**Living Here, yet Being There:**

**Facebook as a Transnational Space for Newcomer Latina/o Adolescents**

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**Research Questions**

1) For what purposes do the participants use Facebook?

2) How does their transnational Facebook use challenge their label as at-risk students?

*Participants and Information as of January 2012.*

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Age** | **Country of Origin** | **Months in U.S.** | **Grade in School** | **Level of Education Completed in Country of Origin** | **Date Started FB Page** | **Number of FB Friends** | **All Posts by Students** | **All Posts to Students** |
| Valeria | 19 | El Salvador | 20 | 10th | In first year of bachillerato = 10th grade | January 2011 | 241 | 543 | 965 |
| Alejandra  (Valeria's sister) | 17 | El Salvador | 20 | 11th | In second year of bachillerato = 11th grade | December 2010 | 79 | 91 | 364 |
| Celia | 17 | Mexico | 18 | 11th | Finished secundaria = 10th grade | August 2011 | 69 | 31 | 62 |
| Miguel | 20 | Guatemala | 9 | 11th | In third year of universificado = 12th grade | May 2011 | 83 | 11 | 29 |

\*All names are pseudonyms approved by the participants.

**Themes**

Students use Facebook to:

**1)** **Connect to Home**

* Why do you use Facebook? "For my sister and my mom." "Para mis hermanos y mis primos" *For my brother, sister, and cousins.*
* Protect younger siblings: "Hey victor mucho respeto a mi hermana ok*." Hey victor respect my sister ok*.
* Mother/daughter relationship: "El otro día me regañó [mi mamá] porque eso, había una foto donde tenía el cabello todo arreglado y me gusta que lise el cabello. Se enojó por eso." *The other day she got onto me because there was a picture of me with my hair all done up and she likes my hair straight. She got angry because of that*.

**2) Maintain their Latina/o Identities:**



*Alejandra's profile picture Example of pictures posted by and to students*

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*Examples of Latin artists on students' "like" section*

* "si tas aqui es xk TQM" *if you are here it's because I LOVE YOU A LOT*-Caption to a collage of friends
* "soy puro chaplin" *i'm pure guatemalan*-Post by Miguel accompanied by a picture of himself in a soccer jersey

**3) Acquire English:**

* "Aquí en la escuela casi no tengo amigos de americano, así que los tengo en Facebook." *Here in school I really don't have American friends, so I have them on Facebook*.
* "omg tomorrow i have test" and "lol"

**Significance**

The participants' monolingual, monoliterate, and monocultural counterparts who do not possess sophisticated transnational abilities, graduate from high school, go to college, and become productive members of a society that glorifies assimilation. The newcomer Latina/o adolescents in this study are transnational, multicultural, emergent bilinguals who engage in sophisticated multimodal ways of communication. Literacy pedagogy and policy must change in response to transnationalism and new technologies in order to provide all students an equitable education.