire English. In Chapter V, I will provide insight into the findings of the questionnaire with the results of the observations.

Chapter V: Observations and Discussion

In this chapter, I report the observations and refer to the results to the questionnaire to compare questionnaire findings to my observations as well as to the findings of some of the studies discussed in Chapter II. In this way, Chapter IV and Chapter V will answer the research question:

- What is the presence of the English language in the daily lives among an adult Latino in a Latino community in Colorado?

The sub-questions are:

- With whom do they use English?
- In what contexts as adults are they exposed to English?
- What are Latinos doing to acquire English?
- Do they think English is necessary to live in the US?

I began this research in April 2009 by contacting participants to administer the questionnaire. As participants answered the questionnaire, they asked questions, told stories, and gave examples of situations where they or someone they knew used Spanish or English. The stories and comments made while answering the questionnaire provided insight into what was going on in their lives with language and also provided further potential participants for me to contact.

One of the participants, whom I shall call Sandra, is a hairstylist at a Latino salon. The hair salon is located on a corner of an old building on Main Street. One day I went with my husband to the salon and I had brought the questionnaires with me because I previously asked her and another hairstylist to participate. However, when I arrived that day Sandra was the only one there. I gave the questionnaire to Sandra, and I told her what the questionnaire was about.

Her first words were “Yo no hablo inglés” (I do not speak English). But as she answered the questionnaire, I observed she was underestimating her English use. She actually used more English than she claimed. As she answered the questionnaire, she said she preferred to listen to the radio in English because Spanish programs were not good. Her children speak to her in English, and she occasionally has English speaking customers. She also told me she was interested in learning English because she is going to take the citizenship test. At the time of the study Sandra had lived in the USA for 15 years. Even though Sandra has a strong accent when she speaks English, she is a fluent English speaker. In other words, Sandra is an example of a Latina who wants to succeed in her life in the US and is willing to learn English in order to do so.

On the other hand, there is Carlos. As I waited in the salon, Sandra recommended this participant to me. When he got to question 27 of the questionnaire, which asks if he has looked for help to learn English, he said he uses a dictionary. Because for this research I do not consider the use of the dictionary as an ESL program to acquire or learn English, I told him to check *no*. When he was going to answer the question asking if he knew English, he was going to check *no*, but thought for a second and checked *yes*. From what I observed of him and the answers he gave in the questionnaire, he works, lives, and shops in the Latino community and the fact that he has not looked for any type of help to learn English other than dictionary use indicates his English skills might not be much. Overall, in his case, according to his answers to the questionnaire, his everyday life is conducted in Spanish. At the time of the study, Carlos had lived in the USA for nine years. As I observed while he answered the questionnaire, Carlos seems to know very little English. Carlos is an example of Latinos who seem to grow

accustomed to not needing English because they rarely go outside the Latino community to meet their needs. In this way he is the opposite of Sandra.

English Use In/ Outside the Latino Community

Besides Sandra and Carlos, many other participants also interacted with me and indicated how they used English in and outside the household and even told me stories of their friends and their English or Spanish use. This section will answer the sub-question, in what contexts as adults are they exposed to English. This section will also look at the language used outside the household. Some of the contexts discussed in this section are the work place, children's school, church, stores, which are visited very often, governmental agencies, and hospitals, which are not visited as often.

English Use in the Latino Community.

One of the places I visited frequently in the Latino community was Sonia's Hair Salon. In the salon, as always and as in many other places in the Latino community, Spanish is the language used. One particular day, I had the opportunity to observe many scenarios at the salon. As my husband and I were entering the salon, there was a Mexican man talking in Spanish with someone on the phone; he said, "*¿Cómo está mi reina preciosa?*" (How is my beautiful queen?) My husband and I thought it was probably his daughter. As we entered the salon, Sandra was working that day; she was cutting a woman's hair and they were speaking in Spanish. When she was done, the customer called her son in Spanish, and told him it was his turn to sit on the chair and have his hair cut. It was a bit of a struggle because the boy did not want to. Not only did the woman speak Spanish with her son, she also spoke Spanish to her husband, her daughter, and the stylist as well. This is only one example of language used in one

business in the Latino community. This particular day, as I waited in the salon I had the opportunity to observe many language interactions.

As I remained in the waiting room many people entered and left the salon. Among them were a few boys who were selling chocolate. One of the boys began to speak in Spanish to us and all of a sudden a teenage boy interrupted him to show us what they were selling. None of us bought anything and then the teenager said, "*Es para una buena causa, por lo menos no estamos en la esquina fumando marihuana*" (It is for a good cause; at least we are not at a corner smoking weed). As soon as they stepped out, not only did he immediately switch to English, but he also started cursing and talking about marihuana to some boys who were on the sidewalk waiting for them. There may be more than one reason why these boys spoke to us in Spanish. One reason can be because they speak Spanish with Latino adults. A second reason can be that while in Latino stores, Latinos speak more Spanish than English and the young are aware of the language use in these domains.

As in any business, the salon needed merchandise, and that day a delivery man came in along with a 10 to 12 year-old girl, probably his daughter. As soon as he entered the salon, he spoke Spanish to the hair stylist. One of the last times he entered he came in with a few boxes, and as soon as he entered he said to his daughter in English, "You are sitting down there and you could not open the door for me?" and she responded "Sorry." The hairstylist reported knowing English, but everyone who spoke to her used Spanish. Once someone enters the salon, even if they are fluent English speakers, as the deliveryman and the boys who spoke English with no accent, Spanish is the language of choice. This is true in many other Latino stores in the Latino community. These examples support the findings of the questionnaire. As shown in

Table 8 (p. 42), only 5 participants indicated using English while in stores in the Latino community. In other words, while in the Latino community Spanish use predominates.

As I observed in this single day at the salon, Spanish was the language of choice by many people while they are there. Even the teenagers, who were clearly more fluent in English, entered the salon and spoke Spanish to us. These are just a few examples of Latinos' language use inside a Latino store in the Latino community.

As reported in Chapter IV, 40 percent of the participants say they use English in the Latino community. As you may observe in question 5 (Table 8, p. 42), participants reported using English in various places in the Latino community; the four places with the highest percents were: in stores, at work, at church, and at hospitals. I will discuss the work place later on (p. 102) because I did not observe this context, and I will not discuss hospitals in this section because in the time I spent in the community I did not observe any hospitals in the Latino community. There is a clinic near the community but not inside the Latino community. I discuss hospitals on page 85. In this section I will discuss two of these contexts; stores, specifically supermarkets, and church.

Lanteigne and Schwarzer (1997) observed a community similar to the one I observed. The quote below describes both their community and their participant:

Rafael lives in an area with a high concentration of Spanish-speaking people. The Argentine district of Kansas City, Kansas, is well known as a predominantly Latino area. It is quite common to hear Spanish spoken in the stores and businesses, both by customers and employees. The grocery stores in this area have extensive sections for Spanish cuisine, and Mexican restaurants are abundant. (p. 37)

The community described by Lanteigne and Schwarzer (1997), is very similar to the community I observed. The center of the community in my study is located on Main Street. Many of the buildings are old buildings, and Spanish is used in Latino stores. In my community there are also stores, including supermarkets and convenience stores with many Latin products. This community even has Latino supermarkets, where all of the products sold are Latino products, predominantly Mexican products. As previously mentioned (question 3, p. 41), 60 percent of the participants reported going shopping in and outside the Latino community while 28 percent reported going shopping only in the Latino community. Therefore, the majority of the participants, as many other Latinos, do their shopping in the Latino community. This is similar to the community Worthy (2006) studied.

Due to the demographics of the community in which they lived, parents found that they were mostly able to get by in their daily lives without knowing English. Typically, there were bilingual supervisors or other workers who translated for them, so English was not necessary for most jobs. Because they lived in a bilingual community, the stores they frequented and the services they used were often staffed by bilinguals. (p. 143)

Similar to the community described in the quote above, this community also has many places where residents will not need to use English. There are four different Latino supermarkets in this community. Three of them are clearly Mexican, *El Rey*, *Los Compas*, and *El Merco*. *El Rey* opened very recently and it has a strong American influence. As soon as you enter, you get a sense you are in an American supermarket. The employees are fluent English speakers and speak English among themselves. It is even organized differently than the others; but the food, the decorations, and the music are Mexican. Even though many of the store employees speak fluent English among themselves, once you are done shopping and approach

the cash register, the cashiers switch immediately to Spanish when speaking to you. Again, English is not needed here.

The fourth supermarket, which is the farthest from what I would call the center of the Latino community, is *Mi Casa*. Even though it has strong Mexican influence, you can find products from other Latin countries. At the cash register, you can see a strand of small flags from many Latin countries such as Cuba, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, Colombia, Mexico, and Bolivia among others. All the flags are the same size, and other than the food, nothing else indicates an inclination to one specific country. What I have observed in all these supermarkets is that almost all the workers speak Spanish. For example, one time in *Los Compas* I was going to pay and the cashier asked me in Spanish if I had found everything okay; because I only smiled, she immediately switched to English and asked me the same thing in heavily accented English. Cashiers and store employees will always speak Spanish to customers first, unless it is very obvious customers are not Latinos, suggesting that in these supermarkets in the Latino community everyday life is conducted in Spanish.

In the Latino community, some stores advertise in Spanish while other stores advertise in both, English and Spanish, as I noticed when I went shopping at one of the supermarkets in the Latino community. I had just finished shopping and was in the car waiting for the stop light to turn green. As I looked around, a sign caught my attention. The sign was located at a convenience store and it advertised what was sold in the store: coffee, sandwiches, calling cards, and more. The interesting part was that everything on this sign which was in English had the Spanish translation underneath the English word. As you may observe in this example, even store signs of non-Latino stores are in Spanish.

There are other American companies in the Latino community, such as Little Caesars, Rent a Center, K-mart, and Good Will among others. At these places the majority of the employees are English speakers; but, you can also find Latino employees or bilingual employees in some of these places. As I have observed, in K-mart there are many Latino employees; therefore, it is easy to find someone who speaks Spanish who can help you. There are also small restaurants inside the supermarkets where Mexican favorites are served. Along the street you will also find Mexican restaurants and small food buses called *Loncheras* (lunch box) where you can buy a typical burrito and other typical Mexican food, and the language used is Spanish. Chiswick and Miller (1997) point out that living in an ethnically concentrated community, as the one described here, does not allow the residents to interact with English, consequently reducing language acquisition.

...the language concentration effect varies significantly with education, age, and years since migration. Specifically, the adverse effect on English-language skills of living in an ethnic-language enclave is greater for those with less skill, that is, for those with less schooling, for more recent arrivals, and those who immigrated at an older age. An implication of this is that geographical concentrations of minority-language speakers provide a shelter from having to acquire English language skills. (p. 34)

I have been living in Colorado for over a year and I have seen this reality firsthand. None of the employees in these Latino stores has spoken to me in English first. This is different from employees in American stores in the Latino community who speak English first, unless they have already heard me speak Spanish or I had addressed them in Spanish first. Therefore, bilingual employees, even in American stores, reduce the need to speak English for Latinos.

These observations confirm the data collected in the questionnaire, where only 33 percent of the participants (Table 8, p. 42) reported using English in stores in the Latino community.

The last context I will discuss in this section is church. There are many churches in and outside the Latino community and I had the opportunity to learn where some churches are located and had the privilege of visiting them. The first one is an American church located in another Latino community. This church has two more groups which congregate in their facilities; a small Latino group and an Indonesian group. Even though the American group and the Latino group congregate at the same time and day, the Latinos meet in different buildings; therefore for the majority of the members, contact with the English speaking members of the church is minimal.

One day I went to a church gathering to administer the questionnaire to people who had previously agreed to participate in the study and to new participants as well. At this particular gathering both groups (the American group and the Latino group) were present, but not together in one big group. The majority of the Latino women were sitting under a tree eating and talking. I approached them and gave out a few questionnaires. They were speaking only Spanish and when a member of the American church came by, you would hear a “Hi, how are you?” “Good!” from one or two of the group. Most men were in the field playing a soccer game. But not all the men were playing, and when some approached their wives and saw them writing, they would ask them what they were doing. When the women explained to their husbands what they were doing, they immediately looked at me out of the corner of the eye and tried to escape from the scene unnoticed. Then, I moved to another group. In this group I saw members of the American church and a few Latinos, but they were also separated. This group of Latinos did occasionally have short conversations with the English speaking group, but as I

later found out, half of the Latinos in that group, were born in the US, therefore English dominant.

I sat at a picnic table with the group of Latinos because I was administering the questionnaire to some people. While at the table the Latinos would only speak Spanish. There was one young Latino man whom I shall call David. While he was barbequing, he spoke with us and with the English-speaking members of the American church. I refer to them this way because they were not necessarily white Americans; there were some Russians, African Americans, and even Latin Americans among others. As I waited for the participants to answer the questionnaire, David asked me what that was. I explained and he said, “*Si lo tienes en inglés lo lleno,*” meaning that if I had the questionnaire in English, he would fill it out. He laughed and left. Afterwards, every time he passed the table, he would repeat the same comment over and over again. He had no intentions of filling it out; he just wanted to be funny.

The second church is huge in structure and membership. The English-speaking members meet in the morning and the Hispanic group meets in the afternoon. This Latino group has even less contact with the English-speaking members of the church. Therefore, for the majority of the Latino congregation of both churches, English interactions are scarce to non-existent. However, for a minority of these Latino congregations, especially the leaders of the groups, English interaction is required because they need to communicate with the leaders of the American churches.

Participants reported using English in various contexts the Latino community (Table 8 p. 42); these observations confirm data shown in Table 8. This means that, yes English is used in the Latino community, unless you go to Latino stores, or places where there are bilingual employees. Yes, some participants use English at church, but it is minimal and occasional

because they attend Latino groups or Latino churches. In other words, while Latinos are in the Latino community, Spanish use predominates.

English Outside the Latino community.

Outside the Latino Community Spanish is used less, but Spanish is also present. As you may observe in Table 9 (p. 43), participants reported places outside the Latino community, where they used English. The top four places where participants reported using English were: at work, in stores, in hospitals, and at church. In this section, I will discuss stores, hospitals, and church.

As participants were answering the questionnaire, I observed many participants were reporting they used English while shopping in supermarkets such as Walmart, K-mart, King Soopers, Safeway, among others. Therefore, I decided to go grocery shopping at Walmart and observe what was happening with language use. This particular Walmart is located outside and far from the Latino community, but there are Latinos present. I decided to observe not only Latinos, but everyone who passed me.

That day I went shopping alone. If I had gone with my husband, I would have spoken Spanish with him, and occasionally used some English. As I was walking down the freezer aisle, there was a young family in the middle of the aisle. The mother did not seem too friendly, so I stood to the side to wait for her to move. Then in a mocking manner, she said, "Oh, am I in the way?" and moved. I said "Thanks." As I continued shopping, lots of people walked beside me: Asians and Latinos, among others, and every culture spoke their language. It was then my eyes opened (yes, like seeing the gorilla in the room) to something which was obvious, but I had not considered before. Almost every ethnic group I observed spoke their native language among themselves, while shopping, the opportunities where people used English were very few.

If that lady had not been in the way, I would not have interacted with anyone else in the store that particular day.

As soon as I finished shopping, I headed to the cashier. “Hi!” “Hi!” “Did you find everything you needed?” “Yes.” “Your total is \$. Thank you for shopping at Walmart. Have a nice day.” “Thanks, you too.” That day, the amount of English I used in a supermarket outside the Latino community was very little and very basic. Therefore, I started to pay more attention and observe the language needed when shopping in or outside the Latino community. Even though 60 percent of participants (Table 9, p. 43) reported using English while shopping, when I decided to observe in detail what was happening at shopping places, I realized the amount of language (Spanish or English) needed while shopping is not much. When trying to learn a language, shopping places do not allow for much interaction with language, either Spanish or English, unless an individual is motivated to learn the language and creates opportunities for interaction.

In stores like Walmart, where you only grab what you need and leave, language is not needed. Stores where people need to communicate what they want to buy, have bilingual employees to assist Latino customers. One example of such stores is American Furniture Warehouse. This is an American store located outside the Latino community; they have commercials on both American and Latino channels. The Spanish commercial informs Latinos they can go buy at their store because they have hired more bilingual employees to better serve them. These examples show that even stores outside the Latino community are advertising for the Latino community in Spanish, thus reducing the need for English.

Another context where I did not have to use English was in banks. Even though banks are not shopping places and participants do not consider them a shopping place, I will discuss

them here. As you may observe in Table 9 (p. 43) only 12 percent of the participants reported using English in banks, which is a very low percent. At the bank we go to, there are two female employees who speak Spanish: Patricia, a Chicana, and Johanna, a second generation Puerto Rican. Patricia speaks Spanish to customers who speak Spanish. Although she knows we are Latinos, she rarely addresses us in Spanish because she knows we can communicate in English. She is clearly more fluent in English than Spanish and speaks Spanish with an accent.

I believe Johanna identifies with me as I identify with her because of the connection with Puerto Rico. Even though Johanna knows my husband and I speak English she always speaks Spanish to us. However, I have not seen Patricia and Johanna speak Spanish with each other. In this bank, any Latino customer who does not speak English is able to communicate with Patricia or Johanna in Spanish. We also visited other banks to learn about them and select one. We first went to Direct Bank we waited until someone helped us. A woman guided us to her office. As we spoke with her, she asked us if we spoke Spanish; we said yes, and she switched to Spanish. Latinos who go to this bank also have the alternative to speak with a Spanish-speaking teller who can understand them and help them.

The last bank we went to was one of the biggest chain banks in the US. We entered and stayed in the waiting room until an American employee came to us and walked us to her cubicle. We spent some time with her as we opened an account. As we were chatting and filling out the paperwork, she asked us what we did for a living. My husband answered first and then I answered. I told her I was a master's student and I was working on my thesis. She became interested and continued asking questions. When I told her my thesis was about the English use among Latinos, she immediately referred to the sign hanging from the ceiling above

the cubicle next to her which said “*Hablo Español.*” This sign pointed out to Latino customers that this person is a Spanish speaker. We finished the paperwork and left.

We returned to go back another day and talked to the woman, and once again we had to wait for someone. As we were waiting, there were two other customers before us, a Latino family and an Asian family. An Asian employee came out and asked the Latino family if she could help them. The only gesture the Latinos did was to point at the woman sitting under the sign which said she spoke Spanish. The next people in line were the Asian family who were waiting for the Asian employee. As soon as she got to them, they immediately switched to their native language. Each group of people was sitting in front of the person they wanted to speak to. The Asian family was in front of the Asian’s office; the Latino family was in front of the desk of the Spanish-speaking employee, and my husband and I were in front of the American woman who had initially opened our account. Even in places outside the Latino community, there are bilingual employees who can help Latinos in Spanish, thus reducing the use of English outside the Latino community. But as I have also witnessed in several places, in many circumstances, and with people of different cultures, the use of the native language in everyday life is not an isolated phenomenon of Latinos only. Every culture does the same.

While in some places outside the Latino community, Latinos do not need to use English; as the examples above illustrate, there are other places where language in general is not needed. The Panda Express is a Chinese restaurant located near the Latino community. In this zone, the Latino community begins to fade, but a lot of Latinos frequent this restaurant. It has a green roof, the windows have turned yellowish and are opaque; when you drive by you can only get a glimpse of what is going on inside. There is no air conditioner in the summer and in the winter the heat is so low you barely feel it. Only Chinese work in the restaurant and the inside of the

restaurant is not much different from the outside. As you enter, to the right there are three rows of chairs and tables where you can sit and eat. At the other end there is a table and a trash can where you throw your leftovers and where you return the plates. On the left there is the buffet. There are approximately 16 different prepared foods; each serving costs a dollar.

Most of the food served in the Panda Express has jalapeños or is spicy hot. Many Mexicans come to eat at this restaurant daily. The buffet has a sneeze guard, on which the name of the dish is written in English. Many people ask for what they want by name, but some Latinos do not. Many just point at what they want and signal with their finger the amount they want. One finger for one portion, two fingers for double portion and so on. When it is time to pay, the Chinese woman opts for one of two ways to communicate the total to the Spanish-speaking customers. The Chinese woman's English is very limited and her Spanish is even less. Still, the Chinese woman tries to say the amount in Spanish, or they just point to the amount on the cash register.

One day at the Chinese restaurant, I observed a Latina woman and I noticed she was not using any type of verbal communication to communicate with the Chinese woman. She only pointed at what she wanted and with her hand requested the portions she desired. I looked away for a moment and when I looked back, the Latina was trying to tell the Chinese woman something, but she was unable to speak one word. She was waving her hands and arms desperately trying to communicate. Her face showed an expression of discomfort and embarrassment, while lifting her hand and pointing her finger outside. Not even I had a clue of what she was trying to communicate. Her face also had a look of HELP! I approached them and asked the Latina if I could help her. The Latina wanted to say she had to get some money at her car. But her lack of English impeded her communication with someone who does not speak

Spanish. Because Latinos have become accustomed to not needing to use English in many contexts, when they have the need to say something, they cannot because they lack the basic language to communicate simple needs. This is just one incident, there may be many more.

Another example of how bilingual staff or employees help Latinos with poor English skills communicate in their everyday life is told by a participant in Worthy's (2006) study. This participant described her first visit to the hospital. She said she was scared at first when she thought she had to speak English, but when the doctor came up to her, the doctor asked her if she knew English. She said *no*, and the doctor switched to Spanish (p. 142). I had a similar experience when I got married. My parents were in Colorado visiting; one night my dad could barely sleep because of a headache, so we took him to a hospital. The nurses and the secretary would come to me to get the information they needed from my dad. At the time, I was acting as a language broker, in other words, a translator. Because my mom has some knowledge of English and the doctor knew a little Spanish, my mom also joined the conversation occasionally to correct a term I used or even to answer the doctor's question. Outside the Latino community there are people who are capable of helping Spanish speakers communicate, therefore reducing the need to learn English.

As shown in Table 9 (p. 43), 24 percent of the participants report using English at church, but they go to Spanish groups or Latino churches; another example of this is seen at the church I attend. My church is a culturally diverse one; there are approximately forty two countries represented and the majority are from Africa. Because of the diversity, English is used as a lingua franca, meaning people use English as a language to communicate because the majority of them do not have English as their L1 (Fromkin et al., 2003, p. 468). There are also interracial marriages. One example is Donna and Federico; she is Indonesian, and he is

Spaniard. Donna studied in Spain before they met and she learned Spanish. They speak English with each other, and occasionally she speaks Spanish, but she prefers to use English. At church, my husband and I speak with everyone in English; however when Federico speaks to us, he switches to Spanish immediately, unless there is someone else in the conversation who does not speak Spanish. All three of us are fluent English speakers and we can maintain conversations with anyone, but some people, like Federico, prefer to use Spanish with us. Others like Yvonne, a Chicana, goes back and forth between Spanish and English when talking to us. She prefers to speak English, but from time to time she speaks in Spanish, and very often she uses both languages at the same time. As in the churches in the Latino community I have mentioned before, there is a Latino group which congregates in the lower level of the church.

When I arrived for the first time at the church, there was a group of approximately six Latinos, who were attending the church. Early on, I learned their intentions were not just to attend the American church, but to create a smaller Latino group within the church. The service is divided in three sections: the Sabbath school, the review of weekly lessons, and the sermon. Even though they attended the first and third services with the rest of the congregation, they had their own lesson discussions in Spanish. After a few months, the group grew until they had enough members to request their own room in the lower part of the building. Once downstairs, the group grew even more.

This American church has many activities every week, and the Latino members never participate in them. Latinos create their own activities completely separate from the church. Once again, the only people in the Latino group who interact with members of the American church are the leaders. The rest of the congregation does not. The Latino group even has different times for arriving and leaving church, a difference of thirty minutes earlier. When

there are special activities which the Latino group participates in, Latinos sit together, and speak to each other in Spanish. Very few interact with members of the American church.

In one particular event called *The Taste of the Nations*, which is celebrated once a year, every culture dresses in their traditional attire and walks through the center of the church with their flag. When the service is over, we all go to the gym where every culture presents dishes from their countries. Latinos filled their plates with food from Mexico or Guatemala, which is basically food they already know. They sat among themselves and left as soon as they were done eating. Later that night, there was another activity which consisted of each culture showing their typical clothes, sharing typical desserts and/ or appetizers, and even typical dances or special ceremonies. The only Latinos who attended were the Puerto Ricans, a Mexican who has an African girl friend, a Mexican family because their young adult children are involved with the American church, an Argentine couple, and my husband and I. These are situations and opportunities for Latinos to interact with the English-speaking members of the church in a naturalistic and relaxed environment; they are moments where they can communicate with other immigrants who are also ESL learners. But not many take advantage of these situations.

As these examples have shown, Latinos have the option to go to places outside the Latino community where bilingual employees can help them in Spanish, thus reducing the need to use English outside the Latino community. This means that each individual chooses where to go and what language to speak outside the Latino community and if the person chooses to go to places where they do not need to use English, the need to use English decreases.

English in the Household

A local neighborhood effect that may be quite important is associated with the immigrant's immediate family, that is, the spouse and children. When the immigrant is married and the spouse has the same mother tongue, opportunities for conversation in that mother tongue within the home substitute for conversations in English, and thus both reduce the need to learn English and limit the learning by doing that may otherwise take place. (Chiswick and Miller, 1997, p. 13)

As the quote above expresses, an important factor in the community of the individual is their family members, spouse and children, and people with whom an individual normally speaks in the household. This section discusses the language used by the participant with their spouse and children.

Spouse.

It is natural for people with the same L1 to speak it at home. While going over the results with one of my professors, an American woman living in Puerto Rico, she indicated she always speaks English with her husband at home unless there is a monolingual Spanish speaker present. Not surprisingly, wherever a person lives, the use of their L1 with their family in all cultures is very likely.

As mentioned earlier, 80 percent of the participants reported their spouse knew English (question 12, p. 44), but only 40 percent reported speaking English to some extent with their spouses (question 13, p. 44). One couple contradicted themselves when answering this question. The wife indicated she did not use English with her husband while her husband said he used English with his wife. I know the couple and the times I have been with them, I have never heard them speak English among themselves.

There is one couple, whom I will call Denise and Antonio, who I have observed using some English with each other. They are the oldest participants in this study. They are well educated people. Denise has a Bachelor's degree and Antonio was the participant who almost finished his PhD. Both of them have worked for many years in the USA. At the time of the study both of them were retired, but Denise was working as a part time Spanish teacher at an Christian elementary school. In my presence, they occasionally would speak a few sentences in English to each other and to us. But for the most part, they speak Spanish to each other the majority of the time.

When I asked participants in question 14 (Table 10, p. 44) how often they speak English with their spouse, 12 percent (3 participants) reported using English very frequently with their spouse. These three participants are different from the rest. Two are married to US born spouses; therefore their spouse might have a better command of English and might create more opportunities for the participants to use and practice English. The third participant was brought to the USA, by her parents, as a child. She is married to a Venezuelan; as they were filling out the questionnaire, they told me because they have different words for the same items (e.g. for toilet one calls it "taza" and the other "poseta"). They sometimes preferred to use English to avoid confusions when speaking to each other. This allows her spouse opportunities to use and practice English with her.

Spouses' English interactions vary from no English or very little English, as the first example, to some English to understand each other, as the last example, to occasionally use English as the second example illustrates. There are various reasons, as these examples show, why spouses speak the language they choose to speak. There were participants who were married to US citizens, but because their Spanish is as good as their English, they spoke Spanish

to their spouses. As I have observed with many people in various contexts, very few spouses spoke English among themselves except rarely. I consider myself bilingual, and my husband is also bilingual, but we speak English occasionally with each other. As I already mentioned, it is natural for people with the same L1 to use it with each other. I believe these observations contradict the data presented in Table 10 (p. 44). I saw no English use with some couples and very little English use with very few couples.

Children.

As reported in Chapter IV, all of the participants have children. While 48 percent of the children speak English to their parents (question 16, p. 44) a majority 72 percent of the parents reported speaking only Spanish to their children and 28 percent reported speaking both languages to their children (question 17, p. 45). Therefore, the use of Spanish by participants with their children, and the use of English and Spanish of children with their parents is normal, not only for Latinos, but for many other non-Latino immigrant families as well. Research shows that school-aged children bring English to the household (Allen, 2005; Redstone, 2007; and Worthy, 2006). This input may be in various ways, such as children speaking directly to the parents, when children speak among themselves (Worthy, 2006), or even by television shows children watch in English.

One example of how children bring English into the household is from a Mexican family I occasionally visit. Luciana, the mother, has two elementary school children who watch a lot of cartoons; therefore their television is almost always on English cartoons or children's programs. Another way these children bring English into the household is with their school assignments. On various occasions, I have seen Luciana sitting at the table with an electronic translator at her side helping her children do their homework.

Another example is Denise. She has a daughter who recently moved to Michigan, whom she talks to on the phone constantly. Not only does Denise speak with her daughter, she also speaks with her two granddaughters as well. In these phone conversations, Denise uses Spanish and English with all three. As these two examples show, there are various ways in which parents are exposed to English through their children.

I believe one of the major ways children bring English into the household is when they speak to their brothers or sisters. Luciana's children use more English when speaking among themselves, thus creating English input for the parents. Even though Luciana and her husband speak and understand some English, when their children speak to them, they use Spanish and occasionally some English. But when the children speak to their grandmother, who does not speak or understand English, they speak only Spanish.

The most common reason parents choose to speak Spanish (Table 11, p. 46) or both languages (Table 12, p. 47) to their children is maintenance of mother tongue. As the example in Sonia's Hair Salon illustrate, where the mother is using Spanish to tell her son to get in the chair, it is very common to see Latinos and non Latinos speaking to their children in their mother tongue. I have seen this everywhere, in and outside the Latino community, while shopping, at church, in restaurants, and even in their homes. Overall, Spanish is used more by participants when speaking to their children; only 28 percent of the participants reported speaking some English to their children. I do believe parents can learn English by practicing it with their children and even by sitting with them to watch cartoons or do homework. As results in Table 11 (p. 46) show, Spanish use with their children is higher than English use. This was confirmed by my observations as well.

Although some English is used in the household with the spouse and children, Spanish is the language used by a majority of the participants. As I observed, this is something which happens both in and outside their homes. In other words, it does not matter where the participants are, if they are with their children and/ or spouse, they will usually speak Spanish to them.

Learning English

For this research, I was interested in what type of help or what methods participants have used to acquire the language. The methods considered in this research were ESL classes, audio/ video courses, computer programs, private classes, and the use of the media, such as television, movies, radio, music, and newspapers. This section will answer the sub-question, what are Latinos doing to acquire English. In the sociodemographic section of the questionnaire, I asked participants if they knew English before coming to the US, 76 percent answered *yes* and 24 percent answered *no*. I also asked participants, in the sociodemographic section, if they had learned English after coming to the USA; 84 percent answered *yes*, 12 percent answered *no*, and 4 percent did not answer. The 12 percent who answered *no*, probably meant they had not taken additional classes or programs to learn English. We are always learning, and there is slang, everyday vocabulary, and expressions which are learned by living in new places. For example, my husband asked me what *budget* meant. I gave him the definition I knew, which is the amount of money intended for a certain event or purchase of any sort, but in his work place budget stands for the amount of time intended for a task.

A second example of expanding vocabulary knowledge was at a restaurant ordering breakfast with my husband. As we were ordering, the waiter asked me how would you like the eggs? I said, "I want them fried with the soft yellow center." He said, "sunny side up!" I had

no idea that was how to ask for them. That day, I learned how to ask for eggs the way I like them. Although people might not take any formal ESL classes or course, they can pick up the language in their everyday lives.

English as a Second Language Classes.

In question 23 (p. 50), I asked participants if they had taken any ESL courses. Only 56 percent answered *yes*, but they have taken only a few classes; a majority have only taken one class (Table 15, p. 50). Even though the highest number of classes taken by participants was five classes, taken by eight percent of the participants (two participants), one commented he took these classes for the wrong reasons, which had nothing to do with learning English. An ESL classroom provides students with opportunities they will not find in their community. For example, they can use English in context, practice the language with peers who are at a similar level as they are, and interact with a native speaking teacher. Lanteigne and Schwarzer (1997) describe some of the English interactions participants had in ESL class they held. They have only basic English skills and try to communicate with their teacher as a limited speaker of Spanish.

In fact, codeswitching (Eastman, 1992), or switching between English and Spanish, occurs constantly in Harvest America's beginning English class. The students alternate between English and Spanish (as I do), using whatever words they know in either language in order to communicate. Since I know only a little Spanish, they have to talk to me in English (which is a definite plus). But if they do not know an English word for what they want to say, they say it in Spanish, and another student translates for them. (Or if no one knows the word, we use gestures, draw pictures, or look words up in the dictionary.) (Lanteigne and Schwarzer, 1997, p. 39)

These learners are using a lot of code switching, “or switching between English and Spanish” (Lanteigne and Schwarzer, 1997, p. 39), and use hand gestures to be able to communicate with the teacher. These Latinos are trying to communicate in English with an English speaker who is a limited Spanish speaker. Because she cannot understand a lot of Spanish, Latinos are forced to use English, therefore creating opportunities or exposing themselves to the language by using it. Exposure to the language as defined by Chiswick and Miller (1997)

...refers to the learning by doing and the formal instruction aspects of acquiring fluency in the destination language. It includes the extent to which others, whether in person or through the media, use English in one's presence and the extent to which the person himself or herself utilizes English. (p. 11)

People who spoke English in class in English are the ones who took full advantage of the class. These Latinos were exposing themselves to the language and they were trying to use it and communicate in English. Even though they were practicing English, I question myself about what those Latinos do after the researcher has left the research site. Did they continue to practice English? Did they continue to take ESL classes? How much have they progressed?

English as a Second Language classes can be taken in various places. The most common place is a community college, followed by church programs as mentioned by participants, and finally through library programs as reported by Worthy (2006). In the community college and some church programs, people need to pay to take these classes. But not everyone can afford them or is willing to pay for these classes, as Eleonora indicated.

There are various reasons why immigrants choose not to take ESL classes. Eleonora is one example. Eleonora, one of my husband's co-workers and a Mexican mother of three

children who has lived in the US for about eight years with her children and husband. She asked me, “¿Yadira, *qué puedo hacer para aprender inglés?*” (Yadira, what can I do to learn English?) She continued saying, “Your husband told me about the classes in the community college and I was going to take them, but I could not pay the tuition.” This example illustrates not everyone can afford to pay for classes to learn English.

However, learners cannot expect to acquire English with only a few months of practice or classes. Hakuta et al. (2000), carried out a study on the time it takes school children and teenagers to acquire English. They stated, “Even in districts that are considered the most successful in teaching English to ESL students [children and teenagers], oral proficiency takes three to five years to develop” (p. 13). This is a long period of time considering they might spend between six to eight hours in school taking all their classes in English. In other words, these children receive up to eight hours of English input five days a week, and it still takes them years to achieve oral proficiency. Then, how do adults expect to achieve oral proficiency in a few months? Learning English is time consuming, and sometimes costly. Worthy (2006), described a similar situation. She said that as soon as the participants in her study arrived, ten out of sixteen started to take ESL classes (p. 145), but

At the time of the interviews, only two of the mothers were still taking classes but attending irregularly, and two had borrowed or bought audio or video language learning programs, which they used occasionally... all were grateful that they were able to survive without it [English]. (p. 142-143)

This is similar to what is happening with the participants in this study. Even though a majority has taken only one class none of the participants have given much thought to taking

more classes. None of the answers were specific on question 26 (Table 16 p. 51). The most specific response was “at least two” classes.

Worthy (2006) indicated “Many educators have made recommendations for improving the delivery of English language instruction” (p. 150) and one of these recommendations is to “provide more classes and make them easier for working parents to attend” (p. 150). The ESL classes my husband suggested to Eleonora had flexible hours; the classes were Mondays and Wednesdays or Tuesdays and Thursdays, and there were actually three sections from which she could choose: morning, noon, or night. Therefore, the suggestion Worthy (2006) gives was being taken in this community by the community colleges offering ESL classes. In other words, in this community, Latinos have various time and day options (time and day) from which to choose to take ESL classes. Even though the community colleges are offering date and time flexibility for ESL classes, this is not sufficient to motivate all Latinos who need classes to take them.

English as a Second Language Programs.

In addition to taking ESL courses, I asked participants if they had used any type of ESL programs. For this research I considered audio/ video courses, computer programs, and private classes as ESL programs. Even though less than half of the participants (44 percent) answered they had used an ESL program (question 27, p. 51), very few reported using them often (Table 17, p. 52).

There are constant commercials for programs which promise to help you learn English on Spanish TV channels. One of the most popular programs is *Inglés sin Barreras*. This program can also be found at public libraries located near Latino communities or in the central public library. As explained by a librarian in the Spectrum Public Library, it is very popular

and at the same time hard to find. I went to the library for three consecutive weeks, and I observed the courses were checked out. One participant told me she had done the entire course, except volume one, because she never found it. Other people might give up after the first few attempts to get a hold of the course and not find it. Nevertheless, in these public libraries there are other courses which can help people learn English. But every time I went to this section, I would see them on the shelves. Either people prefer to take out the most familiar course, or they have not looked up and seen the rest of the collection available for them. There are different types of courses, even courses to listen to in the car while you are driving. Appendix C shows a list of the courses available in the Spectrum Public Library located near the Latino community I observed.

As previously stated, people who want to learn another language, no matter the language, need to spend a lot of time doing so, and these participants have spent little time trying to acquire English. A reason for this may be that they do not need to use English frequently, in or outside the Latino community as already discussed; therefore, they do not put a lot of effort into trying to learn English when so many bilingual employees are available to help them in their native language.

The Media for Learning English.

Between the 1940's and 1960's Spanish was the only minority language in which there were broadcasting stations and entire broadcasting days (Fishman, 1978, p. 88). Today this is still true in the community I observed where you can find various AM and FM Spanish radio stations. Various Spanish newspapers can also be found, but similar to the 1940's, 1950's and 1960's, newspapers are used less frequently than the radio. Another media which has developed since then is television. In Colorado, Dish offers Dish Latino with over 130 channels

in Spanish. Therefore, 50 years later, Spanish media has developed and continues to grow even more.

The media may be used as a free or inexpensive method to acquire a target language. In this section, I discuss the three types of media: television and movies, radio and music, and newspapers.

Television and Movies.

As explained in Chapter IV (Table 20, p. 55), television is mostly used in Spanish, while for movies, English is used more. I have even observed that in the Latino community businesses where there are televisions, they are showing Spanish channels, therefore reducing the need to use English.

With the new High Definition (HD) era, there are many free television channels available. At my house we receive 32 channels, and of those, four are in Spanish. But today there are companies which offer more channels and more programming such as Dish, Cable, and Direct TV. In Colorado, Dish offers Dish Latino which includes over 130 channels in Spanish. The Guatemalan family I visited has it every time I went to their home; the television was tuned to Spanish-speaking channels. Contrary to this family, the Mexican family I also occasionally visited, and who have two school-aged children, a six and an eight year old, their television is almost always on cartoons or children's programming in English. One day Luciana, the mother in the Mexican family, and I were talking; she told me that even when all five of them are at home and spend time with the kids, they watch cartoons because of the kids. Their children bring and create English input through television, homework, and their conversations.

An example of media use for learning a language are my younger sisters. They learned English through watching television in English; therefore, I believe the use of the media provides learners with English input. Even more, the media provides learners with everyday language which they can use in their life. If learners cannot afford to pay for ESL classes or ESL programs, the use of the media may be one way which they can learn English.

Another example is Eleonora, my husband's co-worker. As the conversation with Eleonora continued, she added, "I have tried watching television in English, but I do not understand anything, so I change it. I only watch television in Spanish." I have heard this from different people, do not watch English programs because they do not understand them. This confirms the data in Table 20 (p. 55), where participants reported using more Spanish to watch television than English; but I did observe more Spanish use than reported by participants.

Radio/ Music.

As reported in Chapter IV (Table 22, p. 57), the use of radio and music is mostly in Spanish. Even more, many Latino stores play Spanish radio stations. It is normal to hear cars beside you with Mexican music while in the Latino community, and as you drive by the apartments in the Latino community, you can hear Mexican music playing in the apartments, suggesting the majority of the music and radio listened to by the Latinos in this community is Spanish.

Radio and music are also widely used in an individual's life. Radio and music can be heard while driving to and from work, at work, and at home. Thus radio and music can be more present in a person's life than television. Chiswick and Miller (1997) studied the effect radio has on Latino immigrants; they said "The ability to avoid communicating in the English language, in this case by listening to the radio in Spanish, has a negative effect on fluency in

speaking English among Hispanic immigrants” (p. 52). Therefore, listening to these Spanish radio stations reduces Latinos’ opportunities to get input in English, especially given the amount of radio some people listen to everyday.

One example of this is Maria, the mother of the two girls I mentioned earlier; she was filling out the questionnaire and at the same time she was commenting on what she was filling out and she said, “I always listen to the radio in Spanish, but my husband told me that I had to start listening to it in English, when I remember I switch it to English.” But what is interesting is that every time I was with them, the radio was tuned to a Spanish station. They listen to Mexican music, and joyfully sing along word for word. The husband, whom I will call Luis, was the person who gave her the advice, yet he does not do it either, or at least not during the moments we shared. When he turns on the car, you hear Mexican music, including CD’s, and radio stations. There is an initiative to use the media in English, but as these three participants demonstrate, they become frustrated because they do not understand so they stop.

As Maria and the data in Table 22 (p. 57) suggest, many Latinos use the media in Spanish. Latinos reported using the media in Spanish, however, I observed more Spanish media use than participants reported.

Newspapers

As explained in Chapter IV (Table 23, p. 58), newspapers are used more in Spanish, perhaps in part because Latinos have so many free Spanish newspapers. An example of how learners can use the newspaper to learn English comes from an American female professor at the University where I study. I do not know how many other methods she has used to acquire Spanish, but one of them was the media. In one of the many classes I took with her, she shared with us her experience with Spanish acquisition. She said she used to buy the Spanish

newspaper, “El Nuevo Día,” one of the largest circulating in Puerto Rico. Every day, she would read the newspaper, but it was very hard for her to understand. She would get headaches and could not read a lot, but she persisted, and everyday kept reading the newspaper. Years later, she feels proud of herself because she kept on trying and achieved her goal, which was to be able to read the entire newspaper and understand it. It took her many years, but she did not quit and accomplished her goal. This is one example of the process a learner goes through when learning a second language. It will take a long time, but it is not impossible.

In this community there are a lot of free newspapers; and as I have observed, one of the main reasons why Latinos read newspapers is for job searching. Some of the available newspapers in Spanish are: *El Hispano*, *El Comercio*, *La Voz*, *Viva Colorado*, and *La Luz de Colorado*. *La Voz* and *La Luz de Colorado* are bilingual newspapers; each article is written in Spanish, and under it, or on the next page you will find the English translation. These Spanish newspapers can be found in many of the Latino stores and supermarkets in the Latino community. But *La Voz* is always the one with the highest stack available. One reason why *La Voz* might not be taken as much as the others is the articles in that newspaper are at a higher reading level than the rest.

This data suggests Latinos are not doing as much as they could to interact with English media. There are other options available to learn the language than just paying to take an ESL class. For example, participants can go to the library which has free resources, watch television, and listen to the radio and music in English, look for free internet courses, or search for churches which offer inexpensive or even free classes. I did not ask participants if they had access to the internet at home, but for those who do, there is a lot of free material. Even so, they can go to the public library and they can use a computer and practice there.

The limited efforts to learn English among first generation adult immigrants may be due to the amount of Spanish in and outside the Latino community. In Worthy (2006) participants indicated they found ESL classes,

more difficult and time consuming than they had initially expected. Although free classes were available, there were many obstacles to contend with. Long and unpredictable work hours, lack of reliable transportation, and inconvenient class schedules and locations made it difficult to attend classes regularly. Top priorities were raising their children and making enough money to survive. (145)

The problem, as Worthy (2006) pointed out in this quote, is that English language learners want to learn English fast, and apply it immediately: "...she wanted to be able to speak fluently in a short time frame. Like many adult English learners..." (p. 145). But the truth is that the process of learning a new language is difficult and time consuming.

Everyday English Use.

Every day we do different activities in our daily life, such as go to work, go to the supermarket, go shopping, go to a school meeting, visit a relative or a friend, and so on; in almost all of these activities language is used, in some contexts more than others. This section will answer two of the research questions, which are: With whom do Latinos use English? And in what contexts as adults are they exposed to English?

In this section I will discuss some of the data of Table 26 (p. 60) and Table 27 (p. 61) and compare it to the data from questions 5, 7, 14, 17, and 18. As shown in Table 26 (p. 60), the answers with the highest percentages of where participants use English during the week (Monday- Friday) are at work, at stores, and at church. Similarly, in Tables 27 (p. 61) the answers with the highest percents of with whom participants use English during the week are

with co-workers, bosses, and clients, all of which are work related. Therefore, both tables show that for a majority of the participants, the work place is where most of their English use occurs. Other categories with high percentages are with store employees, church members, and with friends. Again, stores and church were repeated in both questions. The repetition may be due to the fact that both questions were very close to each other, and they repeated what they had written in the previous question. When I gave the questionnaire to Sandra and I got to questions 40 and 43, she answered “*los mismos del arriba*” (same as above), meaning that the answers were the same as the answers to questions 39 and 42. Still, participants are reporting more English use outside the household. Because I have already discussed some of the contexts mentioned in this section, I will now discuss only three categories: family, work, and government agencies.

As shown in Table 13 (p. 48), the highest percent of Spanish only use, with 76 percent, is with family members followed by friends, with 48 percent. This is similar to what Redstone (2007) indicated in her study; the lowest English use is with friends and with their spouse (p. 947). In these results (Table 13, p. 48), I observed less English use with their spouse when compared to question 13 (p. 44) where 40 percent indicated they use some English with their spouse and now in Table 13 (p. 48), only 20 percent reported they use English and Spanish with their family. Even though a spouse is one member of a family, it still falls in the family category. Even more, in Table 27 (p. 61), the category family decreases even more with only eight percent, and in Table 26 (p. 60), the category of family or home was reported by only 4 percent of the participants (one participant). I do believe Latinos with low English skills level use almost no English with family members who have Spanish as their L1, or that even

understand Spanish. This is something I also observed with many participants in many places in and outside the Latino community.

Different from the household, the work place is a context where a majority of the participants reported using English. The highest percent of English use reported by the participants in various questions throughout the questionnaire was at work (Table 8, p. 42; Table 9, p. 43; Table 13, p. 48; Table 26, p. 60; and Table 27, p. 61), unless they work in the Latino community. Even though the percentage varies in these questions, it is always one of the highest percent in all of the questions. As you may observe in Table 13 (p. 48), I divided the work place in two sections: boss or supervisor and co-workers. Co-workers are people you work with side by side, speak to and in many cases chitchat with. Participants reported speaking more Spanish with co-workers (36 percent) and more English with bosses (60 percent). Typically, people speak to bosses less than to co-workers, but when speaking to bosses, it is more likely to be in English. Although 52 percent of the participants work outside the Latino community and 36 percent work in the Latino community (question 2, p. 41), only a little over a quarter of the participants reported speaking English with their co-workers and one quarter reported using some English with co-workers. Therefore I believe Spanish is quite commonly used at work among the participants. At the same time, for those participants who do use English at work, it is where most of their English use happens because it is a place where participants spend a big part of their day. Redstone (2007), observed this as well in her study; she reported that the probability of speaking English at work was higher than in other contexts (p. 940).

Another context where English use has a high percent is in governmental agencies; however, governmental agencies are places people do not frequent on a daily basis. As you

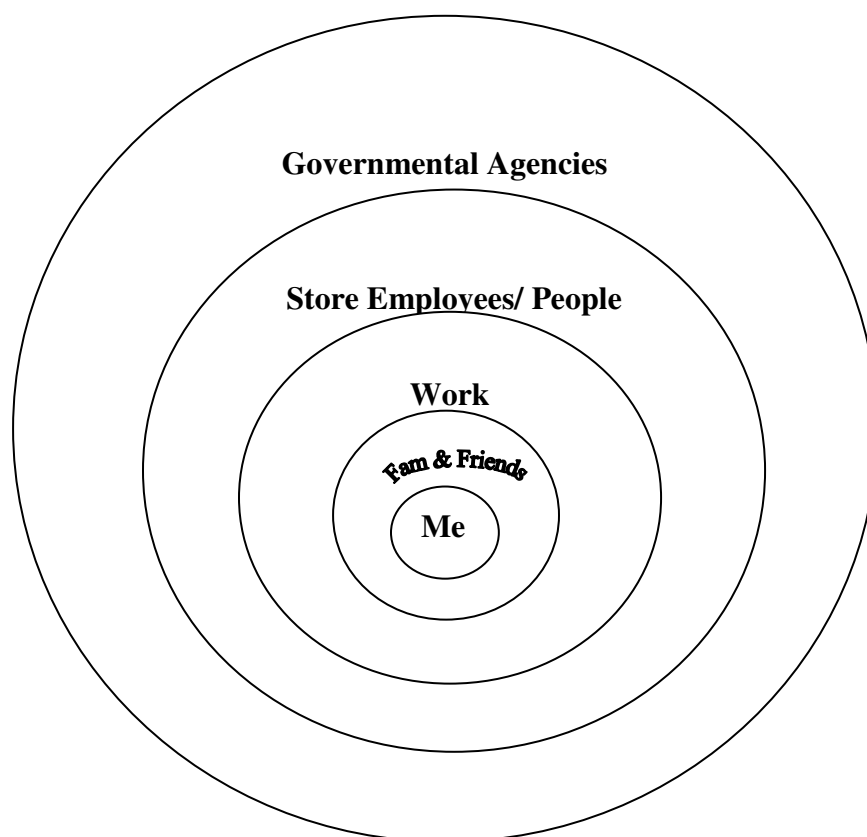
may observe in the tables (Table 8, p. 42; Table 9, p. 43; Table 13, p. 48; Table 26, p. 60; and Table 27, p. 61), this category is only present in Table 13 (p. 48) where I gave them the category; while for the other questions, which were open-ended questions, none of the participants gave governmental agencies as a response. Even though the percent (60 percent) is high, government agencies are not places where participants go very often.

I have gone to some of these places a few times, and during my observations, I had not seen any sign on anyone's desk which identifies them as a Spanish speaker. The Latinos I observed were able to communicate in English with the employees or they had to bring someone who could help. At an outreach church activity, my husband was speaking with a few Latinos present at the activity. One man took an interest in what my husband was saying and opened up to him. He explained he recently had gotten a ticket and the officer had given him a court day. He wanted to know more about this because he knew absolutely no English, so my husband agreed to accompany him. The ticket indicated where he needed to go. The point is that there are Latinos who are capable of taking care of their problems in three ways: by using their own English skills, by using their children as translators or language brokers as research shows (Worthy, 2006, Chiswick and Miler, 1997), or by asking someone else to accompany them and be their translator.

As the data suggests, the places immigrants go tend to determine what language will be spoken. For example, if I go to Walmart, and I need help, I know I need to speak English, but if I go to a Latino supermarket, there is no need for me to use English. Thus, the language a person chooses to speak depends on the places visited. Figure 1 may simplify what I am trying to explain.

Figure 1

Circle of Social Relations and Language Use



The inner circle is the individual. Usually we talk to ourselves (the inner voice) in Spanish, because it is our L1. The second circle (from the inside to the outside) is composed of the people closest to the individual, for example, their immediate family, relatives, and friends. These are people who they see and communicate with very often, and with whom they share a special connection. The closer to the center, the more Spanish they will use; while the farther away from the center, the more English they will be required to use. This is true unless they work and/ or only go shopping in the Latino community where English is rarely used, as some participants do. At the same time, visits farther away from the center occur less often; therefore

even though they report using some English in these places, visits to these places are not regular, therefore reducing even more the use or need for English.

The Importance of English for Latinos

Participants have a need to communicate with others, as many reported in this study, but not all can communicate in English. Worthy (2006), and Valdes (2001) indicated their participants seem to have a positive attitude towards learning English. Yet, many have their reasons for not taking time to learn English. “In passionate words and moving anecdotes, they also conveyed the frustration of not being able to communicate in the language of their adopted country (Worthy, 2006, p. 139).” In this study, all of the participants had reasons to learn English, but through some of the participants’ answers, I noticed, not all of them have a good attitude towards English. This section will answer the sub-question, do they think English is necessary to live in the US.

Reasons for Learning English

As seen in Table 28 (p. 63), all participants shared their reasons for learning English. The answer with the highest percent is progress, which includes personal progress and work related progress. The answer with the second highest percent is communication, which means being able to communicate with other people, to be able to understand their children, and be able to express themselves. The answer with the third highest percent is because it is the language of the USA. The fourth reason is children; participants said they wanted to help their children with their school work and to be able to understand their children when they speak English. These are similar to the reasons Rafael gave in Lantaigne and Schwarzer’s study (1997), “he is motivated to learn English for the sake of his children (also, so he will know what they are saying!). And he wants to know English so he can talk to people” (p. 39). Worthy

(2006) indicated her participants also had similar reasons; they said, “limited English had negatively impacted their ability to stay involved in their children’s schooling” (p. 143). And the last reason participants gave was integration into the USA culture.

Even though all participants have important reasons for learning English, as the data suggest, they do not employ much time and effort in trying to acquire the language because they do not need to use English very frequently. One of the participants in this study indicated, “...*me frustra el no hablarlo correctamente...*” (it frustrates me not to be able to speak it correctly). As I studied the participant’s questionnaire, it shows that, for the most part, her life is conducted in Spanish. She said the only place where she uses English is at her work, where she reported using very little English. She has not taken any ESL classes, does not plan to take any, and even though she has used ESL programs, she reports using them very little. She uses all of the media mostly in Spanish and goes to a Latino church. If she does not expose herself to English, she will continue to be “frustrated,” as she herself said.

Of the 12 percent who indicated English is important for their integration into the US (Table 28 p. 63), eight percent have done various ESL programs to acquire the language. From their questionnaires, I gather they are at a more advanced level of English than the other participants. A third participant has only taken one class and has not used any ESL programs, yet he has acquired a considerable amount of English as indicated by the stories he told me while filling out the questionnaire. He works in a department store outside the Latino community and thus may need to use more English. I do believe some people have the innate capacity to “pick up” the language, but there are a lot of factors which influence this process of picking up the language. Motivation may be one of them; however this topic is beyond the scope of this study.

Significance of Learning English

As Chapter IV and the previous section show, participants have valid and personal reasons to learn English. For a majority of the participants in this study, the significance of learning English is related to progress (Table 29, p. 66). Other ways English is significant are for communication, personal satisfaction, because it is the language of the USA, to help their children and to integrate into the US culture. Almost all of these reasons are the same as the reasons participants gave in Table 28 (p. 63). The only answer which is not repeated is personal satisfaction.

One answer to question 45 (p. 64) caught my attention. Maria answered “...*porque he sufrido malas experiencias por no hablar inglés correctamente,*” (because I have suffered bad experiences for not knowing how to speak English correctly). I have already commented a lot on Maria. She reported taking two ESL classes a year after arriving as well as using audiovisual programs; nonetheless she reported using English very little and that her efforts had not helped her. As already mentioned, she has been in the US for ten years, and she does not use the media as a way to acquire the language. I have seen her literally freeze when someone speaks English to her; afterwards, she looks directly at her daughter for a translation and the entire conversation has to be translated for her. She sees the need for learning English, but only by exposing herself to the language will she be able to overcome the mental barriers which are causing her these problems.

Is English Necessary to Live in the US?

People have their reasons for learning English and I am sure they know the advantages and disadvantages of learning or not learning the language, as they have shown in their responses to questions 44 and 45. However, when they were confronted with a direct question,

some would push back. I asked participants if they thought it is obligatory to learn English to live in the United States and why. A total of 71 percent answered *yes*, while 29 percent answered *no*. The question *why*, revealed that some of their *no* responses were actually a *yes*. I believe the word “obligatory” threw them off, and they probably felt insulted or probably misunderstood the question as if someone was forcing them to learn the language. As shown in Table 30 (p. 68), the answers participants gave were: Because it is the language of the USA, to communicate, progress, integration, and personal satisfaction. All of these answers match the answers participants gave in Table 28 (p. 63) and Table 29 (p. 66). But an answer which I did not expect was the first one; it is the language of the USA, which was the answer with the highest percent (Table 29, p. 66). What I understand by this is that even though participants are not fluent in English, they recognize the importance of English to live in the USA.

Furthermore, when the answers in Tables 28 (p. 63), Table 29 (p. 66), and Table 30 (p. 68) are compared, four answers are repeated in all three. Therefore, participants consider learning English important because it is needed: to progress, to be able to communicate with others, to integrate into the US culture, and it is the language of the USA. But, are these answers how they really feel? Are these given to me because this is what they thought I wanted to hear? Or have these answers come automatically from society.

If a person wants to acquire English, they need to be diligent and committed, and it can be achieved. Therefore, I consider the answer, “The society where I live does not allow me to progress,” is an excuse. I found the last statement, “Because here in the USA, everyone lives how they want,” very interesting. The participant, who I will call Fernando, has some command of English, and at the same time, his answer reflects his character. By writing this he

is making a statement, he wants to be heard; he actually drew a line under his answer, and I understood it as “this is what I think!”

Fernando and his wife live in the apartment complex where I live. They arrived months after my husband and I arrived. As soon as I saw them, I thought of them as potential participants for my study. The condominium where we live has a club house in the center of the property, and every now and then the apartment administration throws small parties (for example, on Christmas, Halloween, and Valentine’s Day) and all the residents are invited. At the club house three women work at the office and they are the ones who host the parties. In one of those parties, I went downstairs and noticed Fernando and his wife speaking in English with Liz, one of the employees, in English. As I approached them Liz said, “Yadira, you speak Spanish, right?” I said yes, and then she asked me, “Can you translate what they are trying to say?” Somehow Liz was unable to understand. Fernando cut in and said yes, and immediately jumped into the conversation in a defensive way. He seemed defensive about the situation and did not allow me in the conversation. It seems he felt uncomfortable because Liz asked me to translate or because he realized she did not understand him. Probably his defensive attitude was because his language skills were being questioned by a native English speaker. This situation contradicted his answer to the questionnaire where he reported knowing a lot of English, suggesting he was over reporting and his lack of English skills were exposed by a native speaker.

Immigrants from Spanish-speaking countries have been identified...as having a unique position in American society. They are the most numerous group, comprising over 40 percent of immigrants from non-English speaking countries. They have the lowest level of English-language fluency. (Chiswick and Miller, 1997, p. 41)

As Chiswick and Miller (1997) stated, Latinos are one of the largest minority groups in the US, and they have the lowest English language fluency. Even though many Latinos may have the language fluency needed in some context of life, such as work, in other contexts they might not have the English skills they might need to communicate with non-Spanish speakers. This may have been the case with Fernando who reported using English at work, but social interactions in English may be more complex than the ones he may need at work.

Exceptions to the Rule

In this research, two participants were sort of an exception to the rule, but they still fall in the category of first generation immigrants. The first one is Victoria; who is what Allen (2005) defined as “the 1.5 generation” because, “they often spent more time than half of their formative years in the United States” (p. 16). Victoria was brought to the United States by her parents when she was 10 years old. Therefore, the majority of Victoria’s schooling was in the USA. She is a fluent English speaker, and even though she uses a lot of English in her daily life, she also reported using a considerable amount of Spanish. She reported she spoke both languages with family members, friends, at work, with store employees, and with strangers. The only place where she reported using only English was in governmental agencies. She fits perfectly into findings by Chiswick (1997) and Redstone (2007), which indicated that age of arrival, (she was 10 years old when she came to the USA) and length of residence (she has been living in the USA for 25 years), positively influence the acquisition and use of English.

Juana is quite the opposite; she was 63 years old when she arrived in the USA, and she has been living in the USA for only 2 years. In her case, late age of arrival and short length of residence negatively influence the acquisition and use of English. Juana is the mother of Luciana. Juana spends all day at home doing house chores and taking care of her grandchildren.

Therefore, Juana has almost no contact with the community outside the household, and as she reports, she has no use for English. She goes wherever Luciana takes her. She has almost no need to interact with the world outside the home because her daughter takes care of everything. In conversations with Juana, she informed me she was in the USA temporarily, since she is only here to help her daughter with the house chores and her grandchildren. She even spoke to me about her home back in Mexico. Juana is an excellent example of what Chiswick and Miller (1997) and Dryden-Peterson (2007) described as immigrants who plan to return to their native country or do not plan to stay long periods in the USA and thus have less motivation to learn English.

As these two examples illustrate, there are different circumstances which influence the acquisition of a language. Each individual is different and each has to struggle with his or her own barriers and dilemmas which might or might not be similar to those of other learners. Four other participants stood out from the rest; they were those with the highest English proficiency and with the highest level of education. Two hold a bachelor's degree and two have a master's degree. These four participants confirm what Allen (2005) said: well educated people are more likely to acquire more English.

Final Discussion

As already stated in Chapter II, Dryden-Peterson (2007) is not in total agreement with other research related to the acquisition of English, such as living outside immigrant enclaves, long periods of residence in the US, commitment to living in the US, higher levels of education in the US, marrying someone with English-dominant background, wider social networks, and holding technical or professional jobs. She questioned whether going through these experiences help immigrants acquire more English, or are the immigrants who know English the ones who

go through these experiences. In this study, 48 percent of the participants live in the Latino community and 52 percent live outside the Latino community. What I can say with the data I have and my observations is that not all of the participants who live outside the Latino community have high levels English. From the 52 percent of the participants who live outside the Latino community, only 12 percent are proficient in English. Therefore, participants in this study who live outside immigrant enclaves are not necessarily the participants with the highest level of English.

Twenty percent of the participants have lived in the USA for over 25 years. But only 12 percent are proficient in English. Therefore, participants with long periods of residence in the USA are not necessarily the participants with the highest level of English. Even though I did not ask participants if they were committed to living in the USA, I did ask two questions which help determine their commitment to living in the USA. Forty eight percent of the participants either own a home or want to buy properties in the USA. Something I have observed in more than one immigrant is that owning a home does not mean a commitment to live in the USA. From the 48 percent of the participants who own a home or want to buy properties in the USA, approximately 28 percent are English proficient. In other words, not all of the participants who seem to be committed to living in the USA are the ones with the highest level of English.

Twenty percent of the participants have a Bachelor's degree or higher. But only 12 percent of those with a University degree are proficient in English. There are other participants who do not have a university degree but are proficient in English. Therefore, for this study, high levels of education not necessarily correlate with highest level of English proficiency.

Only eight percent (2 participants) of the participants of this study are married to English dominant spouses. Nevertheless, both of the participants' spouses have Spanish as their L1.

Both of these participants are proficient in English, and at the same time they also have high levels of educations. The data suggest that participants who are married to English dominant spouses have high levels of English proficiency.

What I observed of participants' social networks is that the majority interact with Spanish speaking people and/ or go to Spanish speaking places. One example is church. Many of the participants who reported attending a church reported using English at church, but all of them go to Latino churches or participate in Latino groups within American churches. In other words, many of the participants' social networks are Spanish dominant.

What I have observed about participants jobs and their English use is that participants who work outside the Latino community and have jobs which require contact with clients, such as teacher, pastor, customer service representative, and interior designer have higher levels of English than the rest of the participants. Therefore, participants who have higher levels of English are the participants who have jobs which require more English use.

To conclude, what I can say about this community with the data gathered is that the majority of the first generation adult Latinos in this small community are not acquiring English as fast as they seem to believe. This may be due to the fact that second language acquisition is not quick and easy and many immigrants do not want to wait. Even more, many contexts in and outside the Latino community provide them with bilingual services; therefore reducing Latinos need to learn English and reducing their interest to acquire English. In other words, because Latinos can conduct the majority of their everyday life in Spanish, they lose interest in learning English.

Chapter VI: Conclusion

The research question for this study is:

- What is the presence of the English language in the daily lives among the adult Latino community in Colorado?

The answer to this question is: it depends on where they are and with whom. It depends on where they work, where they go shopping, with whom they speak, on how often they expose themselves to people who do not speak Spanish and places where Spanish is not the spoken language. The results in this research show that for the Latinos in this study, Spanish is more present in their lives than English.

However, participants mentioned places where they claimed they used English. The two most common places were at work and while shopping, which, as already mentioned, include supermarkets, department stores, and shopping centers. From the few observations I did at the work place and observations I did on how Latinos communicate, this is what I deduce happens with some Latinos in their jobs. Many of the jobs participants hold do not require a lot of English; usually they work with other Latinos; therefore, a lot of Spanish is used. This context does not provide participants with opportunities to use English. Another group of participants who use some English to communicate with bosses or co-workers, mainly follow instructions. After a period of code switching and gesturing, they master listening to the language they need in order to do their jobs. Others, such as construction workers, in time are able to ask questions or even hold short conversations on related tasks they are required to do. These participants are those who might achieve what Dryden-Peterson (2007) defined as “survival English” or basic English skills for socialization and shopping purposes. In this case, I will call it “Work English” because it is where they learn the necessary vocabulary and expressions to be able to

communicate in jobs. On the other hand, there is a smaller group which must use only English at their jobs and have to be in constant conversations with bosses and co-workers, such as teachers, supervisors of English-speaking employees, and store employees outside the Latino community; they use a great deal of English every day. These are the participants who do acquire the language at a faster rate and achieve greater fluency.

Similarly to the work place, the language used in shopping centers varies. The action of going shopping, anywhere, does not require the use of a lot of language, whether Spanish or English. But, if the majority of the shopping is done in the Latino community, the opportunities to interact with English are even less, if not non-existent. However, when shopping in places outside the Latino community, the probability of using English is higher. Even though Latinos report using English while shopping, this context does not provide them with rich opportunities to use the language, unless they create those opportunities themselves.

Many of the contexts I have looked at are places where the amount of English Latinos need to communicate is very little and basic, e.g. supermarkets, banks, and malls. As a result, not all Latinos acquire the basic everyday English they might need to interact with the community outside the Latino community, for example the woman at the Panda Express. What happens to Latinos when they need to enter contexts where they require more advanced English skills such as conversations with their children's teachers, hospitals where nurses and doctors ask them their entire history, and governmental agencies where they need to fill out forms and take part in interviews? What I have observed is that Latinos with very limited English rely on others, like children or friends, to accompany them to these places to serve as language brokers.

The next question regarding the amount of English used would be whether participants are capable of maintaining a normal conversation with a non-Spanish speaker. Olsen, (2000)

indicated, “The acquisition of a new language happens through social communication with speakers of that language” (p. 199). If these Latino participants do not expose themselves to the social community and interact with native speakers, they might not achieve the level of conversational English they will need to communicate effectively. As the data suggests, the opportunities to use English in the Latino community are reduced by the amount of Spanish and the number of bilingual employees available in stores. This is also seen outside the Latino community where stores, banks, restaurants, and other places are hiring bilingual employees to attract Latinos into their businesses, therefore, reducing their need to use English.

Participants reported English is necessary for progress and a vehicle of communication. They also gave good reasons why they should learn English and attested to the importance of English in their lives, but many have not taken ESL classes or courses or have taken very few. The media is used more in Spanish and they are not interacting with the world outside their Spanish environment; for example, they are part of ethnically concentrated churches or groups within churches. As I reflect on what participants associate English with, progress and a vehicle of communication, I recall my mother telling me these exact same words but regarding education. “Education means progress; it opens doors; it allows you to get a better job.” Therefore, in a sense I feel they are telling me what they say to their children when they explain why English and education are important. Even though participants are able to express why the acquisition of English is important, they are unable to put words into actions for their own “progress and integration” into the USA.

Limitations of the Study

As I carried out the study, I encountered four limitations. First, the wording of several items did not allow participants to understand what I intended to ask. For example, participants

asked for clarifications and my explanation tainted their answers. In other questions, I should have asked an open-ended question to get richer answers from participants, for example with regards to the media questions. When I asked participants in which language they used the media, I provided them with a range of possibilities from which to choose. If I had not given them the alternatives, participants would have probably written the first answer that came to mind, which typically is what participants actually do in their life. Although questionnaire results show that Spanish was predominant, I believe there was even more Spanish use than what they were actually reporting. I suspect this may be so because this population seems so limited in their English knowledge and usage. Upon analysis, the questions I designed with very detailed categories, did not work as well as I anticipated. I should have let them write in their responses. Hence, these category questions did not provide additional information for the study, so I chose not to include them (questions 8, 25, 31, 33, 35, and 37).

The second limitation was with the screening process. I did not directly ask in the questionnaire if participants were first generation immigrants. However, after I heard a participant speak Spanish with no accent, I deduced she was a first generation immigrant and gave her the questionnaire. As she filled out the questionnaire, she asked me questions and I realized she was born in the United States. I apologized and explained that she did not qualify to fill out the questionnaire because she was not a first generation immigrant, someone born outside the United States. She smiled and sighed in relief and told her husband, who was filling out the questionnaire, she was off the hook. After this, I was careful to ask each participant if they were a first generation immigrant. I should have made it the first question in the questionnaire.

A third limitation was with question 18 (p. 48) which asked participants in what language they spoke to their family. The concept family includes many people besides spouse and children, such as cousins, aunts, uncles, parents, grandparents, and so on. These categories may be studied further to get a better insight into Latinos' language use among family members.

Finally, as with any type of mixed method research dealing with human participants, the case study findings are limited to a particular point in time, with a particular population and may not be generalized to other groups. Therefore, the nature of this research presents limitations in itself due to my beliefs, experiences, and realities, and how I present them.

Future Studies

Time is always a factor to take into consideration in any research. As a novice researcher, I would have liked to look more into areas of English acquisition, but I needed to limit the focus of this study. That is why I have not followed up on other areas which can be researched further. The first area I observed was the difference between culture and attitudes towards English. My curiosity stems from two Latino festivals I had the opportunity to visit: the first one was a joint Mexican *Cinco de Mayo* and Mother's Day celebration. Every single aspect of the activity was in Spanish; even more, a man who did not speak Spanish was selling CD's and when he went on stage to try to promote his CD's, someone translated everything he said to Spanish. On the other hand, I had the opportunity to visit A Taste of Puerto Rico Festival. The first difference between the Mexican Festival and the Puerto Rican Festival was the way in which they were promoted. My husband heard about the Mexican Festival on a Spanish radio station while I heard about the Puerto Rican Festival from two second generation Puerto Ricans. One of them told me the activity was advertised in the Spectrum Sentinel newspaper; the advertisement for the Puerto Rican Festival was in English. When I arrived at

the festival, even though the music was in Spanish, when the singers spoke to the public, a lot of English was used. Also, I heard a lot of English being spoken among the people besides me. Therefore, there might be a difference in the ways cultures approach English or it might be a generational difference.

A second topic for future studies is ESL classes. In this study, I did not focus on ESL classes because it went beyond the scope of the study. I asked participants if they had taken ESL classes, but I did not ask them how long the courses were, or how much time they waited between courses. These two questions may shed more light on the process of language acquisition of Latinos.

Another topic which sparked my interest was how culturally diverse or mixed marriages like Donna (Indonesian) and Federico (Spaniard) use English in different domains. Finally, the last topic for further research would be language use; who speaks what to whom and where. I believe these topics would add more depth to ESL research, therefore creating a bigger picture of what is happening regarding language use among Latinos.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Map of the Location of Colorado



Appendix B

Pictures of Colorado

The Colorado River and Colorado Canyon



Garden of the Gods



Red Rocks Canyon



Appendix C

ESL Courses Available at the Public Library Nearest to the Latino Community

- Accent English - Sounds of American Speech
- American Speech Sound and Rhythms
- *Aprenda en su Auto Inglés [Aprenda Inglés es su Auto] (varios volumes)*
- Easy Accent
- English
- English for New Americans - Everyday Life
- English for Spanish Persons
- English Plus
- Follow me to America
- *Inglés en Tres Meses*
- *Inglés para Hispanoparlantes*
- *Inglés sin Barreras*
- Learning English – ESL 1
- Learning to Speak English (Spanish)
- Listen and Say it Right in English
- *Principiantes Inglés*

Appendix D

Hoja de Consentimiento Informado (Original)

Universidad de Puerto Rico

Recinto de Mayagüez

Facultad de Artes y Ciencias

Departamento de Inglés

Hoja de Consentimiento Informado

Yo _____ acepto participar voluntariamente y anónimamente en la investigación que Yadira Altiery, estudiante de Maestría en la Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Mayagüez, está llevando a cabo para su proyecto de investigación de su grado de Maestría en Artes en Educación en Inglés titulado: El uso del inglés entre primera generación de adultos inmigrantes latinos en Colorado, US. He sido escogida(o) para formar parte de este estudio porque soy primera generación de adultos inmigrante latino. Este cuestionario le tomará alrededor de 20 a 30 minutos para completar.

He sido orientada(o) acerca del propósito de la investigación y he podido hacer preguntas acerca de la investigación y mi participación en la investigación. Mi participación en este cuestionario es voluntaria y completamente anónima. En cualquier momento puedo retirarme del estudio o rechazar mi participación, y la información que haya provisto en el cuestionario no será utilizada. Estoy consciente que la información que yo estaré dando por medio de este cuestionario va a pertenecer a un documento público que cualquier persona puede acceder. También entiendo que aunque la información que estaré dando puede ser publicada, el cuestionario será visto sólo por el investigador y el comité y luego de terminado el estudio, el cuestionario será destruido.

Entiendo que no seré sometido a ningún tipo de sufrimiento, riesgos, daños físicos ni mentales como consecuencia de este estudio. Tampoco se me otorgará ningún tipo de incentivo o remuneración, por mi participación. Entiendo que esta investigación tendrá beneficios para maestros, programas, y/o personal del gobierno interesado en estudios de inglés como segundo idioma.

Al firmar esta hoja de consentimiento informado, usted está aceptando todo lo descrito anteriormente. Gracias por su participación.

Firma

Fecha

Si desea saber los resultados de este cuestionario, por favor indíquelo: ____si ____ no

Le agradezco su participación voluntaria en este estudio. Si usted tiene alguna duda, preocupación, o recuerda alguna otra información que desee hacerme saber, me puede contactar a mi correo electrónico: yadira.altiery@uprm.edu.

Le agradezco su participación

Yadira Altiery

Candidata a Maestría

Appendix E

Consent Form (Translation of Appendix D)

University of Puerto Rico

Mayaguez Campus

Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Department of English

Consent Form

I _____ agree to participate voluntarily and anonymously in the investigation that Yadira Altiery, master's student of the University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez Campus, is doing as part of her investigation for her degree on Master's in Arts and English Education. The title of her investigation project is The Use of English among First Generation Latino Adults Immigrants in Colorado, US. I have been selected to be a part of this study because I am a first generation Latino adult. This questionnaire will take me from 20 to 30 minutes to fill out.

I have been informed about the purpose of the investigation and I have been able to ask questions about the investigation and my participation in the investigation. My participation in this investigation is completely voluntary and anonymous. I can retract my participation or refuse to participate from this study at any moment, and the information I have provided in the questionnaire will not be used. I am aware the information I have provided in the questionnaire will be part of a public document which any person can obtain. I also understand the information I will give through the questionnaire may be published, but the questionnaire will only be seen by the researcher and her committee, and after the study is finished, the questionnaire will be destroyed.

I understand I will not be submitted to any type of suffering, risks, physical or mental harm, as a consequence of this study. Neither will I receive any type of incentive or remunerations for my participation in this study. I understand this investigation will benefit teachers, government programs and/or personnel interested in English as a Second Language studies.

By signing this informed consent, I accept all of the above. Thank you for your participation.

Signature

Date

If you wish to know the results of this questionnaire, please let me know: _____yes _____ no

I appreciate your voluntary participation in this study. If you have any question, worries, or remember any other information you would like me to know, you can contact me through my e-mail at: yadira.altiery@uprm.edu.

I appreciate your participation

Yadira Altiery

MAEE Candidate

Appendix F

Hoja de Consentimiento Informado al Participante (Original)

Universidad de Puerto Rico

Recinto de Mayagüez

Facultad de Artes y Ciencias

Departamento de Inglés

Hoja de Consentimiento Informado al Participante

Usted ha aceptado participar voluntaria y anónimamente en la investigación que Yadira Altiery, estudiante de Maestría en la Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto Universitario de Mayagüez, está llevando a cabo para su proyecto en investigación para su grado de Maestría en Artes en Educación en inglés titulado:

El uso del Inglés entre primera generación de adultos inmigrantes latinos en Colorado, US.

He sido escogida(o) para formar parte de este estudio porque soy primera generación de adultos inmigrante latino. La investigadora va a analizar situaciones, momentos y personas con los cuales Latinos de la comunidad utilizan el inglés. Esta información es muy importante para los maestros que dan clases de inglés como segundo idioma, ya que la información les puede ayudar a preparar clases relevante al uso que sus estudiantes tienen para el inglés. Este cuestionario le tomara alrededor de 20 a 30 minutos para completar.

He sido orientada(o) acerca del propósito de la investigación y he podido hacer preguntas sobre mi participación en la misma. He sido escogida(o) para formar parte de este estudio porque soy miembro activo de la comunidad bajo estudio. Mi participación en este cuestionario es voluntaria y completamente anónima. En cualquier momento puedo retirarme del estudio o rechazar mi participación, y la información que haya llenado en el cuestionario no será utilizada.

Igualmente la investigadora puede terminar mi participación de este estudio en cualquier momento. Estoy consciente que la información que yo estaré dando por medio de este cuestionario, incluyendo información personal, va a pertenecer a un documento público que cualquier persona puede acceder. También entiendo que aunque la información que estaré dando puede ser publicada, el cuestionario será visto sólo por el investigador y el comité y luego de terminado el estudio, el cuestionario será destruido.

Entiendo que no seré sometido a ningún tipo de sufrimiento, daños físicos ni mentales como consecuencia de este estudio. Tampoco se me otorgará ningún tipo de incentivo o remuneración por mi participación. Entiendo que esta investigación tendrá beneficios para maestros, programas, y/o personal del gobierno interesado en estudios de inglés como segundo idioma.

Le agradezco su participación voluntaria en este estudio. Si usted tiene alguna duda, preocupación, o recuerda alguna otra información que desee hacerme saber, me puede contactar a mi correo electrónico: yadira.altiery@uprm.edu.

Le agradezco su participación

Yadira Altiery

Candidata a Maestría

Appendix G

Consent Form (Translation of Appendix F)

University of Puerto Rico

Mayaguez Campus

Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Department of English

Consent Form (Translation)

You have agreed to participate voluntary and anonymously in the investigation Yadira Altiery, master's student of the University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez Campus, is doing as part of her investigation for her degree in Masters in Arts and English Education, titled:

The Use of English Among First-Generation Latino Adults Immigrants in Colorado, US.

I have been selected to be a part of this study because I am a first generation Latino adult. The researcher is going to analyze situations, moments, and people with whom Latinos of the community use English. This information is very important for teachers who teach English as a Second Language classes, because the information can help them prepare classes which are relevant for the use students have for the English language. This questionnaire will take me from 20 to 30 minutes to fill out.

I have been informed about the purpose of the investigation and I have been able to ask questions about the investigation and my participation in the investigation. My participation in this investigation is completely voluntary and anonymous. I can retract my participation or refuse to participate from this study at any moment, and the information I have provided in the questionnaire will not be used. I am aware the information I have provided in the questionnaire will be part of a public document which any person can obtain. I also understand the information

I will give through the questionnaire may be published, but the questionnaire will only be seen by the researcher and her committee, and after the study is finished, the questionnaire will be destroyed.

I understand I will not be submitted to any type of suffering, risks, physical or mental harm, as a consequence of this study. Neither will I receive any type of incentive or remunerations for my participation in this study. I understand this investigation will benefit teachers, government programs and/or personnel interested in English as a Second Language studies.

I appreciate your voluntary participation in this study. If you have any question, worries, or remember any other information you would like me to know, you can contact me through my e-mail at: yadira.altiery@uprm.edu.

I appreciate your participation,

Yadira Altiery

MAEE Candidate

Appendix H

Cuestionario Sobre el Uso del Inglés (Original)

Universidad de Puerto Rico

Recinto de Mayagüez

Facultad de Artes y Ciencias

Departamento de Inglés

Cuestionario Sobre el Uso del Inglés

Instrucciones: Por favor lea cuidadosamente cada pregunta y conteste. En las preguntas de **selección múltiple** por favor seleccione sólo **una** alternativa. ***Circule*** la alternativa que mejor conteste la pregunta. En las preguntas para contestar, por favor conteste lo más detallado y claro posible. Si el espacio provisto no le da, puede seguir en la parte posterior del papel; asegúrese de escribir el número de la pregunta. Recuerde que la investigadora no puede contactarlo luego de entregar el cuestionario.

1. ¿Dónde vive?

- a) En la comunidad latina
- b) Fuera de la comunidad latina

2. ¿Dónde trabaja?

- a) En la comunidad latina
- b) Fuera de la comunidad latina
- c) No aplica

3. ¿Dónde va de compras?

- a) En la comunidad latina
- b) Fuera de la comunidad latina

c) Ambos

4. ¿Utiliza inglés dentro de la comunidad latina?

☐ No ☐ Sí

5. Si contesto que sí, ¿en qué lugares?

6. ¿Utiliza inglés fuera de la comunidad latina?

☐ No ☐ Sí

7. Si contesto que sí, ¿en qué lugares?

8. ¿Cuán frecuentemente usa inglés dentro de la comunidad?

☐ Nunca ☐ Muy poco ☐ Ocasionalmente ☐ Con mucha frecuencia ☐ Todo el tiempo

9. Estado Civil: _____

10. ¿Se casó (antes / después) de llegar a Estados Unidos? (Con su pareja actual)

11. ¿Cuál es la lengua materna de su pareja? _____

12. ¿Sabe inglés su pareja?

☐ No ☐ Sí

13. ¿Habla inglés con su pareja?

☐ No ☐ Sí

14. ¿Cuán frecuentemente habla inglés con su pareja?

☐ Nunca ☐ Muy poco ☐ Ocasionalmente ☐ Con mucha frecuencia ☐ Todo el tiempo

15. ¿Tiene hijos?

- ☐ No ☐ Sí

16. Si tiene hijos, ¿sus hijos, le hablan inglés a usted?

- ☐ No ☐ Sí

17. ¿En qué idioma les habla usted a sus hijos? _____

¿Por qué?

18. ¿Para cada uno de las siguientes personas explique en qué idioma le habla usted?

Familiares	Amistades	Compañeros de trabajo	Jefes o gerentes de trabajo	Empleados de tiendas	Empleados de agencias gubernamentales	Desconocidos

19. ¿Qué nivel de educación alcanzó en su país de origen?

- a) No estudié
- b) Menos de 6 años (Escuela Elemental)
- c) De 7 a 9 años (Escuela Intermedia)
- d) De 10 a 12 años (Escuela Superior)
- e) Grado técnico
- f) Grado asociado (Dos años de universidad)
- g) Bachillerato (Cuatro años de universidad)
- h) Maestría (Seis años de universidad)
- i) Doctorado (Ocho años de universidad en adelante)

20. ¿Cuál es su profesión? _____

21. ¿Ha buscado algún tipo de ayuda para aprender inglés?

☐ No ☐ Sí

22. ¿Después de cuanto tiempo de haber llegado a los Estados Unidos buscó ayuda para aprender inglés? _____

23. ¿Ha asistido a clases para aprender inglés para adultos (clases de ESL)?

☐ No ☐ Sí

24. ¿Cuántos cursos ha tomado? _____

25. ¿Cuán frecuentemente asiste a clases?

☐ Nunca ☐ Muy poco ☐ Ocasionalmente ☐ Con mucha frecuencia ☐ Todo el tiempo

26. ¿Va a seguir tomando cursos ESL?

☐ No ☐ Sí ¿Cuántos? _____

27. ¿Ha utilizado cursos de audio, video, computadora, tutorías, etc. para aprender inglés independientemente?

☐ No ☐ Sí

28. ¿Cuán frecuentemente utiliza estos programas?

☐ Nunca ☐ Muy poco ☐ Ocasionalmente ☐ Con mucha frecuencia ☐ Todo el tiempo

29. Algunos de estos programas, ¿le han ayudado a mejorar y aprender inglés?

☐ No ☐ Sí ☐ No aplica

Si le ha ayudado, diga cuanto.

Nada	Casi nada	Un poco	Bastante	Mucho

Explique cómo:

30. ¿En qué idioma usted ve la **televisión**?

Español solamente	Más español que inglés	Ambos por igual	Más inglés que español	Inglés solamente	No veo televisión

31. ¿Cuán frecuentemente ve televisión en ese idioma?

☐ Nunca ☐ Muy poco ☐ Ocasionalmente ☐ Con mucha frecuencia ☐ Todo el tiempo

32. ¿En qué idioma usted ve **películas**?

- a) No veo películas
- b) Español solamente
- c) Más español que inglés
- d) En español con subtítulos en inglés
- e) Ambos por igual
- f) Más inglés que español
- g) Inglés solamente
- h) En inglés con subtítulos en español

33. ¿Cuán frecuentemente ve películas en ese idioma?

☐ Nunca ☐ Muy poco ☐ Ocasionalmente ☐ Con mucha frecuencia ☐ Todo el tiempo

34. ¿En qué idioma escucha usted la **radio** y/o **música**?

Español solamente	Más español que inglés	Ambos por igual	Más inglés que español	Inglés solamente	No escucho radio/ música

35. ¿Cuán frecuentemente escucha radio y/o música en ese idioma?

☐ Nunca ☐ Muy poco ☐ Ocasionalmente ☐ Con mucha frecuencia ☐ Todo el tiempo

36. ¿En qué idioma usted lee el periódico?

Español solamente	Más español que inglés	Ambos por igual	Más inglés que español	Inglés solamente	No leo periódicos

37. ¿Cuán frecuentemente lee periódicos en ese idioma?

☐ Nunca ☐ Muy poco ☐ Ocasionalmente ☐ Con mucha frecuencia ☐ Todo el tiempo

38. ¿Cuán seguido usa usted el inglés en una semana (lunes a viernes)?

Nada	Muy poco	Ocasionalmente	Bastante	Siempre

39. ¿En qué lugares? _____

40. ¿Con quién? _____

41. ¿Cuán seguido usa usted el inglés en un fin de semana?

☐ Nunca ☐ Muy poco ☐ Ocasionalmente ☐ Bastante ☐ Siempre

42. ¿En qué lugares? _____

43. ¿Con quién? _____

44. ¿Cuáles son las razones principales que tiene usted para aprender y/ o mejorar su inglés?

Explique:

45. ¿Qué significa para usted aprender inglés?

46. ¿Cree usted que es obligatorio aprender inglés para vivir en los Estados Unidos?

☐ Sí ☐ No

¿Por qué?

Appendix I

Questionnaire About the Use of English (Translation of Appendix H)

University of Puerto Rico

Mayaguez Campus

Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Department of English

Questionnaire about the use of English

Instructions: Please, read each question carefully and answer. For the **multiple choice** questions select **one** alternative. **Circle** the alternative that best answers the question. Answer questions, answer as detailed and clearly as possible. If the space provided is not enough, you may continue on the back of the paper; be sure to write the number of the question you are answering. Remember, the researcher cannot contact you after you have finished the questionnaire.

1. Where do you live?
 - a) In the Latino community
 - b) Outside the Latino community
2. Where do you work?
 - a) In the Latino community
 - b) Outside the Latino community
 - c) N/A
3. Where do you go shopping?
 - a) In the Latino community
 - b) Outside the Latino community
 - c) Both

4. Do you use English in the Latino community?

☐ Yes ☐ No

5. If you answered yes, in what places?

6. Do you use English outside the Latino community?

☐ Yes ☐ No

7. If you answered yes, in what places?

8. How frequently do you use English in the Latino community?

☐ Never ☐ A Little ☐ Occasionally ☐ Frequently ☐ All the time

9. Marital status: _____

10. When did you marry your current spouse? (Before/ After) you arrive in the US?

11. Which is your spouse's mother tongue? _____

12. Does your spouse know English?

☐ Yes ☐ No

13. Do you speak English with your spouse?

☐ Yes ☐ No

14. How frequently do you speak English with your spouse?

☐ Never ☐ A Little ☐ Occasionally ☐ Frequently ☐ All the time

15. Do you have children?

☐ Yes ☐ No

16. If you have children, do your children speak English to you?

☐ Yes ☐ No

17. In what language do you speak to your children? _____

Why?

18. For each of these persons, explain in what language you speak to them?

Family	Friends	Co-workers	Boss	Store employees	Government employees	Strangers

19. What level of education did you achieve in your home country?

- a) I did not study
- b) Less than 6 years (Elementary school)
- c) From 7 to 9 years (Middle school)
- d) From 10 to 12 (High school)
- e) Technical Degree
- f) Associate Degree (2 years of University)
- g) Bachelors Degree (4 years of University)
- h) Masters Degree (6 years of University)
- i) Doctorate Degree (8 or more years of University)

20. What is your profession? _____

21. Have you looked for any type of help to learn English?

☐ Yes ☐ No

22. How much time after you arrived in the United States did you seek help to learn English?

23. Have you attended English as a Second Language classes for adults (ESL classes)?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

24. How many courses have you taken? _____

25. How frequently do you go to class?

- ☐ Never ☐ A little ☐ Occasionally ☐ Frequently ☐ All the time

26. Will you continue taking ESL courses?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No How many? _____

27. Have you used any audio, video, computer programs, or private classes, ect. to learn English independently?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

28. How frequently do you use these programs?

- ☐ Never ☐ A little ☐ Occasionally ☐ Frequently ☐ All the time

29. Have any of these programs helped you learn English?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

If it has helped you, how much?

Not at all	Very little	Somewhat	A lot	Always

Explain how?

30. In what language do you watch television?

Spanish only	More Spanish than English	Both languages equally	More English than Spanish	English only	Do not watch television

31. How frequently do you watch television in that language?

☐ Never ☐ A little ☐ Occasionally ☐ Frequently ☐ All the time

32. In what language do you watch movies?

- a) I Do not watch movies
- b) Spanish only
- c) More Spanish than English
- d) Spanish with English subtitles
- e) Both languages equally
- f) More English than Spanish
- g) English only
- h) English with Spanish subtitles

33. How frequently do you watch movies in that language?

☐ Never ☐ A little ☐ Occasionally ☐ Frequently ☐ All the time

34. In what language do you listen to radio and/or music?

Spanish only	More Spanish than English	Both lang. equally	More English than Spanish	English only	Do not listen to radio/music

35. How frequently do you listen to the radio and/or music in that language?

- ☐ Never ☐ A little ☐ Occasionally ☐ Frequently ☐ All the time

36. In what language do you read the newspaper?

Spanish only	More Spanish than English	Both language equally	More English than Spanish	English only	Do not read newspaper

37. How frequently do you read the newspaper in that language?

- ☐ Never ☐ A little ☐ Occasionally ☐ Frequently ☐ All the time

38. How often do you use English during the week (Monday through Friday)?

Never	A little	Occasionally	Often	Always

39. In what places? _____

40. With whom? _____

41. How often do you use English during the weekend?

- ☐ Never ☐ A little ☐ Occasionally ☐ Often ☐ Always

42. In what places? _____

43. With whom? _____

44. What are the primary reasons you have to learn and/or improve your English?

Explain

45. What does it mean to you to learn English?

46. Do you think it is obligatory to learn English to live in the United States?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Why?

Appendix J

Información Socio-Demográfica (Original)

Sexo: _____Femenino _____Masculino

Edad: _____

Lugar de Nacimiento: _____

¿Dónde nacieron sus hijos? _____

Actualmente, ¿Viven con usted? _____ Sí _____ No

¿En qué tipo de escuela están sus hijos? _____ Pública _____ Privada

_____ Otro: _____

¿Cuántos años lleva usted en los Estados Unidos? _____

¿Por qué decidió usted venir a los Estados Unidos? _____

Su trabajo actual: _____

¿Qué trabajo tenía usted en su país? _____

Educación en los Estados Unidos: _____

¿Es español su lengua materna? _____ Sí _____ No

¿Sabía usted inglés antes de venir a los Estados Unidos? _____ Sí _____ No

¿Aprendió inglés después de su llegada a los Estados Unidos? _____ Sí _____ No

¿Posee un automóvil? _____ Sí _____ No ¿Cuántos? _____

En los Estados Unidos, usted: (marque una)

_____ Posee una casa _____ Alquila (Renta) una casa

_____ Posee un apartamento _____ Alquila un apartamento

_____ Vive con familia

¿Posee otras propiedades en Estados Unidos? _____ Sí _____ No

¿Planifica comprar otras propiedades en los Estados Unidos? _____ Sí _____ No

En su país, usted: (marque una y circule el verbo que mejor se adapte)

_____ Posee/ Poseyó una casa _____ Alquila/ Alquiló una casa

_____ Posee/ Poseyó un apartamento _____ Alquila/ Alquiló un apartamento

_____ Vive/ Vivió con familia

¿Posee otras propiedades en su país? _____ Sí _____ No

¿Planifica comprar otras propiedades en su país? _____ Sí _____ No

Gracias por su Participación

Appendix K

Socio-Demographic Information (Translation)

Gender: _____Female _____Male

Age: _____

Place of Birth: _____

Where were your children born? _____

Do your children currently live with you? _____Yes _____No

What type of school did your children go to? _____Public _____Private

_____Other: _____

How many years have you been in the United States? _____

Why did you decide to come to the United States? _____

Your current job: _____

What type of job did you have in your country? _____

Education in the United States: _____

Is Spanish your mother tongue? _____Yes _____No

Did you know English before you came to the United States? _____Yes _____No

Did you learn English when you arrived in the United States? _____Yes _____No

Do you own a car? _____Yes _____No How many? _____

In the United States, do you: (check one)

- ☐ Own a house ☐ Rent a house
☐ Own an apartment ☐ Rent an apartment
☐ Live with family

Do you own other properties in the United States? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you plan to buy any properties in the United States? ☐ Yes ☐ No

In your country, do you: (check one and circle the one that better describes)

- ☐ Own/ owned a house ☐ Rent/ rented a house
☐ Own/ owned an apartment ☐ Rent/ rented an apartment
☐ Live/ lived with family

Do you own other properties in your country? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you plan to buy any properties in your country? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Thank You for Your Participation

Appendix L

IRB Permit

**UNIVERSIDAD DE PUERTO RICO EN MAYAGUEZ
DECANATO DE ASUNTOS ACADÉMICOS
COMITÉ PARA LA PROTECCIÓN DE LOS SERES HUMANOS EN LA
INVESTIGACIÓN
(CPSHI/IRB—00002053)**

09-08-YA- 02

16 de abril del 2009

Srta. Yulira Altiery
33 Sector La Ceiba
Mayaguez P.R. 00682

Estimada Srta. Altiery:

El comité revisó su propuesta: English Language Use Among Latinos in a Small Community y luego de las correcciones aprueba gustosamente su investigación.

La aprobación de su propuesta de investigación se extiende desde el 16 de abril del 2009 hasta el 16 de abril del 2010. Le recuerdo que cualquier modificación de su proyecto necesitaría pasar por una nueva revisión por parte de este Comité.

Le deseo mucho éxito en su trabajo de investigación y quedo a sus órdenes para cualquier pregunta o clarificación ulterior que estimase necesaria.

Cordialmente,


DECANATO DE ASUNTOS ACADÉMICOS