Colombian Immigrant Children in the United States: Representations of Food and the Process of Creolization

by

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A las niñas y niños inmigrantes que en medio de la alegría por lo novedoso y el dolor de alejarse de seres amados, construyen nuevas identidades y nuevos mundos.
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Colombian Immigrant Children in the United States: Representations of Food and the Process of Creolization

María Claudia Duque-Páramo

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this dissertation research is to study the experience of adjustment of Colombian immigrant children to living in the US. In order to understand the changes they have experienced as immigrants, the research focuses on the ways in which they talk about the food they eat here and on the foods they ate in Colombia. Because of the symbolic importance of food in the construction of ethnic and personal identities, a study of how the children talk about food illuminates the process of blending elements from the immigrant culture with those of the US.

Based on the symbolic interactionism approach to culture, this study assumes that participants’ representations of foods are shaped by their own experiences through interactions with others. Representations of food result from the interactions between participants and the researcher in the research settings.

With a participatory approach, data were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted with twelve girls and eight boys, and three group sessions with three girls and eight boys. Participants were reached at the Taller Intercultural Hispano Americano and through their parents at the Center for Family Health. Data were analyzed
qualitatively following first a process of data reduction and then transforming the interviews and the group sessions into narratives.

Analysis of the data shows that participants’ changes and adjustment are characterized by an emerging process of creolization, a concept proposed by Foner (1997) to explain patterns of acculturation of immigrant families. Creolization is the central idea articulating and providing meaning to participants’ representations of food changes. Colombian immigrant children living in the US are agents actively blending elements from their immigrant culture with elements they encounter in the US context from which new food patterns reflecting their changing circumstances are emerging. Likewise, Tampa in particular and Florida in general provide a context that facilitates and promotes such blending of meanings both in private spaces such as home and in public ones such as restaurants, due to the presence of long-established Spanish-speaking communities of varying degrees of acculturation.
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Children of immigrants, widely diverse in terms of social class, ethnicity, educational level, and nationalities (Hernandez and Darke 1999), represent the fastest growing group of children in the United States (Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco 2001). Scholars agree about the relevance of studying and understanding the cultural changes contemporary immigrant children and their families are facing as they transition from the immigrant culture to their new lives in the United States (Foner 1997; Hernandez 1999a; Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Rumbaut and Portes 2001; Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco 2001). Since pan-ethnic categories, such as Latino or Hispanic, conceal important variations by country of origin, scholars from different perspectives are beginning to recommend nationality-oriented studies (Flores et al 2002; Oropesa and Landale 1997). Little is known, however, about subjective aspects of children’s experiences in the acculturation process (Hernandez and Charney 1998; Portes 1994; Rumbaut 1994; Zhou 1997) or about “their subjective experiences as immigrant children, their abilities to cope and adapt, their ability to grow, and the impact that immigration has in their life” (García Coll and Magnuson 1997:94). Likewise, there are no studies that focus on children’s own perspective and their agency as actors in the process of adjustment and acculturation in the US.

Food is a symbol where expressed emotions, identities, traditions, cultural values, norms, political forces and economic conditions are focused (Lupton 1996; Harbottle 2000). Among human populations food is also related to the processes of individual socialization and to the transmission of culture from generation to generation (Beardsworth and Keil 1997: 54). Likewise, food is a symbol by which social changes and acculturative processes are represented. Though studies focused on the food changes
of migrants have been conducted with several populations (Himmelgreen 2004; Jerome 1980; Lee Kang and Garey 2002), there are no studies dealing with immigrant children and how food symbolizes the changes they experience in the processes of adjustment and acculturation.

Children have been disregarded either as unreliable informants about or as passive participants in culture (Bucholtz 2002; Friedl 2002; Gottlieb 2000; Hardman 1973; 2001; Hirschfeld 2002; Korbin and Zahorik 1985; Toren 1993). In anthropology children have existed on the margins and sidelines of the discipline (Schwartzman 2001:1). However, children are not passive receptors of acculturation and socialization processes; rather they are persons and active subjects constructing their cultural worlds while interacting with others (Gottlieb 2000, 2002; Hardman 1973, 2001; Hirschfeld 2002; Toren 1993, 1999, 2001, 2002a, 2002b).

This dissertation research focuses on how Colombian immigrant children adjust to living in the US. The ways in which the participants in the study talk about food are used as a mean to understand the changes they have experienced. Reflecting the symbolic use of food, this study provides understandings on how the process of blending elements from the immigrant culture with those encountered within the US context is taking place among Colombian immigrant children. Understanding immigrant children’s own experiences and perspectives represented by their food preferences sheds light on the changes and adjustments associated with their experience as immigrants. At the same time, it is useful to provide ideas and suggestions for the design of culturally appropriate nutritional education programs for Colombian and other Latino immigrant children and their families.

This study is based on the symbolic interactionism approach to the study of culture and assumes that the children’s representations result from the interactions between participants and the researcher in the research settings. Participants’ representations are shaped by their own experiences through interactions with others. Likewise, the researcher’s theoretical and methodological choices, as well as the representations of participants’ accounts and experiences, are also shaped by my own personal and professional experiences.
The study’s research questions were:

- How do Colombian immigrant children adjust to life in the United States?
- How does food symbolize the changes that they have experienced?

These main questions were subdivided:

1. How do participants represent the food they eat in the US: in restaurants; on weekdays; on weekends; on holidays?
2. What changes and differences do they identify between the food they ate in Colombia and the food they eat in the US?
3. What concepts, feelings and values are associated to the food they eat?
4. What role does immigrant culture, and participants’ interactions with significant others, such as their families, teachers, peers and media, play in shaping their foods representations?
5. To what degree are participants active agents in their process of food acculturation?
6. How do participants express their agency?

Chapter Two discusses the literature reviewed for this study; it is divided into five sections. The first section focuses on migrant studies in anthropology which includes urban migration, migration and development, and theoretical approaches to migration in anthropology. In addition to the anthropological literature, the second section focuses on reviewing the literature on assimilation and acculturation of immigrant children and their families. The third section focuses on creolization and discusses the main elements defining the creolized acculturation. The fourth section focuses on why the child is an important subject for anthropological research. Finally, the fifth section discusses some relevant sociocultural studies of food, the symbolic dimensions of food, and studies on food, immigration, and acculturation.

Chapter Three describes the methodology used in this research, which consisted of a participative qualitative study. As such I used ethnographic methods and some elements of the case study design. The study was conducted with children between the ages of seven and twelve years old. The main two sources of information used in this research were individual semi-structured interviews and group sessions. A sample of twenty
participants, twelve girls and eight boys were individually interviewed. A sub-sample of eleven children, three girls and eight boys participated in three group sessions.

Participants were approached directly at the Taller Inter-cultural Hispano-Americano (Hispanic American Inter Cultural Workshop, TICH), and through their parents at the Center for Family Health (CFH) where I developed nutritional educational sessions working in the project New Life Good Health (NLGH). TICH was the main research setting where I conducted long term participant observation -from September 2003 through June 2004- and where all the group sessions were developed.

Data analysis was first conducted developing a process of data reduction where data were selected, simplified, and focused and new categories were produced (Miles and Huberman 1994). Then, the group sessions and the individual interviews were transformed into narratives. Further analysis and interpretation was built based on narratives and guided by the central questions of the research. The analysis developed themes and patterns around creolization, the concept proposed by Foner (1997) to explain patterns of acculturation of children and families.

Chapter Four presents participants’ narratives based on the individual interviews. In these narratives I present their voices, perspectives, and interactions that represent them and describe interactions in which their agency during the interviews and the group sessions becomes evident. I organized the narratives guided by the research questions. In general, the narratives include: description of the participants and the interview settings; data about their family; description and analysis of their participation during the groups sessions; language, media and food preferences; ethnic identity; basic meal plan on weekdays when they attend school; variations on weekends, holidays, birthdays and when eating at restaurants; foods consumed while they lived in Colombia and food changes they have experienced since living in the US; and concepts and opinions about American and Colombian food.

Chapter Five presents the narratives of the three group sessions. Group one was conducted with two boys and two girls; group 2 was developed with three girls; and group 3 was conducted with eight boys. In these narratives I use visual material such as...
pictures and drawings as well as participants’ voices in order to present what they talk about food and their interactions and agency in producing the visual materials.

Chapter Six summarizes in tables the main trends I found in participants’ narratives and in the group sessions.

Chapter Seven discusses the emerging themes from the narratives integrating the study’s conceptual framework presented in the Literature Review Chapter. The chapter is structured around the central questions of the research. Following the discussion I present some suggestions to parents, nutritional education programs that work with immigrant children, to nutritional anthropologists as actors interested on the intersection between culture and nutrition, and to scholars in the immigrant studies field.
CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review provides a framework for understanding the main concepts and relationships underlying the ways in which Colombian immigrant children talk about food, and how their interpretation of the process of acculturation is expressed symbolically by the way they tell about food. Since the focus of this study is on the immigrant experience of participants as expressed in their food’s representations, literature on immigration has a relevant place. This chapter is presented in five sections. The first section focuses on migrant studies in anthropology using three reviews of the literature: Graves and Graves’ review on urban migration (1974); Kearney’s (1986) discussion on migration and development; and Brettell’s (2000) analysis on theories of migration in which she discusses three main theoretical approaches: migration as modernization, migration as dependency and migration as articulation, networks and nationalism.

Anthropological literature on migration, although broad and relevant, includes only a few studies of the experiences of children and their families. For this reason, in the second section, which focuses on acculturation of immigrant children and their families, I mainly review sociological literature on assimilation and acculturation in addition to the anthropological literature. Although this review includes studies conducted with various ethnic and national groups, greater attention are given to Latin American populations.

In the third section, I follow Foner (1997) in suggesting that creolization is the salient pattern of acculturation among current immigrant children. That section focuses in discussing the main elements defining the creolized acculturation: the immigrant culture and the context of reception; social capital and immigrant networks; ethnicity and self identity, and language acculturation.
The next section discusses why the child is an important subject for anthropological research. In this context, I first discuss some relevant literature about the child in social sciences in general and in anthropology in particular, and then focus on doing research with children and the ethical implications of such a venture.

Finally, in the fifth section I discuss some relevant studies of food as a cultural symbol, rather than as a nutritional resource. I start with a discussion about identity and its relation to the symbolic dimensions of food, and end with a discussion of studies on food immigration and acculturation.

**Migrant Studies in Anthropology**

Migration is the movement of people through geographic space (Kearney 1986:331). It has been studied through the viewpoint of several disciplines in the social sciences. For example, anthropology, demography, economics, history, law, political science and sociology, all have published theories on migration (Brettell and Hollifield 2000:3). In addition, psychologists, nutritionists and researchers in health related disciplines have documented and measured processes of acculturation among different populations.

From an anthropological viewpoint, the main question about migration is: How does migration affect cultural change and how does it affect ethnic identity? In this sense, migrant behavior (emigration and integration) works as a dependent variable (Brettell and Hollifield 2000:3, 19). Even though migration has been a constant historical phenomenon of the human population, anthropologists did not begin to study migrants until the 1950s and the 1960s. Brettell (2000) reviews migration theory in anthropology, citing Mead, who in the late 1920s conducted fieldwork in New Guinea and reported that young boys often spent several years away from their villages working for the “white man.” Despite this fact, Mead did not recognize the role of migration in the process of shaping social structures. This “sedentarist bias” (Malkki 1995 in Brettell 2000:97) is explained as the characteristic functionalist mode of representation prevalent in the 1920s, which produced ethnographies that were “portraits of discrete and timeless cultures unaffected by the outside world” (Brettell 2000:97).
It was during the post World War II period that anthropologists began to study urban
migrants (Graves and Graves 1974:117). According to Brettell, the reason for this
growing interest was that “in those regions of the world that had traditionally been their
arenas for ethnographic fieldwork… people were beginning to move in significant
numbers from the countryside to the growing urban centers of the underdeveloped and
developing world” (2000:97). Kearney argued that the interest of anthropologists in
migrant studies was related to “a heightened awareness of the magnitude and significance
of migration [that] caused anthropologists to turn away from community studies in the
1950s and 1960s, when it became widely realized that such work was suffering from
terminal myopia” (1986:332). Thus, anthropological studies on migration grew along
with studies on rural-urban migration, peasant studies, and urban anthropology. Such
studies have linked traditional local and community studies with the global processes of
modernization and development. Since the 1970s, anthropological studies of migration
have increased, both in theoretical knowledge and cross-cultural coverage. Research has
been conducted with populations in Europe, the United States, Australia, Southeast Asia,
and the Middle East, and many ethnographic monographs have been published on
populations moving from town to town and city to city as well as on international
migrants (Brettell 2000:98).

Anthropological studies on migrants between the 1950s and the early 1970s were
largely descriptive and consisted of comparative research on adaptive strategies of
communities facing migration throughout the world. Modernization, resulting in
overpopulation and limited resources in the sending localities, was argued as the main
determinant of the movements of people (Graves and Graves 1974). The adaptations of
rural people to urban environments were described as taking place “within three social
arenas: among members of the home community left behind; among the immigrants
themselves; and within the urban host community to which they go” (Graves and Graves
1974:118).

The lived experience of being an immigrant, the process of cultural change following
migration, as well as the characteristics of the home and host communities, have
continued to be the hallmark of anthropological studies on migration. However, there
have been differences in the theoretical approaches to the study of such phenomena, particularly in the relationships at the micro and macro levels. While Graves and Graves’ (1974) perspective on migration was framed under adaptive theory, Kearney’s review of anthropological literature on migration in the mid 1980s took the form of “migration and development.” He considered the theory that since migrants were predominantly workers looking for a higher return for their labor, “the investigation of migration is thus inextricably associated with issues of development and underdevelopment” (Kearney 1986:331). Kearney also emphasized the importance of generating field research at the local level that enlightens broader processes of migration and development. In this context, he reviewed ethnographic studies of migration under the perspective of three theoretical approaches to development: migration as modernization, migration as dependency, and migration as articulation.

From a different perspective, Brettell (2000:998) asserted that theories about migration in anthropology have been shaped by two traditions in the discipline: being sensitive to place and using a comparative perspective. These traditions have shaped questions which have focused:

On the articulation between the place whence a migrant originates and the place or places to which he or she goes. This includes exploration of how people in local places respond to global processes. Equally, anthropology’s focus on culture, which includes the study of the interaction between beliefs and behavior, of corporate groups, and of social relationships, has resulted in an emphasis in migration studies on matters of adaptation and cultural change, on forms of social organization that are characteristic of both the migration process and the immigrant community, and on questions of identity and ethnicity [Brettell 2000:98].

**Migration as Modernization.**

Anthropological research on migration up to approximately the 1970s was framed within the modernization theory. Modernization theory is a Western model of linear development toward civilization, a process that dichotomizes nations and social groups between civilized and barbarian, developed and underdeveloped, and modern and traditional (Kearney 1986:333-334). Through the diffusion of progress from the city or the developed nation to the countryside or the underdeveloped country, migration was thought of as a path to civilization for traditional and backward societies. The individual who decided to migrate was the unit of analysis for anthropological research. Consistent
with modernization theory, a linear and progressive process of acculturation was the desired outcome. Thus, “migrants were seen as progressive types who would have a positive impact on development by bringing back to their home communities innovations and knowledge that would break down traditionalism” (Kearney 1986:333).

Within modernization theory, migration was analyzed within a bipolar framework that “separated and opposed sending and receiving areas, and the push factors of out-migration form the pull factors of in-migration” (Brettell 2000:102). Related to modernization theory, neoclassic economics sees individuals and families as rational decision makers who decide to migrate because of their perception of these opportunities (Kearney 1986:335). Some anthropologists from a neoclassic perspective and “within a modernization theory framework have emphasized the rational and progressive economic decisions made in response to differentials in land, labor, and capital between where a migrant lives and the locale to where he or she has chosen to migrate” (Brettell 2000:102).

In the 1970s, anthropologists studied migrant populations in cities and in developed countries as well as return workers around the world. Through these studies, they documented inconsistencies and failures of the model which included: the persistence of the traditional instead civilization among migrants and home populations; urbanization without development; the creation of migration-dependant communities; little learning of new skills that were useful in their home communities; and generation of further migration through the diffusion of consumerism (Brettell 2000:103; Kearney 1986:334, 346).

The bipolar model was challenged by anthropologists. Working with Mexicans and borderland communities in the mid and late-1970s, instead of separated localities, Uzzell proposed the idea of a “social village spread over thousands of miles”; Whiteford offered the image of “spatially extended communities”; and Lomnitz developed the ecological model of a multi-local system that incorporates both village and city (Kearney 1986:337). They sprinkled the seeds for the current migration models, which are based on networks, articulation and transnationalism.
**Migration as Dependency**

Dependency theory is a neo-Marxist critique of modernization theory that “shifts attention from the motivations and adaptations of individual migrants to the macrolevel processes that shape and sustain population movements” (Brettell 2000:103). As a result of the colonial encounter, the rural areas became periphery and the urban areas became the core. “Rural and urban areas are not unconnected, dual economies, but are instead linked together by ties of dependency, serving the developmental needs not of the periphery but of the core” (Kearney 1986:337). Similar to dependency theory, which posits the presence of a single world capitalist system, world system theory posits a global system as the basis of the international division of labor where commodities are exchanged among the three different zones of production and consumption: periphery, semi-periphery and core (Kearney 1986:340). The unit of analysis in dependency theory and world system theory is the global market. These theories focus on the way that capitalist development, through national and international economic and political policies, “have disrupted, displaced, or even attracted local populations, thereby generating particular migration streams” (Brettell 2000:104).

While anthropologists within the modernization theory framework placed emphasis on individuals (the hallmarks of the culture and personality tradition), dependency and world system theorists retreated from culture and focused on macroeconomic factors to study the global system, regions or nations. Kearney in the 1980s and later Brettell (2000) believed that such shifting was of little benefit for conceptualizing specific anthropological fieldwork projects. The dependency model generated dissatisfaction because it does not depict active agents, but instead believes that migrants are passive reactors manipulated by the capitalist system (Brettell 2000:104). In Kearney’s words, dependency theory in anthropology has allowed the development of a “good political economy, but [is] insufficient [for] migration theory” (1986:341).

**Migration as Articulation. Networks and Transnationalism**

Articulation theory, which is based on the coexistence of capitalist and noncapitalist economies, states that capitalism is not replacing noncapitalist peripheral economies but
may be coexisting with them. Thus, migration is understood as a process that articulates the domestic community with colonial capitalism (Kearney 1986:342-343).

Earlier manifestations of articulation theory were criticized because they “posited a primeval state of autonomy (usually labeled pre-capitalist), which is then violated by global capitalism” (Gupta and Ferguson 1998, in Brettell 2000:106).

Alternatively, it has been proposed that transnationalism is “a social process whereby migrants operate in social fields that transgress geographical, political and cultural borders (Brettell 2000: 104). Transnationalism theory captures the central issues of current anthropological research on migrants: critiques of bipolar models; articulation of home and host societies; and emerging representations of time, space and place. Beyond timeless and localized communities, migrants “are no longer ‘uprooted’, but rather move freely back and forth across international borders and between different cultures and social systems” (Brettell 2000:104). In a world where modern telecommunications and improved modes of transportation have shortened the social distance between societies, immigrants maintain their bonds to their countries of origin making “home and host society a single arena of social action” (Margolis 1995 in Brettell 2000:104). Transnationalism also is closely linked with postmodernist and feminist thought by theorizing on unbounded and discontinuous spaces and emerging diverse identities.

Anthropologists tend to locate transnational processes within the personal, economic and social networks that articulate home and host societies of individuals and families (Brettell 2000:106-107). In this context, anthropologists mainly have studied the role of kinship and friendship networks in the process of facilitating, expanding, and self-perpetuating network-mediated migration: “Each act of migration itself creates the social structure needed to sustain it. Every new migrant reduces the costs of subsequent migration for a set of friends and relatives, and some of these people are thereby induced to migrate, which further expands the set of people with ties abroad” (Brettell 2000:107).

Anthropologists working within social networks and transnationalism theories have put culture, agency and practice in the scenario. Instead of individual decision makers and macrolevel processes, the household migrant and social networks are the unit of analysis. Households and social networks:
Mediate the relationship between the individual and the world system and provide a more proactive understanding of the migrant than that provided by the historical-structuralist framework. In other words, the effort to combine macro- and microperspectives of analysis through the filter of the household not only brings the migrant-as-decision-maker back into focus, but also reintroduces the social and cultural variables that must be considered in conjunction with economic variables. This synthetic approach permits an analysis of subtle differences between those local communities or social classes that become extensively involved in migration and those that do not. It also provides more understanding of how migration streams are perpetuated despite changes in economic and political policies that serve to constrain or halt them” [Brettell 2000:108].


**Acculturation of Immigrant Children and Their Families**

Incorporation of immigrant children and their families in the host society encompasses diverse processes of cultural change, both at the individual and group levels. Such phenomena have been studied from different and complementary disciplinary perspectives in the social sciences. While acculturation is a concept rooted in the anthropological tradition, assimilation has a stronger tradition in sociology, and adjustment and adaptation have been developed mainly in psychology. These are the main concepts that scholars have used to study the processes of cultural, social and psychological change that result from encounters among people from different sociocultural backgrounds. In this section, I will mainly discuss issues related to the acculturation and assimilation of immigrants in the US.
Acculturation and Assimilation

Anthropologists were the first social scientists to recognize the significance and importance of cultural change (Trimble 2002:5). In 1936 Redfield, Linton and Herskovits defined *acculturation* as “those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural patterns of either or both groups” (149). This early anthropological definition still remains as a widely accepted point of departure among social scientists (Berry 2002: 18; Gordon 1964:61; Kottak 2002:282; Castro 2003:8).

In the same article they differentiated between acculturation and *assimilation* “which is at times a phase of acculturation” (Redfield, Linton and Herskovits 1936:149). In present anthropological literature, acculturation is understood as a broader process of cultural change by the continuous encounter of different cultural groups, while assimilation is a particular form of acculturation that may occur by encounters among different cultures. In the ninth edition of his textbook on anthropology, Kottak (2002) defines assimilation as:

The process of change that a minority ethnic group *may* experience when it moves to a country where another culture dominates. By assimilating, the minority adopts the patterns and norms of its host culture. It is incorporated into the dominant culture to the point that it no longer exists as a separate cultural unit. This is the “melting pot” model; ethnic groups give up their own cultural traditions as they blend into a common national stew. [Emphasis added. Kottak 2002:298-299].

Assimilation has emerged as a central concept to define and study the processes by which immigrants are incorporated into US society. The concept designates not only the range of adjustments to the receiving environments, the ways in which immigrants survive, and the manner in which they blend into larger societies, but also discloses the hopes and expectations about how immigrants “should” behave (Fernández-Kelly and Schauffler 1994:662).

Assimilation: The Classical Perspective

In 1937, Park defined assimilation in the US as a natural, inevitable and irreversible process by which “diverse ethnic groups come to share a common culture, reducing cultural heterogeneity and to gain equal access to the opportunity structure of society” (Zhou 1997: 976). In 1945, Warner and Srole, studying eight immigrant groups in the
major status hierarchies of Yankee city, depicted assimilation as a straight linear process of progressive advancement towards a complete melting into the US society (Rumbaut 1997a:925). A quote from an article published in 1948 about the Italian family, depicts the classic model of assimilation:

The changes in the Italian family in America can be visualized in terms of a continuum which ranges from an unacculturated Old World type to a highly acculturated and urbanized American type of family. This transformation can be understood by an analysis of three types of families which have characterized Italian family living in America: the Old World peasant Italian family which existed at the time of the mass migration from Italy (1890-1910) and which can be placed at the unacculturated end of the continuum; the first-generation Italian family in America, which at the beginning of contact with American culture was much like the first but which changed and continues to change increasingly so that it occupies a position somewhere between the two extremes; and, finally, the second-generation Italian family which represents a cross-fertilization of the first generation Italian family and the American contemporary urban family, with the trend being in the direction of the American Type. Consequently, the position this family assumes is near the American-urban end of the continuum [Campisi 1948:443].

In 1964, Gordon presented assimilation theory as the encounter and incorporation of different people into a common and shared cultural life, where cultural differences tend to disappear. He argued against earlier conceptualizations of one huge melting pot and recognized different “pots” or sub-societies in American society. Instead of one unique pattern of acculturation, Gordon proposed the multiple melting pot or pluralism theory as the form of cultural and ethnic assimilation in the US (Gordon 1964: 115-131).

Acculturation was the first stage in the process of assimilation, which included seven variables or sub-processes:

1. Cultural or behavioral assimilation or acculturation. Change of cultural patterns to those of the host society. Includes linguistic assimilation.
2. Structural assimilation. Large-scale entrance into cliques, clubs and institutions of the host society on a primary group level.
3. Marital assimilation or amalgamation. Large-scale intermarriage.
5. Attitude receptional assimilation. Absence of prejudice.
Gordon’s typologies described different dimensions on the process of assimilation by assuming that assimilation occurs sequentially with language and behavioral acculturation occurring first and is followed by structural assimilation. Acculturation was regarded as part of an inexorable process of assimilation over the span of generations of immigrants. The last stages of assimilation involved identification with the new culture and the abandonment of identification with the culture of origin (Birman and Trickett 2001:457). Even though Gordon believed that acculturation was a necessary first step, he accepted that spatial isolation and lack of contact may result in ethnic groups remaining distinguished from one another and that “the full assimilation will depend ultimately on the degree to which these groups gain the acceptance of the dominant population” (Zhou 1997: 977). Yet, from the classical assimilation perspective, distinctive ethnic traits are sources of disadvantage. Hence, immigrants “must free themselves from their old cultures in order to begin rising up from marginal positions” (Zhou 1997:977).

While Gordon asserted that assimilation may be partial for first generation adults, the American born children of immigrants, “the second generation, with exceptions based on the existence of a few rigidly enclosed enclaves, should be realistically viewed as a generation irreversibly on its way to virtually complete acculturation to native American cultural values” (Gordon 1964:244). Public schools and mass media were seen by Gordon as having “overwhelming acculturative powers” that will push [the] immigrant’s children to “proffer their unhesitating allegiance to those aspects of the American cultural system which are visible to them” (Gordon 1964: 245). This tendency will bring one American identity and, eventually, will alienate native-born children from their “immigrant parents and the culture they represent” (Gordon 1964:245). Such alienation explained generational conflicts and adjustment and mental health problems among children of immigrants, particularly among second generation.

Classical assimilation theory emerged mainly from studying early waves of adult European immigrants coming to the US (Hernandez and Charney 1998:23), especially from research done on the so-called “old wave,” who immigrated late in the nineteenth century and during the first two decades of the twentieth century. From them, scholars depicted an:
Orderly sequence of assimilation: The struggles and common poverty of first generation immigrants will be superseded by the gradual entry of their offspring into mainstream social and economic circles. The loss of ethnic linguistic and cultural traits, as well as the disappearance of earlier labor market disadvantages will be complete, for the most part, by the third generation” [Portes 1994:633].

Even though the early literature recognized the fact that assimilation did not occur at the same pace or in the same direction for all immigrants, pointing to the persistence of diverse outcomes and distinct ethnic subcultures (Hernandez and Charney 1998:24), the classical assimilation view actually represents assimilation as a homogeneous, ideal, and normative type of incorporation of immigrants into the US. From this approach, it is expected that diverse immigrant groups from underprivileged backgrounds, “eventually abandon their old ways of life and completely ‘melt’ into the mainstream through residential integration and occupational achievement in a sequence of succeeding generations” (Zhou 1997:976). At the same time that this tradition shaped immigration policies, it was also supported by programs encouraging sequential and complete assimilation into mainstream US society.

**Challenges to the Classical Perspective**

The identification of assimilation with economic success started to be challenged in the 1960s and 1970s when scholars studied the perpetuation of poverty among children of less fortunate black Americans migrants from the rural South as well as among Puerto Ricans coming to the mainland. Some scholars in the 1960s, however, did not challenge the assimilation model and explained the relationship among poverty and “urban pathologies” with concepts that included the *culture of poverty* and the *urban underclass* (Fernández-Kelly and Schauffler 1994: 665; Portes 1994:635). It was in the context of the Civil Rights Movement that classic assimilation was challenged by structural approaches inspired by Neo-Marxism. From research on immigrant enclaves and middlemen minorities, researchers also described alternative and more effective modes of incorporation, such as self-employment, business formation, and the maintenance of shared cultural understandings outside the American mainstream. In counterposition to earlier, more optimistic interpretations, critics portrayed assimilation “as a deflating pressure threatening immigrants’ chances for success” (Fernández-Kelly and Schauffler 1994: 666).
While children were generally marginal for scholars studying the old wave of immigrants, post-1965 theories on immigration have increasingly been based mainly on data based on children and their families’ experiences. Current critiques to the classical model are often based on declining prospects for the second generation of Asian and Latin American immigrants. During the 1980s and 1990s, social scientists studied distinct and complex patterns of assimilation especially among families and children of disadvantaged immigrants. Some studies documented contradictory relationships between different dimensions of the assimilation process. For example, studying intergenerational changes among Puerto Rican families in the Bronx, Rogler, Santana Cooney and Ortiz (1980) found that among parents education was directly related to knowledge of both English and Spanish. Among their children, however, education was significantly related only to knowledge of English. In addition it was found that a nonlinear relationship between education and ethnic identity exists.

Other studies reported a nonlinear evolution of assimilation through generations. For example, Lamare, studying Mexican American children (700 youngsters age nine through fourteen) residing in El Paso, Texas, found a linear evolution of political integration from the first generation through the second generation. Yet, among the third generation a notable decline in political assimilation occurred (Lamare 1982:169).

Research done with refugee children in the 1980s in the US also pointed out the importance of policies which showed less emphasis on assimilation. Reviewing literature on mental health and cultural development of refugee children, Eisenbruch (1988:291) recommended focusing on interventions that propitiate a positive view of children’s cultural identity. Huyck (1981) developed a conceptual framework for examining research and cultural services needed by refugee children in the process of acculturation—particularly Southeast Asians, Jews, Cubans, and Latin Americans. Asserting the failure of the melting pot theory, he advocated for policies which sustain refugee children during their adjustment by supporting “not only their cultural roots within a total community, but also for finding that the agents of the institutions of their new country that share their own cultural identity” (Huyck 1981:253).
Challenges to the classical assimilation perspective include the following anomalies (Zhou 1997: 978):

- Instead of increased assimilation as a function of the length of US residence, ethnic differences have persisted across generations. Recent studies have shown more maladaptive outcomes in third generation children than in first and second generations, pointing to deterioration over time and generation (Rumbaut 1997a:923; Zhou 1997:978).

- Instead of obtaining better health outcomes, the literature has documented adverse effects of acculturation to the US, pointing to health hazards in the process of assimilation of infants, children and adolescents. Related to physical health and risk behavior outcomes a strongly linear assimilative pattern has been suggested, which points to deteriorating rather than improving outcomes (Rumbaut 1997a:934).

- Some studies using samples of different ethnic groups across the nation, report better educational achievements among first and second generation children than among third generation children, indicating a deterioration in educational outcomes over generations. Results are also consistent with “the erosion of an ethos of achievement and hard work from the immigrant generation to the third generation” (Rumbaut 1997a:938).

- Research has documented that outcomes of adaptation vary, depending on where immigrants settle. Some studies on intergenerational mobility found that educational outcomes were not significantly influenced by length of US residence or by generation, suggesting that “early and insignificant differentials in advantage result in substantial differences in educational and occupational mobility in later years” (Zhou 1997:978).

- From a national census-based perspective in 1990, compared to native born children, second generation children: were concentrated in states and metropolitan areas known as popular destinations for the new immigrants (California, Arizona, Florida, Texas, New York, and Chicago); were more likely than those of earlier arrivals to reside in urban areas; appeared to be more geographically mobile than native children; were more likely to live in rented homes than native-born children.
and lived in households that had on average fewer rooms and more total persons per bedroom. While the poverty rate for native children was 17 percent, the rate for children of immigrants was closer to 22 percent, and among foreign-born children of recent arrivals, the poverty rate neared 38 percent. The heads of household’s of second generation children were more likely to be males (83% versus 76%) and were more likely to be married (87% versus 76%). In conclusion, compared to native children, second generation children were disadvantaged in terms of many socioeconomic conditions but at the same time had many advantages: Their heads of household were more likely to be married, they were overrepresented among the best educated, and their families had higher self-employment and asset income (Jensen and Chitose 1994:719-733; Stepick and Stepick 2002:247).

- First generation highly skilled professionals and their children are successful in business and academic settings, bypassing the traditional bottom-up order.

In summary, following Fernández-Kelly and Schaufller (1994:665), the classical notion of assimilation has remained problematic for several reasons: (1) It implied that immigrant and American cultures were bounded and mutually exclusive categories, and “only by giving up ethnic identity could immigrants fully participate in American life;” (2) It depicted the immigrant as a passive object within a quasi-evolutionary process that transcended human agency; (3) being an American and American identity were assumed as unchanged, stultified assumptions; and (4) “the relationship between individual and collective processes was often confused” (Fernández-Kelly and Schaufller 1994:665).

While some advocates of the classical assimilation perspective think new interpretations are too pessimistic (Perlman and Waldinger 1997:893), other supporters argue that anomalies simply mean differences in the speed of assimilation attributed to variations in human capital, spatial distribution, co-ethnic populations, group size, and continual mass migration. They assume a non-ethnic and unified core of American society into which, with enough time, immigrants are expected to assimilate (Haverluk 1998:465,478-479; Zhou 1997:981).
**Multiculturalism**

Multiculturalists reject the assumption of a unified core. They “perceive American society as composed of a fluid and heterogeneous collection of ethnic and racial minority groups, as well as the dominant majority group of European Americans” (Zhou 1997:981). Unlike classic assimilationists, who assume a passive immigrant, multiculturalists deem immigrants as agents who actively shape their own lives. The multicultural perspective views ethnic minority groups as part of the American population and portrays immigrant cultures as “integral segments” of American society. Structuralists would add that immigrants and ethnic minorities are constrained by an ethnic hierarchy, which limits their access to social resources. Thus, the “benefits of ‘becoming American’ depend largely on what stratum (or segment) of American society absorbs the new immigrants” (Zhou 1997:982).

In summary, the consensus that has emerged is that contemporary immigrants’ fates depend on the interaction of three factors: “(1), the internal composition of the groups to which immigrants belong, particularly in terms of social class; (2), their degree of concentration in specific locations; and (3), their mode of reception and incorporation into specific labor market strata” (Fernández-Kelly and Schauffler 1994:666). In this context, the concept of segmented assimilation was developed.

**Segmented Assimilation**

In 1993, Portes and Zhou coined the term *segmented assimilation* to denote a middle-range theory that explains different patterns of adaptation and varying modalities of immigrant incorporation into diverse sectors of American society among contemporary immigrants (Fernández-Kelly and Schauffler 1994:662). Contemporary immigration to the United States, which is very diverse in social class, ethnicity, nationality, and educational level (Hernandez and Darke 1999), determines different starting-points. Segmented assimilation denotes divergent destinies from three distinct possible multidirectional patterns of adaptation: The *upward mobility* pattern resulting in the acculturation and economic integration into the normative structures of middle-class America; the *downward-mobility* pattern, in the opposite direction, where the
acculturation and parallel integration is into the underclass; and a third pattern that combines upward mobility and heightened ethnic awareness with a deliberate preservation of the immigrant community’s values and solidarity (Rumbaut 1994:753-754; Zhou 1997:984).

Divergent outcomes and pathways of assimilation depend on a “variety of vulnerabilities and resources, experiences and exposures, and contexts of exit and of reception, including the changing structure of the economic opportunity and the sector of the American society to which a particular immigrant group assimilates” (Rumbaut 1997a:948). Such divergent modes of incorporation are likely accompanied by changes in the meaning and salience of ethnicity, thus shaping the divergent modes of ethnic self-identification.

The segmented assimilation framework allows us to understand the process by which the children of contemporary immigrants become incorporated into the system of stratification in US society, as well as the different outcomes of this process (Zhou 1997:975). Determinants of immigrant adaptation at the individual level “include education and other factors associated with the exposure to American society, such as aspiration, English language ability, place of birth, age upon arrival, and length of residence in the United States. Structural factors include racial status, family socioeconomic backgrounds, and place of residence” (Zhou 1997:984). Although classic assimilation theory also specifies these two sets of variables, segmented assimilation theory focuses on the interaction between the two, centering its attention on issues such as: changes in the context of reception which poses structural constraints; collective ethnicity and self-identification; and social capital and networks of support and control (Rumbaut 1997a; Fernández-Kelly and Schauffler 1994).

Most studies of segmented assimilation have been done with lower social class children and the literature implicitly assumes that children of high income, highly educated and highly skilled immigrants generally face better economic chances. When they immigrate to the US they live in suburban neighborhoods, study in private or the better public schools, and have much more opportunities to access higher education and obtain economic advancement.
In brief, the segmented assimilation theory recognizes that immigrants today are being incorporated into different segments of American society ranging from impoverished inner city ghettos to affluent middle-class suburbs. For the later, it may be advantageous to assimilate and become American in the classical perspective, but for those in poor and segregated communities it is likely that assimilation will result in social and economic disadvantages. A set of external factors interact with intrinsic factors to determine the life chances of immigrant children. External factors include racial stratification, economic opportunities, and spatial segregation; factors intrinsic to the group encompass financial and human capital upon arrival, family structure, community organization, and cultural patterns of social relations (Zhou 1997:999). In Zhou’s words:

The children of today’s diverse immigrant groups are generally eager to embrace American culture and to acquire an American identity by becoming indistinguishable from their American peers….In the long journey to becoming American, their progress is largely contingent upon human and financial capital that their immigrant parents bring along, the social conditions from which their families exist as well as the context that receives them, and their cultural patterns – including values, family relations and social ties – reconstructed in the process of adaptation. The host society offers uneven possibilities to different immigrant groups. These unequal possibilities may limit the opportunities of immigrant groups, but they do not necessarily constitute a complete denial of opportunity [Zhou 1997:999].

Within the framework of multiculturalism and segmented assimilation, a new pattern of acculturation emerges, one centered on the concept of creolization.

**Creolization: A Pattern of Acculturation**

Foner in 1997 examined the relevant literature concerning the way family and kinship patterns change during the process of immigration. She starts her article recognizing that “we are only just beginning to understand the complex ways that new arrivals construct and reconstruct their family lives here” (Foner 1997:961). Within a segmented assimilation framework, she recognizes the role family networks have played on stimulating and facilitating immigration and adjustment. Beyond that role, however, immigrants and also their families play an active role in reconstructing and redefining family life. In the process of immigration, immigrant cultures “have a powerful influence in shaping family values and norms as well as actual patterns of behavior that develop in the new setting…. [immigration culture is thus actively] restructured, redefined, and renegotiated in the new setting” (Foner 1997:962-963). In the process of acculturation,
ethnic networks, immigrant communities and transnational ties to the sending society, help immigrants to keep traditions alive, at the same time that former beliefs and social institutions may change, if only subtly, in form and function (Foner 1997:963,965). Such change does not mean full cultural assimilation, but rather a blend of meanings, perceptions and social patterns where a new culture, different from both home and host society, emerges.

From studies with Jamaican immigrants, Foner defines such change as a kind of creolization process. Like creolization in Caribbean societies, immigrants blend, in complex processes, cultures, values and attitudes brought from home and shifting them in the context of the new hierarchies, cultural conceptions, and social institutions they confront in the US. Besides Jamaican, mixed and changing patterns of reconstruction of immigrants’ family lives have been documented in Japanese American, Dominican American, Korean American (Foner 1997:968), and Indian American families (Jain and Belsky 1997).

The Immigrant Culture and the Context of Reception

Immigrant culture –or the cultural understandings, meanings, symbols, and the entire way of life that immigrants bring with them from their home societies- and ethnic pre-migration cultural attributes are not inferior traits, but primordial characteristics that “constantly interact with the host society to reshape and reinvent themselves” (Foner 1997: 962-963; Zhou 1997:981). Some cultural patterns, norms and values are selected to bring to America; some are unpacked once settled, while others “are modified, changed, adapted, transformed, reformed, and negotiated in the course of immigrant adjustments” (Zhou 1997:982).

Immigrants develop new meanings, ideologies and patterns of behavior in response to conditions and circumstances they encounter here (Foner 1997:967). Foner suggests intrinsic and external factors shape the changes and define the kinds of mixtures of immigrants’ family and kinship patterns. Some of the intrinsic factors include immigrant culture and demographic composition. For example, sex and age ratios in each group would affect marriage and family patterns. Likewise, immigrant families’ lives are
shaped by external forces in the new environment, such as the United States legal system, economic conditions, and job opportunities (Foner 1997; Zhou 1997). For example, greater opportunities of wage employment have meant increased authority for immigrant women. On the contrary, a lower earning power for men can reduce their authority. Typically, women and youth who gain more freedom adopting American values are more willing to support new norms (Foner 1997:969-970). Mass media, schools and other institutions disseminating cultural beliefs and values concerning marriage, family and kinship, also play a central role in creating new family culture.

New immigrants themselves differ greatly in their social classes and national origins, as does the American society that receives them (Rumbaut 1997a:943). Economic internationalization has transformed the context in which acculturation takes place. Compared to the situation for turn-of-the-century European immigrants, the host socioeconomic context for new immigrants today shows a wider gap between rich and poor and a worse economic situation for most American workers. “In the Fordist era, workers could envision entry-level jobs as a first step in a journey towards prosperity. At present…many of the paths toward socioeconomic improvement have been blocked” (Fernández-Kelly and Schauffler 1994:663). Low skill jobs, not only pay relatively less than before, but there are also fewer of them. In addition, poverty is highly concentrated in the inner-cities where most low-skilled immigrants converge. Poverty is also a large problem in rural areas that attracts those who work in the agricultural industry, particularly Mexicans and Central Americans. Discrimination and segregation exacerbate the social and economic consequences of minority concentration in low-income neighborhoods. This environment of actual and less perceived chances for social mobility creates frustration, pessimism and rejection of academic pursuits in minority children (Zhou 1997:985-987).

Social capital and Immigrant Networks

As discussed previously, anthropological studies on immigration have documented the central role social networks play in facilitating, expanding and self-perpetuating kinship and friendship network-mediated immigration. Likewise, anthropological studies
have revealed how these international networks bridge the points of origin in Mexico and points of destination in the US (Brettell 2000:107; Fernández-Kelly and Schauffler 1994:668).

The immigrant *enclave* is an example of immigrant networks in the US. The enclaves are immigrant networks and are internally stratified in terms of class. This allows “the presence of miscellaneous links established by persons of a dissimilar status, and connected in various forms, [to] move in several fields of social activity” (Fernández-Kelly and Schauffler 1994:668). Within these networks, immigrants have access to jobs, information and entrepreneurial know-how, which constitutes social capital. According to Greenbaum and Rodriguez (2000:1), *social capital* consists of personal networks and institutional connections that result in productive outcomes. Social capital provides ties within local communities, ties between levels of the spatial and political hierarchy, and consists of tangible assets that can be mobilized in pursuit of shared goals. In this sense, social capital is a collective resource that provides credit and access to resources within the community as well as providing relationships within the society. Social capital derives from trust, reciprocity and shared feelings of social belonging (Fernández-Kelly and Schauffler 1994:668). Social capital of ethnic groups provides children with a set of rules, prescribed behaviors, and forms of proscribed behaviors which support their social integration.

Studies among Haitian children in Miami have documented rapid assimilation of children into the subculture of the impoverished black inner city (Portes and Stepick 1993). Yet, research with Vietnamese youth in New Orleans have found that ethnic communities and immigrant culture can serve as social capital that provides positive influences and can promote constructive forms of behavior for children. At the same time, ethnic communities prevent them from assimilating into the underprivileged segments of American society where their community may be located (Foner 1997: 962-963; Zhou and Barkston 1994:821-822,841-842). Social capital provided by ethnic groups ensures that immigrants and their children “maintain their cultural values and work habits and learn the skills for socioeconomic advancement” (Zhou 1997:995). The networks of social relationships provide a context in which social capital is formed,
enabling immigrant families and their children to withstand the leveling pressures from the inner city. Networks also shape children’s identities. Children’s identities are shaped by what they see around them and the types of relationships they are able to establish. Hence, the characteristics of schools, living quarters, local businesses, and places of leisure and entertainment are forces teaching immigrant children about becoming American. In summary, social networks not only allocate resources as well as channel and filter information, but also confer a sense of identity and shape the behavior of immigrant children’s (Fernández-Kelly and Schauffler 1994:670).

Ethnicity and Self-Identity.

In this context, ethnicity emerges as a key force in the complex and active process of immigrants’ acculturation. “Ethnicity is a process of construction or invention which incorporates, adapts and amplifies preexisting communal solidarities, cultural attributes, and historical memories, and is grounded in real-life context and social experience” (Zhou 1997:982). In a pluralistic culture, ethnicity is a way of defining the self, a way of being American, and renegotiating and reshaping identity through everyday interactions.

The immigrant’s fate depends not only upon macrostructural factors but also varies according with the recasting of self-definitions (Fernández-Kelly and Schauffler 1994:663). In the process of acculturation, collective identity is itself a significant resource for individuals forced by the immigrant condition to “repeatedly engage in purposeful acts to signify their intended character and the way that character differs from, or converges with, that of other groups” (Fernández-Kelly and Schauffler 1994:663). Immigrants with stigmatized identities—whether because of skin color, social class, or nationality—can face acculturation as an injurious transition unless they resort to shared repertoires based on national origin, immigrant status or religious conviction. Although “some identities protect immigrants; others weaken them by transforming them into disadvantaged ethnic minorities (Fernández-Kelly and Schauffler 1994:663).

Few studies have been conducted concerning the collective identities of the children of immigrants. Those few studies however, provide relevant information that supports the segmented assimilation pattern, while, at the same time, depict the complex nonlinear
process including the various meanings of becoming American. Roughly 75% of new immigrants are from Latin America, the Caribbean and Asia, who are perceived as “people of color.” In response to the racial discrimination, immigrant youth are adopting complex identities through which they “confront racial and ethnic categories that exist in the United States (Stepick and Stepick 2002:250).

Rumbaut (1994) studied patterns of self-identification, parent-child conflict, self-esteem, and depression among a sample of 5,000 children of immigrants (Asian, Latin American, and Caribbean) attending the eight and ninth grades in local schools in San Diego and Miami. Within the segmented assimilation framework, Rumbaut developed the study based on three contextual factors that are most likely to shape children of immigrants’ prospects: “presence or absence of racial discrimination, location in or away from inner-city areas (and hence differential association with the reactive adversarial subcultures of underclass youths), and the presence or absence of a strong receiving coethnic community” (Rumbaut 1994:756). While contexts that combine the positive characteristics of those factors may lead to a resilient sense of ethnic identity, contexts that combine the negative characteristics of those factors “may be expected to lead to assimilation into the oppositional identities of native racial minorities” (Rumbaut 1994:756).

Besides documenting different and segmented patterns of ethnic identities formation, Rumbaut reported that: respondents who experienced discrimination were significantly less likely to identify themselves as American (1994:780); parent-child conflict was more likely to occur among daughters than among sons, and in families where the mother is less educated and where the economic situation of the family has perceptively worsened (1994:786); the experience of being discriminated was strongly associated with parent-child conflict; parent-child conflict was the strongest predictor variable associated with lower self-esteem and higher depression (1994:782); females had lower self-esteem and higher levels of depressive symptomatology (1994:783); perception of worse economic situation compared to five years before, unemployment of the father and absence of the father were also related to higher depression and lower self-esteem (1994:785); and the father’s level of education, English language competence and educational achievement
were positively related to self-esteem and psychological well-being (1994:783). He concluded affirming the central role of the family in shaping the identities of children:

Children’s psychosocial adaptation is shaped by the family context. The likelihood of identificational assimilation is moderated by parental ethnic socialization, social status, and parent-child relationships. The children’s ethnic self-identities strongly tend to mirror the perceptions of their parents’ (and especially their mothers’) own ethnic self-identities, as if they were reflections in an ethnic looking-glass. Children who feel embarrassed by their parents are significantly more likely to identify assimilatively as unhyphenated Americans, whereas higher-status professional parents are more likely to influence their children to identify by their national origin. [Rumbaut 1994:790].

Fernández-Kelly and Schauffler (1994:670) analyzed data from a 1992 survey of 5,263 randomly selected second generation children of immigrants –eighth and ninth grade students- in Dade County (Miami), Broward County (Fort Lauderdale), and San Diego schools. From that sample they formed a sub-sample of 120 children and their parents with whom in-depth interviews were conducted. Based on this qualitative data and the parent’s national origins, the authors depicted five different identities: Haitian strivers, Nicaraguan sliders, Cuban gainers, Mexican toilers and Vietnamese bystanders. The researchers’ conclusion emphasized the central role of collective identities in the assimilation process of these children’s and the “interactive relationship between the opportunity structure and the way individuals and groups perceive themselves and others” (Fernández-Kelly and Schauffler 1994:687). Nevertheless, they found differences in the use of ethnic identity in different groups. Depending on the context, disadvantaged children shifted ethnic identity as a “defense from stigma and an incentive to defy leveling pressures” (Fernández-Kelly and Schauffler 1994:684).

Similar patterns of shifting self-identities have been found in other groups. Research done with children of new immigrants in San Diego, California (from Mexico, Philippines, Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, and others Hispanic and Asian countries), described a particular pattern of ethnic-self identification: “Unlike language, which changes in a straight-line fashion like an arrow, ethnic-self identities vary significantly over time – not in linear fashion but in a reactive, dialectical fashion, like a boomerang” (Rumbaut 1997a:941). In the same article Rumbaut defined “four main types of ethnic identities: (1), a plain American identity, (2), an hyphenated-American identity, (3), a national-origin identity (e.g., Mexican, Filipino, Vietnamese), and (4), a pan-ethnic minority identity (e.g., Hispanic, Latino, Chicano, Asian, black)” (1997a:941). Ethnic
identity was studied first in 1992 and then in 1995 asking: “How do you identify, that is, what do you call yourself?” “Hispanic,” “Chicano,” “Black,” and “Asian.” In 1992, 43 percent chose a hyphenated-American identification, followed by 32 percent who identified themselves by their national origin. But in 1995, the survey conducted months after the passage of Proposition 187 in California, reported an increase of national origin identification from 32 to 48 percent and a decline of the plain American and hyphenated-American (dropping from 43 to 30 percent). Rumbaut explained that such a boomerang-type change was due to an increase in ethnic awareness among the youth, who also experienced prejudice and discrimination. He concluded that changes of ethnic identity over time:

Has been not toward assimilative mainstream identities…, but rather a return to and a valorization of the immigrant identity for the largest groups and toward pan-ethnic identities among the smallest groups as these youths become increasingly aware of the ethnic and the racial categories in which they are classified by mainstream society” [Rumbaut 1997a:942].

Ethnic identity also varies developmentally over one’s life span. Some scholars studying the relationship between development and ethnic identities among immigrants base their analysis on Erikson’s well-known work *Childhood and Society* (1964), in which he did not refer to immigrants but instead presented identity as a central achievement of adolescent development (Phinney 2002:73; Rumbaut 1994:753). From a psychological cross cultural perspective, Phinney’s revision of the literature on models of ethnic identity development (2002:73-75) included some that mirror a pattern of linear assimilation towards one achieved identity. She also presented models that include differential paths of ethnic identities and biculturalism –which she asserts is the most adaptive identity for immigrants. From a similar perspective, Birman and Trickett (2001:458, 473) compared acculturation of Soviet Jewish refuges –both adolescents and parents. They assumed that, unlike their parents, children have not consolidated their identities, are more capable of quickly picking up the new language and learning new behaviors and traditions. Thus they expected adolescents would have a stronger American identity. However, they found that adolescents maintained a greater Russian identity than their parents. Rather than concluding divergent patterns of acculturation, they explained these differences by different stages of identity development and by an “acculturation gap between children and parents” (Birman and Trickett 2001:458).
**Language Acculturation**

For non-English-speaking immigrants, acquisition of the English language is a central part of acculturation. Since the ability to learn and to speak a language like a native depends on age, and is greater between the age of three and the early teens (Rumbaut 1997a:950), children who arrive before puberty are very likely to learn how to speak English without an accent which facilitates adjustment and assimilation. Likewise, children’s greater abilities with language acquisition have traditionally supported and helped their families in facing the challenges of the new society. Children often act as translators and are mediators between their parents and the institutions of the host society (Hewett and Hewett 1990; Ziegler 1977).

English proficiency has been a central indicator for measuring assimilation. Linguistic assimilation seems to be the only variable that has followed a linear pattern in both the old wave and the new wave of immigrants. Research conducted on English preference and proficiency of children of new immigrants in San Diego, California, reported a rapid language shifting from the native language to English, with a strong linear pattern of rapid linguistic assimilation across nationalities and socioeconomic levels (Rumbaut 1997a:939-941). Moreover, bilingualism among children of immigrants is an issue of increasing interest. In contrast to former assumptions, scholars now document benefits of fluent bilingualism as an intellectual and cultural resource for the children of immigrants (Portes 1994:659). Though desirable for some, bilingualism is difficult to achieve because it requires strong support from parents, teachers, and children, who must be aware of the benefits it can confer (Rumbaut 1997a:951).

**The Child: Subject and Social Actor**

When discussing research with children, several anthropologists and social scientists lament that children have been disregarded either as unworthy informants or as interactive actors in producing culture (Bucholtz 2002; Friedl 2002; Gottlieb 2000; Hardman 1973, 2001; Hirschfeld 2002; Toren 1993). For example, in their discussion of socialization surrounding health and illness, Korbin and Zahorik complained of the little attention paid to the child’s emic perspective:
The child’s perspective, the ‘emic’ world of childhood, has been virtually disregarded in medical anthropology and in the more general literature on socialization. Despite Malinowski’s often cited words that the thrust of anthropological work is ‘….to grasp the native’s point of view….to realize his [her] vision of his [her] world, children too readily are disregarded as informants. They are immature members of their societies, with limited access to resources and limited knowledge and experience [Korbin and Zahorik 1985:337].

Certainly there is a good amount of literature available on research about and with children in the social sciences and in anthropology. Hirschfeld (2002:611) cites some examples of anthropologists’ research on children from the time of Margaret Mead up through some current works by linguistic anthropologists. Likewise, from this literature is possible to draw some trends on how children have been depicted as well as particular issues on methods and ethics. Yet a central issue is how children have been thought about or perceived? Are they deemed passive receptors of the decisions, external politics, and the social and economic constraints shaped by others? Or are they regarded as subjects interacting as social persons and thus transforming and building culture and social reality? The fact that the younger the children the more vulnerable they are to aggression and violence as well as to harsh living and economic conditions, does not deny the fact that they have been subjects interacting with others and producing meaning throughout their lives. These certainly are relevant and interest issues that emerge from reviewing the literature.

Following Battaglia (2000:115), open subjects are historically constructed, that is, their subjectivities and identities are shaped in their relations to others and under the press of historical and cultural contingency. Selves are not completed defined realities but open questions subject to the constraints and manipulations of cultural forces, and also capable, upon reflection, of breaking with and transforming the situations in which they are formed. In this context, subjects, bodies, ages and genders are not essentially biologically defined categories, but cultural constructions and interactive phenomena that continually shape the reification of defeated identities. If children are regarded as open, historical and changing subjects, anthropologists need to be ethically aware of the contingency of reflecting the cultural differences of the engaged children on their own terms. Under the idea of an open subject, ethical success means that while doing research the anthropologist recognizes contingences, slippages and ambivalences in the children’s
own ideas and practices embracing ambiguous productivities and “problematization as a moral aesthetic engagement” (Battaglia 2002:120).

In this context, this section was constructed on the basis of two assumptions: first, children are subjects and persons; and second, young people like other subjects in social sciences are not less developed or immature, but different. Hence, particular methodological and ethical issues are not related with children’s particular limitations on their ability of being informants, but – as for any other subject- with their personal, biological, cultural and social- and contextual characteristics. I organized the discussion of this section on three parts. First, I will discuss how children have been regarded in anthropology and the roles they have played in anthropological research. Second, I will discuss some theoretical considerations that support the particular methodological issues related to doing research with children. And finally, I will present the ethical issues for doing research with children focusing in the federal regulations as well as in the ethical concerns when doing participatory research with children.

The Child in Social Sciences and Anthropology

Children have been represented in several different ways. They have not escaped the anthropological tradition of exoticizing others (Di Leonardo 1998). Affirming that a child is a cultural invention, and lamenting that culture has been absent from developmental individualistic theories, Kessen noted: “No other animal species has been cataloged by responsible scholars in so many wildly discrepant forms” (1979:815). Fine and Sandstrom in their work about participant observation with children, depict them as “masters of indirection and hard truth, gleeful chicanery and stoic reserve” (1988:7-8). Traditionally developmental theories do not regard childhood as an autonomous world, but place it within an evolutionist perspective, a world that reflects “early development of adult culture” (Hardman 1973; 2001:504). For example, Spencer and Tylor regarded children as carriers of primitive thought (Hardman 1973; 2001:505-6); in Piaget’s

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1 The original article “Can There Be an Anthropology of Children?” was first published in 1973. Then, in 2001 the Journal *Childhood* reproduced it. Since I had access to the 2001 reproduction, when referencing this article I will mention both 1973 and 2001 but the pages correspond to the 2001 reproduction.
cognitive model the child is a “philosopher in the making” (Toren 1993:471). Likewise, children have been depicted

As passive objects, as helpless spectators in a pressing environment which affects and produce their every behavior…. [Children are seen] as continually assimilating, learning and responding to the adult, having little autonomy, contributing nothing to social values or behavior except the latent outpourings of earlier acquired experiences. The adult plays the role of either frustrating the child in its toilet training, feeding or other activities, or compelling the child to fit to a cultural pattern [Hardman 1973; 2001:504].

Infants and children are central actors in cultural phenomena traditionally studied by anthropologists such as kinship and social organization. If children have been present in most of the fieldworks where anthropologists have been studying others and home populations, one wonders why this limited analytic interest on children among anthropologists. In addition with the cited stereotypes, developmental theories may have played a role in the marginalization of infants and children. Traditional theories of development are based in the assumption of an evolutionary process from immature to mature beings. In this context children are seen as undeveloped forms in contrast with mature adults. Maybe children’s different forms of communication and interaction, based more in emotions and less in verbal language, along with the assumption of their defenseless and powerless social position, pose particular methodological challenges that refrain anthropologists from pursuing theoretical and applied interests. Another reason may lie in the assumption that “we know and understand children, both because we were children once, and because we see them so often” (Fine and Sandstrom 1988:35).

Anthropologists’ resistance to child-focused research is explained by Hirschfeld as a “byproduct of….an impoverished view of cultural learning that overestimates the role adults play and underestimates the contribution that children make to cultural reproduction, and ….a lack of appreciation of the scope and force of children’s culture, particularly in shaping adult culture” (2002:611). Children have been neglected from the mainstream anthropological inquiry, Hirschfeld argues, because “it has marginalized the two things that children do especially well: children are strikingly adept at acquiring adult culture and, less obviously, adept of creating their own cultures” (2002:611). Thus, a child-focused anthropology is necessary because their particular cultural forms and conceptualizations reveal significant insights about how the cultural beliefs and the cultural experience are sustained (Hirschfeld 2002:611).
Since there are more studies on youth and adolescents than on younger children, it seems that the younger the child the fewer the number of studies with children. Infants seem to be the more neglected in the anthropological literature. While cultural studies on childhood and youth are increasing in the literature, interest on infants is just beginning Gottlieb (2000:121). Gottlieb (2000) proposes six reasons for babies’ exclusion in the anthropological discussion: “The fieldworkers’ own memories and parental status, the problematic question of agency in infants and the presumed dependence on others, their routine attachment to women, their seeming inability to communicate, their inconvenient propensity to leak from a variety of orifices, and their apparently low quotient of rationality” (2000:121).

Among the literature there are two main groups of studies: research done about children and research done with children. With research about children I mean both analysis on secondary data of children and studies that despite of focusing on children are more interested in describing broader cultural processes, supporting cultural theories or understanding adulthood behavior or problems. Research with children means that primary data were obtained from children and the main purpose of the study was related to children’s culture, problems or wellbeing.

*Studies about Children*

Studies about children in social sciences have been conducted on diverse topics. Two main groups are the studies on the history of childhood and the cross-cultural studies on childrearing practices. Studies on the history of childhood were inaugurated by Ariés (1960) who within the French school of the New History assumed that childhood was a social construction which varies in different times and places (Muñoz and Pachón 2002:9). Since then, research on the history of childhood has grown as a multidisciplinary field shared by “sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists, linguistics, physicians, demographers, and historians of the literature, the arts, the clothing and the work” (Muñoz and Pachón 2002:9-10). Studies on the history of childhood have been published in different times and places such as Europe (mainly England, France and Russia), the

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2 Free translation.
United States of America, Brazil and Colombia (Muñoz and Pachón 2002:11-16; 1996). Such studies represent children as culturally and historically situated (Gottlieb 2000:122), which provides an important element to think about the agency and subjectivity of children.

Current childhood studies in the US include topics such as children and media (Goldin 1998; Spigel 1998); child abuse (Scheper-Hughes and Stein 1998); childhood sexuality (Giroux 1998; Jenkins 1998; Kincaid 1998; Walkerdine 1998); and child’s play (Göncü et al. 1999; James 1998; Steedman 1998).

The cross-cultural study of childrearing practices began early in the twentieth century with Mead and the Culture and Personality school. Such studies have continued as a field shared by anthropologists and cultural psychologists. This perspective has been sustained by Beatrice and John Whiting and by “those who published in their ‘Children of Six Cultures’ series [who] continued this tradition” (Gottlieb 2000:121). Such studies have focused in searching for explanations of cultural variation in expressive practices. “Childhood experience is seen as the independent variable, behavior in adulthood as the dependent or outcome variable….Although the focus of data collection may be childhood, the focus of theoretical interest is apt to be adulthood ” (Harkness and Super 1983:221). Based on the Whiting model for psychocultural research several ethnographic and cross-cultural studies on childrearing practices among diverse cultures have been conducted (Harkness and Super 1983:221). For example, sibling caretaking (Weisner and Gallimore 1977; Weisner, Gallimore, and Tharp 1982) has been studied in different cultures.

Cross-cultural comparison, studies on child psychology and childrearing practices have sometimes been used for teaching and advising parents on “better” childcare practices. For example, from studies on sleeping, an anthropologist recommends that adults do not sleep with babies (McKenna 1987:45). Kessen lamented this normative consequence of child psychology studies because it transformed diversity of practices into one moral norm and stated: “Critical examination and study of parental practices and child behavior almost inevitably slipped subtly over to advice about parental practices...
and child behavior. The scientific statement became an ethical imperative, the descriptive account became normative” (Kessen 1979:818).

An anthropological branch of cross-cultural studies has documented breastfeeding practices, infant feeding practices, infant and child health practices and child spacing practices (Hull and Simpson 1985; Marshall 1985; Popkin et al. 1986; Raphael and Davis 1985) that have also contributed to understanding the cultural diversity of children’s worlds.

Other studies about children include research to understand broader cultural processes where children play a central role as social actors. For example, studies on kinship (Toren 1993), on foraging practices among hunter-gatherers (Hawkes, O’Connell and Blurton Jones 1994), and on street kids and child labor (Bissel, Manderson and Allotey 2000; Bock 2002; Cross 2001; Invernizzi 2001; Kenny 1999; Levine 1996, 1999; May 1996; Munroe, Munroe, and Shimmin 1984; Nieuwenhuys 1996; Porter 1996; Watson-Gegeo 2001; Yamanaka 2002).

Within medical anthropology, several studies about cultural interpretations of children’s health and diseases have been conducted. Some examples are Nichter’s studies on cultural interpretations of malnutrition, digestive diseases, and acute respiratory infections in different populations (Nichter 1985; 1988; 1993; Nichter and Nichter 1993). Schieffelin, Ochs and Goodwin have developed research on language socialization with children within the field of linguistic anthropology (Hirschfeld 2002:611).

Another large body of studies about children are those conducted within the political economy framework. Structural determinants of child care, nutrition and food consumption, infant mortality, children’s health, maltreatment, and wellbeing have concerned many anthropologists (Popkin 1986; Schep-Hughes 1987; Schep-Hughes and Sargent 1998; Schep and Stein 1998). Such studies analyze the effects of the world economy in children’s lives but lack a sense of the children’s own point of view. In works espousing a political economy perspective “the sense of the indigenous perspective of children’s experiences and how these fit in with other cultural features of the social landscape –including religion and other ideological structures- is often absent” (Gottlieb 2000:122).
Studies with Children

Studies with children include a wide range of studies in the social sciences; however, I will focus on those conducted by anthropologists. In applied anthropology there are some studies with adolescents and more vulnerable children. Studies with adolescents have been conducted to know and understand their own perceptions about health problems as well as for assessing their needs. These studies generally provide recommendations to adolescent health programs. Some examples are studies on reproductive health (Erickson 1996; Lackey and Moberg 1998); AIDS (Sobo et al. 1997); and on body image and weight concerns (Parker et al. 1995). Another example is a multidisciplinary program with homeless Hispanic street kids in Washington (Hopps, Tyler, and Warner 1989:6) conducted for the purpose of calling attention to their special needs and finding ways to assist them.

There are some ethnographic studies with children in the US. For example, Gender Play (Thorne 1993) is an ethnography focused on gender relations between boys and girls in elementary schools in California. Lopez (1999) developed an ethnographic work of the home and school experiences of farmworker migrant children. She analyzes the complex lives of migrant boys by looking at their families, their teachers, school leaders, and members of the local community surrounding the schools. González (2001) studied the discourses of women and children in Tucson as the means for analyzing their language, identities and ideologies. Finally, Taylor and Hickey (2001) conducted ethnographic research with kids who spend their lives passing across tunnels that in Nogales connect the US and Mexico.

There are also some works with immigrant children oriented toward youth audiences. Such books were developed using ethnographic, visual, and qualitative tools in order to present immigrant children’s lived experiences to others youths. For example, Bode (1989) presents oral histories of immigrant teens from Afghanistan, El Salvador, India, Cuba, Philippines, China, Mexico, South Korea, Greece, Dominican Republic, and Vietnam. Rosenberg and Ancona (1986) present snapshots of four immigrant children from Japan, Cuba, Guyana, and India depicting their lives before migrating and the changes they went through during the immigration experience. Hewett and Hewett
(1990) tell the story of Hector, a ten year-old Mexican American who lives in Los Angeles. The book describes Hector’s life with his family, friends in the neighborhood and school, his parents’ courage for making a new life in the United States, as well as Hector’s pride when he gets a green card.

Within the literature of immigration, there are few studies concerning immigrant children’s perceptions. One study that was conducted with first generation immigrant children in Canada examined the central role of the family in the Italian postwar migratory process. Interviewees saw familial considerations, such as greater opportunities for their children, and reunification as the main motivations for their parents when they decided to migrate. The study documented the children’s mixed feelings, such as sadness and unhappiness at leaving their country, grandparents and friends, as well as pleasures related to family reunification or the idea of living in Canada. Learning English was considered the most difficult aspect of their adjustment, but for some children the ability to serve as interpreters had positive connotations because they became psychological supporters of their family in the new country. Finally, the author pointed out the central role of the family in the migration process stating: “Migration is not only of the family, it is for the family…(Within this population) family ties have not only survived migration, they have indeed [become] fortified because of it” (Ziegler 1977: 332).

Research with Children

Research with children includes different levels of children’s participation and interaction among researchers and participants. Following a methodological tradition in anthropology, early studies with children used participant observation rather than language-mediated methods. It is not of the interest of this review to discuss this issue, but certainly it seems related to a set of beliefs that deem children as “minors” meaning, immature, less developed, and not knowledgeable of their worlds. For example, Fine and Sandstrom (1988) devoted a book to discuss how to conduct participant observation with preschoolers, preadolescents and adolescents. Within the discussion about the relationship between the emic and the etic perspective, a comparison of field observer’s with observed children’s perceptions of sibling caretaking was conducted in Hawaii. The
The purpose of the study was to establish the degree of concordance between folk and observer view in sibling caretaking. With this purpose researchers used spot observation and ratings of language use, and instruction or information exchange (Weisner, Gallimore, and Tharp 1982). The social reality of chronically ill children in seven middle-class families was studied using participant observation of the families’ home naturalistic setting. The anthropologist observed children’s and family members’ interactions and interviewed the children’s parents (Anderson and Chung 1982). Behavioral styles while in school-class were studied among Caucasian and Navajo children. Thirteen “full blood” Navajo children—with an average age of four years and two months- and seven “completely Caucasian” children—with an average age of four years and one month-, were observed in a preschool and a day care classroom and playgrounds of the Tribal American Consulting Corporation in Los Angeles (Guilmet 1981). Neither the children’s own perspectives nor their interactions with the researcher were taken into account in any of these studies.

Research has also been conducted with children in which they are regarded as informants and their emic perspective is taken into account. As theories on subjects’ agency spread out and women’s studies give voice to women and other disempowered social actors, studies on children’s own perspectives are becoming increasingly relevant in the social sciences’ and anthropological literature, both in academic and applied settings.

In order to know the child’s own perspective, researchers have used focus groups, individual and group interviews, and several techniques such as drawing, pictures, and stories. There are not set rules about which method is best to use at particular ages. It seems that the method is selected by balancing several of the children’s conditions (age and developmental stage abilities, symbolic and interactive characteristics, and gender) the contextual characteristics (school, home, street, community settings), the researcher’s gender, and the purposes of the study (description of children’s culture, learning about their beliefs and practices, needs assessment, planning programs, or developing children-based policies).
Doing research with children means the acceptance of two central assumptions: children are worthy informants and their perspectives are necessary to better understand social phenomena and to improve programs that affect them. These assumptions are not issues related to charity or just giving power to immature and dependant human beings. Rather they represent methodological considerations that have to do with understanding the children’s emic perspective in the construction of their own culture and adult culture, and the need to provide theoretical explanations of social and cultural phenomena.

In this context, the literature presents diverse methodological recommendations and some disagreements about how children differ from other older informants, or about the difficulties when doing research with children. While some regard doing research with children as difficult (Stanley and Sieber 1992:1), others say it is fun and interesting (Fine and Sandstrom 1988:76; Muñoz 2003). Yet, as with any other population, developing research with children implies to define methods and techniques that best achieve the purposes of the study. When studying children’s emic perspective, some issues emerge as relevant: children as informed participants; ages and developmental stages; power and participatory approaches; methods and techniques; and issues related to the researcher.

*The Child: An Informed Participant*

The participation of children in research has shown they are valuable and effective informants. Moreover, some of the researchers point out how good informants they are. For example, Korbin and Zahorik (1985) in the cited study about schoolchildren’s beliefs and behaviors on health and illness assert:

> Children are excellent informants on their health beliefs and behaviors…The children provided multiple indicators for identifying ill health. The children articulated both generalizing feelings of malaise and specific symptoms of maladies such as colds, headaches, stomach ailments, and fevers…. They were able to identify causes of illness and differentiate between general beliefs about illness causation and causes of particular experienced illness episodes…The children could tie failure to exercise, eating junk food, or going outside without warm clothing to the possibility of ill health [Korbin and Zahorik 1985:341, 343, 345].

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3 Telephone communication. Cecilia Muñoz is a Colombian psychologist, psychoanalyst, and sociologist. She has conducted research about and with children in Colombia. Her works include several books and reports on the history of childhood in Colombia as well as with migrant farmworker children and worker children in Bogotá (Muñoz 1980; Muñoz and Palacios 1980; Muñoz and Pachón 1989, 1996, 2002); she has extensive experience in psychoanalysis with children and in applied psychoanalysis. Currently she is developing a therapeutic model for grieving with displaced children in Colombia.
The recognition of children as active participants of their social lives and producers of culture has resulted in increased research where children participate not only as informants but also as co-researchers in different stages of the research process. For example, a study with street kids in Brazil (Scheper-Hughes and Hoffman 1998) highlights their agency and forms of resistance to harsh living conditions. Youth participated in the design of instruments in a research done with middle-class US adolescents on understanding the onset of adult sexuality (Lackey and Moberg 1998). Another experience has been developed with youth in Sarasota, Florida. Youths from 14 to 17 years old were trained as data-collectors in doing surveys and focus groups with their peers about health issues (McCormack et al. 2001).

Children are also recognized as health resources for their families. For example, Korbin and Zahorik (1985) mention the importance that children may have influencing their families’ health care practices. Van Deer Geest (1999) presents an experience in east Africa where schoolchildren were trained on the appropriate use of medicines in the household for supporting their families’ medicine intake.

Some people may argue that the former research experiences were possibly because they were conducted with middle-childhood children and adolescents who are more capable than younger toddlers, infants and newborns. Gottlieb recognizes this problem for anthropological research with infants affirming that if younger person’s “opinions seem irrelevant in making life decisions about other…. [they do not seem] promising material as informants” (Gottlieb 2000:124). Yet the underlying question that we are discussing is whether children, of any age, are social subjects and have agency. This means, whether their interactions with others result in changes that impact those involved as well as their social lives. Gottlieb, who has developed anthropological research with babies, answers:

As any parent knows, passivity is far from a complete description of a newborn’s life. Right from the start, infants demand to be accounted for….though adults may not interpret those demands accurately. The anthropologist of infants is much like the parent, seeking to learn a new language that has neither a ready-made dictionary nor a published grammar but for which there are undoubtedly hidden rules, if only they can be unearthed—or, as some developmental psychologists would say, mutually created….In the course of fieldwork in Cote d’Ivoire the more I investigated the lives of Beng adults and older children involved in infant care, the more I discovered that the preponderance of their day-to-day decisions were made in relation to infants…. [Within Beng culture], Beng infants are far from helpless creatures with no opinions or impact on the world. For the Beng, as for many non-Western people, the supposedly complete dependence of infants, as it is
widely if unconsciously assumed by Western-trained anthropologists, is a non-issue—thus challenging our implicit ideology of infant-as-passive creature, which has foreclosed the possibility of privileging babies as legitimates sites, let alone active producers of culture [Gottlieb 2000:124].

Current anthropologists doing research with children (including infants) agree that such research rests on the assumption that they are persons and social actors actively shaping their lives and the lives of those around them (Gottlieb 2000, 2002; (Hardman 1973; 2001; Hirschfeld 2002; Toren 1993, 1999, 2001, 2002a, 2002b). Infants may utilize “exotic modes of communication” (Gottlieb 2000:127), but children and infants are nevertheless social actors because, they, like adults, “are part of a cybernetic system in which identity is defined as constitutive of society” (Gottlieb 2000:127). They are persons always acting in and through relations with others. Their meanings and “intentionality constitute and are constituted by the politic-economic process that describe collective relations” (Toren 1993:470).

Comparing adult notions with children notions of Fijian hierarchy, Toren found that meanings made by children are different and may be direct inversions of adult meanings: where adults saw animist explanations children gave materialist explanations (1993:462,465). From her studies with Fijian children, she concludes:

It makes no sense to dismiss children’s ideas as immature, or to argue that they do not understand what is really going on. Children have to live their lives just in terms of their understandings, just as adults do; their ideas are grounded in their experience and thus equally valid. The challenge for the anthropologist is to analyze the processes that make it possible for children to lead effective lives in terms of ideas that are an inversion of those held by their parents and other adults [Toren 1993:463].

From his research with children on the cooties lore and racial thinking, Hirschfeld concludes that children:

Create and inhabit cultures of their own making, cultures that in significant measure are independent of and distinct from those of the adults with whom they live. In making their own cultural traditions, children deploy singular conceptual skills that significantly constrain and mold not only their own cultural productions but also those of adults…Children participate in special-purpose cultural activities from which adults are largely excluded…Children develop and maintain social practices, networks of relationships, and systems of meaning that are distinct to their own social and physical spaces….Children maintain a rich repertoire of games and songs—cultural forms—that do not appear to be linked to adult culture, forms ‘circulate from child to child, beyond the influence of …adults [who] know nothing of them….From generation to generation’….In constructing their cultural environments children engage in the same kind of activities, deploy the same kind of relations of power, authority, and status, and draw on the same moments of meaning as adults do as they create and inhabit their own cultural worlds” [Hirschfeld 2002:612, 615].
Toren (1993, 1999, 2001, 2002a, 2002b) as well as Hirschfeld (2002) assert that knowing children’s cognitive architecture and specialized learning mechanisms is crucial for understanding culture: “without the singular architecture of children’s minds culture would be impossible” (Hirschfeld 2002:616). Knowing what makes something cultural, understanding how things become cultural, explaining why some representations become widely distributed and are more successful than others, requires that we understand how children produce and reproduce culture.

A final compelling argument supporting active role of children and infants is presented by Toren who cites Maturana and Varela (1980; 1987) and their works on the biology of knowledge. “All living organisms are autopoietic units –i.e. they are autonomous and self-producing, at once products and producers of the biological processes that are proper to them; so the structural organization of an organism functions to specify those changes of state in the environment that produce changes in the state of the organism” (Toren 1993:467). Even though children are more vulnerable in some areas, they as adults are living autopoietic organisms engaged in interactions with others and thus producing and transforming their lives.

In brief, children are important to anthropological inquiry for two main reasons. First, they are social actors and subjects interacting in the social construction of reality, producing own cultures, and shaping and sustaining cultural processes of the societies. Second, research with infants and children can provide broader understanding of traditional and current theoretical and applied anthropological problems such as: the production of culture –including infants and children’s perspectives in the production of culture; modes of sensory communication other than verbal language –including local interpretations of how infants communicate; cultural variation of childrearing practices –including co-sleeping and other practices subject of “medical advice” and the study of the bodies of babies and children as significant markers pointing to critical cultural values; and diverse kinds of rationality –including the hegemonic role of Western adult-centric rationality (Gottlieb 2000:124-127). Since a subaltern experience marks children’s lives, a child-focused anthropology would shed light over the practice of power in everyday interactions (Hirschfeld 2002:613). Finally, research with children would provide
understanding on how children as subjects and objects of history constitute their knowledge of their world in topics such as kinship, social inequalities or religion (Toren 1993:461-462)

Doing research with young persons goes beyond the question as to whether they are social actors able to communicate. Children are active part of the social reality and actors in cultural processes. The theoretical aim is to explain how children socialize themselves by engaging their peers, younger children, seniors and caregivers in the process of making their own distinctive meanings of the world and producing culture (Toren 1999:267).

Assuming that children are active social actors, persons, and cultural producers, there are two methodological questions that must be considered by researchers. One is how the researcher is going to shape a context of interaction with children to mutually create the rules to interpret their behavior. And, assuming that “children’s thoughts and social behavior may not be totally incomprehensible to adults, so long as we do not try to interpret them in adult terms” (Hardman 1973; 2001:513), the second question is how are we going to engage children in data interpretation.

In the perspective of how shaping a context of interaction between the child and the researcher, ages and developmental stages are relevant to consider. The concept of developmental stage is mainly rooted in the tradition of socialization and developmental theories such as Freudian psychosexual theory, Erickson’s psychoaffective developmental theory, Piaget’s cognitive developmental theory and Kohlberg’s moral development theory. Besides depicting a universal ahistorical individual (Toren 1993:461,471), such theories describe several linear stages which define the inexorable destiny of every human being. Though different segments or stages of the life span have been documented along different cultures, such segments vary (Boyden and Ennew 1997). Developmental stages are culturally shaped as response to the observable aspects of human development and vary in terms of the duration of each stage and in terms of the expectations for personal behavior in each stage (Harkness and Super 1983:223). Likewise, the end of each stage as well as the end of childhood is cross-culturally
variable (Gottlieb 2000:123). Table 1 illustrates examples of studies conducted with children and their main characteristics.

Table 1.
Studies Conducted with Children: Topics, Samples and Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Topic and Group Studied</th>
<th>Sample and Age or Grade</th>
<th>Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Korbin and Zahorik 1985</td>
<td>Beliefs and behaviors on health and illness among middle childhood schoolchildren. Elementary school in Cleveland, Ohio</td>
<td>34 fifth and sixth grade students</td>
<td>Structured open-ended interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lackey and Moberg 1998</td>
<td>Understanding the onset of intercourse among adolescents in Milwaukee</td>
<td>Focus groups: 101 adolescents 10- to 14-year-olds and 15- to 19-year-olds.</td>
<td>Focus groups, surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sobo et al. 1997</td>
<td>AIDS misconceptions among adolescents in Cleveland, Ohio</td>
<td>98 youths. The average interviewee was 15 years old</td>
<td>Semi-structured face-to-face interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hessler, 1993</td>
<td>Youth’s problems in Sikeston, US.</td>
<td>10 black youth. 6 th grade youth</td>
<td>Focus groups with youth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geissler et al. 2000</td>
<td>Health seeking behavior. Primary schoolchildren in western Kenya</td>
<td>57. Age 11 – 17 years, median 13 years</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lockhart 2002</td>
<td>Risk of HIV infection. Urban street boys in Tanzania</td>
<td>75 boys aged eight to 20</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quintero and Davis 2002</td>
<td>Functional values, addiction and smoking. American Indian and Hispanics in 11 schools in seven communities in New Mexico</td>
<td>234 youths in focus groups 34 individual interviewees 12 to 17 years old</td>
<td>Face-to-face individual interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corsaro, William A. Discussed by Fine and Sandstrom 1988</td>
<td>Friendship and peer culture in a university nursery school. The ways in which preschoolers use language to build a social structure and a culture.</td>
<td>Preschoolers (3 – 5 years old)</td>
<td>Participant observation, concealed observation, and videotaping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sluckin, Andy. Discussed by Fine and Sandstrom 1988</td>
<td>School playgrounds in Oxfordshire</td>
<td>Preschoolers (4 – 6 years old)</td>
<td>Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine, G.A. Discussed by Fine and Sandstrom 1988</td>
<td>Fantasy role-playing games Communities in New England and Minnesota.</td>
<td>Older brothers of the little league baseball players. Middle adolescents (14 - 16 years old)</td>
<td>Participant observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lopez 1999</td>
<td>Children’s lives (family, school). Migrant Farmworkers</td>
<td>Three boys. Antonio 11 years old; Jose 10 years old, and Rodolfo 10 years old.</td>
<td>Critical ethnography. Participant observation, unstructured open-ended interviews, and semi-structured interviews.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolcott 1983</td>
<td>School dropout</td>
<td>A twenty-year-old youth</td>
<td>Life History</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Children’s ideas and behaviors are developmentally shaped but are not the direct result of the stage of development defined by developmental theories. Their ideas and behaviors are related to, “but do not precisely mirror, those of its peers and seniors.
Rather, a child’s notions properly belong to the child as a function of its age, cognitive abilities and the history of its relations with others in an environment that has a specific cultural history” (Toren 1993:466). Likewise, children rapidly and readily learn culture around them representing cultural information, manipulating these representations and using them for “making sense of the world and organizing action on it” (Hirschfeld 2002:615). Age only provides a very rough approach of some expected cognitive and linguistic abilities (Bierman and Schwartz 1986:268).

In this context, developmental stages and developmental theories can not be understood as the determinants of children’s ideas and behaviors. Rather, in doing research with children, general concepts of developmental theories and stages are useful to define some general criteria for defining –not fixed but open and changeable- groups of ages, and for recognizing some general characteristics in order to design tailored methods. Yet tailoring methods is a process that should also include considerations on age, gender, class, and personal abilities, interests and desires of participants as well as researchers characteristics such as background and training.

Scholars use different concepts in order to define the children they study. While some concepts are somehow related to developmental stages –i.e. infant, toddler, adolescent- others are defined by contexts of interaction –i.e. schoolchildren, middle school age youth, street kids.

Finally, in considering the child as informant the issues of power and the use of participatory approaches are important. Just as with any other social actors, issues of power and authority are present in children’s lives (Hirschfeld 2002:615) and must be considered while doing research with them (Fine and Sandstrom 1988:29). Hence, differentials of power among children and the researcher and within the children themselves must be taken into account during the entire research process. Authority, seduction and manipulation are forms of wielding power used both by children and adults. Yet children in most societies generally are more constrained by adult’s authority and more exposed and vulnerable to violence and aggression from older persons. It makes sense to affirm that in the social relationships between adults and children in Western societies, adult’s identity derives from a notion of maturity and attributed
competence and children’s identity derives from a notion of immaturity and attributed incompetence. Such identity relations shape a “subaltern-elite” relationship where adults are allowed to wield significant power over children (Hirschfeld 2002:612). For those reasons main methodological and ethical concerns relate to the recognition of issues of power and authority and to generating research spaces and research environments that allow and promote interaction based on rapport, knowledge and trust. Yet patterns of age segregation in the American society can make suspicious or unacceptable a child-adult relationship not based in authority because “legitimate adult-child interaction depends on adult authority” (Fine and Sandstrom 1988:13). This tendency can result in a conflict for the researcher who wants and needs to interact with children in a participatory approach but at the same time is expected by other adults to wield an authoritative role.

A participatory and interactive approach is a basic condition when the purpose is to know children or adolescents’ perspectives. The literature presents various experiences of participatory research with children. For example, conducting research with middle-income African American and Latino adolescents in Milwaukee, Lackey and Moberg used participatory processes to develop the design and the data collection instruments. “These processes became critical, not only for our final research design, but to our ultimate findings as well” (1998:493).

In some cases children and youth are trained as researchers. In addition to some of the studies previously cited, another study was conducted by a multidisciplinary team composed of representatives from women’s studies, anthropology, pedagogy, history, museology, and video production from the State University of New York. The project involved middle school youth in the investigation of their own family histories by exposing them to some of the concepts and methods of anthropology, history and women’s studies (Higgins 1988:22, 27).

Methods and Techniques

Since most cultural knowledge is expressed in patterns of behavior, speech and artifact, methods and techniques need to reach understanding of such patterns, speeches and artifacts. In doing participatory research some researchers include mixed –
quantitative and qualitative methods. For example, in the cited study with adolescents Lackey and Moberg (1998) implemented 13 focus groups of 6 – 10 participants, 593 surveys with youth and 95 surveys with their parents.

With the purpose of beginning to develop the anthropology of children, Hardman among others, proposes analyzing children’s sayings, examining the oral traditions, their games and other playground activities and the values underlying them, and analyzing children’s drawings. She states, "I am sure that other means and methods of interpretation will gradually emerge as more observation of children is undertaken" (Hardman 1973; 2001: 516).

In general, there are no rules or constrains in methods and techniques for doing research with children. Though children’s behavior, thought, and speech differ systematically from that of adults, the research tools of observation, interaction and analysis

That afford insights into the specificities of experience of the Ashanti and Nuer, or for that matter gays in San Francisco or transmigrants moving between northern California and west-central Mexico, are just as amenable to studying the specificities of children’s experience….Children …constitute themselves into semiautonomous subcultures, and as such can be as usefully explored by anthropologists as Senegalese street merchants in Marseille, Vietnamese rice farmers in Louisiana, or high-energy physicists at Lawrence Livermore [Hirschfeld 2002:613].

Participatory research with children implies finding out “ways in which children’s ideas and perceptions can be expressed in their own terms” (Boyden and Ennew 1997:37). It can be achieved using techniques that are less dependent on words and reducing the power relationships between children and adults in the research process (Boyden and Ennew 1997:37). Moreover, developmental considerations may be useful in providing some guidelines about children’s general cognitive, linguistic and interactive abilities related to age. Such guidelines would help the researcher in the selection of particular techniques, as well as in the preparation of the research environment. Yet such guidelines should be continually contrasted with each child personal characteristics. For example, children in their middle childhood years (seven to twelve years old) not only recognize general social rules and normative standards but are often remarkably adherents to norms and conventional behavior (Bierman and Schwartz 1986:269). Likewise, play is a central cultural phenomenon in children’s lives (Göncü et al. 1999) and is highly recommended as a research tool. From this information one might plan
research activities with children in their middle childhood years based on play and games that take the form of tasks which fit with their normative characteristics. Table 2 presents some recommendations when using different research techniques with children.

Table 2. Recommendations for Using Research Techniques with Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tool</th>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Recommendation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drawing pictures</td>
<td>Bierman and Schwartz 1986: 271-272</td>
<td>Ask the children to tell a story about the drawing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stories and story completions</td>
<td>Bierman and Schwartz 1986: 271-272</td>
<td>The interviewer phrases questions he or she would like to ask as sentence completions. The child’s answer are then pursued with follow-up questions, also phrased as sentence completions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of less threatened questions</td>
<td>Bierman and Schwartz 1986:271-272</td>
<td>– Questions that point out that other children feel that way &lt;br&gt;– Questions that give two alternatives &lt;br&gt;– Soften negative choices or phrase questions to imply negatives &lt;br&gt;– Combine questions about positive affects with those about negative feelings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Parker 1984: 20-21,27</td>
<td>Middle childhood years (six to twelve). The interviewer needs to present convincingly a permissive, causal and accepting attitude. &lt;br&gt;For all: &lt;br&gt;– Being permissive, accepting everything the child says &lt;br&gt;– Suggesting alternate response possibilities &lt;br&gt;– Use a clear and precise language &lt;br&gt;– Asking the child to bring to the interview something he/she has made or earned &lt;br&gt;– Asking the child to represent a peer group rather than only him/herself &lt;br&gt;– Planning probed questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games</td>
<td>Tammivaara 1986:233</td>
<td>Making the activity purposeful and playful. Games: &lt;br&gt;– Let’s pretend…Children are asked to take on the role of someone they know or to act put a personal routine &lt;br&gt;– Taking turns. The child takes turns with the investigator and other children in answering questions or in sharing information &lt;br&gt;– Telling stories. Children make up a story or play or draw an scene about themselves in the third person &lt;br&gt;– Reading a book.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>methods</td>
<td>Boyden and Ennew 1997: 54</td>
<td>– Visual Techniques, with groups or individuals, such as drawings, other plastic arts, diagrams such as maps and genealogies, photographs or films, which may be made by children, or used as stimuli for discussion &lt;br&gt;– Role play and drama, usually improvised by children on themes suggested by them or by researchers &lt;br&gt;– Group techniques, that reduce the adult/child power relationship and may include focus group discussion, group drawings or group activities such as ranking exercises &lt;br&gt;– Children’s writings including essays, diaries, recall and observation schedules &lt;br&gt;– Interviews should not be used until the research process is well under way and other methods have been used to develop children’s confidence in themselves and the researcher &lt;br&gt;– Schedules and questionnaires should be avoided, it is better to use group interviews techniques and encourage children to interview each other using tape recorders, or other child-friendly techniques.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Building rapport and trust should be a central purpose of the researcher while conducting ethnographic research. It includes steps such as gaining access to settings where children are (Fine and Sandstrom 1988:21); communicating and discussing with children decisions about the research setting; negotiating with other adults about the reasons for not expecting the researcher to adopt a policing-disciplinary role to control children (Fine and Sandstrom 1988:23, 29); and being honest, or as Angrosino says in his work with mentally retarded adults, “just be yourself” (Angrosino 1998:163). A reliable adult is not one who complies with all the children’s wants. A trusting adult is one who is aware of power differentials as well as of the risks some children undertake. Thus, trust is based on respecting the children, taking into account their personalities and abilities and protecting them.

The researcher can play different roles. For example, Fine and Sandstrom (1988) discuss four roles a participant observer doing research with children can play: Supervisor, leader, observer, and friend. After discussing each role they recommend “to become a friend to one’s subjects and interact with them in the most trusted way possible…Adopting the friend role suggests that the participant observer treats his or her informants with respect and that he or she desires to acquire competency in their social worlds” (Fine and Sandstrom 1988:17). After talking about the friend role, trust and respect, the authors describe three approaches participant observers have used to explain their presence: explicit cover, shallow cover and deep cover. Besides being contradictory, misleading and authoritarian to expect trust when the researcher is covering the purposes of her/his presence, such position assumes an objective participant-observer who denies the role that the researcher-children interaction is playing in shaping the research experience, the researcher’s interpretations and the results. This is not just a methodological issue, but an ethical one related to the right that research participants have in knowing the purposes of the research.

A different and interactive approach is presented by Boyden and Ennew (1997):

The current tendency is to research with children, using techniques that are designed to find out about their perspectives, while taking into account children’s relative lack of power in society, the fact that they cannot yet use words as well as most adults (or use words differently, or invent their own words) and do not have so much experience of the world. This places children in the centre of
the research process rather than relying on the perspectives of adult researchers. It means that children participate in research in a different way [Boyden and Ennew 1997:37].

Such a perspective implies a change in the researcher position as well as in the role of child-researcher interaction.

Beyond methodological and ethical concerns, doing research with children may pose some questions related to the researcher as a person. For example, Gottlieb wonders if parenthood is a prerequisite for fieldwork with infants. Her answer is clear: “In fact, one of the classic hallmarks of cultural anthropology is to study ‘the other.’ Surely it is hard to imagine a more different ‘other’ to an adult than an infant, no matter what the cultural background of both” (Gottlieb 2000:124).

Boyden and Ennew (1997:54) provide a list of some required skills a researcher within a participatory approach should have:

- Knowledge of and commitment to children’s rights
- Respect for children as individuals
- Appreciation of the different cultural contexts of childhood
- Sensitivity to the differences between children’s and adult’s perspectives
- An ethical approach that shares the research aims, processes and results with research participants
- The ability to listen and learn rather than teach
- The ability to talk with children as equals
- Practicing ways of reducing adult power in research situations i.e., reducing spatial differences, such as no sitting on a higher chair or behind a desk, and negotiating informed consent before and during research.

**Ethical Implications and Ethical Constrains**

Federal legislation for doing research with children poses legal, practical and ethical constraints. Some scholars deem that such constraints might affect the research rigor placing “the investigator in an impossible situation” (Stanley and Sieber 1992:1). Current ethical legislation procedures seem to be a critical topic for some anthropologists. They require that every research proposal goes through a process of approval and should
include informed consent mechanisms, which seems impractical and against anthropological procedures for some anthropologists. Fluehr-Lobban (2003) discusses the discomfort caused by informed consent to some anthropologists, but she goes onto assert:

If informed consent simply means that the researcher offers the fullest possible disclosure of the goals and potential uses of the research before it is undertaken, then the application of the informed consent guidelines in anthropological research need not to be as controversial as it might first appear. In the first place consent forms are not a necessary component for obtaining informed consent, and the chilling effect on research that most anthropologists fear can be reduced or eliminated entirely. Philosophically informed consent can be interpreted as a professional responsibility or charge that in research anthropologists will practice full disclosure, to the best of their ability, and that issues affecting participants regarding methods, use, or publications of research will be discussed with them in advance [Fluehr-Lobban 2003:168].

Yet, current legal and ethical requirements may also mean opportunities for interactive and participative research. For example, under a participatory approach the process of informed consent can be a constructive step of the research which helps in rapport and building trust instead of being an annoying legal requirement.

The main theoretical and methodological assumptions of the ethical implications of doing research with children have already been discussed. Following I will point out the main ethical issues and the legal constrains for doing research with children, particularly with children aged seven years and older.

The Legal Context

Federal regulations ruling research with human subjects were first adopted in 1974. In 1979 The Belmont Report, a regulatory document produced by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, stated the basic ethical principles and guidelines in resolving ethical problems while conducting research with human subjects. The report includes three basic ethical principles: respect for persons, beneficence and justice, and three mechanisms to apply those principles: informed consent, assessment of risk and benefits, and selection of subjects.

In 1983 the Department of Health and Human Services adopted additional federal regulations to direct research involving children (including survey and interview research) which are regarded as a particularly vulnerable population. The regulations require that an Institutional Review Board (IRB) approve proposed research. Likewise it requires the parents consent and the child’s assent to participate in a minimal risk
research (Areen 1992:7-8). Minimal risk is defined as “the risk of harm not greater than that ‘ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examination or tests” (Thompson 1992:35).

The Informed Consent

Informed consent is “the knowing consent of an individual, or a legally authorized representative, able to exercise free power of choice without undue inducement or any element of force, fraud, deceit, duress or other form of constraint or coercion” (Fluehr-Lobban 2003:166-167). In the context of federal regulations informed consent is considered a mechanism and a necessary step in order to assure that subjects have the opportunity to choose, based on reliable information, whether or not to participate in research. Informed consent is an individual process and should be appropriately documented (Areen 1992:21).

Federal regulations for the protection of human subjects define children as “persons who have not attained the legal age for consent to treatments or procedures involved in the research” (Areen 1992:24). Thus, in the context of research with children the informed consent takes the form of Parent’s permission and child assent. Permission “means the agreement of parent(s) or guardian to the participation of their child or guard in the research” (Areen 1992:24). It is required that both parents give their permission unless one parent is deceased, unknown, incompetent or not reasonably available. (Areen 1992:27). Assent is defined as “a child affirmative agreement to participate in research...Because children are intimidated easily and might be afraid to object, the regulations provide that ‘mere failure to object should not, absent affirmative agreement, be constructed as assent” (Areen 1992:9). Likewise, “informed consent, of course, implies informed rejection. Children must be given a real and legitimate opportunity to say that they do not want to participate in the research” (Fine and Sandstrom 1988:31).

Yet in the context of a participatory approach informed consent goes beyond. It looks for a cooperative relationship between anthropologists and others, where openness, disclosure, honest discussion of goals and methods and common knowledge will work as means to reduce differentials of power and to build confident relationships and reliable
anthropological knowledge. Participation and cooperation are not conditions conceded by anthropologists to others, rather, as Simonelli and Earle have stated it is a condition of doing research with “[people] with whom we would have to negotiate the future of our relationship” (Simonelli and Earle 2003:75). Such participative scenario might seem difficult with children but is possible to achieve even with preschool children “if adults are willing to share power (Boyden and Ennew 1997:41).

Particular federal requirements for informed consent include (Areen 1992:21):

- The information given to the child and his/her parent or guardian shall be in language understandable to them.
- Informed consent may be oral or written.
- Not inclusion of any exculpatory language to waive any of the subjects’ legal rights or releasing researcher or sponsors of liability for negligence.
- Specific information:
  - A statement that the study involves research.
  - Explanation of the purposes of the research and the expected duration of the child’s participation, and a description of the procedures to be followed.
  - A description of any risk or discomfort as well as a description of any benefits to the child or to others which may be reasonably expected from the research.
  - A statement describing how confidentiality of records will be maintained.
  - An explanation of whom to contact for answers to questions about the research and research subjects’ rights, and whom to contact in the event of a research related-injury to the child.
  - A statement that participation is voluntary, refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which the child is otherwise entitled and the child may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which the child is otherwise entitled.

Within a participatory approach, child’s assent and child’s informed consent should also include the following elements:

- Assurance that the child is not pushed by their parents or other adults to participating in the research (Fine and Sandstrom 1988:31).
The child’s expression of his/her desire for participating in the activities of the research, once he/she has been properly informed about the purposes of the research (or what the researcher wants to know when doing research with children), about the different activities to develop (such as drawing, taking pictures, individual or group activities), and about the characteristics of the research setting. In brief, “to participate meaningfully, children need information about the reasons and the consequences of what they are doing, and the [required] social skills” (Boyden and Ennew 1997:41).

Follow-up consent during each session, if there is more than one session.

Information about their rights over the materials they produce such as drawings, sculptures and pictures.

Information of the general plan of the research as well as of the plan of every activity.

Their right of leaving the research or any activity when they want, without having to justify their decisions.

**Risks and Benefits**

Child’s participation in research should be guided by an analysis of the benefits and risks (Weber, Miracle, and Skehan 1994). Likewise, IRB approval requires that:

- Risks to subjects are minimized by using procedures that are consistent with sound research design and that not expose children to risks.

- Possible minimal risks to children are reasonable in relation to anticipated benefits.

- There are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of the data (Areen 1992:20-21).

Research ethicists generally based the risk and benefits evaluation on four main principles: respect, autonomy and privacy; nonmaleficence; beneficence and justice. Children may benefit from their research participation. Such benefits can include: participation in pleasant, fun or interesting activities as well as the opportunity of learning, interacting with peers and receiving affirming responses from the researcher.
An assessment of research risks and benefits with children includes being aware that benefits, risks, and vulnerability to harm vary at different ages. In the context of a child’s age, Thompson (1992:43-49) states the following propositions:

- “In general, the younger the child the greater the possibility of general behavioral and socioemotional disorganization accompanying stressful experiences. With increasing age, the child’s growing repertoire of coping skills permits greater adaptive functioning in the face of stress” (43).
- “Threats to a child’s self-concept become more stressful with increasing age as children develop a more comprehensive, coherent, and integrated self-image, become more invested in an endured identity, and acquire a more sophisticated understanding of the components of the self by which the self-concept becomes progressively modified and reshaped” (44).
- “Social comparison information becomes a more significant mode of self-evaluation with increased age” (45).
- “The capacity to make sophisticated psychological inferences of others’ motives, attitudes, and feelings increases with age” (46).
- “Once such self-conscious emotional reactions as shame, guilt, embarrassment, and pride are acquired initially, young children may be more vulnerable to their arousal because of their limited understanding of these emotions” (47).
- “Young children’s understandings of authority renders them more vulnerable to coercive manipulations than older children, for whom authority relations are better balanced by an understanding of individual rights” (48).
- “Privacy interests and concerns increase and become more differentiated as children mature, and broaden from an initial focus on physical and possessional privacy to include concerns with informational privacy” (49).
- “With increasing age, children are likely to become more sensitive to cultural and socioeconomic biases in research that reflect negatively on the child’s background, family, or previous experiences” (49).
Respect, Autonomy and Privacy

A child’s right of privacy and autonomy –more critical with adolescents- might mean conflicts between their interests and the interests of parents who want to exercise some control over their children (Stanley and Sieber 1992:2). A general guideline is to respect the child’s privacy, to explain to parents that his/her child has the right to privacy and thus anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained. Yet it needs to be counterbalanced with the researcher’s responsibility and his/her obligation of protecting children when important risks might appear. In extreme cases, if the researcher deems necessary to disclose information whether for legal or health reasons, it is necessary to inform, explain and discuss with the child the reasons of this disclosure.

Another issue related with respect is acknowledging the words children have spoken, the drawings they have drawn and the materials they have produced. Children have the right of keeping their drawings and other research related materials. Thus it is necessary to ask them if they want to keep the drawings, if so the researcher can take copies and return the drawings to them (Boyden and Ennew 1997:119).

Confidentiality

Traditionally in anthropological research, “confidentiality is assumed to be necessary in order to hide the identity of specific persons who might be subject to reprisals or embarrassment” (Fine and Sandstrom 1988: 30-31). Sometimes, children might insist that their real names are used. Yet such requests should be carefully weighed against possible later risks. For example, doing research with immigrant children poses the probability of meeting with undocumented children and/or undocumented families. In such cases the duty of protecting children and their families is more important than the possibility of fame. In this context, the use of pseudonyms is imperative.

Additionally, researchers have the obligation to understand how the concerns of parents, on issues such as kidnapping and sexual abuse, affect what can be done with their children, given the images of social problems in society (Fine and Sandstrom 1988:33).
Sociocultural Studies of Food

There is a wide range of studies about the sociocultural factors of food in disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, and history. This section discusses some factors defining food consumption and food ways and issues on identity and the symbolic dimension of food. Finally studies on the relationship between food, migration and acculturation are discussed.

Food Consumption

Food consumption is a complex process that involves psychological, emotional, social, cultural, economic, and biological forces that interact with an individual’s life experiences which result in individual preferences such as taste, convenience, and monetary considerations which shape food behavior (Bisogni et al. 2002; Glanz et al. 1998). Within a market-driven economy the food industry in the United States is recognized as a central actor in determining food patterns in the general population and particularly among children. They are bombarded daily with “television commercials promoting fast foods, snack foods, and soft drinks. Advertisements for such products are even commonplace in schools” (Nestle and Jacobson 2000:18). In the US, social class and ethnicity of neighborhoods has also proved to be a factor in determining food consumption: “without access to supermarkets which offer a wide variety of foods at lower prices, poor and minority communities may not have equal access to the variety of healthy food choices available to non-minority and wealthy communities” (Morland et al. 2002:23). From a psychological perspective, the major determinants of children’s food intake are their food preferences (Birch and Fisher 1996:127). Following Parraga (1990) and Worsley, Coonan, and Baghurst (1983), children’s food consumption patterns are determined by different factors: 1) The physical and social environment, which includes physical availability of food, and parent’s income, level of education and occupation; 2) Children’s preferences, attitudes and feelings toward food which includes the degree of liking or aversion for foods; 3) Social influence which includes the influence of cultural customs, parents, peers and mass media; 4) The physical characteristics of food such as its smell, color, general appearance, and texture; 5) The symbolic meaning, values,
knowledge, and beliefs about food which include, for example, beliefs on whether the food is “good for you,” “healthy,” “contains energy” or is “nutritious.”

One emphasis of the studies on foodways has focused on understanding the primary cultural determinants of food consumption which were expected to “reveal both sociocultural barriers to change and potential avenues for facilitating improvement in dietary practices” (Pelto 2000:18). Topics developed included beliefs, values and expectations about food and eating. Examples of this group are the studies on breastfeeding developed by Davies-Adetugbo (1997), Dettwyler and Fishman (1992), Launer (1993), and the extensive studies carried out by Dana Rafael and Penny Van Esterik (Pelto 2000:17).

Johnston’s (2001) study of the political economic transformations looks at the food patterns and food preferences. Johnston (2001) points out cost and ability to purchase as main factors to access food and, hence, shape food patterns of current populations. O’Brian (2001) documents how larger processes such as westernization, poverty and inclusion in market capitalism act as factors determining diet and food practice among Mayan women. In addition, Ziker (2002) documents inequalities in sex ratios and processes of social change as factors shaping diet in Artic Siberia.

Other studies in the area of food patterns emphasize personal and ethnic factors that determine food choices and study the relationship between food and identity (Bisogni et al. 2002; Caplan 1997), personal values in food systems (Devine et al. 1999), life-course influences (Devine et al. 1998), and meanings of food (Chapman and MacLean 1993).

Research on household allocation of food resources has documented a variety of power mechanisms by which some individuals are favored over others through household food distribution. Studies on unequal household food allocation have been carried out, among others, in communities in rural Nepal (Gittelsohn 1991:1141), and South Asia (Miller 1997:1685).

Identity and the Symbolic Dimension of Food

Food and eating habits are apparently banal experiences. Yet, beyond our absolute biological dependence on food and nutrients, food is a symbolic medium where
expressed emotions, identities, traditions, cultural values, norms, political forces and economic conditions are focused (Lupton 1996; Harbottle 2000).

The structuralist school of Claude Lévi-Strauss (1997) and Mary Douglas (1997) in the 1960s and 1970s also included several other scholars who contributed to the recognition of the symbolic dimensions of food and the significance of food as a culture system. Structural perspective is based on the assumption of the human symbolization capacity and the human ability to assign significance to daily objects such as food. Structuralists analyze food as a “sign language which could be deciphered to reveal the underlying attitudes of the society under consideration” (Harbottle 2000:18). In this context, early structuralists’ research on food “was to decipher the rules and conventions governing food classification and preparation in order to comprehend the relationship between food systems and the social order” (Harbottle 2000:19); this was one of Lévi-Strauss’s particular aims. A main conclusion that resulted from the structuralist perspective of food and particularly from Mary Douglas’s works is that “food habits cannot be divorced from the social context in which they occur” (Harbottle 2000:20).

New developments have continued and expanded the structuralist tradition. Brown and Mussell (1984), who studied regional foodways in the US, point out that food traditions are better studied within the context of regions which are embodied cultural systems, than within the political and administrative boundaries of states. Other further studies of the symbolic dimensions of food have expanded the field studying meanings on the relationship between food, body, the self, power, and gender (Charles and Kerr 1988; Counihan 1999; Lupton 1996).

A study on “eating out” in Britain support the idea that, besides nutritional issues, eating out is “expanding as a form of entertainment, and a means to display taste, status and distinction” (Warde and Martens 2000:1), where need and luxury are closely linked. Buying foods and eating away from home are ways to fulfill at the same time nutritional requirements and the constraints of time and space in daily life (Warde and Martens 2000:16).

Among sociocultural studies of food with current populations, identity is a central concept. In her study with immigrants, Harbottle points out that food
Carries a powerful symbolic potential and is therefore very important to identity-formation, at both an individual and a collective level. [Fisher’s] notion of ‘incorporation’ recognizes the symbolic aspects of ingestion by which the culturally ascribed properties of a food are assimilated by the embodied social person, together with the nutrients which are absorbed and integrated within the cells and tissues [Harbottle 2000:3].

Harbottle explored the relationship between food and identity among Iranian families in Britain integrating symbolic and behavioral dimensions of identity. She found that in that case, the family meal within the home has great “significance in processes of individual and collective identity-construction” (2000:6). Cultural identities are established, expressed and enacted on food consumption and food production practices (Harbottle 2000:5-6). Accepting that “there is no simple relationship between food, performance and processes of identity-construction,” Harbottle suggests high variability in the symbolic potency of food in relation to identity formation, being of relatively minor significance within the ethnic majority. “However, for minority groups… for whom identity-construction may be a more conscious and potentially a more problematic process, food consumption may be ascribed much greater symbolic weight” (2000:7). Such situation might be more relevant for immigrant children who, in Harbottle’s study “demonstrate particular flexibility and variety in their food consumption practices, for example, eating food from a variety of ethnic cuisines, as well as Iranian dishes and consuming home cooked meals and takeaways, as well as dining out occasionally” (2000:6). As an experience full of hopes, uncertainties and changes, migration exposes parents and children to new cultural systems and cuisines. Such changes, Harbottle (2000:10) concludes, may result in positive identity fusions and transformations or may result in identity conflict.

Food is related to identity in the processes of socialization “both in terms of the formation of individual identity and the transmission of culture from generation to generation” (Beardsworth and Keil 1997: 54). During processes of nutritional socialization, the child learns how to reduce the risk of eating hazardous substances and how to select food from other edible items in his or her environment. Parents employ a wide range of strategies “to exert control over the child’s eating patterns and to encourage, cajole or coerce him or her into the consumption of what is seen as a suitable diet” (Beardsworth and Keil 1997: 55).
Finally, it is worthy to mention a recently published book, where MacClancy (2004:69) proposes some elements to explore when studying local modes of food identification such as exploration of crops, local terms of foods, traditional festivities and the discourses of food.

**Food, Migration and Acculturation**

From studies of both migrants from rural to urban areas and international immigrants, it is widely accepted, that diet and food habits change during acculturation (Fitzgerald 1978; Freedman and Grivetti 1984; Jerome 1980; Lee Kang and Garey 2002; Parsons et al. 1999; Méndez y Mercado 1993; Romero 1992b; Romero-Gwynn 1993, 2000; Smith et al. 2003; Witcher, Kolas, and Bond 1988; Ysunza et al. 1986). Diet itself is regarded as a sensitive index of acculturation (Jerome 1980:276). Likewise, scholars in the field generally agree that food is more than nutrition and for immigrants the changes in diet are closely related to emerging identities in the new environment (Freedman and Grivetti 1984:186). Reviewing the literature on the maintenance or abandonment of ethnic food traditions among ethnic groups in the U.S, Freedman and Grivetti (1984:186) stated that the underlying purpose of these studies has been to determine whether abandonment of cultural food practices and adoption of new patterns, or food substitutions, leads to improvement or deterioration in nutrition or results in no change. Although some people assume that the abandonment of traditional eating practices and the adoption of modern eating customs, have resulted in a deterioration of the nutritional situation of children, this has not always been proved to be the case (Jerome 1980:323; Witcher, Kolas, and Bond 1988:190).

The processes of westernization encompass a group of factors explaining diet changes and consequent obesity both in industrialized societies and in traditional societies facing the rapid processes of modernization. Obesity as a consequence of acculturation has been documented among Polynesian islanders, Samoans, and Malays (Bindon 1995:227; Brown and Konner 2000:349; Greksa 1995:253; Wilson 1995: 213). Formerly rural and dependent on traditional subsistence, these communities experienced socioeconomic changes that altered their resource base, food choices, and activity
patterns with a consequent increase of body size and fatness. The more rapid the transition, the more likely that metabolic maladjustments will occur (Bindon 1995:227). Such kinds of influences have been documented by anthropologists who studied the diet and health of Polynesian islanders at different stages of acculturation. They concluded that obesity is the first of diseases of civilization to appear (Brown and Konner 2000:349).

It seems that under conditions of abundance and rapid diet changes, former adaptive mechanisms are unable to regulate body weight. Similar explanations have been stated to argue that adaptive factors in early life are determinants of obesity in adolescents and comorbidities in adulthood. The “thrifty phenotype hypothesis” suggests that fetal growth retardation and stunting in early childhood result in metabolic changes that are adaptive under nutritionally stressful circumstances, but during overnutrition these changes become maladaptive, “leading to the development of abnormal lipid profiles, altered glucose and insulin metabolism and obesity” (Crawford et al. 2001:862; Popkin, Richards and Adair 1999: 321). The thrifty gene theory proposes that certain populations previously genetically adapted to food shortages and harsh conditions, which migrate to affluent industrialized societies, are predisposed to obesity (Crawford et al. 2001:862).

Studying the relationship between acculturation and obesity in Latinos in Tampa, Himmelgreen (2002:8) has reported that the longer an individual stayed in the United States the greater the likelihood they would be overweight or obese. “People’s food habits change dramatically when they arrive.” (Himmelgreen quoted by Kluger, Gorman, and Park 2004). In a study with Puerto Rican women living in the continental US, Himmelgreen and colleges (2004) found that length of time spent in the US was associated with a significant increase in body mass index (BMI) and “with an increase in the frequency of consumption of artificial drinks, most notably sodas” (Himmelgreen et al. n.d.).

The following changes have been documented among rural to urban migrants: (1) the source of the food supply changes with a sudden or increasing dependence on foods bought in stores (Fitzgerald 1978:31; Jerome 1980:295; Romero 1992b:190; Witcher, Kolasa, and Bond 1988:1907). Among Southern-born African American women in
Milwaukee, dependence on purchased food meant “a substantial decrease in their ability to acquire food despite equivalent or increased incomes” (Jerome 1980:275). Among Ecuadorian women, however, the researchers interpreted similar changes as an adaptive strategy to fulfill women’s varied roles. (2) Immigrants gain greater availability and access to a wider type of foods. Studying changes of food patterns among migrants to Mexico City, Ysunza et al. (1986:104) concluded that, due to economic constraints, increased availability of new food items did not necessarily mean diet improvement. Introduction of a wider variety of fruit and vegetables among rural to urban migrants Ecuadorian school children in Quito did no result in real improvement because those items were consumed less frequently (Witcher, Kolasa, and Bond 1988:195). Among Colombian migrants in Bogotá, such wider access to new food items have had a negative impact on nutrition because people more frequently eat what is available to them, and, “unfortunately [even] if the cheapest foods are not those without nutritional quality, these [still] are selected and consumed” (Romero 1992b:190). (3) Less time is allocated to food acquisition and food preparation. For example, among Southern-born migrants in Milwaukee, less time was allocated for food preparation in order for them to meet the demands of their work and school schedules (Jerome 1980:275). In the case of Ecuadorian women, the introduction of refined cereals, along with consumption of purchased food and changes in the fuel source for cooking from wood to gas or kerosene reduced the time required for food acquisition and preparation. Thus, women were able to fulfill their feeding obligations to their families without threatening their primary roles as wives and mothers (Witcher, Kolasa, and Bond 1988:195-197). (4) Children develop new appetites by experiencing new tastes at school (Jerome 1980:276). Also, they increased their consumption of foods containing sugar, such as cookies, candies, soft drinks, and ice cream (Witcher, Kolasa, and Bond 1988:195). (5) Changes occur in women’s food related tasks. For example, as cited, Witcher, Kolasa, and Bond (1988:197) regarded access to purchased food as a kind of relief for migrant women in Quito. Méndez y Mercado (1993:38), however, highlighted the increased responsibilities for migrant Mixtec women, who, working as domestic workers, have to cook and eat new and different foods from what they were used to using.
In the previously cited Southern-born African American population in Milwaukee, Jerome (1980:295) also documented changes in food preservation practices; the use of commercially prepared and preserved foods; preparation methods; in meal patterns (i.e. number of meals and names given to each meal); traditional beliefs concerning food; and the incorporation of new concepts of food and nutrition. For that population, migrating to the north meant changes toward more elaborate, a higher caloric and a more varied diet. Although higher nutritional quality was always achieved, it was reached through very high caloric intakes (Jerome 1980:321, 323). A different interpretation of dietary changes is presented by Witcher, Kolasa, and Bond (1988:195-197) from the study of migrant children in Ecuador. They found that the introduction of changes can have a negative impact on health, such as an increased consumption of sugar-based foods and decreased consumption of milk. They also reported decreased uses of granulated salt, which was replaced by iodized salt, which meant an important improvement for a population with a high prevalence of goiter and cretinism.

From a political economy of health approach, some different but complementary changes have been documented in Colombian rural to urban migrants in Bogotá. Studying traditional recipes of grandmothers and infant’s feeding practices in rural to urban migrants, Romero (1992a:190) argued that although some families have maintained traditional eating patterns because of family composition and occupations, many other factors have induced rapid changes in households diets and infant feeding practices, which resulted in high levels of malnutrition and higher rates of infant mortality (Romero 1992b:189). Such factors included income, food availability, easy access to processed foods, and shopping for food in small local grocery stores, which “limit their diets to what is available in these stores” (Romero 1992b: 190). Rural diets, which included recipes prepared with cereals, vegetables, roots and fruits from home gardens, have been abandoned because the ingredients were not available or were too expensive (Romero 1992b:189). Likewise, introduction of expensive commercial infant foods often resulted in the overdilution in the preparation of the formulas. Some factors that determine changes in infant feeding practices included availability of family and social networks, access to food marketing, and prestige. “The existence of mass media, of
differential prestige value associated with particular foods, and commercial promotion of infant foods, [also] plays an important role in the growing use of processed foods” (Romero 1992a:199). Mass media influence the increased consumption of soft drinks, candies and fried products has been documented among rural Mixtec in Mexico (Méndez y Mercado (1993:39).

Prestige is a factor determining changes in food consumption among Andean rural to urban migrants. For example, Romero (1992a:189) cited that under certain circumstances, some Colombians prefer spending money on clothes rather than on food. She also cited prestige associated with particular types of food. Witcher, Kolasa, and Bond (1988:196) documented a decreased consumption of foods considered to be “Indian” or low status foods among Ecuadorian families in Quito.

Among immigrants to the United States, diet acculturation and changes in food habits have been documented in people from different nationalities. Studying typical and pregnancy diets, Freedman and Grivetti (1984) found differences in the composition of meals and the timing of food intake between first, second and third generation Greek American women. Second and third generation women increased their intake of bread and cereals. Within a linear pattern of assimilation, they concluded that diet changes showed “a strong trend of abandonment of traditional dietary patterns and adoption of ‘American’ foods by third generation Greek Americans” (Freedman and Grivetti 1984:185). Surveying Koreans immigrants in the New York City area and Honolulu, Lee Kang and Garey reported dissimilar patterns of food acculturation. They found that “first generation Koreans residing in a white-dominant neighborhood in the New York City area were more likely to have Korean foods at ceremonies and to have popular Korean dishes than were those living in ethnically-mixed neighborhoods” (2002:40). They also found stronger Korean food habits among those living between five to twenty years in the US, than among those living less than five years in the US; higher traditional food habits among older age respondents; more consumption of American dishes among those of higher educational level; and more traditional food habits among married persons (Lee Kang and Garey 2002:41).
A recent study (Smith et al 2003) with Maya children compared body measurements of Mayans in Guatemala with immigrant Mayans in the US. Even though this is not a study on dietary habits, it is interesting because it measured the impact of immigration on physical growth. Assuming that immigration from developing countries to the US introduces unhealthy lifestyle patterns, Smith et al. (2003:145) found higher rates of obesity and overweight among Maya American children than in Maya Guatemalan and white American children (Smith et al. 2003:159).

Nutritional anthropologists in the 1970s and 1980s, despite being immersed in linear or bipolar models of immigration, recognized that new food patterns were not simply an adoption of the host culture. In 1978, Fitzgerald, who studied rural to urban migrants in the Pacific Islands, stated that food habit changes were neither lineal from a ‘pure’ island diet to an urbane pattern, nor merely a consequence of migration itself. Within a modernization theoretical framework he explained that such changes occurred in response to push and pull factors and to a complex set of nutritional variables which includes such factors as ecological considerations, distributional circumstances, soil difficulties, social conditions, import/export factors, urbanization (Fitzgerald 1978:30, 32-33). Jerome, working with Southern-born African Americans in Milwaukee, documented both change and stability in the diet pattern. He concluded that new food ways were “a clear syncretization of long-cherished habits and new lifestyles” (Jerome 1980:276).

Immigrant food changes are not the simple replacement of old patterns with new ones. Food acculturation is a complex process of both change and stability in the diet patterns. Children and their families actively restructure, redefine, and renegotiate food related norms, values and behaviors (Foner 1997). Pre-arrival immigrant culture, points of entry in the US, characteristics of the neighborhoods where immigrants settle, and access to different types of foods as well as children’s interactions with their families and social networks, peers and schools, and media are presumably shaping children’s food consumption patterns. This study explored such elements with a group of immigrant children.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODS

A participative qualitative study was conducted to understand how Colombian immigrant children adjust to life in the US. For this purpose I used ethnographic methods such as participant observation, semi-structured interviews and visual data, as well as some elements of the case study design as proposed by Yin (1994:20) and Creswell (1998:61). In addition, the study was conducted with a participatory approach. The participative element of the study consisted of allowing participants to participate actively in making some choices about how they are represented, selecting some of the activities developed and selecting most of the visual material produced.

Research Design

The study was designed mixing some elements of the case studies designs proposed by Creswell (1998:61) and Yin (1994:20). The elements selected and adapted for this study include:

- Research questions
- Philosophical and methodological assumptions
- Definitions of terms
- Research settings
- Participants and sources of information
- Data analysis
Research Questions

The focus of the study was on how participants adjust to life in the US, and I looked at the way that they represent food as a symbol of their experience. In this context, the research was led by the following central questions:

- How do Colombian immigrant children adjust to life in the United States?
- How does food symbolize the changes that they have experienced?

The study was divided into six guiding sub-questions:

1. How do participants represent the food they eat in the US: in restaurants; on weekdays; on weekends; on holidays?
2. What changes and differences do they identify between the food they ate in Colombia and the food they eat in the US?
3. What concepts, feelings and values are associated to the food they eat?
4. What role does immigrant culture, and participants’ interactions with significant others, such as their families, teachers, peers and media, play in shaping their foods representations?
5. To what degree are participants active agents in their process of food acculturation?
6. How do participants express their agency?

Even though the focus of the research was on children’s own representations, it is necessary to recognize how the close relationship between them and their parents, particularly with their mothers, influences their views. In this sense, mothers were also included in the study because I interacted with them while doing participant observation at TICH, at the CFH, and at their homes. I did not, however, conduct separate interviews with any of the parents.

Philosophical and Methodological Assumptions

The main philosophical, theoretical and methodological assumptions of this study underlie assumptions of the symbolic interactionism approach of culture and on assumptions of qualitative research as discussed by Creswell (1998). The main assumptions of symbolic interactionism are the “socially constructed nature of human
“collective life” (Reynolds and Herman-Kinney 2003:15) and ideas such as relativism, reflectivity, “persuasive interchange, human enterprise, and the essential enabling features of language” (Reynolds and Herman-Kinney 2003:15). As discussed by Prus (2003), such central concepts can be followed back to the Greeks and symbolic interactionism has affinity with a number of intellectual traditions within the social sciences. In this context, culture and mind which are closely linked are produced through interactions and “cultural meanings arise through social interactions” (Musolf 2003:104). Thus, in socialization processes, the individual learns not only, “the meaning of objects, but also creates the meaning of objects as an active participant in his or her own socialization” (Musolf 2003:104). In brief, symbolic interactionism provided to this study a broad framework of assumptions such as the interactionist nature of reality, the existence of multiple realities, the situatedness of every experience, and the active participation of individuals as agents constructing cultural meanings through linguistic mediated interactions with others.

Other assumptions of this study are based on central characteristics of qualitative research as discussed by Creswell (1998:76-77):

- Reality is constructed by individuals involved in the research situation.
- The research is a process and the result of the interactive relationship between researcher and participants.
- Qualitative researchers use personal narratives and literary forms such as the use of narratives and the use of the first person “I.”
- Methodologically, the researcher works inductively, developing new categories from the participants.

In this context, this study assumes that the representations presented result from the interactions between participants and the researcher in the research settings. Participants’ representations, as presented during the interviews and the group sessions, have been shaped by their own experiences through interactions with others. The researcher’s theoretical and methodological choices, as well as the representations of participants’ accounts and experiences, have been also shaped by her own personal and professional experiences. Traces of my own experiences certainly are embedded in this dissertation.
Those that might be relevant for this study are here described. I grew up in Colombia in a family where daily and special meals mixed Colombian and Lebanese traditions and at the same time incorporated foreign foods such as lasagna, pancakes, filet mignon, and Chinese food. Relevant to this study is also my experience with immigration and food related changes. As an eight year old girl, I left Tocaima, my hot-land town located low in a foothill region of to study at the cold-land and modern Bogotá, a city located high in the mountains. Then, in my mid twenties I lived one year in México where I enjoyed its diverse and marvelous foods, and finally, three years ago, when again pursuing educational goals, I came to live in the US, a country where for many people, food meanings are less related to home, mother and fondness, and more close by linked to the food and health industries and marketing.

**Definition of Terms**

- **Acculturation:** Broadly, acculturation is understood as a complex process of cultural transformations that occur by the continuous encounter of different cultural groups (see page 14 and 23-24). During the acculturation process, immigrants blend in complex processes, cultures, values and attitudes brought from home and shift them in the context of the new hierarchies, cultural conceptions, and social institutions they confront in the US. In this context, through their immigrant experience, children actively transform their foods representations they bring from their original culture into new representations in their destiny in the US. Such transformations occur through daily interactions with their families, peers and friends, and the media. All these elements represent the culture of their new setting in the US. Acculturation was explored in two different dimensions: one describes the characteristics of the food that participants eat here in the US; the other explores acculturation based on some traditional

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4 The terms *hot-land* and *cold-land* initially refers to the temperature. Low in the mountains the temperature is higher and lower as you go up in the mountains. However, actually it refers to two different cultures. People who live in hot-land in general are open and talk loud and frankly. In contrast, people who live in cold-land are reserved and talk low. Likewise, food practices are quite different.

5 In this study the original culture is better represented by the region or city of Colombia where they come from, rather than by the country as a single entity.
indicators: length of time in the US; language use; cultural orientation of daily interactions (preferred friends, television, music, and books); and ethnic identity.

- **Food**: Food and foods in this study are used in their broad generic meaning. It includes food items, dishes, deserts as well as drinks and snacks. Food in the US included the basic meal plan for weekdays when children go to school, weekends and holidays variations as well as food eaten in restaurants.

- **Food acculturation**: Food acculturation is a multidimensional, dynamic, and complex process by which the immigrants adopt the food practices of the host country (Satia-About a et al. 2002:1105). In this study food acculturation is understood as a process of both changes and continuities in the diet patterns of immigrant children. The ways in which the participants talk about food are used as a mean to understand the changes and continuities they have experienced in the food they eat.

- **Changes of food**: Food changes were understood as changes and differences participants found between the foods they ate in Colombia and the foods they eat here.

- **Concepts, feelings and values**: Included concepts of American food and Colombian food, preferred and disliked foods and feelings associated with food such as fondness or pride. Feelings related to food were interpreted by the researcher based on participants’ use of words expressing love and liking or hate and disliking toward particular foods. Likewise, participants’ feelings toward foods were interpreted by the researcher based on participants’ expression of emotions such as changes of intonation and changes of face expression meaning love, hate, pride, or fondness.

- **Colombian Immigrant Children**: For the purposes of this study, Colombian immigrant children are first generation immigrant children who were born in Colombia, and at least one of their parents was also born in Colombia.
**Research Settings**

Children or their parents were reached through both the NLGH project, and at TICH. Thirteen interviewees were first contacted through TICH. TICH was also the main research setting where long term participant observation was conducted and all the group sessions were developed. Thus, while the relationship with participants reached through the NLGH was limited to the interview, the interactions between researcher and participants approached at TICH, extended to group sessions, weekly activities at TICH from September 2003 through June 2004, and assistance to some of the local events where the dance groups make presentations in Tampa.

**New Life Good Health**

NLGH is a community-based nutrition education and farmer’s market project, directed by David Himmelgreen. It has been funded by Allegany Franciscan Foundation, the Children's Board of Hillsborough County, and the Areas Health Education at University of South Florida. NLGH targets low-income Latino families, including recently arrived immigrants. The project’s activities run out of several community-based agencies in Tampa such as the Center for Family Health (CFH). CFH is a private not-for-profit corporation that provides community-based medical and health education to underserved people. CFH is located in the Seminole Heights neighborhood of the city of Tampa, next to the Saint Francis Episcopal Church. It was established in 1986 for elderly and indigent people, but through the years it has transformed itself into a family health center that provides health services mainly to Hispanic undocumented people, many of them Colombian. CFH’s mission is to “provide essential health services to those most in need in the Tampa Bay area through the operation of culturally sensitive, community-based clinics, offering free primary medical care, health screenings, education and counseling to qualified individuals and families in a caring and patient oriented environment” (Martinez 2001). The mission is enacted through clinics of general medicine, gynecology, pediatrics, and dental services where they attend children, adults and the elderly.
I worked with NLGH from November 2003 until May 2004 as a nutrition educator. My former experience as pediatric nurse and in the public health field was useful assets. My job responsibilities included selecting, adapting and evaluating educational materials, and conducting several sessions of three kinds of participative seminars with diverse groups of Hispanic immigrants. The first seminar focused on promoting a varied, balanced and moderated diet. The second seminar focused on promoting a healthy diet based on low consumption of fat, sugar, and sodium and higher ingest of fiber. It also provided cooking ideas to help participants to develop a healthy diet. The third seminar, conducted in a grocery store, focused on practical activities about buying groceries and analyzing food labels. Besides providing the opportunity for reaching diverse participants, the experience at NLGH provided us with ideas and materials for developing the nutritional education sessions which were developed after the individual interviews.

The sessions of the first seminar were developed at the CFH. People who attended the sessions were Hispanic adults, males and females from varied national origins such as Cuba, Argentina, Colombia, México, Venezuela, and Puerto Rico.

_Taller Intercultural Hispano Americano_  
TICH is a non-profit educational and cultural agency where mostly Hispanic children ages five to fourteen years old learn Spanish and “Hispanic” culture. Most of them are of Colombian origin, but there are also families from other Latin American countries such as Mexico and Venezuela. They meet every Saturday in the Iglesia Bautista Hispana (Hispanic Baptist Church) located North West of CFH. At present there are around forty children who take Spanish, music, dance, cooking, leadership and Hispanic heritage classes. Children are organized in three groups: group I includes children from six to eight years old; group II includes children from nine to eleven years old, and group III includes children from twelve to fourteen. TICH is directed by María Esther Carrillo, who works with a team of volunteers who teach and support the different activities with children at the school and around the city when children perform dances original from Hispanic countries. The mission of TICH is contributing to: the development of cultural identity of Hispanic children; the children’s school and educational achievement;
children-parents communication; establishing a bridge between their cultural heritage and the culture where they live; and preparing Hispanic leaders to serve their communities (Carrillo-Suárez 2003:1).

I have volunteered at TICH since September 2003. There I approached some of the participants in this study and also observed the Saturday school and other activities, such as dance presentations and gatherings where food was always part of the event. Since TICH is a more formal educational environment, it was easy for my role to be confounded with that of a teacher. So the activities and responsibilities I developed as volunteer were more related to being a facilitator and supporter with little or no authority over children.

As a volunteer, I had two kinds of responsibilities. One was developing the educational materials for the unit on Hispanic Food, adapting them to each group, and supporting the cooking classes where children prepared and enjoyed arepas and patacones. Other responsibilities were assigned by Marí́a Esté́r as needed and included diverse tasks such as being on charge of the store, translating letters from Spanish to English and taking pictures of students, staff, and volunteers for the presentation at the end-of-the-year ceremony. I accompanied them to the dance presentations during the 2003 National Hispanic Heritage Month at the Tampa Museum of Art and at USF, and to the Second Hispanic Cultural Festival of Tampa, organized by TICH and conducted at Leto High School on April 17, 2004.

**Participants and Sources of Information**

The study was conducted with Colombian immigrant children between the ages of seven and twelve years old. The main two sources of information used in this research were individual interviews and group sessions. A sample of twenty participants, twelve girls and eight boys were individually interviewed. A sub-sample of eleven children, three girls and eight boys participated in three group sessions. Yet, two boys who participated in group three were not interviewed. Thus, a total of twenty two children participated in the whole study. Individual interviews and group sessions worked as
complementary strategies for getting a more holistic picture of participants and their food intake patterns.

Participants were approached directly at TICH and through their parents at the CFH. Some participants were contacted through previous interviewees using the snowball sampling approach. Out of the twenty interviewees, thirteen were approached at TICH or contacted by interviewees from TICH. The remaining seven participants were contacted through contacts made at the CFH.

Colombian parents participating in the educational sessions at CFH were approached and informed about the purposes of the research. Those who were interested in participating were provided with contact information. Then, children were called and invited to participate in the study and to discuss in greater detailed the activities they would be consenting to, such as the purposes of the research and their expected role. Once parents verbally agreed and children assented the interviews were scheduled and the written informed consent were explained once again and signed prior to the interviews. At TICH participants were informed about the research its main purposes, the role the children were expected to play, and the activities they were going to develop in the group sessions. Based on the children’s initial consent, their mothers were contacted by phone and explained the main elements of the informed consent. With all participants, once their consent and their parents’ verbal agreement were obtained, the written informed consent was provided both in English and Spanish. Usually, children were provided with the English consent and their parent with the Spanish one. Rapport and trust were built through interaction and clear and direct communication, and explanations of the research purposes and activities to be developed. Participants were invited to participate in the research by explaining to them what the researcher expected to learn and wanted to know about them and the food they eat. They were invited to actively participate in researching about their food ways. Informed assent was explained to every child ensuring that they understood the elements of the assent. Oral parental permission and child’s assent was requested of all participants. Since it was possible for some of the
participants to be undocumented\textsuperscript{6} and could feel threatened by signing the informed consent, a waiver of written documentation of informed consent was requested and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of South Florida. Parents and participants were given a written statement explaining the study and the complete elements of the informed consent. Besides clear explanations about the purposes of the study, children received appropriate and complete information relevant for their participation during the interviews and the group sessions.

Records were kept confidential. Each questionnaire was assigned an identification number. All materials were kept securely locked in a storage container at my home. Pseudonyms, chosen by them were used for all participants.

\textit{Interviews}

Individual interviews were conducted using a semi structured questionnaire, which included questions about: demographic data; their parents; acculturation; the food they eat on weekdays when they go to school, at restaurants, and at special events. I borrowed some questions from the following instruments: the Youth Adaptation and Growth Questionnaire developed by Portes and Rumbaut (2001); the Short Acculturation Scale for Hispanic Youth (Barona and Miller 1994; Serrano and Anderson 2003); and from those used by Arcia et al (2001); but did not use any of those instruments for purposes of measurement or assessment. Since a main purpose of this study was to understand how food symbolizes the change that participants have experienced, emphasis was placed on documenting the foods they recalled they having eaten and how such foods were distributed in meals in different occasions in different settings, rather than specific statements regarding composition and quantity. In this way my study is different from that of a nutritional anthropologist using a formal dietary-recall protocol.

Except for two, all interviews were conducted at the participants’ homes. In order to help them recall, flash cards portraying food items were used. However, based on the experience with the first participants, cards were also used as a main tool to identify liked

\textsuperscript{6} “No one has an accurate count of the numbers of Colombians in South Florida. The Colombian Consulate in Miami estimates the number of Colombians residing permanently in all of Florida at 458,000. According to some estimates, as many as 40\% to 50\% of all Colombians in Florida may be undocumented” (Collier and Gamarra 2001)
and disliked foods, and to compare the foods they ate in Colombia with the foods they eat here, as participants identified changes and continuities of specific food items there and here.

During the interviews the recorder as well as the cards and a copy of the questionnaire were available to the interviewees. The opportunity to manipulate some elements of the interview, as well as having the interviews at their homes, not only encouraged rapport, but also provided a context where power was diffused and not concentrated on the researcher. Another strategy used was the introduction of the questions by themes before asking them. For example I would tell the children, “Now, there are some questions about your parents,” or “I will ask some questions so we can fill out this chart about the foods you eat at school.”

Even though privacy and confidentiality were issues discussed with parents during the informed consent process, some mothers intervened during the interviews to correct or complement their children’s answers; others asked the researcher about their children’s responses. In these circumstances the researcher kindly emphasized the importance of obtaining the participants’ own knowledge and the impossibility of disclosing the participants’ answers. In other cases participants directly asked their mothers for information they did not know. However, in several cases mothers did not intervene and respected the privacy of their children.

Interviews were audio taped and transcribed. The researcher also took notes in each questionnaire and detailed field notes. The field notes were designed based on ideas from Whiting et al. (1966) and based on experience with the first interview. Each field note described:

- Events prior to the interview such as phone calls with participants and parents.
- Place and time of the interview.
- Interactions between researcher, participants and family members before and after the interview.
- People at home during the interview.
- Physical setting of the interview.
- Use of the recorder and the food cards.
Feelings and additional comments.

Halley, the first interviewee, was very interested in showing some of her preferred foods; thereafter, pictures of some foods they selected were taken after the interview and are presented as illustration in the appendix.

Interviews lasted an average of fifty one minutes each. The length depended on every participant’s interest and specific setting conditions such as interruptions by mother or siblings. Thus, fifteen interviews lasted between forty five and seventy minutes, four lasted around thirty five minutes, and one lasted ninety five minutes.

In brief, the interviews yielded detailed and generally complete data about:

- Sociodemographic characteristics as well as participants’ knowledge of their parents’ educational level and occupation.
- Participants’ preferences as related to the culture of origin, the culture of destiny or more commonly to both.
- Food preferences and dislikes.
- Comparisons between Colombian and American food as well as identification of continuities and changes of food intake along the experience of immigration.
- The presence and influence of parents, brothers or sisters, extended family, parents’ friends, participants’ friends, teachers, media and marketers in their representations of food.
- The food that participants usually have on weekdays when they go to school, and some variations on weekends, and special occasions such as Christmas, Thanksgiving and birthdays.

**Group sessions**

The main purpose of the group sessions was providing a creative context in which participants were able to freely express representations related to food through play-based activities. In this context, the role of the researcher was limited to making available materials and refreshments, introducing the purpose of the group and taking notes and pictures.
Group sessions were developed with a sub-sample of eleven children, eight boys and three girls who participated in three group sessions. The three groups were conducted at TICH. Originally the sessions were planned to take place in one of the classrooms at TICH, but due to a fire that destroyed the house where the classroom was located, the groups were developed in another building of the church that serves as a day care during weekdays. This change turned out to be very productive for the purposes of the study because, besides the foods and materials provided by the researcher, there were several food related toys such as a kitchen, and plastic figures that participants used creatively. The setting also allowed privacy, personal security, comfort, freedom from interruptions and access to bathroom facilities and the rudiments of comfort.

Group one took place on May 1st 2004 with two boys and two girls. Group 2 was developed with three girls one week later and group 3 was conducted with eight boys on the same day of group 2. Even though the groups were planned to consist of three to five participants, what defined the size of the groups was the availability of participants. For each group session the researcher presented a general introduction and suggested a main theme (e.g., eating in a restaurant). Materials were available to facilitate different possible activities (e.g., role play, drawings, and pictures) and refreshments. Participants decided what activities to develop and the only requirement made by the researcher was that it related to food. The researcher’s suggestions, such as the theme of the session, were generally disregarded by participants and they selected the activities and the materials and enacted the performances. Such participative environment along with a no disciplinary attitude from the researcher was a bit challenged during group three when some participants were rude and behaved badly. Yet, communication served to define some limits. In this context, mess ups, yells, and bad words were accepted, but whenever there was a risk of anyone getting hurt, limits were clearly defined with firmness and sweetness.

Each group session lasted one hour. Participants were encouraged to engage as co-researchers asking questions to reach a deeper understanding in an atmosphere of respect and cooperation. Comparisons among the children were avoided during these sessions, as well as attitudes that may promote competition and rivalry. Instead, cooperation and trust
among participants were promoted and participants controlled resources and the research environment.

Each session was audio taped and the researcher took notes and pictures of each session, which are presented on Chapter Five. The most interesting and relevant passages of the recordings were transcribed.

A conflictive situation that emerged at TICH during the group sessions was related to children who were not invited to participate in the study and who expressed their discomfort at being excluded. Besides providing a communicative space to express their feelings, and explaining to them the reasons for such exclusions, refreshments were also shared with them. Likewise, a session of nutrition education based on play and using the same materials, such as color pencils and play-doh, was developed on May 15th with all students at TICH regardless of their age or national origin.

Besides participant observation at TICH, individual interviews and group sessions, observations at La Cabaña Antioqueña, La Hacienda and La Típica Colombiana, all Colombian restaurants in Tampa, were conducted. In addition, observations of food items at Latino stores were conducted.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted during the whole process of data collection and continued until drawing of conclusions. Data collected included interviews, field notes, photos of food items at participants’ homes, photos of the group sessions, and photos of participants’ sculptures at the group sessions, participant’s drawings, photos of Colombian food items at Latino stores, and documents provided by the research settings.

During an early stage of the analysis a process of data reduction as proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994), based on the primary research questions and categories, was conducted. Thus, along the process of transcription and beyond, data were first selected, simplified, and focused, at the same time that regularities, patterns, explanations and propositions were carefully registered as memos.

Suggestions and actions provided by interviewees while helping to fill out the charts of the foods they eat and while using the food cards served as guidelines and insights that
reoriented following interviews. In the first interviews, participants used food cards not only to recall foods they eat, prefer and dislike, but also to compare the foods they ate in Colombia and those they eat here. Therefore, in the following interviews, children were asked to do the same. However, it was during the interview with Mark that we finally defined themes about continuities and changes of food. While watching the food cards, Mark described changes and continuities for each food. His description stimulated me to sort his responses in four groups: foods he ate in Colombia and continues eating here; foods he ate in Colombia and is not eating any more or eats very little here; foods he ate little or rarely there and eats much more in the US; and new foods in the US. Based on this initial categorization, and after reviewing again every interview, the new categories for describing patterns of comparison between there and here were defined first as continuities and changes. Indeed, four types of changes were identified: new foods, foods not eaten any more, changes on proportions and changes on time or places. Table 3 presents the complete list of final categories as well as the initial and final subcategories.

Talking about the varieties of perspective in qualitative analysis, Coffey and Atkinson (1996:6-10) assert that while “for some authors, analysis refers primarily to the tasks of coding, indexing, sorting, retrieving, or otherwise manipulating data…For others in the field, analysis refers primarily to the imaginative work of interpretation.” Among others, Coffey and Atkinson revises the approach followed by Miles and Huberman and compare it with that proposed by Wolcott. Miles and Huberman’s approach falls into the first category of analysis as data manipulation and Wolcott’s under the second one as a kind of analysis that means data transformation. Wolcott (1994:10) proposes three ways of transforming data: description, analysis and interpretation. Description yields an account which stays close to the data and treats data as fact, expecting that “data ‘speak for themselves’” (Wolcott 1994:10). Built upon description, and beyond it, analysis expands and extends it, proceeding systematically to identify “key factors and relationships among them” (Wolcott 1994:10). Based on systematic procedures, analysis searches for themes and patterns to identify relationships and essential features. In this context, analysis “is both cautious and controlled…[and also] structured, formal,
bounded, systematic, grounded, methodical, particular, carefully documented, and impassive” (Coffey and Atkinson 1996:9).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Initial sub-categories</th>
<th>Final sub-categories</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>– Occupation and educational level.</td>
<td>– Occupation and educational level.</td>
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<td>Demographic - child</td>
<td>– Age.</td>
<td>– Age.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>– Gender.</td>
<td>– Gender.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>– Original residence in Colombia.</td>
<td>– Original residence in Colombia.</td>
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<td>– Age at the time of immigration.</td>
<td>– Age at the time of immigration.</td>
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<td>– Name of the school and grade.</td>
<td>– Name of the school and grade.</td>
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<td>– Family living with the child.</td>
<td>– Family living with the child.</td>
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<td>Acculturation</td>
<td>Length of residence in the US.</td>
<td>Length of residence in the US.</td>
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<td>Language</td>
<td>– How well English and how well Spanish.</td>
<td>– How well English and how well Spanish.</td>
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<td>– Language use at home and preferred language.</td>
<td>– Language use at home and preferred language.</td>
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<td>Cultural orientation of daily interactions</td>
<td>– Friends.</td>
<td>– Friends.</td>
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<td>– Television channels and radio stations</td>
<td>– Television channels and radio stations</td>
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<td>– Music and books.</td>
<td>– Music and books.</td>
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<td>Ethnic Identity</td>
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<td>Food in the US</td>
<td>Basic meal plan weekday US</td>
<td>Basic meal plan weekday US</td>
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<td></td>
<td>– Meal name.</td>
<td>– Meal name.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>– Dishes - Food items, sweets, desserts and drinks.</td>
<td>– Place</td>
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<td>– Meal place and time.</td>
<td>– Content: Similar to Colombia, different than in Colombia, or mixed.</td>
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<td>– Ability to recall food eaten at Christmas and Thanksgiving.</td>
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<td>– Perceived continuities or changes of the celebration</td>
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<td>– Food items at birthday</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– Presence of networks: relatives, Colombian friends, Latino friends</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Restaurants</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>– Colombians, Latino, or Americans</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Feelings, values and concepts</td>
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<td></td>
<td>– Concepts of Colombian food, American food and bicultural food.</td>
<td>Comparison of American and Colombian food:</td>
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<td>– Liked/preferred foods and disliked foods.</td>
<td>– Good and bad.</td>
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<td>– Sources of knowledge and values.</td>
<td>– Differences: taste or food items</td>
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<td></td>
<td>– Concepts of food and nutrition: nutritious, energetic, healthy, good, bad.</td>
<td>Preferred, liked foods, and disliked foods</td>
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<td>– Colombian, American, or mixed.</td>
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<td>Food terms</td>
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<td>– Use of diminutives.</td>
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<td>– Joyful and/or exalted expressions</td>
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<td>Pride</td>
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<td>– Knowing to cook</td>
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<td>– Having many friends from diverse origins</td>
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<td>– Pride related to specific foods</td>
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<td>Continuities and changes</td>
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<td>– Food dishes and food items at breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks in Colombia.</td>
<td>– No Changes or continuities</td>
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<td>– Comparative consumption of food items.</td>
<td>– Changes: new foods, foods not eaten any more, changes on proportions and changes on time or places</td>
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<td>– Pizza, hot dogs, nuggets there and here.</td>
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<td>Interactions and influences</td>
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<td></td>
<td>– Family.</td>
<td>– Mother, father, siblings, grandmother</td>
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<td></td>
<td>– School.</td>
<td>– Family networks: parent’s friends, relatives in Florida or in the US.</td>
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<td>– Media.</td>
<td>– School: teachers, lunch ladies, classmates.</td>
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<td>Agency</td>
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<td>– Food they cook.</td>
<td>– Food they cook.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>– Food preferences.</td>
<td>– Food they know how to prepare.</td>
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<td>– Participation in the research: the interview and the group.</td>
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Interpretation is where the researcher makes sense of “what goes on, to reach out for understanding or explanation beyond the limits of what can be explained with the degree of certainty usually associated with analysis” (Wolcott 1994:11). In this sense, an unbounded, impassioned and generative researcher “transcends factual data and cautious analysis and begins to probe into what is to be made of them.” (Coffey and Atkinson 1996:9). In this context, in a second stage, the analysis of this study shifted to a more transformative process of data description, analysis and interpretation.

The group sessions were first transformed into narratives based on the reconstruction of participants’ voices and products along with the pictures taken during the sessions. Following Banks (1998:11), visual data were used not only for illustration but also for descriptive and interpretative purposes. Then, based on transcribed interviews, individual field notes, and group narratives, individual narratives of each participant were written. Such narratives were written based on the research questions. The structure of the narratives included:

- Contextualized description of the participant and the interview setting.
- Relevant data about his or her family.
- Description and analysis of his her participation during the group or groups sessions.
- Descriptive account of acculturation sub-categories including preferences and ethnic identity.
- Basic meal plan in the US during a weekday when goes to school.
- Food variations on weekends, Christmas, Thanksgiving and birthday.
- Restaurants.
- Foods in Colombia and food changes since living in the US.
- Concepts of American and Colombian food.

Interactions, influences and agency were woven along the narratives as related to other themes. Individual and group narratives mainly focus on description and in some cases reaches analysis.

Further analysis and interpretation was built based on narratives and guided by the central questions of the research about how Colombian immigrant children adjust to live
in the US, and how does food symbolize the change that they have experienced. Thus,
based on relationships among categories, the analysis developed themes and patterns 
around creolization, the concept proposed by Foner (1997) to explain patterns of 
acculturation of families. In the discussion I present such analysis at the same time that 
explore some interpretations beyond factual data and cautious analysis.

**Validity and Scope of the Generalizations**

Finally, I want to comment to some issues about validity and generalization of the 
findings. Miles and Huberman (1994) define two types of validity for qualitative studies: 
internal and external. *Internal validity* refers to credibility, verisimilitude, authenticity, 
plausibility, and adequacy of the accounts and interpretations presented by the researcher. 
“Do the findings of the study make sense? Are they credible to the people we study and 
to our readers? Do we have an authentic portrait of what we were looking at?” (Miles and 

*External validity* is related to generalization and refers to the transferability of the 
conclusions to other contexts. Unlike quantitative studies that make sample-to-population 
generalizations, qualitative studies aim at analytic generalizations based on the 
conceptual power and/or representativeness. “We are generalizing from one case to the 
next on the basis of a match to the underlying theory, not to a larger universe” (Miles and 

Internal validity of this study has resulted from the authenticity of the narratives and 
the credibility that readers such as my major professor and the committee members have 
given to the accounts and interpretations. In this sense, sociodemographic and 
acculturation variables were not used as tools for measuring the acculturation process, but 
rather as analytic and interpretive devices to enrich the plausibility and adequacy of the 
process of creolization that defines the kind of acculturation of participants.

External validity requires the definition of the scope of the study. I think that an 
emerging process of creolization and blending of meanings between elements from the 
immigrant culture with those they encounter in the context in the United States, defines 
the kind of acculturation that are experiencing not only participants on this study, but also
other Colombian children. However, it is necessary to recognize that it is very likely that
the particular characteristics of the acculturation process varies according to many factors
in Colombia such differences in social class, urban, peri-urban or rural residence, and on
individual and familial experiences, as well as according to factors in the context in the
US such as the magnitude of the presence of other Colombians and Spanish speaking
immigrants or the availability of Colombian foods. Yet, this study does not intend to
measure or analyze the relationship among the acculturation process and such factors; it
would be required other kind of research studies to understand such causal relationships.
CHAPTER FOUR

PARTICIPANTS AND THEIR NARRATIVES

This chapter is dedicated to participants. In total twenty two children between the ages of seven and twelve years old participated in the study. Of them, twelve were girls and ten boys. Out of the twenty two participants, twenty were interviewed. Juan Felipe and 50 Cent, participated in the group of boys but were not interviewed. Thus, their participation is presented in the narrative of group 3 and they are not included in the individual narratives. Seventeen interviewees were between seven and ten years old, and three between eleven and twelve years old. Tables 4 and 5 show the distribution of age and gender of participants. Most of them lived in the North West area of the Hillsborough County (appendix).

I present participants’ voices, perspectives, and interactions in individual narratives that represent them and describe interactions in which their agency during the interviews and the group sessions becomes evident.

As discussed on the Methods Chapter, I organized the narratives guided by the research questions. In general, the narratives include: description of the participant and the interview setting; data about his or her family; description and analysis of his her participation during the group or groups sessions, for those that participated; language, media and food preferences; ethnic identity; basic meal plan in the US on weekdays when they attend school; variations on weekends, holidays, birthdays and when eating at restaurants; foods consumed while they lived in Colombia and food changes since living in the US; and concepts and opinions about American and Colombian food. Likewise, within the narratives are woven their interactions with others in food related events and the elements of participants’ agency as identified on food preferences, the food they cook and their performances during the interviews and the group sessions.
Though narratives have a common structure, there are differences among them on length and detail. Such differences resulted from diverse factors such as the length of the interview, the level of detail given by the participant, on whether the interviewee participated in the group sessions, and on whether the participant was approached through CFH or at TICH. In general, the relationship with participants at TICH was more extended than with participants reached through the CFH.

Even though my initial intention was to keep just participants’ and researcher’s voices without including other sources of information, mother’s voices became so relevant that I had to include them. It was evident during the interviews that, even when a completely private environment was achieved, the girl or the boy wasn’t alone but closely connected to her or his mother: the mother is part of the child and the child is a prolongation of the mother\(^7\). Either at the beginning or at the end of the interview mothers expressed their own opinions trying to complement or correct what she heard or imagined her child said in the interview. It was as if the mother herself had built her own interview and briefly provided it to me. Moreover, the interview extended to other members of the family as happened at Luigi’s interview when his mother and his grandmother continued discussing what they had eaten for Thanksgiving, while he and I continued the interview, as well as at Elisa’s interview when her siblings offered complementary data about the food they like, and after Rebeca’s interview when her adolescent sister explained why she dislikes so much the food at school. I included in the narratives some relevant pieces of such other close voices.

In this sense, I found that interviewing participants at their homes generated a context where participant observation was a main tool for understanding their perspectives. Besides, I think that conducting interviews at their homes as well as the fact that they recognized me as Colombian, may have played a role in some of their inclination to feel proud of representing themselves as Colombians. Yet, I do not think this is something that impacted on the general trends or main conclusions of the study.

Recognizing that as qualitative researchers we are part of the methods and thus narratives are reconstructions mediated by our own realities, my intention was to write a

\(^7\) Muñoz, telephone conversation.
text where the reader can hear the participants’ voices and experiences within the interview’s context, as well as the part of their lives I was able to be with them. Indeed, narratives reflect both participants’ and researcher’s choices of representation. In this sense, in writing the narratives I tried to keep their original ways of speaking and meanings. Thus, their quotes are in their original language, keeping the mixture of words in Spanish and English and their syntaxes—sometimes based on Spanish and sometimes based on English grammar. I kept the order in which they mentioned people, foods and restaurants, as well as the order they used to list their food preferences. I also kept the words they used to refer to people such as mother, mom or mommy, both when they used the English words and when they used the Spanish words. As is common for Colombians, participants used many diminutives which generally are formed by adding to the word the suffixes “ito,” “ita,” “ico,” or “ica.” As a general rule, I understand that when participants are using diminutives on their speech they are not only meaning smaller size, but also expressing fondness, love and cherished foods. I also kept, and tried to present in a clear manner, the relationships they make among different elements and the arguments they use to support assertions and judgments.

First, I translated the Spanish quotes into English keeping the original structure. I was assisted by Angela Gómez, a Colombian-born anthropologist, whose English is very fluent, revised the translated quotes. Taking into account issues of representation and risks of misrepresentation due to my limitations with the English use, I decided not to include most slang when I was not sure what it meant. In addition, most quotes were first edited deleting short silences so as to keep a sense of fluid speech. The decisions I made related to language use were based not only thinking on the fluidity of the text for the reader, but also assuming my feelings and thoughts about how I believe the children would like to be represented. My experience doing qualitative research with adults in Colombia taught me that most of them, like me, dislike quotes that were not edited and showed gaps in their speech. Since this is not a study about language use, such decisions should not affect internal validity.

No pictures were taken of participants during the interviews, but photos of some foods they selected were taken. As mentioned before, based on the experience with
Halley who was very interested on showing some of her preferred foods, I started to take pictures right after the interview of some foods participants selected. I used such pictures as complementary illustrations of their narratives and as additional data to analyze how they wanted to be represented.

Finally, I want to say a word about foods’ names. Traditional Colombian foods are cited following guidelines of the Chicago Manual of Style (15th edition) as recommended for anthropological literature: the first time the name is used it is written in the original language and in italics any additional mentions are not in italics. Translations sometimes are presented on a footnote, but most of the times the term is defined in the glossary which is presented at the end of this dissertation.

Halley

Halley was born 10 years ago in Barranquilla, a large city on the Caribbean coast which every year performs an explosive, joyful and highly popular carnival. She speaks softly and calmly with a sweet intonation and a precise use of words. Such style shifts to explosions of energy when she talks about food she loves such as nuggets and arepas or when she complains about food she really hates such as natilla or a nasty fish which is prepared at school. While her Spanish reveals her Caribbean origins, her English doesn’t differ from the way her American classmates in fourth grade at Dickenson Elementary speak.

When I met Halley’s mother, a woman about 35 years old, at the CFH she talked about her concerns regarding her daughter: “ella se la pasa comiendo,” she exclaimed. When I called Halley to invite her to participate in this research study she accepted and my first interview was scheduled at their home on a Friday morning during her 2004 Spring break. As I arrived at their home, Halley’s mother opened the door and I found myself in the living room of a spacious, clean, and well lit apartment. She asked me to come in and have a seat. I felt not only welcome but also as if I were in Colombia again. Halley’s light brown skin and chestnut colored hair reveals the genetic and cultural mixture of most Colombians. Her older sister, an adolescent about 16 years-old came to

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8 She eats all the time.
greet me, as did her grandmother, a woman in her sixties. In contrast with her skinny and
tall mother, Halley looked short and round, and may be overweight, yet I wouldn’t say
she is obese. She wore a short skirt, a short-sleeve top, and sandals. Her wavy shoulder-
length hair looked combed. I felt she was ready for the interview. Halley sat in the middle
of a large couch and I sat at her left beside the window. In the living room there was also
another couch a couple of chairs, a coffee table, and a couple of auxiliary tables, several
decorations, and a large TV. Halley’s mother showed me a picture in a silver frame:
Halley with her father in Barranquilla. He is behind Halley hugging her, and both are
smiling.

After discussing the preliminary issues related to the informed consent
documentation, Halley’s mother left the room. Halley wore the microphone and took a
survey in her hands. After a while, Halley was not only answering the questions in a very
secure manner, she helped me write down English words, told me what I should do, and
anticipated questions she thought I would ask.

Halley came to live in the US two years ago when she was eight. She lives with her
mother, her older sister, and her maternal grandmother. Even though they were all in the
apartment, I only saw them when I arrived. About her father she just said, with a soft
tone, that he lives in Colombia. When talking about her mother, her voice returned to
normal. In Colombia Halley’s mother completed high school and obtained a college
degree in business administration. In Tampa she works as a housekeeper in a hotel.

When asked about how well she thinks she speaks Spanish she answered “bien”9
with a normal intonation that, quickly shifted into a proud and open-eyed exclamation
“bien!” when asked about her English. Since she anticipated that my Spanish would be
better than my English, Halley chose to conduct the interview in Spanish so that it would
be easier for me. Even though she said she prefers to speak English most of the time, at
home she speaks Spanish because:

No todo el mundo entiende inglés. Mi mamá no entiende inglés, mi abuela tampoco. Solamente mi
hermana y yo. Me toca hablar español porque mi mamá y mi abuela están aquí. Entonces siempre
que salgo a alguna parte que mi abuela y mi mamá no están entonces hablo inglés… siempre 10

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9 Good.
10 Not everybody understands English. My mother doesn’t understand English, neither my grandmother.
Just my sister and I do. I have to speak in Spanish because my mother and my grandmother are here. But
She identifies herself as Hispanic and her friends are from the United States. Her favorite television channels are Cine Canal, Nickelodeon, and Cartoon Network, as well as a Colombian channel called RCN where she watches an old and very famous Mexican family series called *El Chavo del Ocho*. While watching *El Chavo* she usually has raisins. She also has other snacks such as apple, mango, radish, cheese and cookies. She recalled two food advertisements from Colombian television:

> En Colombia hay unos pescaditos que tienen la cara de alguien. Entonces le dicen a la señora que procure comer atún que es muy saludable.. y también de espaguetis, espaguetis Doria… que vienen…entonces de la oficina le pregunta: hoy comiste espagueti Doria? y dice sí , entonces empiezan a hablar de las diferentes clases.. macarrones, tornillitos, espaguetis sueltos. Entonces hacen que lo más o menos la canción y van diciendo todos los días coman espaguetis que es muy saludable también.

Halley listens to 94.9 FM and likes the music of Celine Dion and Britney Spears. At school she has read books by Mary Stevenson. One that she remembered well is a diary written by a little boy who is ill and writes poems. She remarked that she really likes to read that kind of book. Like the sensitive and sad character of Stevenson’s book, she herself writes poems, but unlike him, she writes poems both in English and Spanish. Halley also likes to eat croissants, cookies, tacos, *bandeja paisa*, dips, chili, *empanadas*, spaghetti, corn dog, *patacones*, macaroni and cheese with pizza taste –that her mother buys specially for her- and chicken wings that “we buy at Walmart.” She also

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11 The boy of the [apartment number] eight.
12 Doria is the name of a popular brand of pastas.
13 In Colombia there are some little fishes with human faces… then, they tell the woman try to eat tuna because it is very healthy. Also, there is one about spaghetti Doria. Somebody from the office asks: did you eat spaghetti Doria today? The person answers yes. Then, they begin to speak about the different kinds such as macaroni, tortellini, and spaghetti. Then, they sing a song saying eat spaghetti everyday because they are healthy.
14 I translate to English the ones I write in Spanish and to Spanish the ones I write in English.
likes to eat avocado with salt, lemon with salt, guacamole, strawberry, cantaloupe, pineapple, watermelon, banana, grapes, and fruits juices prepared with frozen fruits such as lulo. Other dishes that her grandmother prepares and that she likes elicit her additional positive and loud comments:

[El ajiaco] sí lo como muuuucho, con la crema de leche… delicioso! [Sancocho] muuuucho. Y arroz de camarón, arroz chino, camarón al ajillo, y la paella … delicioso! Pan de bono, empanadas, chorizos… deliciosos!. Y bueno, eso es lo que como normalmente.\textsuperscript{15}

Foods that she does not eat include beans and chocolate. Foods that Halley really hates are pickles, pies, natilla, maizena, and some food at school such as a nasty fish they prepare with flour.

Talking about what she eats during the week when she goes to school, she asserted that she remembered everything she ate the previous week. She started by saying, in a voice that revealed fondness and pampering, that last Friday she woke up, as usual, at 6:20 a.m. and had a cheese omelet “que me hizo mi mama.”\textsuperscript{16} Halley remarked that for breakfast, she always has eggs and almost always cereal. At school they don’t allow you to have any food until lunch time at 11:25 a.m. Last Friday she just had bread for lunch because there was a kind of tuna or ugly fish as well as peanut butter and jelly sandwich and “I hate them,” she remarked. Yet, when there is pizza she enjoys having lunch at school; she makes that exception because “no podemos tomar ni gaseosa ni nada. Tenemos que tomar leche de chocolate extra, o sea de la roja. Horrible. Yo nunca tomo leche; siempre llevo agua”\textsuperscript{17}.

Even though she likes spaghetti, she does not eat the kind they prepare at school “porque tienen muuuuucha grasa, saben a agua y no saben a nada, uggg. Se les olvida sacarle el agua, no saben cocinar. Pobre!”\textsuperscript{18} At school, when she sits to have lunch with classmates, she likes to have hamburgers and nuggets. Yet, nuggets are her favorites. She got excited when talking about them:

\textsuperscript{15} [El ajiaco] I eat it a looot, with milk cream, delicious! I eat a lot sancocho, shrimp rice, Chinese rice, garlic shrimp and paella, umm delicious! …Normally, I also eat pan de bono, empanadas, chorizos… delicious!

\textsuperscript{16} that my mother made for me.

\textsuperscript{17} We can not drink any soda. We have to drink extra chocolate milk.. it means, the red one. It is horrible. I never drink milk; I always take water with me.

\textsuperscript{18} Because they have too muuuuuch fat, taste like water, and does not taste to anything at all, uggg. They forget to take out the water; they do not know how to cook, poor them!
Los nuggets sí me las puedo comer todos los días que no me canso de nuggets. For lunch is cool!
[At school] Nos lo dan de ese tamaño y de este tamaño, nos los dan regulares y nos los dan en triángulo, pero vamos a comer nuggets [singing]. Wendy’s. 99 cents nuggets (singing). I buy them by myself. So that’s why I buy 99 cents nuggets them by myself. 19

Around 3:05 p.m. when Halley gets home, she eats the almuerzo20 her grandmother has prepared. They usually have meat for almuerzo, yet lately, Halley complained, “como pollo todos los días aquí en la casa…Ya me estoy cansando del pollo. “21 Last Friday her grandma made grilled pork, rice, and a salad prepared with onion, lettuce, radishes, and cucumber dressed with salt and vinegar. After almuerzo she watches TV and has raisins. Raisins deserve an outstanding place among her preferences and companionships:
“Raisins. I love raisins. I don’t know… I love them… the whole time watching TV. “Yo tengo tres cajas ahí, si quieres ir a ver todo lo que yo como”22. Among her treasures she also has Colombian snacks that she generously offered to share with me: ‘Tengo Bon Bon Bum de Colombia, tengo Maní Moto, tengo una caja grande de Maní Moto, tengo una bolsa de Bon Bon Bum. Si quieres te doy.’23

Later on, around 6 or 6:10 p.m. she eats “la comida,” dinner. Sometimes she prepares her own dinner and sometimes her grandma does. Last Friday she had arepas and a coke. After that time she is not allowed to eat anything else until the next day. Besides preparing the snacks she likes such as chopped mango, radish, and celery, Halley knows how to prepare several dishes that either her mother or her grandmother cooked in Colombia and continue preparing here. She herself prepares dishes such as cheese omelet, salads and macaroni and cheese. When she is by herself she prepares macaroni and cheese “porque no quiero cocinarle a mi hermana”24. Likewise, she helps her

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19 I can eat nuggets everyday without getting tired of them. For lunch is cool! [At school] They give as nuggets of this size, and also this size. They give as regular nuggets and triangle nuggets. Wendy’s. 99 cents nuggets (singing). I buy them by myself. So that’s why I buy 99 cents nuggets them by myself.
20 Most people would translate almuerzo to lunch which generally is correct and accepted. Yet, the use that participants give is not the same. As will be discussed in Chapter Seven, while sometimes almuerzo means a big meal they eat at home whether when they arrive from school or later, other times means the meal eaten around noon whether at home or school, or restaurants.
21 I eat chicken everyday at home and I am getting tired of it.
22 I have three boxes there if you want to see what I eat.
23 I have Bon Bon Bum from Colombia. I have Maní Moto, I have a big box of Maní Moto, and I have a bag of Bon Bon Bum. If you want I give you some.
24 Because I don’t want to cook for my sister.
grandmother in seasoning the pork for grilling and knows very well the recipes for
cooking rice, spaghetti with Alfredo sauce, and arepas:

Arepas…yo sé cómo se preparan…tienen harina de trigo\(^{25}\). Entonces después tú coges y le echas
un poquito de sal, un poquito de azúcar y la revuelves con agua caliente. Después coges el
queso… fuuuull queso. Son dos libras de queso y una de masa. Entonces le echas todo ese queso,
y haces bolitas tiny…entonces después las echas y te las comes con coke…ummm!\(^{26}\)

Halley had several ideas about the food at special occasions. For Christmas and
Thanksgiving she went with her family to a friends’ house which has a big patio. Her
grandmother and her grandmother’s friend cooked turkey, mashed potatoes, and
Hawaiian ham “Tú sabes jamón? hawaiiano, que tiene la piña.. delicioso!”\(^{27}\) Following
what she called a tradition in Colombia, they have cake for birthdays as well as potato
salad with chicken, apple, and “cosas así.”\(^{28}\) Her grandmother’s and sister’s friends go to
visit her for her birthday, “y me dan regalos, que es lo mejor del cumpleaños, por cierto!
y la comida y bueno ya!”\(^{29}\)

Halley eats out in restaurants either with her grandmother and her grandmother’s
friends or with her sister, her sister’s friend, and her mother several times both on
weekdays and weekends. On Sundays they usually stop by McDonald’s to have caramel
ice cream before going to mass, so they can hold out until lunch. After mass, they always
go either to a Chinese restaurant or to Golden Corral. At the Chinese restaurant she
usually has fish, Chinese cookies, ice cream, grapes, pineapple, jelly, and coke. At
Golden Corral she likes to have meat, salad, soup, hot dog, or corn dog, and ice cream.
About once a week she also goes to Latino restaurants such as La Cabaña Antioqueña,
where she has bandeja paisa.

She thinks the food she eats has not changed since she came to live in the US. In
Colombia she ate most of the food that could be called American food, such as
hamburgers, hot dogs, or pizza. Yet, there they were not part of her daily diet but were

\(^{25}\) Arepas are made with corn meal.
\(^{26}\) Arepas … I know how to prepare them. They have wheat flour. Then, you add a bit of salt a bit of sugar,
you mix it with hot water and then you add cheese, fuuuull cheese {now her accent sounds very typically of
Barranquilla, and her voice tone is excited}. There are two pounds of cheese and one pound of flour. You
add all that cheese, and then you make little balls, tiny, you put them… and then you eat them… with
coke…ummm!
\(^{27}\) You know ham? Hawaiian, the one with pineapple…delicious!
\(^{28}\) Things like this.
\(^{29}\) And they give me gifts which is the best thing of the birthday, certainly! And the food and well that’s it!
eaten only in restaurants or on special occasions. Likewise, pizza and hot dogs are different. In Colombia, “la pizza de piña sabe más rica. Esa piña de acá sabe a lata. La otra en Colombia era natural” Hot dogs are very different; Colombian hot dogs had “las papitas, el huevito, la salsa de piña, la salsa tártara y la salsa rosada [excited]. Acá sólo tienen el pan la salchicha, mostaza y salsa de tomate [disappointed].

Through the interview we found some other particular changes. One is that in the US she began to eat tacos because “allá no se comía mucha comida mexicana, eso es más mexicano que colombiano”. The second change is related to taste; in Colombia she did not like strawberries but in the US she began to like them and conversely she stopped eating arequipe, which she liked in Colombia. Even though she loves obleas she has not eaten them any more because they are not found here. Yet, Halley believes there has been a major change in the food: [In the US the food] “La comida tiene mucha más grasa y muchas más vitaminas por eso es que te pones como un cerdo!” When I asked what American food is and what Colombian food is, she answered:

La comida colombiana es muy rica y muy típica y en diferentes países hay diferentes comidas que son muy ricas. La comida americana a veces es rica pero engorda mucho. A veces es fea y también engorda.

Lizzie McGuire

I met Lizzie at TICH where she usually plays, talks, and laughs with her friends. When I invited her to participate in the research, she was very excited. She is an eight and a half year-old girl, who came from Cali to the US four years ago, when she was “four or five.” She is in third grade at Dickenson Elementary, is thin and looks taller than other children of her age. She has light skin and long, light chestnut hair.

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The pineapple pizza tastes more delicious. Here the pineapple tastes like tin can and in Colombia it was natural.

Papitas is the diminutive of papas (potatoes). It may mean not only smaller size but also fondness or something cute.

I believe she is talking about quail egg.

Potato chips, egg, pineapple sauce, tartar sauce, and pink sauce [excited]. Here they just have bread, sausage, mustard and ketchup [disappointed].

There, we did not eat much Mexican food and those are more Mexican than Colombian.

Contains a lot of fat.. and a lot of vitamins. That is why you become like a pig!

Colombian food is delicious and very typical. Different countries also have delicious foods…American food is delicious but causes you to get fatter. Sometimes is nasty and also makes you to get fatter.

Lizzie McGuire is a Disney’s character.
I am still amazed with the huge difference she showed during the interview compared with the way she behaved in the two groups she participated. During the interview at her home she was shy, talked in a low voice, and seemed not to understand my questions either in English or in Spanish. In the groups she was loquacious, very independent, and active. In the mixed group (group 1), she offered her opinion and supported the idea of playing make believe as if they were at a restaurant; she became allied with Angela to be the customers, asking, laughing, and really acting like a professional actress. Then, when Angela left and she was the only girl among two boys, she stopped playing with them, isolated herself from them and started to draw a picture. Once in a while, while drawing, she had several arguments with Usher about personal issues. In the group with the girls (group 2) she led and organized what they would do. Based on what she did and what she saw the boys do in group 1, she told the other girls what to do and then, creatively, opening her almond-shaped eyes, she jumped, raised her arms and proposed to stick cards with the food names on the wall as if they were the menu. In the group, she was talkative, and even though she usually speaks in English with her friends, both her spoken English and her Spanish were very good and clear. Conversely, during the interview, many times she avoided looking at me, and said she did not understand many questions and common words such as \textit{domingo}.\textsuperscript{38}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image.png}
\caption{Lizzie (left) explains to Valentina that a steak is a meat.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{38} Sunday.
When I called to set the appointment, her mother, a woman of about 40 years, said Lizzie is mad about chocolate, brownies, and cookies. She also suggested that it would be better to conduct the interview not at their home but at a beach close by. She pointed out that at home it would be very difficult to conduct the interview since her mother-in-law lives with them, along with her little daughter. When I got to their home, however, she said that it wasn’t possible to go out so we stayed there. This happened after I got lost on what I guess was a highway close to the Tampa airport; I was saved by a kindhearted Puerto Rican woman who realized that I did not understand her directions and who ordered me to follow her right to the corner of Lizzie’s home.

When Lizzie opened the door she was wearing fashionable blue jeans, adjusted in the top and ample in the bottom, with a pink short sleeve top with a logo and a painting of a modern young woman wearing jeans and a white T-shirt. I usually have seen her with a ponytail, but she had her hair loose and nicely combed. I realized that she was ready for the interview which she chose to conduct in English.

We sat on a couch in the living room, which was located close by the entrance in front of a medium-sized window. There were two more chairs and some decorations on a table and on the walls. In front of us were the dining table, and the kitchen at its right side. I sat at Lizzie’s left side; she wore the microphone, took the recorder in her hands, and following my instructions, set it up. Soon she got tired of the microphone and asked me if she could take it off. Actually, she was not interested in the recorder at all, although she was very interested in the food cards: “you get these on the computer?” She asked me.

Lizzie lives in a middle-sized house with her mother, father, younger sister, two older male brothers, and her paternal grandmother. She said there are six children but two do not live with her. An older stepbrother lives in another place in Tampa, and her stepsister, who is about her age, lives in Colombia. In the Beach Feast, the painting she made as participant of group 1, she depicted what I interpret as her desire to reunite the family, since they were all sitting together eating sandwiches in the beach. In the painting she also drew herself playing volleyball with her stepsister from Colombia.
Lizzie thinks her father sells kitchen accessories but she does not know about his or her mother’s education. Her mother works in two places, YMCA and “giving bags to the banks.” Moving with relief from the questions about her parents, to which she did not know the answers, she said, with a dubious tone, “very good” when asked about her ability to speak Spanish. When I asked how well she speaks English, however, she exclaimed securely, “very good!”

At home she speaks Spanish but she prefers speaking English most of the time. She identifies herself as Colombian although most of her preferences are American ones. Most of her friends are from America or Cuba, her favorite television channels are Nickelodeon and Disney Channel, and she listens to 1380: the Disney radio station. She listens “most of the time Lizzie McGuire.” Recently, she has been reading the Indian Book which was a gift from her mother. It seems that she likes the book a lot and wanted to say more than she could say, so she asked: “may I show it to you?”

Let me show you. Right here it tells you stories about the Indians Red, when their kids were little, and they show you how to do things. They show –I think this is the second thing that they show you, how to do for arts, and the first one was to do the shoes that they wear. Here is another story that makes just for fun….He can made man out of the animals and then when [he was] inside on himself, he killed himself, and with his brain and with his body they did people, and they were strong and brave.

During weekdays, she usually has breakfast at home at 7 a.m. Sometimes she has “pan con mantequilla,” and other times eggs and arepas, but “I eat all the time Milo” she asserted. When asked who prepares her breakfast she said “my mom, when I am taking a bath.” Yet, Lizzie knows very well how to prepare arepas, Milo, and pan con mantequilla, and sometimes she does prepare them. Usually Lizzie sits at the dining table by herself while her mother is in the kitchen.

At school she drinks water after playtime, and at 12:30 p.m. she has lunch with her friends, a girl and two boys. When asked about what she has for lunch at school, she answered with an insecure tone:

I don’t know what. Like little things that are… I don’t know how they are called. I don’t know how to explain or call them…And Milo again. [Looking at a hamburger in the cards] Oh! Here, it is. It’s like this but it doesn’t have those things, it has like something inside. It was like a meat but

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39 Bread with butter. [Bread with butter and bread with butter and jelly are common foods for breakfasting in Colombia].
40 Milo is a chocolate powder very popular among Colombian children, used to prepare chocolate milk.
with a sauce in there. Like chicken but meat on there. Chicken with sauce in there, a lot. So, I didn’t want to eat it. I gave it to my friend. I threw it away and gave it to my friends.

After many questions and answers she talked about some foods she likes having for lunch at school: orange, raisins, the round bread of the hamburger, and Milo. After school, she goes home where she eats the lunch her grandmother has prepared. Later, she has dinner, which is also made by her grandmother, and about 10 p.m. she drinks Milo again. Her grandmother usually cooks on weekends but Lizzie does not think they have special foods.

While we were talking about food, she answered many times “I don’t know,” “I don’t remember,” or “I don’t understand.” It is my understanding that maybe in some cases she did not know the names of food items or places either in English or in Spanish. I also think, perhaps she is shy and does not remember the food eaten. So I tried a complementary strategy, using the food cards and giving all of them to her. She began to check the cards and asked me what to do. Without being clear about what to do, and concerned with validity and IRB issues, I told her to organize the food items in three groups: food that she likes, food that she doesn’t like and food that she doesn’t know. Immediately, she sat on the carpet, as I also did, took all of the cards and began to sort them. She took this task very seriously, observed each card, stayed quiet most of the time, and looked very engrossed in this task. For the remainder of the interview she sorted cards, sometimes asking me about the names of the food items or dishes. After a while she pointed out “here are the ones that I don’t know.” Then she added “Las que me gustan primero, las que no me gustan y las que no sé”\(^{41}\). Later she asked: “Y ¿Cómo sabe cuáles son los que me gustan y los que no me gustan?”\(^{42}\). The two year-old sister interrupted us several times, and even though Lizzie was bothered by her, she stayed calm and did not look upset or annoyed.

Looking at the cards she exclaimed: “I used to drink this Milo.” Then added “Cuando yo era chiquita tomaba este Milo”\(^{43}\). I ask “what Milo do you drink now?” and she answers: “I don’t know how it is called. I think it is the same.”

\(^{41}\) The ones that I like first, [then] the ones I don’t like, and the ones I don’t know.
\(^{42}\) And how do you know which I like and which I don’t like?
\(^{43}\) When I was little I drank this Milo.
Lizzie likes to eat meat and for snacks she likes *papitas*[^44] and M&M’s, both the normal ones and “the others one that I like are M&M’s but it doesn’t have chocolate inside, it has like peanut butter.” Among the food she likes there is one vegetable, carrot, and several fruits such as bananas, apples, pears, oranges, grapes, watermelons, tangerines and strawberries. Other foods she likes include eggs, ham, cheese, milk, butter, arepas, *patacones*, chicken nuggets, and bread. The list of the food she likes got longer when she began to sort the group of cards which include candies, pastries, and sugar based foods. Her gaze turned, from serious and involved to smiling and sweet when she added to the pile of the food she likes cakes, *buñuelos*, pretzels, chocolate bars, pan de bono, cookies and chocolate cookies, candies, cup cakes, brownies, pop corn.

Foods that she does not eat include most vegetables, flan, fruit salad, muffins, biscuits, bagels, tortillas, pizza, macaroni and cheese, and hamburger. She also does not like: beans, fish, chicken, nuts, pineapple, peaches, cantaloupe, guava, papaya, watermelon, guacamole and avocado. Lizzie said her food choices are respected by her parents: “If I don’t want, if I don’t want it, I say my mom and dad not to eat it [and I don’t eat it].”

Lizzie goes to Colombian restaurants with her parents, grandmother, and sister. There, she likes to have meat with lemon, beans, rice, patacones, *maduros*, and water. She said that either her mother, her father, or her grandmother cooks for her birthday, and they “put candies in little bags.” Lizzie did not recall well what they had for Christmas and Thanksgiving. First, she said “I don’t know” and then added:

> We were with my grandmother, my mother, my father, my family and friends. We ate grapes and made twelve wishes.[^45] And we ate food that most people don’t eat, like different food.

She had few memories of Colombia. One thing she recalls is that “I went to granny’s country house which had a pool and I had a very good time with my cousin.” At the country house, she also remembered her mother prepared “*como unas salchichas* that you

[^44]: *Papitas* is the diminutive of *papa* (potatoes). Yet she actually meant potato chips. The suffixes “ita” “ito” “ica” and “ico” are used in Spanish as diminutives. Besides meaning a small size, diminutives are commonly used by Colombians to express particular affections such as fondness, tenderness and love. Participants of this study used several diminutives when talk about the food they like, usually expressing such affections.

[^45]: This is a widespread tradition in Colombia for the New Year.
put on the water, que mi mamá me hacía, como arañitas, spiders, como arañitas con ocho piernas, no sé qué es.”

For snacks in Colombia she remembered bocadillo, sodas, water, and juices, and she also remembered that pizza was different but she did not know what the difference is. When asked about Colombian and American food she concluded:

Colombian food is delicious and also is different…Some American food tastes like Colombian food and others no.

At the end of the interview, Lizzie asked me to take a couple of pictures of her with the Nesquik pot, which is her Milo. Finally, I realized that the name “Milo” is Lizzie’s generic term for all chocolate milks. Even though she doesn’t drink Milo any more, she does drink Nesquik at home or chocolate milk at school, and she calls them both “Milo.” It seems to me that Milo and chocolate milk represent not only the most loved food for her, but also a sense of continuity and stability in the midst of changes. It represents both links with her past when she was younger and with her present links with her mother and the school:

My mom gets it [Milo] hot but…my mom gets it like tili tilo, como un poquito frío o un poquito caliente. And at school I have it cold.

Bryan

The first time I went to TICH, the director invited me to attend a Spanish class so I could get a sense of the program. It was a warm spring Saturday and I wore Bermudas and a T-shirt, as I usually did on Saturdays. There were about ten children between eight and eleven years old in the classroom, six boys and four girls. I was just greeting them when one of them asked loudly “Are you going to the beach?” When I tried to find where the voice came from, my eyes met a watchful and smiling boy, with small and shining green eyes, and wavy well cut hair. Bryan and all his classmates laughed, while I, still confused, understood that my casual dress wasn’t appropriate for the circumstances.

After that, I met Bryan several Saturdays during the spring 2004 at TICH. At playtime he usually buys sodas and chips and plays soccer with his friends. He always

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46 Like sausages that you put on the water, that my mother made for me, like little spiders, spiders. Like spiders with eight legs. I don’t know what it is.

47 She meant tibio, which means lukewarm.

48 Like a bit cold or a bit hot.
answers my greetings with a mixture of respectful kindness and independence. In the afternoon, he also takes soccer classes with Ronald Valderrama a Colombian soccer player who now lives in Tampa. When I invited him to participate in the research he immediately said yes and gave me his mother’s phone number. His mother, a woman about 40 years old, mentioned her concern that Bryan is overweight. She said he is twenty pounds overweight and she is concerned because his father and his paternal family are obese. She said her problem is that even though people tell her to give him fruits and vegetables, she doesn’t know how because she doesn’t know how to cook with more vegetables than she is used to. Then, she added “a él le encanta la pizza de peperoni y yo no quiero controlarle la comida, entonces le hago tratos. Yo le preparo el almuerzo que lleva a la escuela y los viernes le doy plata para que compre pizza en la escuela.”49 By the time I got to Bryan’s home his aunt and two cousins were there, but neither he nor his mother were at home. His cousins, a boy about four years-old and a girl seven years-old were watching TV. When Bryan and his mother arrived, he greeted me, kindly as usually, unloaded a heavy bag on the carpet, and ran to set up the play station. He wore baggies, black sneakers, and blue T-shirt. His mother called him and we sat in the dining room. I sat on his left side. His cousins were in the living room to my left where there was a huge TV and the play station along with a couch, some chairs, two tables and several decorations. Bryan’s mother was cooking in the kitchen located to his right and behind Bryan there was a cage with an Australian parrot.

Bryan explained to me in pretty good English that the play station was his mother’s gift for his ninth birthday last January. His voice was strong and secure and his answers were mostly short and precise. He came from Cali to the US when he was five and lives with his mother, his aunt and her husband, and his two cousins. He is in third grade at Lee Elementary. His mother works cleaning houses, which he said is something she likes to do. In Colombia, she studied “the thing that, the lady that tells where to put things, like

49 He loves pepperoni pizza and I don’t want to control his food, so I make deals with him. I prepare his lunch for school and every Friday I give him money to buy pizza at school.
in houses. *Mami, usted en Colombia qué hacía?* he shouted to her mother. “*Ejecutiva de ventas…Yo estudié diseño de interiores,*” answered her.

Bryan thinks he speaks good Spanish because “I speak it in my house all the time. Well, sometimes. [I speak Spanish] with my uncle and my mom [and] in English I speak with my two cousins.” He thinks he speaks not only good but excellent English; looking at his mother, said he prefers to speak Spanish most of the time. He identifies himself as Colombian and American.

He asked my permission to take off the microphone and hear the recording. He opened his eyes and laughed excitedly when he heard his voice. I recall how much he enjoyed the group session, when he roared with laughter with his friends, creating several different objects with the play-doh and expressing a sincere mixture of gentleness, curiosity, and seriousness. During group 3, he first made a couple of multicolored dishes with strawberry, cream, vanilla and chocolate; then, he designed a yellow tractor cake; after that he made a Colombian candy with eye, and finally along with Ron made the “*bombón de la libertad!*”

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50 Mom, what did you do in Colombia?
51 Marketing executive. I studied interior design.
52 The candy of freedom!
After explaining to him again that wearing the individual microphone was up to him and not really necessary for quality reasons, he decided not to wear it and kept the recorder in his hands while we continued the interview.

Bryan’s friends are from Colombia and from America, his favorite television channels are Nickelodeon, Cartoon Network, and Disney Channel. He does not listen to radio, but said his favorite music is “Hispanic or American music. I like Hispanic music. I like both.” We were talking in English and I was not sure how much his mother understood what we were talking, so I wonder if he felt pressure to make sure she would approve of his answers. His favorite books are “funny books, scary books, some sports books and some animal books; about soccer and about parrots.” “Esta es la mascota de él” added his mother pointing to the Australian parrot.

His favorite foods are pizza, hot dogs, and “Spanish food” such as beans, rice, chicken, and soups. Soups he likes include chicken and noodle. His favorite snacks are Cheetos, chips, Doritos, and sodas.

Even though he ate nuggets, pizza, and hot dogs in Colombia, Bryan thinks they are different from the ones he eats here. “The pizza in here has a lot of cheese. In Colombia has a little bit of cheese, and less sauce.” About the hot dogs he added, “in Colombia they put the chips on it and I liked it. Hot dogs were more delicious there.” His mother asked “yo puedo meter la cucharada? Es bueno que él recuerde que en Colombia no comíamos casi pizza a comparación de aquí. Lo poquito que se comía era little.” I thank the mother for her comments and kindly explained to her again about confidentiality and reminded her that the purpose of the research was to know what Bryan knows and thinks.

On weekdays Bryan usually wakes up at 6:30 a.m. takes a bath, gets dressed, and eats breakfast. In Colombia he ate eggs, but “here sometimes I eat eggs and sometimes I eat cereal. But I eat lots of eggs. I like eggs.” When I told him that I also like eggs, he smiled at me and we both laughed. The only difference he recognized in the breakfast he ate in Colombia and the one he eats here is that in Colombia he ate:

53 This is his pet.
54 May I butt in? It is good that he remembers that in Colombia we did not eat as much pizza as compared to here. The little that we ate was little.
Huevos fritos y pericos, tostadas con mantequilla y a veces mermelada. Acá desayuno lo mismo pero sin tostadas. Acá desayuno es con pan con mantequilla, huevos y sándwich.\footnote{Fried and scrambled eggs with onion and tomatoes, toasted bread with butter and sometimes jelly. Here I have the same breakfast but without toasted bread. Here I have breakfast with bread with butter, eggs and sandwich.}

After breakfast he goes to school where he has a snack at 10 a.m. Lunch time is at 11:50 a.m. Sometimes he eats pizza sticks, chocolate milk, and ice cream for lunch. Then he has grapes for snack at the after-school with his teacher and friends. Bryan said his lunch has changed since he came from Colombia. He recalled in Colombia for lunch he had foods such as “\textit{lasaña, sopa de verduras, sopa de pollo y sopa de pasta}.”\footnote{Lasagna, soup of vegetables, chicken soup and noodle soup.} In the US, he eats dinner at home, at around 6 or 7 p.m. His aunt cooks for the family. Sometimes he eats “\textit{arroz con pollo}”\footnote{Rice with chicken.} and cheese stick, and he drinks water and chocolate milk. Sometimes he prepares his own chocolate milk and usually has dinner with his aunt, uncle, and two cousins because at that time his mother is working. Bryan also found his dinner has changed since he came from Colombia because there he usually had a sandwich. Yet he thinks in Colombia he had similar snacks such as candies and popsicles.

Bryan goes to “Spanish restaurants” with his mother and uncle where he likes to eat “\textit{chuleta, arroz and Colombiana}.”\footnote{Chop, rice and Colombiana. \textit{Colombiana} is a popular and traditional red colored soda.} He did not remember what he had for Christmas, but said that for Thanksgiving he had chicken and cake cooked by his mother for his birthday. It was “good… chocolate. It is chocolate and ice cream cake.”

Bryan likes “\textit{plátanos fritos}”\footnote{Fried plantains.}; he described how his mother prepares them: “\textit{mi mamá corta el plátano, lo aplasta, lo pone en el aceite, lo saca y están listos!”}\footnote{My mother cut the plantain, squashes it, put it on the oil, takes it out and they are ready! (His description corresponds to \textit{patacones}).} Looking at the cards he said he also likes a “green soup” his mother cooks and ran to tell her: “\textit{usted hizo la sopa verde pero sin esas cosas}”\footnote{You made the green soup but without those things.} and his mother exclaimed “\textit{espinacas! Sopa de espinacas, a él le gusta}!”\footnote{Spinach!. Soup of spinach, he likes it!}
Even though Bryan defined Colombian food as having “carne, cebolla, tomate y salsas,” I think Colombian food for him is represented by the food his mother cooks, by the food he eats at home that is prepared by his aunt, and by what he eats in “Spanish restaurants.” Bryan defines American food as “perros, pizzas, hamburguesas y sodas.”

His cousin was playing with the play station and Bryan became very anxious. He constantly looked at his cousin, stopped paying attention to me, and asked if we were almost done. I said yes but, aware of his feelings, I reminded him that we could stop whenever he wanted to. So he concluded, “I want to stop.”

Asprilla

Asprilla is a thin, tall, and smiling eleven year-old boy who studies at Davidsen Middle School. He looks like an energetic sixth grade teen. He has very short straight black hair covered with gel, dark almond shaped eyes, abundant eyebrows and a some tentative fuzz on his upper lip. When I invited him to participate in the research at TICH, he accepted immediately and asked me when the interview would be, because “estoy listo.” Like other people from Risaralda, his home region, he takes very seriously everything he does. Playing soccer with his younger brother and some friends he runs energetically along the field, fights cleanly for the ball, cries, take his head with his hands when he fails, and jumps with joy when he scores a goal. As a group participant in the session with the boys he did not participate in the jokes and rough play, but rather sat calmly in a chair, asked for something to drink, and then sat on the table to draw with his friend Usher and his brother 50 Cent. He talked with them in a normal tone and stayed involved with his painting, which he drew in great detail. “Estos son comidas de Colombia. Esto es café de Colombia, arroz, acá hay un sancocho, frijoles, un buñuelo que me encanta, y empanada, carne y un chorizo.”

63 Meat, onion, tomato and sauces.
64 Dogs [hot dogs], pizzas, hamburgers and sodas.
65 Asprilla is a famous Colombian soccer player.
66 I am ready.
67 50 Cent is an American singer. It is the pseudonyms that Asprilla’s brother choose in group 3.
68 These are Colombian foods. This is Colombian coffee, rice; here is one sancocho, beans, one buñuelo which I love, and empanada, meat, and one chorizo.
When I reached Asprilla’s home, I realized that after almost three years of living in Tampa, I was just beginning to know the city. While following the phone directions that Asprilla’s father gave me, I heard several people speaking Spanish in the background. Asprilla was in the pool but would join us in a few minutes said his father, who offered me a delicious bocadillo and a glass of cold milk. Later he also gave Asprilla and me dinner, which consisted of rice, lentils, canned sausages, and mango juice. Asprilla’s mother called. The father answered that yes, I was there and yes, he offered me bocadillo and milk. He continued talking with her for several minutes. Then he said, with a profound paisa\textsuperscript{69} accent, that even though normally the father is the one who should maintain the family, here it is different and he has to accept the change of his role and take care of his children while his wife works.

Asprilla arrived and greeted me gently, informally, and securely. He wore black baggies with white strips on the sides, black and heavy sneakers, and a loose white T-shirt. He was very interested on the tape recorder, wore the microphone, set the recorder up, and tried it a couple of times. He sat on a medium-sized couch in the living room, close by a big window. I sat to his right on a similar couch. There was a coffee table, two

\textsuperscript{69} People from the department of Antioquia, Risaralda, and Quindío are known as “paisas.” They all belong to the Antioqueña culture which I discuss on Chapter Seven.
auxiliary tables with decorations on them, and pictures on the walls. Asprilla’s father and brother, who were in the kitchen behind us, left us alone.

Asprilla helped me to write the name of his school, Davidsen; he spelled for me while checked my writing carefully. With his marked paisa accent, he said he came to live in the US when he was nine years old and lives with his father, his mother, and his younger brother. His father washes cars and drives cars to the airport, and his mother works in a hospital. Asprilla said his parents studied *everything*, which means high school, but did not go to the university. He said of his mother, “ella estudió de todo pero no sé si fue a la Universidad.”

When I asked how he identifies himself, he answered clearly and loudly “*Yo? Colombiano!*” He thinks he speaks English more or less and good Spanish “*Es el que sé más, lo hablo bien. Pienso que lo sé más que el inglés.*” He prefers to speak Spanish most of the time as he does with his family at home and with his friends, mostly Colombians, at school. Since, “yo estoy en una clase de ESOL. Entonces es como puros hispanos y casi todos son colombianos, hay cubanos y todo pero la mayoría son colombianos.”

On TV he watches cartoons, music, and sometimes movies in English, and sport news and soccer games in Spanish, or sometimes watches “*Betty la Fea*” on UNIVISION. When he began listing the number of the channels, he looked at the questionnaire where I was taking notes, and after saying that number five is in Spanish and number four in English, he asked with concerned, “*si caben ahí?*” When I showed him there was enough room, he continued his list: 8 and 13 in Spanish, 36, 58, 40, 66, 23, 32 and 26 in English. He listens to English music at 95.7 and 98.7 and also listens to a radio station in Spanish “*cuando mi papá la escucha.*” His favorite music is rap, hip hop, salsa, and *reguetón* which is from Puerto Rico. He said he knew rap in Colombia but

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70 She studied everything but I don’t know if she went to the university.
71 Me? Colombian!
72 Is the one that I know the best, I speak it good. I think I know it more than English.
73 I am in a ESOL class. Then, we are all Hispanics and almost all are Colombians, there are Cubans and others but the majority are Colombians.
74 Betty la Fea (Betty the ugly) is a popular Colombian series presented several years ago, exported throughout Hispanic countries and then made as a cartoon series.
75 Do they fit there?
76 When my father listens at it.
the reguetón and the hip hop in the US because “acá hay mucho puertorriqueño.”

Asprilla likes reading books of adventures both in English and Spanish; at present he is reading one titled *The Canary Carper*, or something like that.

His favorite food is Bandeja Paisa as told me loudly and proudly. He also likes fried fish with salt and lemon, empanadas, stuffed potato, *sancocho*, and *frijoles*. He has fish both at home –prepared either by his mother or his father- or at La Cabaña Antioqueña. They buy the empanadas and the stuffed potato at Colombian bakeries, and the sancocho is cooked “acá!” exclaimed, as if it was obvious. He ate all these foods before, yet:

En Colombia el pescado sí que lo comía mucho. En Colombia una cosa que me gustaba era la pizza hawaiana, en Colombia me encantaba...Pero allá le echan bastante piña. Acá como hawaiana, peperoni y de queso y allá sobre todo hawaiana.

For snacks he likes papitas, bocadillo, “galletas de las que tienen chocolate... como esas cositas de chocolate pequeñas... (y) como fritos que son esos que tienen bastante sal.” Suddenly, he stopped and pointing out a place on the questionnaire, asked me “Acá no va eso?” I explained to him how the notes were a support but the main source was the record of the interview, which was why I was not writing everything. He looked at me, said “okay” and continued. In Colombia, he recalled excitedly, that he loved mangos, which were sold on the streets:

Los partían así y así y le echaban sal y limón. Después salieron unos nuevos que ahí sí me gustaban antes más... ellos lo ponían un mango ahí y salían puras tiritas de mango y le echaban un plato lleno de eso y entonces después le echaban sal, limón, uno le podia echar *pepper*, no sé cómo se llama eso

R: *Pimienta*

Pimienta... y le podia echar leche condensada pero yo siempre le echaba mucha sal y limón y le echaba un poquito de leche condensada... más rico! Ay! a mí siempre me gustan los mangos

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77 Here there are a lot of Puerto Ricans.
78 Beans.
79 Here!
80 In Colombia I did eat a lot of fish. One thing that I liked in Colombia was Hawaiian pizza, in Colombia I loved it...But there they put enough pineapple. Here I eat Hawaiian, pepperoni and cheese, and there mainly Hawaiian.
81 Those cookies which have chocolate...like such small chocolate little things...(and) such as fries that are those very salty.
82 Does it not go here?
verdes, siempre escojo los más verdes que son los que me gustan más, con sal y limón, los más picantes.83

Talking about changes in the food he eats since he came to the US, first he said there have been only a few changes, and then thought for a while trying to define them. It seemed to be a hard task since everything he thought was different, was really similar after all. Unlike here, in Colombia he did not stay at school for lunch but went home where his grandmother, like his parents, made frijoles. Actually, at home and at the country house, she made the same food he eats here. Maybe there is a difference after all, he suggested: “a veces cuando yo me quedaba a comer en la escuela, en Colombia daban como comida normal, como en Colombia, pero acá me dan chicken sándwich, y cosas así.”84

On weekdays during school he usually wakes up at 7:30 a.m., takes a shower, gets dressed, and then, about 7:45 a.m. has desayuno85. Sometimes he has Kellogg’s86 and other times “arroz con huevo y arepa con mantequilla.”87 Usually, the parent who is at home prepares his breakfast, but sometimes he prepares his Kellogg’s and has breakfast by himself. Since his brother is at elementary school leaves earlier. Then, he takes the school bus. At school, around 11:20 a.m. Asprilla has lunch:

En el lunch, en el almuerzo yo como… a mí me gusta mucho cuando dan pollo. Porque muy poquito dan pollo así normal, pero siempre que dan yo lo cojo. Pollo, chicken nuggets, taco y un sándwich de pollo. Eso son dos panes y un pollo.88

I asked him to describe the sandwich and the taco, and he said:

[El sandwich] es como el que dan en McDonald’s, ¿Usted nunca ha ido a McDonald’s o a Burger King o a Wendy’s? [Los tacos son] normales, son como esa cosa de ese pan o esa cosa, esa arepa.

83 They cut them like this and like this and they added salt and lemon. Then, there were some new ones that I liked even more. they put a mango there and there were just little mango strips and they put one plate full of this and then after, they added salt and lemon, and one could add pepper. I do not know how to say it R: Pimienta. Pimenta (pepper)...and one could add condensed milk but I always added a lot of salt and lemon and added a bit of condensed milk...so delicious! Oh! I always like the green mangoes, I always chose the greenest which are the ones that I like the most, with salt and lemon, the hottest ones.

84 Sometimes, when I stayed for dinner at school, in Colombia one was given like normal food, like in Colombia, but here they give me chicken sandwich and things like this.

85 Breakfast.

86 He used the brand Kellogg’s as a generic term for all kinds of cereal.

87 Rice with egg and arepa with butter.

88 At lunch, at almuerzo I eat...I like so much when they give chicken. Because sometimes, very few times they give normal chicken, but always that they give it I take it. Chicken, chicken nuggets, taco, and a chicken sandwich. This is two breads and one chicken.
The only fruits Asprilla likes at school are strawberries and tangerines, and for drinking he always has orange juice and chocolate milk. “Acá, fresas” pointing out a place on the questionnaire. Since most of the women who prepare the lunch at school are Colombians, Asprilla and a Colombian friend make jokes asking them for bandeja paisa. Usually, he has lunch with Colombian, Cuban, and Puerto Rican friends.

In after school, at about 3:45 p.m. “ahí nos dan snacks, lo mismo que le dije en la otra página. Como galletas y fruit punch, jugo como de frutas.” Sometimes his father picks him up at the after school and other times he goes with a friend to his home where they play. Sometimes they eat arepa, but since his friend is Venezuelan, the arepa served at his home “no es como la colombiana así que es toda aplastada, sino que es como una más pequeña, pero es más gorda. Y ellos la cortan por la mitad y le ponen jamón, queso, salsas ahí. Comer con ellos es bien rico.”

Then, when Asprilla arrives home around 7:30 p.m., his father gives him another “almuerzo, la comida, pues la comida.” For dinner he said he has normal things such as beans, lentils, rice, meat, potato, and sometimes a little salad. Actually, he does not eat much salad although he said he does not know why.

Even though Asprilla thinks there have been few changes in the food he eats in the US compared to the ones he ate in Colombia, he found some differences. In Colombia, he recalled having:

Al desayuno arepa con huevo, carne, arroz y buñuelo. A veces como de eso acá al desayuno, a veces buñuelo. El desayuno de acá es como el de Colombia. Acá cuando voy al colegio como cereal porque hay poco tiempo y es más rápido comer cereal. Pero a veces cuando voy al colegio como desayuno como en Colombia. Claro que en Colombia a veces comía Kellogg’s porque mi tía me traía mucho.

89 [The sandwich] is like the one that gives at McDonald’s. Have not ever you been at McDonald’s, Burger King or Wendy’s? [Tacos] are normal ones. They have like such thing, that bread, that thing, that shell. And one is given meat to put inside them. One is given cheese, and salad to put on them. And also one takes a taco sauce which is all hot.
90 Here, strawberries.
91 There, we are given snacks, the same that I told you in the other page. I eat cookies, and “fruit punch,” juice made with fruit.
92 Not like the Colombian, which is all squashed, but one that is like smaller, but fatter. And they cut it in half and put ham, cheese, sauces inside. Eating with them is delicious.
93 Lunch, the dinner, well the dinner.
Para el almuerzo, en Colombia comía de pronto frijoles, lentejas, sopa de arroz, sopa de fideos. A mí me gusta arroz con carne, a veces una ensalada con jugo. En Colombia sopa, arroz, carne, siempre ensalada y jugo y papa. Acá como de eso también. Hoy comí sopa de arroz con albondiga. A la comida, yo creo que lo mis mo que comía al desayuno, pero más poquito.94

He also asserted not missing Colombian food because here he also goes to Colombian restaurants. However, in Colombia when he went to a restaurant he had “chuleta de pescado”95 or fruits salad, which he hardly eats here.

Asprilla goes to restaurants with his parents and brother once a week. At Burger King he usually has hamburgers. At Wendy’s he has hamburger with bacon and Coca cola while at McDonald’s he usually eats a chicken sandwich or chicken nuggets. He likes Wendy’s hamburgers because they also have tomato and lettuce, yet he dislikes pickles and onions. He has not seen desserts at Wendy’s, but he has eaten a cake and loves ice creams at McDonald’s. He described details about the McFlurry: “es un helado y le echan Oreo96 y lo revuelven en una máquina y eso queda todo el Oreo ahí en el helado y uno se lo come.”97 Yet, he concluded, he got tired of McDonald’s, Burger King, and Wendy’s and now he likes eating “comida rica.”98

On Sundays he said he practices “soccer fútbol.” Sometimes he eats at home or sometimes goes with his family to a Colombian restaurant such as La Cabaña Antioqueña or Antojitos. His favorites’ dishes at these restaurants are bandeja paisa, fish, and meats. The influence of his parents on his tastes and choices clearly emerges when he talks about Colombian restaurants:

Uy! mi papá pide unas carnes asadas más ricas… que yo tengo otra comida y me gusta es comer de la de él…Y mi mamá, como mi mamá quiere que nosotros tomemos sopas, a veces nos pide sopa como de pescado, sancocho de pescado. Pero ella nos pide también como frijoles o…una

94 For breakfast arepa with egg, meat, rice and buñuelo. Sometimes I eat those here for breakfast, sometimes buñuelo. The breakfast here is like the one in Colombia. Here, when I go to school I have cereal because there is few time and is quicker having cereal. But, sometimes when I go to school I have breakfast as I did in Colombia. In Colombia sometimes I ate Kellogg’s because my aunt brought much of them. For lunch in Colombia I may have had frijoles, lentils, soup of rice or soup of pasta. I like rice with meat, sometimes salad and juice. In Colombia I had soup, rice, meat, always salad, and juice and potato. Here I eat those also. Today I had rice soup with meatball. For dinner, I think in Colombia I had the same that I had for breakfast, but fewer. Or just soup.
95 Literally, fish chop.
96 Though there are several McDonald’s in large cities in Colombia, this is not the case for Asprilla’s original town in Risaralda. Thus, McFlurry is a new food for him.
97 It is an ice cream and they put Oreo and mixed it in a machine and the whole Oreo is there in the ice cream and one eats it.
98 Delicious food.
sopa que tiene una carne ahí, pero no me acuerdo cómo se llama… pero nos pide muchos frijoles en los restaurantes.\textsuperscript{99}

For his birthday, the whole family goes out to eat. If they also have a party at home, he said they serve things that children like, such as desserts and “papitas y una salsa rosada. Pa’ que eh! como a mí me encanta la salsa rosada.”\textsuperscript{100} Asprilla prepares the pink sauce mixing ketchup and mayonnaise.\textsuperscript{101}

Last Christmas he went to New York with his family to his cousin and aunt’s home. His aunt gave them empanada and sancocho because she likes those. There, he also stayed at “una casa de la madras… de la… ay! ¿Cómo se llama la que… cuando le van a colocar el nombre?”\textsuperscript{102} When I said madrina\textsuperscript{103}, he continued saying that at his brother’s godmother –whom he had met in Colombia and is very good friend of his mother, they ate things such as rice with egg. Compared to her aunt, she gave them a lot of cereal.

For Thanksgiving they go to see other people and eat turkey there. He is not sure but almost sure that people they have visited for Thanksgiving are mostly Colombians.

Asprilla thinks Colombian food “es buena y rica;”\textsuperscript{104} yet, his answer is more complex and contradictory when expressing his concept of American food:

No sé. Es que yo casi no como de eso. Lo que como de americana es la del lunch y del Burger King. A mí el lunch no me gusta tanto. Algunos me gustan y otros no. La pizza me gusta, pero esa también la puedo comer en Colombia. Y también me gustan las hamburguesas de Burger King. Qué no me gusta? Las pizzas de la escuela no tanto. Me gusta la pizza pero no la de la escuela.\textsuperscript{105}

Juanes\textsuperscript{106}

Juanes was born in Medellín eight years ago and came to live in the US when he was five. He is thin and short, and his gaze is lively. Most of the children at TICH, were not

\textsuperscript{99} Uy! My father asks some delicious roasted meats…that I have a different food and I like to eat is his. And my mother, since my mother wants us to have soups, sometimes she asks for us a fish soup, fish sancocho. But she also asks for us beans or a soup with a meat like this, but I don’t remember how it is called…but she asks a lot of beans for us at restaurants.

\textsuperscript{100} Papitas and a pink sauce, pa’ que eh (very paisa slang), since I delight the pink sauce.

\textsuperscript{101} Pink sauce is a common dip in Colombia. Though the basis is ketchup and mayonnaise it may also has mustard, lemon, salt and hot sauce.

\textsuperscript{102} At home of the stepmo.. of the.. ay! How is it called the one that.. when they are going to put the name?

\textsuperscript{103} Godmother.

\textsuperscript{104} Good and delicious.

\textsuperscript{105} I don’t know. [What happens] is that I hardly eat such food. The American food I eat is the one from the lunch and from the Burger King. I don’t like the lunch as much. I like some and others no. I like pizza, but I can also eat it in Colombia. I also like hamburgers at Burger King. What I don’t like? Pizzas at school not as much. I like pizza but no the one at school.

\textsuperscript{106} Juanes is a popular, well known Colombian singer born in Medellín.
at first interested in talking with me, but one day I was in charge of the store, and Juanes argued that I was wrong with the money and we spent a while checking accounts. After I tried several explanations, he asked several additional questions and we reached an agreement. As a result, we grew closer. He is usually jumping around, talking loudly, making jokes, and laughing with his friends, but he can also be calm, hard worker and a tender boy who honesty expresses his fondness and give hugs to his friends and loved ones.

As a participant in the mixed group he was the one who proposed playing make believe as if they were in a restaurant, and he rapidly became the cook and owner and king of the kitchen. He explored the setting and used several food toys that were there since that room of the church where TICH is held on Saturdays serves as a day-care center on weekdays. Then, he worked with Usher, pleasantly and quietly concentrated in cooking beans, French fries, and chorizo made with play-doh. Yet, his calm shifted to restlessness and contained anger when he was with several other boys in group three. It took him a while to find his place and first he spent his time jumping around, and shouting rude things, which produced laughter among the other participants. Then he sat, took several pieces of play-doh, blended them and produced an undefined dark color mixture which represented a *chicharrón* first, then the heart of the United States, and finally his beard which he wore proudly but with a sense of humor.
Juanes’ mother readily agreed to the interview and a warm Friday afternoon at the end of April, I found myself looking for her apartment in a complex that made me feel as if I was in Cali or Medellín. There were people outside the apartment who spoke loudly in Spanish, there were several children and youths riding bicycles and skating, and there were several people in the pool area. Juanes’ mother opened the door; in a friendly manner she invited me to come in, have a seat in a big chair on the bright and neat living room. She offered Juanes and me a delicious, very cold glass of lulo juice. Juanes wore loose red shorts with airplane designs, a T-shirt, white socks and gray sneakers. Juanes and his mother sat on a couch to my right. In front of Juanes there was a big TV, and at his right was the door to a balcony from which we could see the pool and the parking lot. Behind me was the kitchen with a small dining table for four. While we were talking about the research, Juanes and his mother had the following conversation:

M: Ay! Juanes y tú que no comes verduras\footnote{M: Ay! Juanes and you don’t eat vegetables.}

J: Verduras? Qué es verduras?\footnote{J: Vegetables? What are vegetables?}

M: Vegetales….mírele la cara\footnote{M: Vegetables…look at his face!}

J: Mami, yo lo como! Tú me lo echas en la sopa\footnote{J: Mom, I eat them. You put them on my soup.}

Juanes helped me change the batteries for the recorder; he wore the microphone, set the recorder up and during the interview stopped it a couple of times to hear it. When his mother left, Juanes chose to conduct the interview in Spanish and said “\textit{a ver empécemos con la comida}.”\footnote{Let’s see, let’s begin with the food.} He was sitting on the couch with the recorder on his hands and the box with the food cards besides him; I was to his left, looking at him with the questionnaire and a pen in my hands. When I asked him where he lived, he shouted excitedly, “Medellín!” Then when I asked where he lived now, his expression changed and he answered with a less excited voice “Tampa.” Yet, very soon he shifted his mood toward excitement again when he yelled at his mother asking how to spell the name of his school. At Claywell Elementary, he is in first grade \textit{“porque es que todavía no sé leer.”}\footnote{Because what happens is that I don’t know how to read yet.}
Juanes’ father went to the university and works at YMCA cleaning the machines at the gym. From 6 a.m. until noon, his father also works with his mother at Malio’s, the same restaurant that he suggested as the site of the play during the group session 1.

Timoteo, “mi perro,” lives at their country house in Rionegro – a town half an hour from Medellín, where he stayed during weekends. A friend of his father in Colombia is taking care of Timoteo, said Juanes speaking in a confidential tone. In Tampa he lives with his father, his mother and a male adult friend. Talking about his family he said:

Mis tíos y mis hermanos están en Colombia. Hay uno que no es mayor porque él tiene cinco. Y tengo aquí un primo pero vive aquí en la misma unidad…pero está al otro lado…entonces estoy cerquita a él.  

Juanes identifies himself as Colombian and thinks he speaks “mucho y muy bien” both English and Spanish. Then, when I told him that we can also speak English, he asked me with some surprise “tú lo entiendes?” At home, he speaks Spanish all the time; it is clear the language he prefers to speak in other settings. His friends are “de todos los países. No! No, menos de China y de francés.” Some examples of places where his friends come from are the United States, Colombia, and Barranquilla.

Juanes watches Spanish movies about pistols on channel 50. He recently saw a movie where somebody shoots a man and nothing happened to him. In Spanish, he also watches channel 62 and in English he watches cartoons and movies on channels 38 and 16. He also listens to English and Spanish music on the radio. Yet, his favorite’s music is “la música esa que es de inglés…que las canciones son en inglés, pero esas que tocan tambores bien duros…rock!”

His favorites’ foods are eggs, fruits such as bananas and “orange” and “choco cris.” Yet, he explained he likes all fruits even the red ones which are like a little ball.

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113 My dog.
114 My uncles and my brothers are in Colombia. There is one that is not older than I because he is five. Here, I have a cousin but he lives here at the same unit…but he is at the other side…so I am close to him.
115 Much and very good.
116 Do you understand it?
117 From all the countries. No, no, except from China and French.
118 I am not sure if he is aware that Barranquilla is in Colombia.
119 That music that is in English…that the songs are in English but those which are played with loud drums…rock!.
120 He calls “choco cris” the cocoa rice Krispies which in Colombia is called Choco Crispies.
with a little stick\textsuperscript{121} “\textit{que yo las tengo en Colombia y me las como todas.}”\textsuperscript{122} Using the cards he points out other fruits he ate in Colombia and eats here such as watermelon, kiwi, peaches, apples, guanabana, pineapple, papaya, mangoes, lemons, and tangerines. He also has several fruit juices at home because they buy frozen fruit pulp from Colombia.

Juanes pointed out from the food cards other foods he likes such as empanadas, fish, cheese, hamburgers, bocadillos, sausages, chicken nuggets, arepa, tortilla, natilla, macaroni and cheese, bandeja paisa, hot dog, corn cake, pizza (but no the kind they serve at school), beans, milk, ice cream, sandwich, tomatoes, carrots, chocolate bar, and bread. He continues by naming other traditional Colombian foods such as buñuelos, pan de bono, Milo, arequipe, patacones. Juanes does not like bagels, pretzels, brownies, or shrimps, but he really dislikes nuts and achiras. Juanes thinks food in Colombia is almost the same than food here. The best from there are the fruits and “la comida, y las sopa, la carne… y también cuando yo era bebé los perros.”\textsuperscript{123}

On weekdays when he goes to school, Juanes wakes up at 6 a.m., takes a shower, gets dressed, and has choco cris, which his father prepares for him. Yet, he usually eats it by himself. Then, around 8 a.m. he has an additional breakfast at school, also with choco cris. At 11:30 he said he has a snack. By that time, he is with his friends and usually eats meat with cheese, papitas, fruits, milk, and ice cream. At school there are other foods such as spaghetti and:

Una pizza fría\textsuperscript{124} que no es buena. Entonces esa no la cojo. Yo siempre miro en un papel y digo esto qué dice? y mi mamá dice que mañana va a haber pizza fría, y yo le digo mami échame plata, y ella me echa la plata. Entonces allá en la meal, yo puedo coger pizza, o pollo, con helado, con galletas.\textsuperscript{125}

\textsuperscript{121}Looking at the cards he points out strawberries. 
\textsuperscript{122}Which I have in Colombia and I eat all of them. 
\textsuperscript{123}Food, soups, meat… and also dogs, when I was a baby. (He meant that one of the best things he recalls from Colombia are the dogs when he was a baby. Based on other conversations with him and his mother, my understanding is that he has heard his parents talking how much he has loved dogs since he was a baby).
\textsuperscript{124}Juanes is expressing a common value associated to food in Colombia: a meal should be warm and cold food is not good.
\textsuperscript{125}A cold pizza which is not good. Then, I don’t take it. I always look at a paper and ask my mother “what does it say” and my mother says “tomorrow is cold pizza, so I say “mom give me money” and she gives me money. Then, there, at meal I can take pizza, or chicken with ice cream with cookies.
Juanes thinks his breakfast has not changed since he came from Colombia. Like here, there, he usually had choco cris, arepa, cheese, milk and juice. For lunch in Colombia he recalls having chicharrón, soup, and the eggs of the birds he found at the country house. The only change is that he no longer eats the birds’ eggs. For dinner, he usually has choco cris, same than in Colombia, he concluded. Yet, unlike there where he said he did not eat snacks, here he has papitas, juices, Coca cola, and yoghurt. He asked if I would like to have one of his favorite yoghurts which is one that has “diferentes colores.”

For his birthday, Juanes had chocolate and vanilla cake they bought along with ice cream, cookies, and “muchas otras cosas.” His little cousin, Juanes’ brother who lives in the US, and the mother of his cousin visited him for his birthday. Suddenly, he got excited recalling his birthday party last February:

Había mucha, mucha gente, todo esto estaba lleno. Todas las sillas, todas estas sillas. Eso fue un party muy bueno, y una piñata. La pusimos ahí. Yo nunca había tenido una piñata, entonces era mi primer día de una piñata.

There is a Chinese buffet restaurant Juanes goes to with his parents and that he likes a lot; he describes it as an American restaurant which comes from China. There you can choose whatever you want. There, “hay americanos que van allá y cogen tres platos y los llenan todos de comida! Aquí en Estados Unidos hay muchos americanos que son gordos y comen mucho.” There, he said he eats apples, ice cream, fruits, and much more things such as meat with red sauce and Coca cola. Then, when he gets home, he goes biking.

Sometimes he also goes with his parents and a friend to McDonald’s where he usually has a happy meal.

126 All participants’ mothers concerned about nutrition of their children and in general they regard Colombian food as more nutritive than American food. However, my understanding is that since cereals contain vitamins and minerals they can replace a meal. Likewise, cereals are common in Colombia and not necessarily are labeled as American food.

127 Different colors.

128 Many other things.

129 There were a lot, a lot of people, all this place was full, all the chairs, all those chairs. That was a very good party, and one piñata. We put it there. I’ve never had a piñata, then it was my time having a piñata.

130 There are Americans who go there and take three plates and filled all of them with food. Here in the US there are a lot of Americans who are fat so they eat a lot.

131 Since he recognizes that at the Chinese Buffet he eats a lot, then he does exercise for preventing getting fatter as the Americans he sees at the restaurant. However, it is interesting to point out that when he talked about Americans who are fat he meant that since they are fat they need to eat a lot, instead of saying that they are fat because they eat a lot.
When I ask him about Colombian and American food he said, Colombian food is like “chicharrón, arroz. Como la comida mexicana, los frijoles, todo eso y mucho más.”\textsuperscript{132} American food “la hacen de todo y lo engorda a uno mucho.”\textsuperscript{133}

Finally when I asked if he misses any food from Colombia, his face took on a serious and somehow adult gaze as he said: “No. De Colombia [extraño] mi familia.”\textsuperscript{134}

Valentina

With her physical appearance, her well behaved attitude, and her talkative spirit, Valentina reminds me of myself when I has her age. She is quite short for her nine years and thin, and talks with a mixture of sweetness and pride that comes from being very sure of herself. Her wide forehead, thin eyebrows, almond shaped small dark eyes, and timid smile, all give her a expression that combines helplessness, tenderness, sadness, and a kind of sharpness. I saw that look gaze during the interview but not during the group session with other girls.

Even though I had met Valentina when I started volunteering at TICH in September 2003, the first time we really talked was when I invited her to participate in the research in March 2004. With an informal and open attitude, a soft but secure voice, and a lively gaze, she accepted immediately and ran back to continue chatting with her girlfriends. Her parents were also very willing and paid little attention to my detailed and obsessive explanation of the informed consent process. Like most of the parents of the participants, Valentina’s, listened respectfully to my proposal, but I think they regarded such procedures as a useless waste of time and photocopies.

Valentina’s mother cares about what her daughter eats and when we met in the nutrition education session she was really interested. She is concerned because even though Valentina eats a lot of vegetables and fruits, she is eating less overall. Valentina’s mother concern reflects the fact that she mother was recently diagnosed with diabetes, which Valentina’s maternal grandparents also have.

\textsuperscript{132} Chicharrón (fried crackling) rice. It is like Mexican food, beans, all those and much more.
\textsuperscript{133} It is made from everything and makes you gain a lot of weigh.
\textsuperscript{134} No. From Colombia [I miss] my family.
As a participant in group 2, Valentina was shy at the beginning, but once Lizzie proposed playing the restaurant, she found her place first as a cook and then played active and creative roles as waitress and customer. Along with Lizzie, Valentina wrote the name of the foods on the cards and helped her post them on the wall. Yet, it was during the interview that she displayed her personality as she developed interesting and humorous stories.

Valentina is in fourth grade at Claywell. When she opened the door on a Tuesday evening at the beginning of May, she was wearing blue capris, a white T-shirt with the Colombian flag, and sneakers. The apartment had ample room, with good light, and everything looked clean and organized. I could see that it consisted of an open space where the kitchen, the dining room, and the living room were located. Her father invited me to sit at the living room; he was gentle, direct, and warm. He said he needed to leave in a while but that I could stay; he asked Valentina’s older sister to turn off the TV and asked me where I would be more comfortable for the interview. I asked Valentina and we decided to sit on a large couch in the living room. Besides the couch, there were some chairs, a big TV, a coffee table, and a couple of side tables with decorations. I sat to the right of Valentina and explained to her how to play the recorder. She wore the microphone, looked at me with a serious expression, and asked if she also had to push the play key for recording. When I showed her the waves displayed by the recorder indicating that it was already recording, she looked excited and amazed.
Valentina did not have a language preference for the interview. Yet, she decided to do it in English, and so I could report her own words here without translation. But, as with several other participants, the interview ended up shifting between the two languages. The children and I were focused on the practical use of language and not on displaying our linguistic skills.

Like many other participants, Valentina lived in Cali before coming to the US three years ago. Actually, she recognized very well that Cali is a city, but the relationship between Cali and Colombia was not clear to her. She talked clearly and securely about Cali, but said she did not know in what country her parents were born; she also asked me to explain what a region was.

She lives with her father who works in “plumbing,” her mother, who studies English every day and works in maintenance, and her oldest sister. Valentina thinks she speaks “good” Spanish and “like a little bad but good” English. At home she speaks Spanish with her parents and English with her sister. Yet she expressed a kind of relief when said that she prefers to speak Spanish most of the time.

Valentina’s friends come from Colombia. “One comes from here and the other one come from Georgia” she proudly concluded. Her favorite television channels are “Univision and Telefutura, that’s it!” and she hears English rap at 95.7, 98.7, and 93.3. Yet her favorite music is “rap in some ways and Spanish ones in another way.” Even though she asserted that she does not read books, she later corrected her answer, adding: “oh! Yeah! Like Captain under Pants. It’s comedy, it is fiction.”

Her favorite dish is: “Chicken with mushrooms. I really call ‘em soup, soup of chicken with mushrooms! That is my favorite one.” Since it is a dish her mother made up, it belongs to her and seems not to have any particular affiliation to American or Colombian tradition. Her fondness seems to reflect the intimate relationship between Valentina’s food preferences and her mother’s predilections and recipes. Such link is also present when she talked about vegetables “yo soy la que me gusta más los vegetales y a mi mamá. A J. [hermana] y a mi papá no les gustan tanto.”

She meant from Tampa.

I am the one that likes more vegetables, and my mother. J [sister] and my father don’t like them as much.
Her mother cooks at home and sometimes Valentina helps her; she even knows how to prepare some food. For example, she cooks spaghetti, macaroni and cheese, or for breakfast she prepares “huevos cocidos,” she exclaimed with a mixture of laughter and pride. She invented home made pizza, which she prepares in the microwave with hamburger bread, pepperoni, and chopped cheese sticks. She has also learned to prepare potato salad.

Even though her mother is usually the one who buys groceries before she comes home, but sometimes her dad takes her and her sister and they get “you know like, the food that we need. I got to pick with my sister. Like snacks, like yoghurt and all of that, we got to pick it too.” Later, looking at the yoghurt card she laughed because they buy the same yoghurt at Publix.

The range of preferred snacks is wider. It includes Brownies (which she loves), arequipe, cheese nips, donuts, “quesito,” celery with peanut butter, “buñuelitos,” pieces of the food her mother has left on the refrigerator, chopped tomatoes, yoghurt, almojábanas, and chocolate bars. Talking about when she eats chocolate bars and candies, she said:

Like kin’a of Mondays ‘cause I go to this church every Monday. I really went there to practice first communion classes but we found out that it wasn’t first communion classes but studying, and they give us candies by the answers that we answer.

Other foods she likes include “huevitos,” milk, nuggets, spaghetti and meat balls, and pork meat which “they call here chuleta.” She also included most vegetables, such as cauliflower, mushrooms, spinach, cucumber, broccoli, and carrots, as well as bagels with cream cheese, muffins, pancakes, cupcakes, biscuits, lasagna, sudados, soup of vegetables, pumpkin soup, long beans, corn, moneditas, arepas, and empanadas. Except blueberry, which was a new fruit for her, she likes all fruits. Her list includes:

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137 Hard boiled eggs.
138 Diminutive of queso (cheese).
139 Diminutive of buñuelos.
140 Diminutive of huevos (eggs).
141 Valentina uses the term “moneditas” (little coins) to describe a fried green plantain that is shaped as a coin. Since similar or equal foods have different names depending on the region, I am not sure if such is the name given to these small fried plantains in Cali. I call them “cascabelitos” (little bells), the name given in Bogotá and around which I learned form my mother.
manzana, banano, strawberry, pera, peach, lulo juice, mango juice, watermelon, pineapple, tangerine, and orange, cantaloupe, papaya, and lemons. She and her sister have invented an American version of the green mango with salt and lemon that Asprilla fondly recalled eating in Colombia, which is very popular in several regions of Colombia. Instead of mango they use green apples “me gustan los limones en apple, los espichamos en apple con sal.”

She eats obleas and bagels at her friend’s house. “She is Colombian but she was born here. She talks Spanish very good!” Valentina concluded with certainty. Valentina also believes that in Colombia obleas were better, but the ones she eats here are still good.

Foods that Valentina really doesn’t like include fish (except the breaded fish her mother prepares), poached eggs at school, low-fat milk, guava, pretzels, lemon cake, pies, bacon, sausage (because it is too greasy), pickles, and peas (which she really hates). She also does not like hamburgers, hot dogs, and pizza in the US. Yet at home here they have hamburgers in case people come so is easy to prepare, or in case they are hungry and need something to eat. In Colombia she used to eat pizza and hot dogs. Moreover, she really likes Colombian pizza. The issue is that here, unlike in Colombia, you cannot find some delicious pizzas such as the Hawaiian with pineapple and other fruits. Hot dogs in Colombia were better because there they put papitas and pineapple on them.

On weekdays when Valentina goes to school she usually wakes up at 6:30 a.m., takes a shower, gets dressed (she laughs because it is so obvious that she would do so), is taken by her mother to the bus stop, and around 7:30 a.m. “yo como en la escuela, desayuno. Yo como cereal! Rice cereal, no tiene sugar.” By this point, I suspect that she thinks I am a kind of a weird and ignorant specimen because I ask a lot of simple questions, so she continued describing the cereal she has at school: “It’s like little squares, like triangles. It tastes good with milk, like if it would have sugar but they don’t have sugar. When you eat alone it tastes so simple but when you eat with milk is so sugar.” Besides cereal she also has orange juice and has breakfast with one of her friends because the other one “is a peer mediator, don’t goes to breakfast. She helps people that get in fights a lot, and all of

142 Apple, banana.
143 Pear.
144 I like lemons in apple; we mash them on apples with salt.
145 I eat at school, breakfast. I eat cereal! Rice cereal, it does not have sugar.
that. She’s in training right now so she has to get to school early and she gets to class late.” Valentina also said that even though there are eggs at school, she does not eat them because “they’re uncooked. They don’t cook it right. So, I don’t eat them.”

At 10:30 a.m. Valentina has a cheese stick for snack that “me gets from my friend.” Then, at 11:50 she has “everything” for lunch; she meant “each week we get different things than the other weeks. One day, they have this, the other day they have that.” For example, last Friday she recalled having macaroni and cheese with milk, and orange juice. Lunch at school is prepared by lunch ladies and Valentina sits with some classmates “this girl, and this boy, and this other boy, and this other girl.” They are all from her class. Yet the girl “eats a lots, a lots of healthy food,” which means “like foods and normal sandwich but with wheat bread and, she brings with no butter or little butter, and she never brings snacks, her mother doesn’t allow her,” concluded laughing. Then Valentina described what happens with junk food:

Junk food is bad, no good. It’s not good for your body ’cause it makes like a …of food and it covers your body. [I ask her to explain it to me in Spanish, so she continues].

Es como un hueco, que se va el aire por el hueco y la junk food y la grasa y todo eso se pegan a ese huequito. Y se empieza a rellenar y cuando se rellena todo eso es malo. Tienen que tener cirugía o se mueren.146

Valentina said she does not buy food on the vending machines at school “‘cause I don’t bring money from home. I’m saving money for important stuff, not wasting it for other food that they give me free. Or not really free, ‘cause my parents sign a sheet and send money to school before it started.”

When she gets home around 3 p.m. with her sister and dad, she has “lunch or almuerzo, either way is fine.” Today she had soup of chicken with mushrooms –her favorite dish that her mother prepares, her invented home made pizza, and Sprite because “there was no more thing.” Then, she has any snack and picotea147 “everything, I don’t know why, I got that by my mother.” Later, as a late snack she just eats “what there was for lunch or I just eat cereal.”

146 Is like a hole, the air goes through the hole, and the junk food and the grease and all those, get stuck to that little hole. And it starts to fill and when it is full is bad. They have to have a surgery or they die.

147 Binge.
On Sundays for breakfast Valentina always has eggs, sometimes scrambled or sometimes cocinados. For breakfast she also has Milo which they buy at “Los Amigos.” She explained that this is a Latin store, and also gave me directions for reaching it. She, her mother, or her dad prepares the Sundays’ breakfast, but her sister “doesn’t really.” Her Sunday breakfast resembles the one she used to have in Colombia; it includes egg and chicharrón with arepa.

For Christmas she remembered being “too hungry.” It took a while for her to put the fragmentary pieces of her mixed memories of Christmas and New Year. Maybe she was at her friend’s house. She had desserts like arroz con leche, and natilla, and homemade food such as rice and chicken and Colombian food. Then, she exclaimed:

Yeah! yeah! On Christmas I stayed here. I was thinking on the 31st of Christmas. [It was] Here. They came on here. It’s like everybody brought a part, everybody brought something out. Somebody brought desert and somebody brought a food, and so. [They were] adults and children and my relatives. Just like one relative kin ‘cause they’re, the other one are all in Colombia, or in Spain, or in everywhere. Some of my family is in Colombia, some of my family is in Europe, some of my family is in Venezuela. They’ve all moved.

Even though she did not find any real difference in the food she used to have in Colombia for Christmas compared to the one she has here, there were other distinctions that were important to her. “[It is different] ‘cause, like more people came in Colombia, and I really miss, I really miss my family from Colombia here on the 31st and the 24th and all of that.” For Thanksgiving they go either to friends’ house, where they eat turkey, or they have bought tacos when “amigos no tienen a donde ir entonces vienen acá a comer tacos.”

Valentina likes to go to Golden Corral where she likes to have vegetables, watermelon, ice cream, and Sprite. She goes there about once a year with her parents, her sister, and her cousin. She also goes “once every like three or four months” to Chinese Buffet. There “I like chicken that has this sauce. It’s good. I like practically everything, but not everything. I like the rice there, spaghetti are good too.” She used to go with her family to “El Rincón Latino” because her aunt used to work there and to La Hacienda because her aunt used to go there. At such restaurants she liked to have chuleta, but no

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148 Hard boiled.
149 The Friends.
150 Rice with milk.
151 Friends don’t have where to go so they come here to eat tacos.
desserts because “I don’t think there are desserts over there.” At La Hacienda her father used to buy bandeja paisa and “gave it to all of us.” When she goes to McDonald’s, generally, has nuggets and French fries. Leaving behind supposed preferences for healthy food, she added “me gustan mucho las French fries que son de junk food places.”

Valentina thinks she has not had many changes in her food since she came from Colombia because “para el lunch yo nada más como lo de la escuela. Yo vengo aquí y almuerzo mis cosas.” It seems that school represents American food and home represents Colombian food as two different spaces. However, sometimes such spaces have met:

El viernes tuvimos un picnic outside ahí, en la escuela y yo llevé bocadillos y nadie comió! Y las profesoras los botaron. Y mi amiguita también llevó de lo mismo, casualidad! Pero, nadie comió y los botaron y yo ni siquiera pude ver mis míos! (risas).Cuando fui a recogerlos ya estaban en la basura, -concluyó con voz triste.

In Colombia she also had foods such as cereal, orange juice and ceviche which she recalled eating in a store at Cali. Through the interview she talked about some foods she did not eat when living in Colombia, which included tacos, burritos, mashed potatoes and some of her currently preferred foods such as brownies, bagels, muffins, and biscuits. Other foods she came to like here are raviolis, avocado, and papaya. And fruits she recalled not eating any more since she came here are guanabana, and the lulo fruit, although here she drinks lulo juice made with frozen pulp. Foods she ate in Colombia and seldom has eaten here include koomis and fruit salad. In Colombia such a salad was made with “todas las frutas que teníamos, pero no esas como kiwi.”

A final change is related to her parents. While in Colombia her mother was the only one who cooked, because, as she said in an amused, confidential tone, her father did not know how. Here, however, he has learned to cook. First, “he burned everything!” And her mother had to prepare everything again, Valentina concluded laughing loudly. About Colombian and American food Valentina said:

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152 I like so much French fries from junk food places.
153 For lunch I just eat the food at school. I come here and have lunch with my things.
154 Last Friday we had a picnic outside, there at school, and I took bocadillos and nobody ate them! And the teachers threw them out. And my friend also took the same, coincidence! But nobody ate and they threw them out and I could not even see mine! (laughs). When I went to pick them up they already were on the garbage trash -concluded with sad voice.
155 All the fruits we had, but not those such as kiwi. (Kiwi is not originally from Colombia).
La comida colombiana es saludable y no se ponen tan gordos como acá. Porque es que los colombianos no comen tanta junk food como esas hamburguesas, y cosas así y en Colombia hacen comida más saludable.

La comida americana es fast food, comida rápida y no es tan saludable. Es grasosa (su expresión es de asco). Y tiene una cosa que le echan a los muertos para que queden con carne. Es que aquí para hacer que la comida dure mucho, en los restaurantes, allá como en McDonald’s y todo eso, le ponen como un fertiliz\textsuperscript{er}.\textsuperscript{156}

Aware of the time, I twice asked Valentina if she wanted to finish. The first time she did not pay attention and continued talking about the foods on the cards. The second time, she said with a laugh “a mí me gusta hablar.”\textsuperscript{157} I said “me too,” and she asked my date of birth to check if, like her, I am Cancer. “People born in July are talkative, have strong feelings…and that’s it!” When I got home to download the file, I saw that the recording of the interview lasted more than one hour and a half.

\textbf{Angela}

Angela looks somehow taller than other nine year old girls. During playtime at TICH, she spends most of the time chatting with her girlfriends. She has a sweet pleasant gaze. She looks cute and relaxed.

Angela’s mother was more interested than other parents in knowing about the research and what I have read about immigration. She seemed less concerned with talking about the food she cooks at home, or her daughter’s food preferences.

As a participant in group 1 Angela could not stay for the entire session. While she was there, she and Lizzie were the customers of the restaurant. Unlike Juanes and Lizzie who took on roles of authority, she took a cell phone toy and played with it; when choosing her role, she said what she wanted to do, but was not very forceful. Indeed, she was the one who gave the English name to the performance, saying: “let’s pretend.” As a customer, she told Lizzie “you go first” and then she asked what she wanted to have: coke, apple juice, and rice. In group 2, disregarding my suggestions, she first supported Lizzie’s proposal of playing restaurant again. Then she left to Lizzie and Valentina the

\textsuperscript{156} Colombian food is healthy and they don’t get as fatter as here. Because Colombians don’t eat as much junk food such as those hamburgers and such things, and in Colombia they make healthier food. American food is fast food, comida rápida and is not as healthier. It’s greasy [her gaze expresses disgust]. And it has a thing that they put on dead men in order to preserve the flesh. What happens is that here for the food to last longer at restaurants, such as McDonald’s and all those, they put like a fertilizer.

\textsuperscript{157} I like to talk.
more active roles as waitress and cook, and stayed as a quiet customer who looked at how they prepared the dishes she had ordered, while eating potato chips. When her food (made with play-doh) was served, she made as if she was eating the meat, French fries, and green ice cream. Then, when they shifted the roles, she was the waitress and finally played the cook. She also played with the molds and proudly showed her kitty made with play-doh. She actively developed her roles and supported Lizzie’s and Valentina’s ideas, greatly contributing to the cooperation, creativity, and amusement that the three female participants achieved in group two.

![Fig. 6. Angela playing the customer’s role.]

The afternoon of the first Friday of May 2004, I felt the consequences of having a broken air conditioner in my old but good, faded red Honda in a city like Tampa where the summer begins early and can last until almost November. Fortunately, it took me just about 15 minutes to reach Angela’s house. Carrying her one year-old baby, her mother opened the door and called Angela who was wearing blue denim shorts, a pink short sleeve top, light gray sneakers, white short socks, a silver bracelet on her right wrist, and a multi-colored one on her left wrist. She was nicely dressed, her hair combed and ready for the interview. Her mother gave Angela her favorite juice and offered me a mango juice. Angela explained that her mother prepares the juices with Colombian frozen fruit pulp.
From the entrance door, the ample living room was to the right; a big dining room was in front, and the kitchen to the left. Behind the kitchen, there was a large family room with a big couch, other chairs, toys, magazines, and an exercise machine. We sat in a comfortable couch in the living room. There was a coffee table, three side tables and several decorations on the tables and pictures on the walls. There were also family pictures. Angela sat to my right and looked tense. She chose to wear the microphone but was not really interested in the recorder or the recording.

Angela is in third grade and came from Cali three years ago, when she was six. Her father works with carpets and her mother works at home but she does not know what her work is. Both her mother and her father went to the university.

Angela thinks she speaks excellent English as well as Spanish. Even though first she said she preferred to speak English most of the time, she changed her mind and said she likes both. Then, she asked me whether there is a difference between American Colombian and Colombian American and when I said “not really” she looked secure when she said she identifies herself as Colombian American.

Her favorites television channels are Disney and Nickelodeon; Disney is her favorite radio station. Her favorites’ singers are Hilary Duff and Lindsey Lohan. When I asked about her favorite books she rapidly answered *Broken Hearts* and *Head Over Heels*, and she described stories about girls, girlfriends, friendship, and shy kids.

Talking about food, she shifted from speaking English to Spanish, and answered “*Me gusta chuleta, steak, pizza, spaghetti.*”\(^{158}\) For snacks she prefers potato chips, pop corn, yoghurt, and chocolate bars. She recalled eating all of them in Colombia. When we started to go deeper about each one of these foods, I could see the relationship between specific foods and social institutions; some are located in more specific spaces such as home or Hispanic restaurants, others such as pizza are present in several places. Yet, at home they seldom order pizza. She eats chuleta prepared by her mother at home and at “Hispanic” restaurants. Either her father or her mother prepares steaks at home but she also eats steaks at restaurants. Usually, she eats cheese pizza at school or at pizzerias such as Domino’s and Pizza Hut. She eats spaghetti at home or at restaurants. At home Angela

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\(^{158}\) I like chop, steak, pizza, spaghetti.
has potato chips her mother buys at the supermarket, but also in the cafeteria at school she buys them in “like a little shop.” Angela usually has chocolate bars and pop corn at the movie theater or sometimes at home. Hamburgers seem to have also a particular place: “A veces como cuando vamos de aquí a Orlando, paramos a comprar una hamburguesa para ir comiendo.” 159

Other foods that her mother prepares and that she likes are spaghetti with meatballs or with cheese, sopa de letras160 de pasta161, papitas, fish, chicken, tortillas, and potato salad. Looking at the cards with fruits, she said “mi favorita fruta es mango”162 but she also likes moras163, peaches, fresa164, banana, papaya, sandía165, and uvas166. Other foods she likes include muffins, potato salad, flan, Milo, juice of lulo, and lemonade.

Other foods Angela likes are the ones that can be bought at Colombian groceries or at Colombian bakeries, such as empanada, bocadillos, pan de bono, buñuelos, arequipe, and natilla. She also likes barbecues: “mi papa acá hace barbque con carne, chorizo y arepas. Y también vamos a casas de amigos a barbecues.”167 Angela does not like most vegetables except broccoli and carrots (sometimes). Neither does she like bagels, biscuits, peanuts, spicy foods, beans, tacos, and shrimps.

Even though at first she thought there have been no changes in the food she eats here compared to what she had in Colombia, she later found some differences. Angela thinks that when her mother cooks, it is the same food they had in Colombia, but when they go to restaurants she finds differences. In Colombia the steak “tenía como más sabor,”168 and there she did not eat as much pizza as here because pizza “es como la comida típica de aquí.”169 When Angela is with her family, eating pizza and hamburgers is uncommon. Such foods are reserved for limited occasions such as being in a rush or being too hungry.

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159 Sometimes when we go from here to Orlando, we stop to buy a hamburger to eat it on the road.
160 Letras is the diminutive of letters.
161 Soup of pasta letters (alphabet soup).
162 My fruit favorite is mango.
163 Blackberries.
164 Strawberry.
165 Watermelon.
166 Grapes.
167 Mi father barbecues with meat, chorizo and arepas. And we also go to barbecues to friends’ houses.
168 It had like more taste.
169 It’s like the typical food from here.
and not having prepared food at home. Foods that were new when she came to live to the
US include pancakes, brownies, biscuits, muffins, and flan\textsuperscript{170}.

Talking about advertisements Angela was one of the few participants that had a ready answer: “I´ve seen a commercial of something I want to try. In TV, it’s many pancakes and it brings to dip in it.”

When she go to school on weekdays, Angela usually wakes up at 6:45 a.m., takes a shower, and eats breakfast at home around 7 a.m. She usually has cereal with banana or oatmeal. Sometimes she has arepas with butter or “maybe sometimes a sandwich.” Usually, her mother prepares her breakfast but she sits by herself to eat it.

Then, Angela goes to school where at 10 a.m. she has a snack in the classroom with her teacher and classmates. Today, she had Colombian cookies she took with her, but other times she has potato chips. Then, at 12:15 p.m. she has lunch at school with all the third graders; at the table, she usually sits with her girlfriends. Today, she had cheese pizza, broccoli, chocolate milk, and a pear. Sometimes she has chicken nuggets, ice cream, or fruits such as apples or oranges. Even though at school there are other vegetables such as carrots and salads, Angela usually has few of them.

Sometimes at 3:00 p.m. or sometimes at 4:00 p.m., Angela has “supper” at home “\textit{porque dinner es más como en la noche}.”\textsuperscript{171} Sometimes she sits to eat with her mom or her dad, and other times by herself. Today she had chuleta with rice, tostones, and blackberry juice. She also recalled that yesterday she had ground meat for supper. Then, at 7:30 p.m. or 8:00 p.m.

I just have like a little snack before I go to sleep... Ah! Sometimes it’s dinner, like a lot, and sometimes it’s a little snack. Sometimes we have like something from the bakery or sometimes my mom or dad cook something like a Cuban sandwich. [Yesterday] I had something from the Colombian bakery. it’s like a sweet bread and it has cream cheese inside on it. And, I drink mango juice.

On weekends, any time between 8:00 a.m. and 9:30 a.m., Angela eats breakfast with the whole family. Last Saturday she remembered having scrambled eggs, and last Sunday pancakes. Yet frequently she has arepas for breakfast. While her mother prepares the eggs, pancakes are prepared by her father or her mother. “Every two Sundays,” Angela

\textsuperscript{170} Though flan is found in Colombia for Angela it was a new food.
\textsuperscript{171} Because dinner is like more at night.
goes with her family, or sometimes also with some friends, to have supper, around 2:30 p.m., at a Colombian restaurant. There, she has had “meats, and chicken o una bandeja paisa. [For dessert] arroz con leche, and for drinking jugos, o Manzana.” About once a month she also has supper on Sundays with her family at Golden Corral. There, she recalled having meat, steak, macaroni and cheese, Chinese food, cakes, brownies, ice cream, and soda. Sometimes, “cuando no tenemos tanta hambre” Angela’s family goes to McDonald’s where she likes to have vanilla or strawberry milkshake.

Last Christmas, they met with friends and they had Latin food, which included meat, cake, and drinks. When I asked, she said it was Latin food, “because the people who made were Latin.” There were friends from El Salvador, Colombia, Venezuela, and Cuba. Everyone brought food such as chicken, rice, and turkey, and Angela’s mother took potato salad. Then, she recalls that her grandfather, who lives in Tampa, prepared natilla for Christmas.

For her birthday she recalled having “torta colombiana” and rice with chicken for the adults and pizza for children. While the cake was bought at a Colombian bakery, her mother prepared the chicken with rice and they ordered Domino’s pizza. For Halloween they bought pumpkin pie. For Thanksgiving they met at Carolina’s home with friends from Puerto Rico and Colombia. Indeed, everyone brought something. There were, corn, hams, turkey, potato salad, and rice.

Angela said she knows how to prepare cereal with banana, sandwiches with ham, butter, and cheese. When explaining how she prepares sandwiches, she shouted to her mother, asking about the bread they buy. Her mother answered that she buys white bread, Colombian bread at Colombian bakeries. Even though she did not know how to prepare chuleta, tostones, and rice, she described quite well how her mother prepares each one, as well as the potato salad.

About Colombian and American food Angela said:

Colombian food “es rica, tiene más como sabor, no es como tan simple.” Ahhh It’s good, it has better taste, it’s more…has better taste.” American food it’s good. It can make you fatter because

172 Juices or Apple. Yet, she is not meaning the fruit but Manzana the name of a popular and traditional Colombian soda. It is also known as Manzana Postobón.
173 When we are not as hungry.
174 Colombian cake.
175 It is delicious. It has like more taste, is not as simple.
here it’s mostly junk food. [Junk food is] *Comida chatarra*. [laughs] such as Hamburger, pizza, hot dog.

Since I arrived at Angela’s home, I felt transported to an affluent home in Cali. That feeling continued until the end of the interview, when her father arrived and the mother, usually a very independent and relaxed woman, came in a rush to the living room and asked if we were almost done, because her husband comes home tired from work and she needs to “*atenderlo*.“

**Luigi**

The National Hispanic Heritage Month in Tampa during September and October is a very busy time for everybody at TICH. Besides the normal academic activities, members are active throughout the Bay Area performing different dances from Hispanic countries. The children practice every Saturday with Marco Aurelio, the dance teacher, and with other volunteer teachers who, like him, put great energy and dedication into the effort to keep alive deep and cherished traditions.

The first time I accompanied TICH to a presentation was on a sunny Sunday in middle September at the Tampa Museum of Art. The room where they were preparing for the presentation was boiling with parents, teachers, volunteers, and boys and girls disguised as witches, Spanish dancers of Jota, Venezuelan plain-dwellers, and Colombian dancers of Cumbia. In the midst of voices, screams, and music, I was finally able to talk with María Esther who assigned me to be in charge of distributing the information for the next presentation as well as preparing the flags of the Hispanic countries for the parade they conduct at every presentation.

Around 3 p.m. five boys and five girls disguised as little and harmless witches were entryway scenario singing and dancing a popular Colombian children’s song. Among them, Luigi captured my attention because of his tremendous energy and ability to dance. Then, he also proved to be a very skilled and humorous talker. Luigi is a cute, smiling and restless 8 years old boy. He is short, but demonstrates a great ability for dancing in the style of Cali which is where his family is from.

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176 Junk food
177 See to him.
When I arrived at Luigi’s home, his mother, restraining a huge pitbull, was waiting for me. The small house had a nice porch, which looked like the ones in American TV series. Entering the door there was a room where the living room, the dining room, a computer desk, and the kitchen were located. There were also some small tables and several decorations. Luigi sat on the couch and I sat to his right. Since the mother told me that she needed to leave in one hour, we immediately started the interview. Luigi looked excited; he rapidly set up the recorder and explained to me how it works. Even though he came from Cali to the US “about…say seven months” and prefers to speak Spanish most of the time, he chose to conduct the interview in English. He is in second grade at Tampa Bay Boulevard Elementary.

Luigi’s mother and father both completed university studies. His father works in a “water plant” and when I asked about his mother job, she shouted: “Mami! En dónde trabajas?” She answered “First Floridian” which I recognize as my insurance company, so she said in case I need something just call her.

Luigi thinks he speaks “very good!” Spanish and speaks “regular” English. At home, he speaks Spanish and “sometimes” English, he said after his mother, who was at the computer about four meters from us, told him “You speak both languages.” Luigi identifies himself as Colombian Hispanic “cause I talk Spanish and I am Colombian.” Talking about where his friends come from, he said “Some of them [are] from Puerto Rico, some from Mexico, some from Florida, and that’s all I know!” His favorite television channels are Nick Junior, Cartoon Network in English, and BWH in English. He listens to Super Q 1300, a Spanish radio station, and likes Shakira, Juanes, and The Factoria, all of whom sing “Spanish most of the time.” He has read Hercules both in Spanish and English, and Baby Duck Stories, Sleeping Beauty, and Puppy Love in English.

When asked about his favorite foods, he provided a detailed list, sometimes asking his mother and me to help him recall names:

L: Pizza, cheese Pizza. I like macaroni and cheese; rice with black beans; alphabet soup. I like toast bread, I like pancakes. I like strawberry short cake, and that’s it! Oh no! I like cereal, I like… ¿Tú sabes cómo se llaman esos cakecitos que son como así de grandes? 179

178 Mom! Where do you work?
179 Do you know how are called such little cakes which are as this big?
Luigi remarked he loves “too much” strawberry milk. Then, when I asked him if he had pizza in Colombia or if it was a new food, he began to classify all his favorite dishes and snacks in two groups, new and not new. He continued doing so for other food items during the interview. Among the news there are pizza, macaroni and cheese, crackers and tuna, toast bread, cereal bars with milk, pancakes, meatball burger, and strawberry short cake. The not new group includes rice with black beans, alphabet soup, cereal, cheese sticks, birthday cake, small cakes, cake with milk, and elephant ears. When I asked about other changes, he remained silent. His mother called out:

Mother: tell her what you were telling me yesterday. Why you wanted to go back to Colombia?

L: Oh! That the foods t aste different.

Mother: ayer me estaba diciendo: “Ay 15 días, me voy para Colombia. Estoy loco por llegar a comer mi comida colombiana.”

L: (Laughs) … ayayay!

R: Y qué tiene de bueno la comida colombiana?

L: Que sabe más colombiana … ayayay!

Drinks he remembered having in Colombia, includes “tomate de árbol, Ginger ale, Materva and Coca cola.”

On school days, “normally, I wake up at six; when it’s Sunday or Saturday I wake up at eight.” Usually he has breakfast at home, but sometimes his breakfast is at school.

When he has breakfast at home, it is usually about 7:30 a.m. He eats it in bed, since her

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180 Those that they sell at bakeries which have sugar.
181 Though Colombians eat beans with rice, they do not use to eat black beans. I think black beans with rice is a Cuban dish.
182 Oh! In two weeks I go to Colombia. I am anxious to arrive and eat my Colombian food!
183 And what is good about Colombian food?
184 It tastes more Colombian.
185 Tomate de árbol is a tropical fruit, quite common in Colombia, used for juices and sweets.
186 Materva is a Cuban soda that he drinks in Tampa.
mother takes it to him, but sometimes “I have it in the [dining] table but in the house.” His mother is usually with him while he is having breakfast, but sometimes she is walking the dog. For breakfast sometimes he has cereal, other times sandwich with milk, and sometimes “I have some milk and crackers. By the way, oatmeal crackers.” Usually he prepares his cereal “*pero cuando yo me voy a comer un sándwich de queso ella sí hace todo, todo el trabajo y [también prepara] la comida de ‘Shadow’, es comida de perros*” Luigi has breakfast at school with his friends, although if he is by himself he sits at an empty table. Then, he exclaimed: “I am using ‘sometimes’ too much.” In Colombia he recalled having similar foods for breakfast, such as cereal and crackers.

At school, five minutes before lunch Luigi has a snack. Sometimes he has cereal and sometimes popcorn with all “the classmates around me.” At 11:30 a.m. he has lunch with his “favorite classmates or class friend, or just a boy, Jeff,” he said while checking to see what I am writing. He repeated slowly: “Jeff, with double f.” Today, he recalled having:

L: Let’s say, today I had, one of those meatball…meatball burgers! But the meatball squashed.

Mother: tan sencillo como decir carne de hamburguesa, que es como *meatball* aplastada.189

L: Pues sí!190

R: Lo importante es lo que él entiende y lo que cuenta de la comida.191

Mother: Okay.

At lunch, he also had strawberry milk, “some potatoes, some birthday cake, and I had the largest piece of cake, of course!” he concluded laughing loudly. Then, proud of his knowledge, Luigi said that the lunch ladies prepare the lunch and described how to prepare *meatball burger*:

It’s easy. It just comes in a can. And then you take it out, you take the bread, the burger bread, take the bottom piece, put all the meat that comes in the can, on top of the bottom bread piece.. (laughs) and put the top bread piece on top… And you just put it on the microwave!

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187 He is using Spanish grammar. He meant “I have it at home in the dining table.”
188 But when I am going to eat a cheese sandwich, she does everything, all the work and [also prepares] ‘Shadow’s meal. It is dog’s food.
189 As simple as saying hamburger meat, which is like squashed meatball.
190 I agree!
191 What is important is what he understands and what he says about food.
Since today his parents could not pick him up at school, Luigi went to his grandmother’s house. There, he usually has small cakes, “with double l,” said supervising my writing. While his grandfather is watching TV and his grandmother is reading a book, “I am eating my snack, my little cake.”

For his “actual dinner” yesterday Luigi had black beans with rice, a “little soup of black beans,” and Materva. His mom and dad cook dinner and even though he does not know how to cook either black beans or rice, he remembered that one day, “my mommy let me put the rice and cleaning it. No! Washing it, washing it!”

After dinner, he has a snack. Sometimes he has cereal and sometimes cheese sandwich. “It’s just toasted bread with cheese. And you want to know who cooks it? My mommy does!”

On Sundays sometimes he has shrimp with salad and “some butter toasted bread. And you can write Dr. Thunder, another kind of soda, or Dr. Pepper.”

For Christmas he remembered being at grandma’s house with uncle D and his little girls and the whole family. Grandma cooked and he remembered having “cake de tres leches.” For Thanksgiving Luigi remembered eating turkey, “my first time eating turkey, uaggg it was so nasty yuhuhu.”

By this time, Luigi’s grandmother (who is Cuban) had arrived. She and Jose Pablo’s mother intervened in the interview while he and I continued talking. As I listened to the interview I heard that they were recalling what they had for Thanksgiving, concluding that they had turkey, beans, mashed potatoes, apple pie, and corn.

Luigi goes to the Colombian restaurant with his “mami” or sometimes daddy.” There, he has bandeja paisa, “mi mami y yo siempre comemos una bandeja paisa porque nos gusta.” For drinking he likes Malta or Manzana. Then, he asked his mother the name of the other Colombian restaurant they go to, but his mother said it was not worth mentioning since they went to it only once. His mother added, “we go to Pizza Hut and Wendy’s.” At Wendy’s Luigi recalled having “Happy meal with cheeseburger.” His

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192 Cake of three milks. (Cake of three milks is a dessert similar to flan.
193 Mom.
194 My mom and I always eat bandeja paisa because we like it.

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mother added he calls it happy meal because as at McDonald’s, it also comes with a toy. At Wendy’s he drinks Dr. Pepper, but sometimes he and his father share a frosty shake.

At the end of the interview, Luigi looked at the food cards and sorted them by the food he likes and the food he does not like. Foods he does not like include broccoli, cucumbers, and bocadillos. Besides the foods he already has talked about, he also likes the soups his mother occasionally prepares, arepitas, popcorn, yoghurt, chicken nuggets, Milo, brownies, cookies, empanadas, arroz con leche, apple, grapes, mangoes, corn, carrots, tomatoes, oranges, lemons, guava juice, bread, buñuelos, ham, meat, and eggs.

**Usher**

My first Saturday at TICH, I saw María Esther giving the orientation to a cute, serious boy and his parents. Even though I saw Usher laughing many times when he was playing with his friends, his expression was generally serious, and the pictures I took of him rarely showed his smiling.

Usher is ten years-old and has quiet and somewhat formal manners. As a participant of group 1 he supported Juanes’ idea of playing make believe they were in the restaurant, he said softly but firmly that he would be the waiter. Patiently, he stood beside Lizzie and Angel, stayed serious while they were laughing, waited until they finally decided what to order, and silently wrote down the order and took it to Juanes. First, he sat on the floor, and then on the table making beans with red play-doh. When I asked what he was going to add to the beans he said “la carne y el arroz” with a tone that meant of course.

After, he took the yellow play-doh, and started to shape and cut French fries. Sometimes he spoke in English with Juanes and other times he had some arguments with Lizzie in a lower voice. Actually, Usher was the brain designing fries, beans, chicharrón and chorizo, and he directed Juanes who followed his directions. When I asked who was going to present first, and Lizzie said the boys first, he cleverly defeated her arguing, “como es la única mujer…” ladies first.” When he presented, he said he did frijolitos,

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195 Meat and rice.
196 Commonly, people in Colombia accompany beans with rice and meat.
197 Since she is the only woman.
198 Diminutive of frijoles (beans).
chorizo and chicharrón. Chicharrón is a good meat but it makes you get fatter, he concluded.

During group 3 he first ate and then sat with his friends Asprilla and 50 Cent to draw. He concentrated on his work, and thoroughly completed his drawing. Even though others were jumping, being rude, and shouting, he remained serious as he drew and talked with his friends. At the end, he presented his drawing describing it: “Mi dibujo es de Colombia y las comidas de Colombia, con los colores de la bandera de Colombia. Ahí están comidas de Colombia como el café de Colombia, la empanada, el chorizo, el arroz, los frijoles, el sancocho y el buñuelo.”

On a Thursday afternoon in May, I was beginning to feel confident about finding addresses, and his was an easy one. Along the way I saw several Hispanic and Colombian restaurants and grocery stores, such as “Las Mercedes,” La Típica Colombiana, and “La Grande.” Beside a mall there is a sign that says “Ahora

199 My drawing is of Colombia and Colombian foods, with the colors of the Colombian flag. There, there are Colombian foods such as Colombian coffee, empanada, chorizo, rice, beans, sancocho and buñuelo.

200 Las Mercedes is a female name and also the name of a very popular and trusted virgin: Our Lady of Mercy.

201 The typical Colombian.

202 The large one.
“estamos sirviendo comidas hispanas.” Usher lives with his mother and his father in an apartment. He opened the door and greeted me. His mother came out and invited me in. On the right side was the kitchen and then the dining room. Beyond them there was a living room with a large couch, some chairs and side tables, and some decorations. The living room ended with a sliding patio door through which a lot of light came in. Everything looked quite clean and neat. Usher’s mother served me a glass of cold blackberry juice and some cookies. Looking at the mixture of dark purple color on the bottom and a pink froth on the top, I recalled when as a little girl in the hot and dry afternoons of Tocaima, I went with my mother to visit her girlfriends. While they talked, I stayed with other girls and boys playing outside until the moment we were called to “tomar algo” like a nice cold blackberry juice with the most delicious home made cookies of the world.

Usher’s mother talked about food and nutrition. She said she eats a lot of salads and looked very knowledgeable about nutrition facts and knows a lot about food labels; indeed she said she bases her diet on this knowledge. While talking, she also asked me about my personal life and what I do besides studying. Her sweetness and generosity with me contrasted with the manner in which she talked about Usher. She complained because Usher does not eat fruits and vegetables, and said he likes fast and junk food which, besides being bad is “una porquería.” Even though Usher’s mother looked a bit anxious about what he might tell me, she left us and we stayed in the living room. I sat to Usher’s left on the couch. He wore the microphone, set up the recorder, and kept it in his hands during the whole interview, which he chose to conduct in Spanish.

Usher is in fourth grade at Woodbridge school. He came from Pereira four and a half years ago when he was five and a half. His father works at a buffet restaurant and his mother works at McDonald’s. When I asked if he knew about their level of education, with a marked paisa accent he answered “no ‘eñora.” He used the same respectful,

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203 Now, we are serving Hispanic meals.
204 Having something.
205 Nastiness.
206 Pereira is the capital of the Department of Risaralda, the same department that Asprilla comes from. Until about the 1960s it was part of Antioquia, the large department whose capital is Medellín. People from Risaralda and Antioquia can be regarded as sharing the same “paisa culture.”
207 Short way to say “no señora” (no madam).
somewhat formal and very traditional expressions “sí señora, o no señora” many times during the interview.

He thinks he speaks good Spanish as well as good English. At home he speaks Spanish with his parents, but he prefers to speak English most of the time. He identifies himself as Colombian and most of his friends are Colombians. His favorite television channels are 36, Nickelodeon, and 58, Cartoon Network. He listens to two English radio stations -98.7 and 95.7, and “La Mega” and “La Super Q” in Spanish. His favorite music is salsa, reguetón, and rap. Usher reads adventures books in English and Spanish yet, “me da más duro leer en español.”

Recalling his mother’s complaints about his preference for fast food, I was surprised when he asserted that his favorites dishes are all foods from his home region: frijoles, lentejas, arepa, sopas, and rice. One difference Usher found in the foods he eats here, compared to the ones he had in Colombia is that “en Colombia comía ensalada...pero acá no” Other difference he found is that here he eats more frijoles than in Colombia but in Colombia he ate beet root and had more juices. Then, I could almost hear his mother’s words and complaints when he said: “Por lo menos allá comía de todo.”

He asserted that in Colombia he used to have the same kind of foods than here. Yet, during the interview we found some differences. Lasagna and tacos were new foods in the US. Unlike here, where he eats pepperoni pizza, in Colombia he had Hawaiian pizza. Besides, Colombian pizza “no engorda tanto como la de acá,” and American pizza is “como más mala.” Hot dogs in Colombia were also different. While here, the hot dog is just the bread and the dog, in Colombia he said they add pineapple sauce, pink sauce, and papitas.

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208 Yes madam or not madam.
209 It is harder for me reading Spanish.
210 Lentils.
211 In Colombia I ate salad, but not here.
212 Unless there I ate everything.
213 Does not make you as much fatter as the one from here.
214 Like other participants Usher expressed his concern about fattening foods. I believe this is an expression that they see most American as being overweight. Likewise, some of their parents and people in Colombia who have visited the United States, frequently talk about marked overweight of Americans.
215 Like more bad [than Colombian].
Among other foods Usher likes are tomatoes, grapes, mangoes, bananas, apple, pineapple, pears, and plantains. He also likes arequipe, Milo, arepas, red beans, buñuelos, pan de bonos, empanadas, chicharrón, eggs, rice, natilla, and bocadillos. He also likes the several soups his mother prepares with lentils, beans, or broccoli, as well as the soup of “gorritos.” Finally, he likes pepperoni and Hawaiian pizza, chicken nuggets, spaghetti, ice cream, and brownies. For snacks he likes yoghurt, cookies with milk, or hot dogs. Foods that Usher does not like include most vegetables, peaches, watermelon, hamburger, macaroni and cheese, popcorn, and flan.

On weekdays, Usher wakes up at 6:20 a.m., takes a shower, gets dressed, has breakfast and goes to school. His mother almost always prepares his breakfast for him and sits by him at the dining table. When he began to describe his breakfast, the knowledge I had about paisa food was completely challenged. My surprise was not lessened when I began to ask the meaning of words I did not know:

U: [Al desayuno] hay veces cereal, arepa, parveado
R: Uy me perdí! Qué es parveado?
U: Como pan, queso y eso. Y también [desayuno] migote
R: Migote? Qué es migote?
U: Migote! No sé explicarle. No sabe qué es migote?
R: No
U: Es como caspiroleta
R: Ah! Leche con huevo y azúcar?
U: No. Uno lo hace en agua de panela. Ahí tiene queso, galletas que uno lo miga
R: Ah! le echas el queso y las galletas desmoronados al agua de panela.

216 Gorrito is the diminutive of gorro (hat). He is talking about a soup made in his region with fried dough which looks like a hat.
217 [For breakfast] sometimes I have cereal, arepa, parveado.
218 I got lost! What is parveado?
219 Like bread, and cheese and these. And for breakfast I also have migote.
220 Migote? What migote is?
221 Migote! No sé explicarle. Don’t you know what migote is?
222 It is like caspiroleta.
223 Oh! Milk with egg and sugar?
224 No. One makes it with agua de panela. There it has cheese and crackers that one crumps on it.
225 Oh! You add the crumbed cheese and crackers to the agua de panela.
At school, Usher likes to have lasagna, tacos, hot dogs, milk, and orange juice. Sometimes he also has bagels or nuggets. When there are fruits he likes pineapple or grapes. He does not eat chicken at school, although he does so at home.

After school Usher comes home, greets his father, and about 2:40 p.m., before doing homework, he eats something. Sometimes he has a snack he prepares himself (milk and cookies) while his father takes a nap.

Then, about 6:30 p.m. or 7:00 p.m. he has “cena” with his father and his mother. Sometimes he has something small such as arepas, or cereal, or migote. During the weekdays when Usher goes to school and his parents go to work, his mother cooks at night a meal for the day after. Sometimes Usher has such meal at the almuerzo time when he comes back from school and other times at la comida time with his parents. Such meals include frijoles or lentils with meat and rice, sancocho, broccoli soup, tomato soup, “sopa de fideos,” or “arroz con pollo.” Even though his mother is who usually cooks, sometimes Usher prepares his cereal, the Milo, sandwiches, and hot dogs. He also described very well how to prepare arepas.

Almost every week on Saturdays, after going to TICH, Usher and his parents go to “almorzar” to Colombian restaurants such as La Cabaña Antioqueña or “Mi Pueblito Bakery Café.” There, he likes to have “Arepa de chócolo,” “carne a la brasa,”

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226 Yes, ma’am.
227 It is like a bar in a restaurant. Then they do four things for you. Taco, chicken, tomato soup and for example, vegetables. Then, if one wants, one takes the vegetable. Then, one has to take for example either chicken or taco, Then, one takes whatever wants [for drinking], juice or milk.
228 Dinner
229 Soup with a kind of pasta, like a very thin spaghetti.
230 Rice with chicken.
231 I should say paisa restaurants.
232 My little town, bakery and cafeteria.
233 A yellow arepa make with a special kind of preparation of the corn. It is common food of paisas.
234 Grilled meat.
empanada, pan de bono, Milo, Colombiana and Manzana. On Sundays, for breakfast, around 10 a.m., he has Milo with a sandwich his father prepares for him.

Last Christmas he stayed at home with “mi familia.” His family includes his granny, cousins, uncle, and parents. At first, Usher said they really did not eat that much. Then, he said he just remembered that adults drank beer and children drank milk while everybody chatted and then opened the gifts. For Thanksgiving he and his parents went to the house of his parents’ friends where they had “ese pollo de Thanksgiving,” rice, “picadillo,” “bolitas de arveja,” and squared onions. For his birthday he usually has a party and cake.

Usher defined Colombian and American food as:

[La comida colombiana es] como empanadas, buñuelos, pan de bonos, arepas, frijoles, tamales
[La comida americana es] como perros, hamburguesas y pizzas, tacos y todas esas cosas

Mark

I met Mark’s mother at the waiting room of the Center for Family Health. As usual while working as nutritional educator with the Project New Life Good Health, I conducted a participative session with Hispanic immigrants, based on the food pyramid and about how to face food-related changes in the US. At the end, when I told them about my research with Colombian immigrant children, a tall, stout woman came close to me to talk about her concerns for her nine years old son, Mark, who is gaining a lot of weight and is not eating healthy food. I called Mark and he agreed to be interviewed. It took several calls to schedule the interview. During one of those calls Mark’s mother talked about the hardships of living here with two children by herself and related how her mother, who came with them from Colombia, got sick and then died at the Tampa General Hospital six months ago. Another time she asked for information to help a friend who was diagnosed with cervical cancer and did not have health insurance. Then, when I called her back to give her the information, she did not seem as interested as before.

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235 My family.
236 The chicken of Thanksgiving.
237 The translation of picadillo is minced meat. Yet, I think he is really talking about chopped vegetables.
238 Little rounded peas.
239 [Colombian food is] such as empanadas, buñuelos, pan de bonos, arepas, tamales.
240 [American food is] such as hot dogs, hamburgers, and pitas, and all those things.
On a Wednesday at 6 p.m. I arrived at Mark’s home on street close by Angela’s home. His older sister opened the door and I saw him behind her. Mark is tall and stout, and he was wearing long sand colored pants, a blue Western shirt, socks and gray sneakers. He looked at me, said hello and sat on a large couch beside the entrance; he continued to watch the TV. Mark’s sister served me a huge glass of cranberry juice. I sat to Mark’s left while we waited for his mother. When she arrived, she brought arroz con leche for each one of us. Though a bit sweet for me, it was delicious. While eating, she talked about her life in Colombia and the guerrillas’ threats and how they had to flee suddenly. They had three choices: Costa Rica, Ecuador, and the US. She said she did not know how difficult it could be living in the US when you do not speak English, and now wonders if coming here was a good decision. Yet, when she sees her children’s achievements at school, she thinks it has been worthwhile. It will take her a while to work as a professional business administrator again, but she is studying English, her children are responsible and cooperative and so she expects to success. When we finished the arroz con leche, Mark gently and silently picked up the cups and spoons and took them to the kitchen.

Marks turned off the TV, his mother left, and I sat on the couch beside him. Since he stayed silent while I was listening to his mother, and looked serious and a bit isolated, I was not sure if he was shy. Yet, when he wore the microphone and set up the recording, he smiled and looked ready for the interview, which he chose to conduct in English.

Mark came from Neiva, capital of the department of Huila, to the US four years ago, when he was five. He is in third grade at Bellamy Elementary and lives with his mother, his older sister and two male roommates. His mother works “recogiendo cajas para mandar a Colombia y para Centro y Sur América.”

Mark identifies himself as Colombian and prefers to speak English most of the time. He thinks he speaks “a lot, very, very good” Spanish and “very good” English. At home he speaks English with his sister and Spanish with his mom. Most of his friends are Americans, and “I have one friend that he is from Colombia and another friend is from Guatemala.” His favorite TV channels are Kids WB and UPM 44, both in English. He

241 Picking up boxes to send them to Colombia, and to Central and South America.
listens to English radio stations and rap is his favorite music. His favorite books are “all of the Harry Potter books” which he has read in English.

His favorite foods are pizza, pasta, bandeja paisa, tuna, and milk. In Colombia his favorite dishes were bandeja paisa and frijoles. Since Mark was speaking very quietly, I moved to sit closer to him, but then his sister and mother, behind us at the kitchen, laughed and asked me if I had enough cassettes to record all his preferred foods. I wondered how they were able to hear, considering that there was a wall between us.

With his low but secure voice, and with a marked opita\textsuperscript{242} accent from his native region in Colombia, he continued answering that his favorite snacks are cookies, Doritos, and corn chips. From Colombia he recalled he liked buñuelos, empanadas, bread, “Golpe” and “Pony Malta.” He added that in Colombia he did not call them snacks or anything, he just ate them. When I asked what Golpe is, he shouted to her sister:

M: Cómo era el golpe?\textsuperscript{243} (Sister and mother: laughing behind us).

Sister: papitas fritas.\textsuperscript{244}

M: Papitas, pero con chicharrón.\textsuperscript{245}

Sister: Con patacón. Comida chatarra.\textsuperscript{246}

Mother: patacón, papitas y chicharrón.\textsuperscript{247}

On weekdays when Mark goes to school, he wakes up at 6:30 a.m., takes a shower, gets dressed, and at about 6:45 a.m. sits at the table to eat the desayuno his mother has prepared. He usually has pancakes and “café con leche.” Then he goes to school, where he writes in the journal class and attends different mathematics classes. He explained to me that since he is more advanced in mathematics than his friends, they take the math class in another classroom. Then he has social studies and at twelve “nos vamos para el lonche.”\textsuperscript{248}

\textsuperscript{242} People from the department of Huila are known as “opitas.”

\textsuperscript{243} How was El Golpe? (Golpe means Knock).

\textsuperscript{244} Potatoes chips.

\textsuperscript{245} Potatoes, but with chicharrón.

\textsuperscript{246} With patacón. Junk food.

\textsuperscript{247} Patacón, papitas y chicharrón.

\textsuperscript{248} We go to lunch. “Lonche” is an Anglicism I have heard among Hispanics in the US.
At the cafeteria, he sits with his friends to have the food his mother has put in his “ponchera.” Usually he has Capri Sun, a ham sandwich, a chocolate bar, and sometimes a fruit. Although his mother prepares his lunch for him, he knows very well how to prepare his sandwich. Sometimes he does not bring lunch and brings money for pizza. Since he does not like the pasta or the pizza they prepare at school, he buys pizza at Papa John’s where for $2.25 he can get one slice of pizza, a juice, and a fruit.

At 2:15 p.m. he leaves school and rides his bike home, which is two miles away. When he arrives at 2:30 p.m. he has cookies with Capri Sun and at about 4 p.m. his sister warms up the almuerzo his mother cooked for them. Sometimes he has tuna, rice, and Capri Sun, and other times he has “alverjas, arroz, por ahí jugo de piña o jugo que mi mamá hace y tajadas.” Then, he described how to prepare some of them:

El arroz, uno lo saca de una bolsa, lo echa en una olla, le echa un poquito de aceite y sal y lo pone a hervir y cuando ya hierva el agua, uno le echa el arroz y espera hasta que se haga y después uno lo sirve. [Las tajadas] uno coge un plátano verde, no tan verde, y uno lo corta así en tajadas y lo pone a freir en aceite.

When his mother arrives around 6 p.m., Mark and his sister have a snack such as corn chips bought at the supermarket.

When Mark lived in Colombia, for breakfast he recalled having foods such as scrambled eggs, chocolate and bread and buñuelos, or sometimes tamal, chocolate and bread, or “carne al bistec, chocolate y pan.” Besides knowing how very well how the carne al bistec is prepared:

Carne al bistec, uno la saca del refrigerador, la pone a que se descongele. Uno corta tomate y hace una salsa ahí de tomate y de cómo es que se llama? Espera, yo tengo que pensar, esto, lo que a uno le hace llorar los ojos.

R: Cebolla

Tomate y cebolla! Y hace una salsa de eso y después echa la salsa ahí en una cacerola con la carne. Y después cuando ya la carne esté con la salsa y todo eso, ya uno se la come.

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249 He means “lonchera” (lunch box).
250 Green peas, rice, like a pineapple juice or any juice my mother makes and tajadas (fried ripe plantain).
251 The rice, one takes it from a bag, puts it on a pot, adds a bit of oil and salt, and puts it to boil and when the water is boiling, one puts the rice and waits until it is made and then one serves it. [The tajadas] one takes a green plantain, not as green, and one cuts it on slices and puts to fried on oil.
252 Diminutive of salsa (sauce).
253 Carne al bistec, one takes it from the refrigerator, lets it thaw. One cuts tomato and makes a sauce with tomato and with, how is it called? Wait, I have to think, this, the thing that makes you cry.
254 Onion.
255 Diminutive of salsa (sauce).
When Mark described the recipe, his mother shouted corrections to him and said that this is a Sunday breakfast and not a weekday breakfast. Mark answered that he was talking about his breakfast in Colombia and not at the US, as meaning that in the US he does not have breakfast with carne al bistec on weekdays as he did in Colombia.

In response, Mark’s mother complained that in Colombia he played more sports and walked more. But here children suffer the syndrome of the refrigerator, which for her means that every two minutes they open the refrigerator, binging on food, but not healthy kinds like carrots or celery. While she finished her complaint, he looked at me and with a look of complicity, we both smiled and continued the interview.

In Colombia he recalled having lentils, meat, and rice for lunch. When I asked how his dinners were in Colombia, he first smiled fondly, exclaiming “eran bien ricas!” Then he laughed. In Colombia he used to have dinner around 5 p.m. with meat, patacón, and rice, and lulo juice for drinking. Later he used to have a glass of milk or a slice of cheese.

On Sundays, Marks wakes up at 7 a.m. and turns on the TV, while he watches his mother goes to Mi Pueblito to buy bread, buñuelos, and other foods for the special breakfast. Then around 10 a.m. he, his sister and his mother sit at the table to have arepa—which he also described very well how to prepare—eggs with ham, chocolate, buñuelo, bread and such things. Since Sunday is his mother’s day off, he or his sister, or both prepare breakfast.

Every two or three Sundays, the family goes to a restaurant for lunch. Sometimes they go to Chinese restaurants or to La Cabaña or to “La Pequeña Colombia.” At the Chinese restaurant, Mark likes to have Chinese rice and fried chicken, with cranberry or apple juice, or water. At La Cabaña he likes to have bandeja paisa or “Bandeja Cabaña” which consists of half chicken, French fries, rice, and beans. There, he sometimes drinks Colombiana or lulo juice. Sometimes he also goes to Burger King, where he drinks fruit punch because he does not like sodas.

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256 Tomato and onion! And you make a sauce with them. Then, you put the sauce in a pan with the meat. And then, when the meat is ready with the sauce and all, you eat it.
257 They were very delicious!
258 The little Colombia.
For special occasions such as Christmas and Thanksgiving, Mark usually goes with his mother and sister to visit relatives and friends of her mother. Last Christmas Mark went with his family to her little cousin’s home at Key Coral. His uncle, aunt, and some friends were also there; they had paella\(^{259}\) his uncle cooked, and Coca cola. For Thanksgiving they went to visit some old friends of his mother in Bradenton and had turkey and Coca cola. I was surprised when he also described how to prepare turkey:

\[
\text{Pues uno rellena el \textit{turkey} de fruta, como uno quiera y eso ya trae un \textit{termómetro}. Después uno pone el \textit{turkey} en la estufa, y cuando se le saca el \textit{termómetro} significa que el \textit{turkey} ya está listo.}\(^{260}\)
\]

For his birthday this year he went with his mother and sister to Chuck E Cheese. “\textit{Quítele la e y póngale una E mayúscula,}\(^{261}\) he said, helping me to write it. There, he likes to have pizza and Coca cola.

At first, Mark did not identify many food changes since he came to the US, but when he looked at the food cards he found some. For every food item in the cards, he mentioned whether he ate it in Colombia, here and in Colombia also, just in Colombia, or whether they are new foods he came to know in the US.

Among the foods he ate there and still eats in the US are: bread, cereal, yoghurt, popcorn, birthday cake, candies, ice cream, brownies, pretzels, pasta (spaghetti), milk with banana or with bocadillo, hamburger, pizza, arroz con pollo, arequipe, arepas, patacones, sancocho, eggs, buñuelos, bread, bandeja paisa, natilla, bocadillos, sausages, and empanadas. There are also fruits such as guava, juice of papaya, watermelon, lemons, lulo, blackberries, mangoes, bananas, strawberries, apples, tangerines, coconuts, nuts, pineapple, guanabana, and peaches. The list also includes frijoles, tart of cauliflower, potatoes, celery, carrots, plantains, cabbage, mushrooms, avocado, corn, and tomatoes.

Foods that he ate in Colombia but does not eat any more or eats very little here include: chocolate bars, flan, Milo, and obleas. Foods he ate little or rarely in Colombia

\(^{259}\) Though a typical Spanish dish, paella is a common dish for special occasions among upper classes in Colombia. In general, for special occasions upper classes in Colombia eat either typical Colombian foods or foreign dishes. It is also common mixing Colombian and foreign dishes. This has become also a widespread practice for special occasions among all social classes in large cities. For example, though lasagna is a dish somehow common among upper classes for special occasions (or even for daily meals), among lower classes it is also prepared for special occasions.

\(^{260}\) Well, one stuffs the turkey with fruit as one wants. And it already brings a thermometer. Then, one puts the turkey on the stove, and when the thermometer is taken out it means that the turkey is ready.

\(^{261}\) Take away the e and add a capitol E.
and eats much more here include biscuits, hot dogs, and chicken nuggets. New foods he has been eating since he came to the US include cinnamon roll, pies, muffins, bagels, macaroni and cheese, and buffalo chicken. Foods that he does not eat because he dislikes them include salads, burritos, broccoli, and peppers.

He compared the food he ate in Colombia to American:

Acá la comida acá tiene mucha grasa. En Colombia la comida es más saludable porque en Colombia yo veía a mi tita prepararla y eso no saca tanta grasa, la comida es más buena! Mejor! En cambio acá la comida es sólo hot dog y hamburguesa y todo eso. [En Colombia] la comida es más saludable, [es decir] que a uno le ayuda más para que uno crezca bien grande y sea más fuerte y tiene más vitaminas y minerales. [La comida americana] Tiene harta grasa, es bien mala.

He also contrasted pizzas and hot dogs. Compared to pizzas there, pizzas here have much more sauce. Hot dogs are also different because “la carne allá es mejor que la de acá.”

Even though Mark talked little about his granny, her presence was alive in his food memories. Looking at the food cards he recalled his “tita” who was the person who cooked both in Colombia and here. In Tampa she also made empanadas and tamales, some of which she sold. From her, he learned not only how to prepare several dishes but also about the medicinal properties of foods such as eggplant water to reduce cholesterol. It also seems to me that for Mark, Colombian food is not only closely linked to his tita, but also idealized as good, and healthier in contrast with American food, which is denigrated as greasy, bad, and unhealthy.

Ron

When I invited Ron to participate in the research, his answer was that he was going to think about it. Then he agreed to the interview and to participate in a group session. During playtime at TICH, Ron usually plays soccer with his friends and sometimes sits by himself to have a soda and potato chips. Ron is eight years old and looks tall and stout. Usually at TICH he seemed serious and he hardly ever smiled. He did not seem sad or

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262 Fond name given to his grandmother.
263 Here food has so much fat. In Colombia food is healthier because there I saw my granny to prepare it and there food was not as greasy [as here. There.] food is much better! Conversely, here food is just hot dogs and hamburgers, and such things. [In Colombia] food is healthier, [I mean] it helps one to grows up tall and strong, and it has more vitamins and minerals. [American food] has a lot of fat; it is very bad.
264 The meat there is better than meat here.
265 It may be translated as granny.

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angry but rather shy and focused on his business. Yet in a picture I took of him with his mother he is hugging her and looks tender and sweet.

At the beginning of the group session with other boys, Ron called me to show me something he likes to do. He took a piece of mortadella, bit and cut three pieces and made a rounded face with two eyes and the mouth. Then he hung around. While other boys were already working on their drawings or sculptures, he looked at them and walked around without beginning to work on his activity. Then, when I asked for his work, he rapidly took a piece of play-doh and using a mold, he made a yellow pig which he presented saying: “Este es un puerco volador. Un día él estaba volando y después se cayó porque él creía que tenía alas pero era un sueño.” It was the first time I heard a long sentence out of him. Usually, Ron is a boy of few words.

Fig. 8. Ron Shows “The Flying Pig” he made.

He and Rocky are very good friends, like brothers. They spend a lot of time together and their mothers take care of both of them. So they asked me to interview them the same day while they were both at Ron’s home with his mother. Ron lives with his mother and a Colombian roommate in an apartment near Egypt Lake Elementary school, where he just finished second grade. When I arrived at his home at 11 a.m. on a summer vacation day

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266 This is a flying pig. One day he was flying but then he fell because he thought he had wings, but it was only a dream.
he opened the door. Ron wore blue shorts, a sky blue T-shirt, and white sneakers. At the right side of the entrance there was a small dining room and the kitchen. There was a fruit dish with mangoes on the dining table, as well as several objects such as keys, a pen, and pieces of paper. To the left there was a large brightly living room with two large couches, a couple of side tables with several decorations on them and on the walls. In the living room, there was a big TV and Ron’s play station. Ron’s mother asked where I preferred to conduct the interview. Since Rocky would be waiting, I suggested he would play in the living room, while we did the interview in the dining room. We all agreed and I sat to Ron’s right. His mother said she needed to do chores, and we began the interview.

Ron said he preferred to do the interview in Spanish. He wore the microphone and left the recorder on the table. Other participants helped me write the name of their schools, but when I asked Ron, he answered “dígale a mi mamá [por] que yo no sé escribir eso.” Then, when his mother came to show me a picture, he asked her if they had been living here for three or four years. Ron came from Cali to the US three years ago when he was five. At present, his mother is not working but she has worked as cook at Latino and Colombian restaurants. When Ron talked about his female cousins who live in Tampa, I recalled Valentina talking about the restaurants where her aunt has worked. I also recalled that Ron was at Valentina’s home the Saturday morning I met Valentina and her mother to conduct the nutritional education session. Ron’s mother also prepares empanadas to sell among friends and relatives.

Ron thinks he speaks Spanish and English “bien.” He thinks he speaks Spanish better and prefers to speak it most of the time as he usually does at home with his mother. He identifies himself as Colombian and his friends are from Puerto Rico, Cuba, Colombia, and America. He watches sports on Spanish TV channels and also likes Nickelodeon. He does not listen to radio stations and the only music he likes is Juanes. He has read both Spanish and English books such as Los Osos and Henry and Match.

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267 Tell my mother [because] I don’t know how to write it.
268 Good.
269 The Bears.
His favorite foods are scrambled eggs, sausages, ham, ribs, buñuelos, and “carne partidita”\textsuperscript{270} en pedacitos\textsuperscript{271}. He also likes pizza, salads, bread, natilla, bandeja paisa, bocadillos, empanadas, and the juices his mother prepares with frozen fruit pulp such as lulo and blackberry. For snacks he likes Cheetos or Lays with soda or juices. He also likes yoghurt, popcorn, cake, cinnamon rolls, and rarely does he eat bagels at home. Fruits that he usually eats are cantaloupe, papaya, watermelon, lemons, mangoes, bananas, strawberries, apples, tangerines, and pineapples.

On school days, Ron usually wakes up at 7 a.m. and walks to school “\textit{porque la escuela está allí}.”\textsuperscript{273} At home, he has breakfast which consists of cereal or eggs and bread. Usually, his mother prepares his breakfast and Ron eats it by himself at the dining table. Then, at school, around 10 a.m. sometimes he has:

\begin{itemize}
  \item Hamburguesa, a veces jugos, \textit{orange juice}. A veces \textit{chicken nuggets}, a veces pizza, leche, sándwich. Sándwich con jamón y quesito y también sándwich con \textit{peanut butter jelly}. Y a veces ensalada y ya.\textsuperscript{274}
\end{itemize}

Because at school the tables are numbered, he always has lunch with the same two girls. During the afternoon he goes to a park, where sometimes he just drinks water because his mother cannot always afford to buy snacks “\textit{porque una soda vale setenta y cinco centavos y unas papitas valen sesenta y cinco}!”\textsuperscript{275}

Around 6 p.m., he has dinner at home. Sometimes his mother gives him \textit{arepita}\textsuperscript{276} and eggs, or spaghetti with meatballs. At home he also eats meat with rice, potatoes, chicken soup, or hamburgers. Yet, hamburgers at school are different from those made at home. While at school they are “light brown” chicken hamburgers with just bread, mayonnaise, and ketchup, at home “la que mi mamá me hace es negrita\textsuperscript{277} y ella le echa tomate también y muchas cosas que uno usa en ensalada.”\textsuperscript{278}

\begin{itemize}
  \item Diminutive of \textit{partida} (choped).
  \item Diminutive of \textit{pedazos} (pieces).
  \item Meat chopped on pieces.
  \item Because the school is there.
  \item Hamburger, sometimes juice, orange juice. Sometimes chicken nuggets, sometimes pizza, milk, sandwich. Ham and cheese sandwich, and also peanut butter and jelly sandwich. And sometimes salad and that’s it.
  \item Because a soda costs seventy five cents and a papitas sixty five cents!
  \item Diminutive of \textit{arepa}.
  \item Diminutive of \textit{negra} (black).
  \item The one that my mother prepares for me is black and she also puts tomato and a much more things that one uses for salad in it.
\end{itemize}
Ron asked if we were almost done and he yawned. I answered that there were some more questions, but if he wanted we could stop. He said we could continue. For Thanksgiving he had turkey and last Christmas he recalled being at TICH and at a friend’s house, but did not remember the food he ate. For his birthday, his mother bought a cake and he was with almost all of his friends, as well as with Rocky, and his friends’ parents.

Sometimes Ron goes to restaurants either with his mother, or with his friends and their parents. Even though he has gone to other restaurants, he only recalled two names: Burger King and McDonald’s. There, he has hamburgers and sometimes chicken nuggets. Sometimes, he has “los chicken grandes, los grandotes y a veces los redondos.” There, he also has diet coke and chocolate ice cream with M&M’s inside. Sometimes, he also goes to Dunkin Donuts where besides donuts, he likes to have muffins. At the restaurants where his mother has worked he liked to have bandeja paisa.

Even though he does not know how to prepare most foods, he does know how to prepare his breakfast at home:

No más le pone el cereal y después le puede echar la leche. [Los huevos] le empieza a calentar, después le pone la mantequilla, después echa los huevos, después yo los revuelvo y después espero, después le echo la sal y ya.

Generally, Ron thought his food had not changed since he came to the US. For breakfast in Colombia, he recalled having arepa with cheese inside and pericos. For lunch there, he recalled meat with rice, potato, and “sopita de pollo.” He also recalls that in Colombia he had yoghurt, popcorn, cakes, patacones and aguacate. The only items we found that he had in Colombia and has not had since he came here are obleas and Milo. When he sees its picture, he exclaimed: “Oy! Milo, yo tomé mucho Milo.”

He thinks that in Colombia he ate more arepas and more food in general because “esta comida yo nunca la había probado toda, en cambio en Colombia sí toda la he

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279 Since TICH celebrates Thanksgiving and is usually closed for Christmas, I think he is mixing these two holidays.

280 The big ones chicken, the big ones, and sometimes the rounded ones.

281 You just put the cereal and then you can put the milk on it. [The eggs] you start to heat it, then you put the butter, then you put the eggs, then I scramble them, and then I wait, then I put the salt, and that’s it.

282 Diminutive of sopa (soup).

283 Chicken soup.

284 Oh! Milo, I drank a lot of Milo.
“probado.” Finally, he said he did not know the meaning of American or Colombian food.

Rocky

At TICH Rocky spends most of the playtime playing and talking with his friends. Yet he is a kid who takes his eating very seriously. During breaks, I saw him several times leaving the classroom and going directly to sit at the dining table, open his lunch box, and have a snack with crackers, ham, and cheese, accompanied by juice or soda.

When I invited him to participate, he immediately accepted. His answer was confident, even though he spoke quietly. When I called his mother she said she was concerned because he is obese and although he likes salads, he does not like vegetables. He gains weight while in school and loses it during the summer when she prepares his lunch box and he exercises much more, so she said she thinks the problem is the food he eats at school and lack of exercise at school. She used to prepare his lunch box, but she stopped doing so because at school there is no way to warm up his lunch. In addition, she thinks that he eats more when is anxious.

Fig. 9. Rocky shows the cake with strawberry, chocolate, and vanilla he made.

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285 I never had tried all this food but in Colombia I have tried all the food.
During the group session with other boys, Rocky first played and laughed at the rude jokes Juanes was shouting. Then he started working on his first project with play-doh, making a strawberry cake with chocolate and vanilla. His second project included play-doh and plastic utensils, which he described as “un bombón con una espada. Es un bombón que tiene una cara y una boca. Tiene ojos azules, y tiene una boca verde, y el bombón es amarillo y tiene una espada.”286 On his third project, Rocky had a lot of fun with Bryan. Using his “candy with a sword” as a base, they added some more pieces of play-doh and made a new candy that Bryan called the “candy of freedom.” Rocky’s final project was a colored ice cream made with fruit, which he presented with a happy expression.

Rocky is a stout, talkative, and energetic boy of 7 and a half years. His use of language is very precise and he has a sweet smile that shows the gaps left by his lost baby teeth.

We conducted the interview in the apartment of his good friend Ron. Rocky wore tight gray pants, a red short sleeved jersey with two white stripes and the number 80 in the front, and black sneakers. Rocky sat on a chair to my left in the dining room. He looked ready to get down to work and he asked me in a serious tone about the questions I would ask him. After giving him his copy of the questionnaire and an overview of the questions, he wore the microphone and chose to conduct the interview in Spanish. But first he said he wouldn’t need to use the food cards, since he knows the food he eats and likes without being aided.

Rocky will be in third grade next year at Tampa Baptist School. In Colombia he lived in a hotel in Cali. He came to the US when he was 4 and a half years-old and now he lives with his mother and his father. Sometimes his paternal grandfather or his maternal grandmother come to stay with them for two or three months, and other relatives (uncles, aunts, or cousins) visit them for two or three days. Rocky’s father works in a “junker,” buying cars at auction sales and then selling them. His mother works as a babysitter of two children in Clearwater.

286 A candy with a sword. It is a candy with a face and a mouth. It has blue eyes and a green mouth, and the candy is yellow and has a sword.
He thinks he speaks Spanish and English “lo mejor que pueda.” 287 If he is not able to say words in Spanish, he asks his mother or his father. At home he speaks Spanish all the time and he prefers to speak Spanish most of the time. Rocky identifies himself as Colombian and American and his friends come from the United States, Puerto Rico, Colombia, Cuba, India, and the Philippines. His favorite television channels are Nickelodeon, 288 Cartoon Network, Disney Channel, and an English channel where he watches wrestling. His favorite radio stations are also English-speaking ones: 93.3 and 98.7. His favorite music is salsa, reguetón and a little rap. Even though he reads English books, he also reads books about sports car in both languages. Then, Rocky helped me to write the name Yao Ming who is a basketball player and the character of his favorite book. The book is about:

Un jugador de basket ball que estaba jugando y un día que Shaquille O’Neal en accidente le estrujó el pie y se lo partió. Entonces lo llevaron al médico y empezó a chupar una paleta para que se sienta mejor. 289

Rocky’s favorites’ foods are “Frijoles” and “lentejas, chicken nuggets, hamburguesa, perro caliente, sopa de verduras, consomé, y carne asada, y a veces costilla en la casa.” 290 His favorite snacks are Cheetos, Doritos, Lays (potato chips), gummies, and apple with peanut butter that his mother prepares for him. He gets gummies in several stores: Walmart, Super Center, Kash n’ Karry, Winn Dixie, and Publix. Rocky also recalls a new advertisement he has seen on Nickelodeon about gummies. Other foods he likes are empanadas, achiras, bandeja paisa, bocadillo, natilla, pan de bono, buñuelos, arepas, patacones, arequipe, Milo, apple pie, brownies, flan, and fruits such as apples, pear, pineapple, strawberry and watermelon.

On weekdays when he goes to school, Rocky wakes up around 6:00 a.m., gets in his father’s bed while dad is in the bathroom, takes a shower, puts his clothes on, eats his breakfast, brushes his teeth, and puts his shoes on. For breakfast at home he sometimes

287 The best I can.
288 He says he can watch Nickelodeon both in English and Spanish but he, like all participants who watch it, prefers the English one.
289 A basketball player who was playing and one day Shaquille O’Neal by accident stepped on his feet and broke it. Then, they take him to the physician and he began to suck an ice cream for feeling better.
290 Lentils, chicken nuggets, hamburger, hot dog, soup of verdures, broth, roasted meat, and sometimes rib at home.
has cereal with “galletitas”\textsuperscript{291} and arepa, and other times “huevo y pan y un perro”\textsuperscript{292}, pero no con el pan, sólo una salchicha. Eso es todo.”\textsuperscript{293} His father prepares his breakfast and they eat it together in the dining room. If Rocky wakes up before his father, however, he prepares the cereal, cooks hard boiled quail eggs, and heats up the ready-to-eat arepas they buy.

At school, Rocky has lunch at 11:10 a.m. at a table assigned by the teacher. He explained:

Si nos estamos comportando bien, ella nos deja sentarnos en cualquier mesa, y si no, ella nos pone en las mesas que siempre estamos y a veces podemos cambiar mesa mes por mes también. Pues de verdad, mi profesora escoge tres hombres\textsuperscript{294} y tres niñas. Entonces en la mesa que yo me siento, de la mayoría que sé, tengo un poquito como de amigos.\textsuperscript{295}

Sometimes, he takes his lunch from home and other times he buys food at school. From home, he brings “peanut butter sandwich con\textsuperscript{296} jelly” that his mother prepares for him and a “…\{una\} cajita\textsuperscript{297} que tiene galleticas, jamón, queso y un postre,”\textsuperscript{298} that she buys at the grocery store. Other times he takes macaroni and cheese.\textsuperscript{299} At school, he buys hamburger, hot dog, taco, or pizza.

At school, around 2:45 p.m. he gets from vending machines snacks such as papitas, Cheetos, M&M’s, Snickers, Milky Way, or Three Musketeers. He explained that his teacher allows them to get all the snacks they want but for safety reasons they have to be accompanied by a partner. If not, they are in trouble. Then he stays at school, doing homework until around 5 p.m. when his mother or his father picks him up.

\textsuperscript{291} Galletitas and galleticas are both diminutives of galletas (crackers or cookies).
\textsuperscript{292} He meant perro caliente (hot dog), but in this case he is giving the name perro (dog) to the sausage.
\textsuperscript{293} Egg and bread and a dog, but without the bread, just one sausage. That’s it.
\textsuperscript{294} It is interesting that he said “men” instead of “boys.” I suspect he sees himself more like a man than like a boy.
\textsuperscript{295} If we are behaving well she allows us to sit at any table, if not, she assigns us the usual tables, and sometimes we can also change table monthly. Actually, my teacher chooses three men and three girls. Regardless of where I sit I usually have a friend in the same table.
\textsuperscript{296} With.
\textsuperscript{297} Diminutive of caja (box).
\textsuperscript{298} [A] box that has crackers, ham, cheese and a dessert.
\textsuperscript{299} Though his mother talked that at school it is not possible to heat the food, it seems that he eats it cold. I suspect that for him is fine eating macaroni and cheese cold. May be that since it is an American food it does not required being heated as Colombian food.
When he gets home he eats cena and later at night he eats a fruit. For cena sometimes he has macaroni, or frijoles with “arroz, maduro y carne molida.” Other times his mother cooks lentils, vegetable soup, or broth.

On Sundays, he usually has the same breakfast he has on weekdays but sometimes has pancakes instead. For lunch and dinner on Sundays he has frijoles. Last Christmas Rocky played with his play station at his home with Ron. Then:

Nos fuimos a la casa de mis primos de a pasar la navidad. Allí jugamos y después comimos como arroz con pollo, sólo que le pone el condimento de pescado y alitas de pollo. Y también como bracitos pequeños, de los orange, de los cangrejos, de los bebés pequeñitos. [De postre] Un pastel de cherry y tomamos, Coca cola, diet Pepsi, Pepsi, o Sprite.

Many people, almost everybody from TICH, were invited to celebrate his last birthday at Chuck E Cheese. There they had pizza, ice cream, and cake, which is quite a different celebration from what he recalls having in Colombia where they had frijoles and lentils. For Thanksgiving they went to his aunt’s home and then to the mall. As she did for Christmas Ron’s mother also cooked for Thanksgiving.

The frequency of eating out depends on “si mi mamá está cansada de hacer comida.” Usually he goes with his parents once during the week and on Fridays and Sundays. Sometimes he goes with his cousins. Rocky eats out at Burger King, McDonald’s, Wendy’s, Steak ‘n’ Shake, R&R Beans, Red Lobster, Hooters, La Cabaña, and La Pequeña Colombia. At McDonald’s or Burger King, he usually has a hamburger, chicken nuggets, and salad with Sprite or lemonade, and cookies or cake for dessert. At La Cabaña he likes to have bandeja paisa or vegetable soup with Colombiana, Manzana, or Pepsi, and arroz con leche for dessert.

Rocky described some details about how to prepare macaroni and cheese, rice, and ground meat, although he was unsure about how to cook something more complicated, such as beans.

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300 Rice, maduro and ground meat.
301 Diminutive de alas (wings).
302 Diminutive of brazo (arm).
303 We went to my cousins’ home to spent Christmas with them. There we played and then we ate like arroz con pollo, only that it has fish seasoning, and chicken wings. And also like the small arms, those orange, of the crabs, those of the small babies. [For dessert] a cherry cake and we drank Coke, diet Pepsi, Pepsi or Sprite.
304 If my mother is tired of making food.
In Colombia Rocky used to eat most of the food he enjoys here as well. Yet, there are some differences. There, he recalled having just papitas and soda for snacks. Some foods are different; for example, hamburgers in Colombia were bigger and (he said) had more “salad” on them. New foods he has been eating since he came to the US include chicken nuggets, broth, ribs, and pancakes.

Compared to other participants, Rocky’s perspective on American and Colombian food differs from that of other children: “La comida de América es más porque es más barato. Y la de Colombia, ahí es más caro y más poquita comida.”

Elisa

Halley’s mother helped me contact Elisa’s mother. When I first called, she asked me to call a bit later since she was frying some “tajaditas.” When I called back we talked for nearly an hour, mainly about food, Barranquilla, and her family. At school I had some friends from la costa who like me were sent as girls to the high and cold mountains of Bogotá to obtain a better quality of education. Unlike people from Bogotá who were formal, reserved, and not very friendly toward a little, and timid girl from “tierra caliente,” I found my costeñas friends as warm, open, informal, and noisy as the people from Tocaima where I grew up. Maybe for this reason, and maybe because we share many other (being women, Colombian, and immigrants), Elisa’s mom and I talked as if we were old friends. Like me, she found that at first the meat tastes very different; she said she still dislikes it. She explained that she tries to cook here for the family like she did in Colombia. She frequently prepares arepas, fried fish, and “bollo limpio.” She said her home is like a hotel because she prepares the preferred foods for each one of the members of her family. Her youngest son likes cassava, rice, and salad; Elisa likes vegetables but her oldest daughter dislikes vegetables and eats lots of candies. Since both

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305 American food is more because is cheaper. And Colombian food, there is more expensive and much less food.
306 Diminutive of tajadas (slices). Tajadas are slices of fried ripe plantains.
307 The coast. Such is the name given to the Atlantic (Caribbean) coast.
308 Literally, hot land.
309 From the coast.
310 Literally, clean bun. It originated in the Colombian Caribbean region and is prepared with corn flour, water, and salt. The dough is wrapped with corn leaves and then boiled. It is a widespread food consumed by everyone, rich and poor, in the Colombian Caribbean coastal region.
maternal and paternal grandparents are diabetics, she is trying to make her children aware that they face a heightened risk of becoming diabetics. She concluded that fortunately her children are not fat and that the problem other children have with obesity results from their eating too much pizza.

On Monday June 14, 2004, I arrived to Elisa’s home at 3:00 p.m. Elisa’s mother opened the door and greeted me with a hug and a kiss on the cheek. From the entrance, I saw a medium-sized area where the living room, the dining room, and a large drawing table were located. The kitchen was next and down a hall beyond the dining room, were the bedrooms. Elisa’s mother called Elisa who greeted me a bit shyly extending her delicate hand. She looked short and thin although she is nine years old. She was wearing light green shorts, a short-sleeved top nicely adorned with flowers, and sandals, which she soon took off. Besides Elisa and her mother, her siblings, her girlfriend Tammy, and her father (who stayed a while) were also there. Once she decided to sit in the dining room, she chose to conduct the interview in Spanish. She was very interested in the recorder, asked me about how many microphones it had and looked proud wearing the individual microphone. Her sister passed by the dining room on her way to the kitchen, and Elisa said to her “I told you, this is a recorder.”

Elisa is in third grade at Twin Lakes Elementary. She came from Barranquilla two years ago when she was seven. She lives with her father, her mother, her younger brother and her sister. Her father builds houses and studied “hasta el final. Si él no fue a todo, no puede trabajar aquí.”311 Her mother also studied “hasta el final. Pero ella trabaja de housekeeper porque ella no sabe inglés.”312

Elisa speaks English and Spanish and she thinks she speaks both from “pretty good to good.” She prefers speaking Spanish, but at home she speaks it with her parents although she uses English with her sister. She identifies herself as Colombian American. Her friends are from Colombia, México, America, Japan, China, and from Cuba. Her favorite TV channels are Disney channel, MTV, and cartoon network in English, and Telemundo in Spanish. Her favorite radio station is 93.3 in English and her favorite

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311 Completed his education. If he had not completed his education he couldn’t work here.
312 Completed her education. But she works as housekeeper because she does not know English.
music is hip hop. When asked for her favorite books Elisa asked: “quieres que escriba?” And she wrote *The Night I Follow the Dog*.

Her favorite dish is “*arroz con coco*.” Other favorite foods are fried meat, salad with tomato, cucumber, and onion, vegetarian pizza, chicken soup, and sour candies. Elisa ate such foods in Colombia and has not found much difference since she came to the US because “*mi mamá me hace a mí mi ensalada, la misma ensalada.*” However, in the course of the interview we found some differences. For example, in Barranquilla her grandmothers cooked most of the food they had at home. Pizza in Colombia was bigger and in the US it has more tomato sauce. Here, they don’t sell the same sour chewing gums she bought for snacks at the *tienda* (store) near her home. But the main difference is that she misses the food “*que mi abuelita hace,*” such as lasagna and cannelloni, she said in a low, sad voice with tears in her eyes. Then, she exclaimed: “*Ella va a venir aquí.*”

When I asked about her favorite snacks Elisa asked permission to leave. She went with her friend to ask her mother if she could stay the night with them. Then she invited me to her room to see her hamster and her four babies, and Elisa’s brother asked me if I wanted one of the babies. Kindly I thanked him and explained I couldn’t take care of the baby as he would require. Meanwhile, her mother and sister were in the kitchen cooking something.

Elisa’s favorite snacks are chips; chocolate bars such as Musketeers; sodas such as Pepsi and Fanta, and cookies such as Chips Ahoy and Oreo. In Colombia she used to have the same snacks except for Chips Ahoy, which are not found there. There, she liked to drink soda with bread.

On weekdays when she goes to school, Elisa wakes up at 6:05 a.m., goes to the bathroom, takes a shower, brushes her teeth, gets dressed, and then “*me siento a jugar con los animales. Porque antes tenía un perro y un gato.*” Then, sometimes she has

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313 Do you want me to write it?
314 Coconut.
315 My mother makes the same salad for me.
316 My granny makes.
317 She will come here [to visit us].
318 I sit to play with the animals because before I had a dog and a cat.
breakfast at school and sometimes at home. At school, she has breakfast with her friends and she has cereal and a peanut butter and jelly sandwich at 7:30 am.

Suddenly, Elisa stood up and asked if I would like water. Her sister came to show me the box of mix from which she was going to make brownies. Her mother shouted that since it was going to rain it would be a good idea for me to I park my car closer to the entrance. While transcribing the interview I wrote: “this is like the Barranquilla carnival.” Then Elisa’s mother brought two glasses of blackberry juice and popcorn and Elisa asked me if popcorn is considered to be bad for you. I said that since it is a cereal it is nutritive but if you eat a lot and do not eat other nutritive foods it might result in health problems. I explained that what is important is eating a balanced diet and used the food pyramid to explain what a balanced diet means.

After a while, Elisa continued talking about the food she eats at school. At 11:00 a.m. she has a snack which consists of things she has taken from home, like Cheetos, or “dulces chatarra.” At 12:36 p.m. she has lunch at school with her friends. Sometimes, she has pepperoni pizza, or lasagna, or hot dogs with strawberry milk or juice. She explained that they can choose between juice and fruit, and among chocolate milk, plain milk and strawberry milk. She prefers the fruit and the strawberry milk, and if there is salad she always chooses it.

At 2:44 p.m. she gets home, eats Cheetos or something she gets from the refrigerator, such as, leftovers, or a fruit, and then she naps for a while. At around 7 p.m. Elisa has dinner with “toda mi familia, todos los cinco!” She always likes to have salad or guacamole her mother prepares for her. For dinner she also has chicken soup and fried meat with rice. For dinner in Colombia she recalled having more or less the same foods: salad, fried meat, tajaditas, soups, salchipapa, papitas, lasagna or pizza.

For breakfast on Sundays, Elisa has the same foods she recalled having eaten in Colombia: “café con leche y tajaditas” or meat with arepas. Then, she explained that

319 Junk candies.
320 All my family, the five of us!
321 Compound word formed by “salchicha (sausage) and papa (potato).
322 Coffee with milk and tajaditas.
at school girls don’t have coffee with milk, just teachers. Yet, “cuando mi mamá está off, unas veces ella nos hace café con leche y arepas.”

Elisa recalled little about last Christmas, just that they were living in an apartment where they met some friends and had lasagna and arroz de coco. Yet, she got excited recalling Christmas with her family in Barranquilla:

Siempre íbamos a la casa de mi tía, ahí pasábamos la navidad. [Comíamos] lasaña. Mi tato, mi abuela y mis tíos hacían mucha comida. [Nos reúñamos con] los otros familiares, con mis primos y mis amigas venían. Cuando ya teníamos todos los regalos, regresábamos con ellos a jugar. Porque la casa de mi tía es bien grande y tiene una reja, entonces saltábamos de la reja, ahí jugábamos tiburón. Entonces en el piso estábamos jugando muchas cosas. Tú gritabas y podías oír tu voz.

For Thanksgiving she went with her family to visit her cousins and her uncle and aunt who prepared turkey and mashed potatoes. For her birthday last October, her cousins came from Orlando. First, at home they had the cake her mother had bought, and then all of them went to have dinner at Cici’s Pizza where there is a buffet. Elisa checked that I write correctly the name of the pizzeria and spelled it slowly for me. Elisa, her mother, and her siblings go to Cici’s Pizza almost every week. There, she likes to have salads, pizzas, Sprite, and brownies (which she loves). About once a month she also goes with her family to eat out at “La Pelota,” where she likes to have chicken, soup, salad, empanadas, and Hawaiian punch. On weekdays sometimes Elisa and her family also go to have dinner at McDonald’s or Pizza Hut.

Using the food cards, Elisa talked about food changes. Among the foods she ate in Colombia and still eats in the US are cauliflower, frijoles, potatoes, celery, carrots, plantains, cabbage, mushrooms, peppers, broccoli, onions, garlic, tomatoes, radishes, corn, avocado, popcorn, yoghurt, bread, sandwiches, brownies, pretzels, arequipe, arepas, patacones, guacamole, soups, buñuelos, bocadillos, empanadas, pizza, chicken nuggets, and hamburgers. Foods that she ate in Colombia and is not eating any more or eats very

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323 When my mother is off, she prepares coffee with milk and arepas for us.
324 Fondly name given to her grandfather.
325 We always went to my aunt’s house, there we spent Christmas. [we ate] lasagna. My tato, my grandmother and my aunts made a lot of food. [we met with] other relatives, with my cousins and my girlfriends come with us. When we already had all the gifts, we played again. Because my aunt’s house is very big and has security bars, then we jumped from the bars. There we played shark. Then, on the floor we played many things. You shouted and you could hear your voice.
326 The Ball.
little here include eggplant, Milo, cannelloni, and natilla. New foods she has been eating since she came to the US include macaroni and cheese, bagels, muffins, and cinnamon roll.

The main difference Elisa finds between Colombian and American food is flavor. She defines Colombian food as “rica y con mucho sabor,” and she thinks American food is “rica pero no tiene mucho sabor.”

Andrea

While interviewing Elisa, her mother called Andrea’s mother, who was willing to let me interview her daughter. When I called her, she explained to me that her daughter does not drink sodas at home. Instead she gives her agua de panela, chocolate, milk, or Tampico juices. At home she also prepares sopitas, and rice with lentils or frijoles.

When I arrived at their home, however, they were not yet there. I called Andrea’s mother who said they would be there in one hour. So, I decided to wander around the neighborhood looking for the Latino stores other participants have mentioned. I found “La Bodeguita,” where, besides food items from Mexico, Puerto Rico, and maybe other Latino countries, they sell many Colombian products such as canned sodas such as Manzana and Colombiana, Pony Malta, flour mixtures ready for preparing arepas, natilla, oatmeal, and buñuelos, several kinds of frozen fruit pulp, Milo, bocadillos, and coconut and coffee candies. After taking some pictures I went back to meet Andrea.

I met Andrea and her mother in the front yard of their house. Andrea is a thin 9 year-old girl. She was wearing light blue shorts, a pink short-sleeved top, socks, and light gray sneakers. She and her girlfriend Erika greeted me shyly. At the entrance we all took off our shoes and entered in a medium-sized living room with a large couch, a coffee table, and some side tables. There were decorations on the tables and the walls, and a

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327 Delicious and with a lot of flavor.
328 Delicious but without much flavor.
329 Diminutive of sopa (soup).
330 Diminutive of bodega (pantry).
331 This is not a Colombian custom. Conversely, most people living in Colombia would regard such custom as inappropriate.
computer desk on the extreme right in front of a large window. Andrea’s mother said “siéntase en confianza,” and brought me a glass of grape soda.

Like other participants, Andrea was interested in the recorder. Actually, I think that the recorder helped as a tool for building rapport with participants. Once she felt confident and was wearing the individual microphone, she said “I’m ready.” She chose to conduct the interview in English.

Recently, Andrea finished third grade at Twin Lakes Elementary. She came from Medellín to the US when she was five and lives with her mother and three roommates, a five year-old boy and his Colombian parents. When her father, who lives in Colombia, visits, he brings some candies she likes a lot. Her mother works cleaning houses and in a loan company. Andrea thinks she speaks “enough” Spanish and English. At home she speaks English with the children and Spanish with her mother and other adults. She likes to practice both languages. When I asked how she identifies herself and gave her the list of choices, she asked: “What is Hispanic?” Then, when I explained it, she answered: “yo creo que es mejor poner Colombia.” Her friends are from Colombia and from “here.” Her favorite television channels are Disney Channel, Toon Disney, Cartoon Network, Nickelodeon, and Telemundo. Her favorite radio stations are Disney Radio and 93.3.

Reading the questionnaire she has with her, she said “what is my favorite music? Um…I like country, rap, and pop.” She does not read as many books but sometimes reads chapters’ books in English because “yo no sé cómo leer en español.” Andrea’s favorite foods are “meat, agua de panela, Nesquik, candy, arroz, huevo, spaghetti, agua, pan y eso es lo único que puedo pensar ya!” Then, she recalled the lentil soup, which is her favorite soup.

At first she said she did not recall foods she ate when she lived in Medellín, but suddenly she exclaimed: “Sopa! Ponga sopa! Ponga Sopa! Con mi papá y mis stephermanos, yo era la primera que acababa de comerme sopa y ganaba en la sopa.”

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332 Feel confident. [This is a polite way to greet guests].
333 I think is better to put Colombia.
334 I don’t know how to read in Spanish.
335 Meat, agua de panela, Nesquik, candy, rice, egg, spaghetti, water, bread and that’s all what I can to think now!
336 Soup! Put soup! Put soup! With my father and my stepbrothers I was the first one who finished the soup and I won at the soup.
The soups she likes are made with corn, or spaghetti, or beans, and alphabet soup. Even though Andrea said she recalls few foods from Colombia, she not only recalled many when looking at the food cards, but also had some deep and strong memories about hot dogs there: [Eran] “diferentes porque son hot dogs pero tenían queso crema y tenían como un palito y crema rosada y tenían un huevo tan rico!”

Like other participants Andrea chose to conduct the interview in English but she turned to talk in Spanish sometimes. In some cases I was who first said something in Spanish and then they continued speaking in Spanish, however, as a general trend, participants, as Andrea did, used Spanish to talk about Colombian foods and to express their memories from Colombia. In the same way, English was the language that participants preferred to talk about foods at school. Thus, English, school, and American food are related like Spanish, home, and Colombian foods are linked. However, participants also mixed words and meanings from both languages, which reflects emerging process of blending of meanings and creolization.

Among the foods she recalled eating in Colombia and also in the US are soups, rice, bread, meat, candy, eggs, carrots, cucumber, corn, avocado, tomato with salt, frijoles, cake, cookies, ice cream, chocolate bar, ham and cheese sandwich, empanadas, bandeja paisa, pan de bono, buñuelos, arepas, agua de panela, patacones, arequipe, and Milo. Also fruits such as pineapple, apple, strawberry, blackberry, banana, lemon, watermelon, and papaya. New foods she has been eating since she came to the US include Nesquik, pies, muffins, cheeseburger, nuggets, macaroni and cheese, and pretzels. Foods she does not like include broccoli and pizza.

On weekdays when Andrea goes to school, she wakes up at 6:30 a.m., takes a shower, combs her hair, and around 7:00 a.m. she eats with her roommate. Sometimes she has cereal and other times agua de panela, bread and egg. Her mother always prepares her food at home and Andrea said she did not know how such foods are prepared. When I asked for the name of such meal she looked at me and explained: “I don’t know the names such as dinner or breakfast; I just know it is in the morning.”

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337 They were different because they are hot dogs, but they had cream cheese, and had like a stick and pink sauce and it had an egg so delicious! [Hot dogs in Colombia may be accompanied with boiled quail egg].
though at school they serve food in the morning, Andrea explained that she does not like to eat there at that time.

Around 11:00 a.m. Andrea eats gummies or cookies she buys at school for snack. Even though there is ice cream, she does not buy it because she only likes the strawberry ice cream her mother has at home. Besides, cookies cost 25 cents and ice cream $1. Her mother “tiene de esas paletas como las que hacían en Colombia y se puede poner crackers y chocolate y [tiene] el spray del milkshake. Entonces me gusta más el de acá.”

At 12:30 p.m. she has lunch with her friends at school. She recalled that she likes to have meat, fruits, chocolate milk, juices, and cheeseburgers with ketchup and pickles. When I asked what fruits she has at school, she answered with a bit of annoyance: “No sé. Solamente sé que son frutas y yo creo que son colombianas, porque mi mamá también las compra… como apple y peach.”

Around 3 p.m. she gets home where she eats with her mother, who gives Andrea foods such as soup, meat, arepa, agua de panela, grape soda, egg, and rice. Later, at night Andrea has agua de panela with bread and egg. Andrea explained that sometimes her mother buys soups and other food cooked at Colombian places.

On weekends Andrea stays at Erika’s home. There she likes to have ice cream. Sometimes, Erika, her mother, and Andrea go to eat out at a Chinese restaurant she likes to have fruits, jelly, Chinese rice, Sprite, and “a delicious and healthy red meat.” Then, she added: “Pues yo creo que es healthy. Como es de Chinese, allá son cosas que son healthy.” On weekends Andrea also goes to eat out with friends and their parents at McDonald’s or Burger King. At McDonald’s she usually has Happy Kid Meal, ice cream, and Sprite or lemonade. Looking at the food cards, she recognized a dish she eats at restaurants both here and in Colombia, and asked the name. As I answered “bandeja

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338 Has popsicles like the ones made in Colombia, and it is possible to put crackers and chocolate on them, and they have the milkshake spray. Then, I like better the ones from home.

339 I don’t know, I just know they are fruits and I think they are Colombian because my mother also buys them… like apple and peach. [Even though apples and peaches are common fruits in some regions in Colombia, they are not as typical as others. What is interesting in Andrea’s explanation is the relationship she makes between her mother and the identity of the fruits, and by extension to her identity as a person who eats Colombian fruits].

340 Well, I think is healthy. Since it is from Chinese, their things are healthy. [I don’t know which meat is she talking about. What I find more interesting is again the relationship between food and identity as expressed by saying that Chinese food is healthy].
paisa,” and she said: “eso es de paisa, cierto? Yo nací…yo soy paisa, por eso yo como eso.”

For Christmas she recalled that she was at a friend’s home and that she had strawberries. For Thanksgiving she recalled eating rice at her mother’s friend home. She got excited recalling her birthday. Her mother bought a cake for her and all her friends, and her mother’s friends came to visit her and they also had chips y “cosas así.”

Comparing American and Colombian food Andrea said:


Erika

Erika is Andrea’s girlfriend and she was at her home during Andrea’s interview. Quite excited, Erika asked me to interview her right after Andrea. I explained to her that it was not possible because I first needed to explain the research to her mother and obtain her permission. But I promised to call her mother later and if she agreed, we could have the interview the next day. Erika said that was good for her. When I called her mother that afternoon and talked about higher rates of obesity among Latino children, she said her daughter was not obese and talked about the diversity among different groups of Latinos. She explained that Colombian parents usually are very interested in their children’s nutrition, and like her, they are very dedicated to their rearing. She continued affirming that what children eat depends on their parents, so they should impose their will and tell their children that they have to eat soup with vegetables as she does with her daughter. Since she had worked in a school’s kitchen and lunchroom, she knew very well that if you ask children what they want to eat, their response will be hamburger or pizza. So, she tells her daughter that school’s food is just to hold her until she gets home where she has her soup with arepas and other foods she prepares, which she labeled as good.

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341 This is paisa isn’t it? I was born...I’m paisa, that is why I eat it. [Here she completes the relationship between food and identity saying that since she is paisa she eats bandeja paisa.]
342 Things like these.
343 [Colombian food] is like different from food from here. It is healthy! It is delicious for eating. Based on what I remember, there are more healthy things there. From here, I believe this because I see more candy here. [American food] is good. Some is healthy.
She concluded asserting “nosotros somos paisas que comemos arepa todos los días al desayuno.”

On June 18 at 5:30 p.m., I arrived at Erika’s home. Erika opened the door asking me to come in. She is short and thin. She was nicely dressed with fashion jeans, a white and pink top, shining white sneakers, and a nice pink wristlet. Her lively eyes seemed to hide a kind of old and deep sadness which I felt during the interview, and still recall while writing this narrative. I asked for her mother and Erika ran upstairs to call her. At the entrance on my right side there was a small room and in front I saw a hall. Along the hall there was a bathroom and the laundry room. When they came down, I followed Erika through the hall which ended at a medium-sized area where the living room and the dining room were located. We sat in the living room at the left end of the hall. The dining room was to the right and the kitchen was next to the dining room, about 10 feet from the couch where Erika, her mother and I were seated. The mother asked what I would like to drink. I said water and she brought me a glass of water with a light lemon taste. After we completed the informed consent procedures, I waited a while for the mother to leave, but she stayed. Erika sat on the couch; I was to her right side and her mother to her left. After a couple of minutes I told Erika in Spanish “okay, when your mother leaves we will begin.” Then, the mother asked: “Yo me tengo que ir?” So, I explained again what privacy and confidentiality mean and told her that she could be around so she could see that her daughter was safe, but that she couldn’t be part of the conversation. The mother said there was no problem and left.

Even though she is only eight years old, I believe that Erika’s speech, both in English and Spanish, expressed a kind of certainty that makes her seem older than she is. Erika is in third grade at Barbra Muller Elementary and she lives with her mother and two roommates. She came from Medellín to live in the US when she was three years old. She lived first in New Jersey with her grandparents, cousins, and aunts, and moved to Tampa with her mother two years ago. Talking about her father she said “I never saw him, I never got to saw him.” Her mother works cleaning rooms at Saint Joseph’s Hospital.

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344 We are paisas who eat arepas everyday for breakfast.
345 Do I have to leave?
Erika thinks she speaks Spanish “like a little bit” and her face expressed pride when she affirmed “I speak English great.” At home she speaks Spanish with her mother, who is also trying to make sure Erika read books in Spanish. Yet the book she really likes is Dr. Seuss. “It is mysterious stuff,” she exclaimed excited. Erika identifies herself as Colombian American and her friends come “some from Medellín and from Puerto Rico and some from America, and one of them came from Hawaii.” Her favorite television channels are Disney Channel, Play House Disney, Nickelodeon, and Cartoon Network. She also likes Disney radio and listening to rap, jazz, reggae, and Spanish music. Her favorite dishes are “los frijoles, a little bit egg, chocolate, agua de panela, pancakes, and waffles.” At this moment, her mother, who was doing laundry close to us, asked me “qué es lo que más le gusta?" Kindly I explained to her that I could not disclose such information. For snacks at school or at home, Erika likes to have gummies, peanut butter sandwiches, pancakes, waffles, yoghurt, pink lemonade, Twinkies and arepas. Other foods she likes are hamburgers, hot dogs, Nesquik, and the banana cake her mother bakes. She dislikes lasagna.

On weekdays when Erika goes to school she wakes up at 5:30 “in the morning,” takes a bath, then goes downstairs to eat, and then come back upstairs to brush her teeth. Around 5:39 a.m. she said she has “breakfast or desayuno in Spanish. Sometimes I eat crackers and chocolate, and sometimes I eat arepa with chocolate.” Her mother usually prepares her breakfast at home and is the one who knows how to prepare arepas. However, Erika can prepare crackers and chocolate by herself. She also prepares hot dogs and lemonade. Then, “I go to my bus and wait until my bus comes in, and then I go to a ramp to get to another bus that takes me to my school.” Around 7 a.m. at school, Erika eats Cheerios for breakfast with her friends. Then, “at like 2:20 or 1:20, I get lunch” with friends. Sometimes she has “hot dogs, hamburgers, lasagna, and milk. And sometimes I get ice cream for desert, and no more.” Around 4:30 p.m. at home she eats dinner with any of her girlfriends who like to eat her mother’s food. The dinner at home sometimes includes “frijoles, sometimes chicharrón, and sometimes a soup, and sometimes I get to

[^346]: What is what she likes the most?
eat like fries, egg and rice, and juice.” Sometimes the soup has meatballs, peas, and papa, and sometimes I eat it with carne." Later, she has ice cream, or gummies or mints.

Erika recalls that in Colombia she ate arepa, rice with egg, and chocolate for breakfast. Since we were conducting the interview in English I asked:

R: What snacks did you have in Colombia?
E: I didn’t have snacks.
R: You didn’t have snacks in Colombia.
E: Only candies.
R: and for lunch in Colombia?
E: I didn’t have lunch.
R: You didn’t have lunch in Colombia?
E: No.
R: Y almuerzo?
E: Al almuerzo yo comía frijoles, arroz y papa y carne, chicharrón, and no more.

This dialogue allowed me to understand that for her, as for other participants, almuerzo and lunch did not have the same meaning.

On the weekends she usually has breakfast with Cheerios and sometimes her mother buys Chinese food. Suddenly, she shouted: “Espere! Se está quemando” and ran upstairs. Her mother came to the kitchen and shouted “Oh! My God, el arroz se quemó!”

For Christmas Erika gets gifts and sometimes “I get to see my cousins.” Excited, she recalled Christmas at her aunt’s home in New Jersey with “my aunt, and my mom’s friends, and my cousins, two cousins, and my other aunt, and one that was going to be my uncle. He is already my uncle, and my mom, and me and some friends y ya!” She does not remember what she ate for Christmas in New Jersey. However, she recalled that last Christmas she was with her mother and a few friends in Tampa and she ate frijoles, rice

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347 Meat.
348 Wait! It is burning.
349 The rice is burnt.
350 That’s it!
and egg, and pop corn. For Thanksgiving she only had turkey “but I couldn’t eat turkey because I was sick.” For her birthday she went to YMCA to celebrate and she had pizza, juice, candy and the gummies bag her mother bought.

Sometimes Erika goes to eat out at McDonald’s, Wendy’s, Burger King, or to the Spanish restaurant. At McDonald’s and at Wendy’s she likes to have hamburger and fries and Coca Cola. Yet sometimes she drinks Sprite or orange juice. She goes with her mother and sometimes with friends to the Spanish restaurant where she likes to have chicharrón, arroz, egg, frijoles, and arepa.

Since Erika came to live in the US when she was three years old, I was expecting her not to recall too much about the foods she ate there. However, she talked very definitely about foods she ate in Colombia. Among the foods she ate there and eats in the US are frijoles, agua de panela, chocolate, arepa, spaghetti, empanadas, bocadillo, obleas, Milo, natilla, bandeja paisa, buñuelos, ajiaco, patacones, and arequipe. She also has continued eating cantaloupe, guava, papaya, lulo, blackberries, mangoes, strawberries, apple, tangerines, nuts, pineapple, guanabana, cherries, tomatoes, broccoli, red pepper, plantains, potatoes, pumpkin, eggplant, carrots, cucumber, corn, avocado, ice cream, chocolate bars, cookies, candies, flan, sandwiches, hamburger, and macaroni and cheese. New foods she is eating since she came to the US include pancakes, waffles, gummies, peanut butter sandwich, pretzels, brownies, chicken nuggets, bagels, muffins, and pies. From Colombia she recalls some cigarette candies which she has not found anymore.

Erika said that Colombian food “is good, and sometimes makes you fat, and is healthy,” then she added “I love it.” About American food she said “I hadn’t eaten American food before, only hamburgers and hot dogs. That’s the most that I like, and Nesquik.”

Rebeca

Carolina’s mother helped me to contact Rebeca’s mother. When I called her she was very kind and willing to collaborate with my research. She stated that both her daughters would be interested in participating. Since Rebeca is ten years old and her sister is fourteen, I told her that only Rebeca could participate. When I talked about higher rates
of obesity among Hispanics in the US, she said this would not work because her
daughters were slim. She also explained that she does not buy cookies or sodas and she is
always telling them that sodas cause cellulite. After chatting for about half an hour we
scheduled the interview for June 22nd at 5 p.m.

As I was arriving at Rebeca’s home I found her house to have an ample front yard
like others in that neighborhood. Rebeca and her sister opened the door and invited me to
follow them to the kitchen where their mother was preparing strawberry juice. The house
was large and everything looked clean and neat. It had a den located at the left side of the
entrance, an ample living room with a large couch, a coffee table, some chairs and side
tables, a dining room, a modern kitchen, and several bedrooms. Through huge windows I
could also see a large back yard. Rebeca looked excited and I think she was glad to be
interviewed.

Rebeca is thin and short. She wore white shorts, an orange short-sleeved top, and
short socks with white and gray sneakers. She also wore some rings on her fingers and a
wristlet and a headband, both made with the colors of the Colombian flag. With her
mixture of shyness and explosive joy, Rebeca reminded me girls of her age in I have met
in Bogotá.

While I was explaining the elements of the informed consent Rebeca asked me who
would hear the recording. She looked relieved when I answered that I would be the only
one, and I described the procedures to ensure that participants’ records were secure.
Then, her mother invited us to go to the den where we would have privacy. The den was
a medium-sized well illuminated room with bookshelves, a desk, a couple of chairs, and a
couch. Rebeca sat on a light brown couch and I sat on her left side. Excited but taking it
very seriously, she chose to conduct the interview in Spanish. She preferred not to wear
the individual microphone, but she did set up the recorder.

Rebeca spelled the name of her school. She is in third grade at Sand Pine. She came
to live in the US with her family four years ago when she was six. In Colombia she lived
in Yopal, Bogotá, and Medellín. Her father is from Medellín and her mother was born in
Casanare. Proudly, Rebeca points out the large pictures on the wall and said “esa es la
Casanare is a state located in central east Colombia within the geographical area called “Llanos Orientales,” which are extensive and sparsely populated plain lands where livestock is one of the main economic activities and a central element of the “Llanera” culture.

At her home, Rebeca lives with her mother, her father, her older sister, and her younger brother. She has two “pajaritos” called Santiago and Alejandro. She also has an uncle, an aunt and a cousin who live in Tampa. Suddenly, she exclaimed “mi abuelita va a venir a quedarse tres meses!”

Her parents work cleaning houses. She was not sure, but recalled that maybe her father told her about him studying high school. Her mother did not complete high school. When I suggested that she could ask her mother, she looked at me with surprise and said “No! pero qué pena!”

Rebeca thinks she speaks “bien” Spanish and “medio” English. Though she prefers to speak English most of the time, at home she speaks Spanish all the time because her father says that she and her siblings have to speak Spanish at home. Since she speaks “inglés y español,” Rebeca identifies herself as American Colombian. Her friends at school are from America and her friends who visit her at home are from Colombia. She likes to watch Sponge Bob SquarePants and a program at night called “el desafío 20.04” She likes the music at 93.3 and also likes Shakira and Juanes. Lately, she read Because of Winn-Dixie. She stopped talking and waited until I finished writing the name. Then checked to see that I wrote it correctly and she said “ajá” and continued.

351 That is the country house. It is owned by my granddaddy.
352 East Plains.
353 Original from the Llanos (plains).
354 Diminutive of pájaros (birds).
355 My granny will come to stay for three months.
356 No! I am ashamed!
357 Good.
358 Medium.
359 English and Spanish.
360 The challenge 20.04
361 Expression which is used similarly to “okay.”
Her favorite foods are chicken, meat with rice, egg, tomato soup, sausage, and sancocho. For snacks she likes popsicles, Cheetos, galleticas\(^{362}\), brownies, and papitas, and bocadillo with milk. She also likes avocado, tomatoes, mushrooms, carrots, potatoes, plantains, orange, strawberries, pineapple, apple, grapes, and pineapple pizza. Foods that Rebeca dislikes include broccoli, red peppers, pumpkin, cauliflower, macaroni and cheese, and pretzels.

Rebeca had many food memories from Colombia. She recalled eating empanadas, arepas, soup, dry meat, eggs, and rice. Excited and joyful she recalled the clear soup with chicken and potato her granny prepared for breakfast at 6 a.m. at the country house. She also remembered eating sancocho, rice with potato, chicken or meat for lunch. Sometimes she went to eat out at McDonald’s where she liked to eat chicken. At restaurants there she also liked to eat rice, meat, pizzas and soups. Rebeca was not sure what the difference is but for sure the pizza there tastes very different compared to the pizza here; it may be the cheese. However she likes both the pizza there and the pizza she eats here.

On weekdays when she goes to school, Rebeca wakes up at 7 a.m., takes a shower, gets dressed, watches TV, and then goes to school. There, she has breakfast with her brother and a friend. For breakfast she usually has corn flakes, poached egg, and sausage. Then, at 12:45 she goes to lunch. For lunch “Comemos perro caliente, frijoles, zanahoria, pollo y a veces hay paletas.”\(^{363}\) At school she also likes to have chicken nuggets and macaroni and cheese. Even though she likes salads, at school she does not have them because “son feas,”\(^{364}\) she confessed in a lowered voice.

At 4 p.m. she comes home where she has a snack with orange or strawberry juice and a cookie. Then, at six “mi mamá prepara comida, pollo, arroz, carne, sopa… ya me llené mamá!”\(^{365}\) Other times her mother prepares sancocho or frijoles or lentils. Rebeca has dinner with her father, her mother, her sister and her brother. If she happens to get

\(^{362}\) Diminutive of galleta (cookie).
\(^{363}\) We eat hot dog, frijoles, carrot, chicken, and popsicles.
\(^{364}\) They are ugly.
\(^{365}\) My mother prepares dinner, chicken, rice, meat, soup…I am already full mother!
hungry afterwards she has corn flakes, because at that time “mi mamá no se para a hacer nada.”

Sometimes, when her mother does not feel like cooking, Rebeca goes out to dinner. At Wendy’s she loves to have hamburger, soda, papitas, and nuggets, and sometimes she also has “frijoles,” baked potatoes, and salad without dressing. On weekends sometimes she also goes with her family to eat out at McDonald’s or at a buffet restaurant. When they go to the buffet, they are accompanied by friends. Sometimes she also goes out to eat with her family at Colombian restaurants where she likes to have bandeja paisa, arepas, and chorizo.

With a sad voice she mentioned that since she and all her family were sick for Christmas they stayed home. Yet, years before in Tampa:

En el 2002 y en el 2001. Es un party en cada casa. Un día en la casa de uno, el otro día es otro party en la casa de otro. Es como cuando uno pray, cuando uno está en la navidad, entonces cada casa hace eso. Todos los amigos de las casas.

Rebeca hardly recalled the food she ate for Christmas; maybe rice and meat or rice with sausage that both her mother and her aunt prepared. Since she does not like to have a party at home, for her birthday she usually goes with her family or with her aunt to eat out. Yet, like in Colombia, they always buy a cake.

Among the foods she ate there and eats in the US are eggs, meat, rice, popsicles, Cheetos, avocado, tomatoes, mushrooms, carrots, potatoes, plantains, empanadas, arepas, pizza, spaghetti, lemon, blackberries, mangoes, tangerine, bocadillo, natilla, ajiaco, patacones, arroz con pollo, yoghurt, bread, ice cream, candies, and chocolate bar. Foods that she ate in Colombia and is not eating any more or eat less here include Chocoramo, Milo, guava, bunuelos, arequipe, spinach soup, and donuts. In Colombia she used to eat

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366 My mother does not wake up to prepare anything.
367 It may be chili, but she said “frijoles.”
368 This is a widespread tradition during Christmas time in Colombia.
369 In 2002 and in 2001. It is like a party at each house. One day is at one’s house, the other day is another party at other’s home. It is like when you pray, when one is on Christmas. Then, each house does this. All the friends from the houses [She is talking about a widespread and deep tradition during Christmas time in Colombia. Resembling the nine months of the Virgin’s pregnancy (from December the 16th until the 24th), every night relatives and friends met to pray and socialize. These celebrations also include traditional Colombian foods for Christmas time and may also include adopted foreign foods and drinks such as chips, lasagna, or whiskey. Traditionally, each night the party is at a different family’s home].
bandeja paisa frequently, but here she eats it rarely only when she eats at Colombian restaurants.

Foods she ate less in Colombia and eats more here include chicken, tomato soup, cookies (because here cookies have chocolate and are more delicious), brownies, pineapple, carrots, hot dog, pop corn, sandwiches, hamburger, chicken nuggets, and fish. New foods since she came to the US include watermelon, strawberries, and muffins.

Unlike other participants who have expressed opposite concepts of American and Colombian food, Rebeca said that Colombian food is “rica y diferente…El sabor es diferente…[tiene] diferentes comidas [como] empanadas, arepas.” Likewise, raising her arms she explained that American food is not bad or good, but that it only tastes different.

Alejandra

When I interviewed Erika, her mother told me about her niece, Alejandra, who lives in New Jersey and who was going to arrive the following Sunday to stay with them during the summer. She asked me if I could interview her. Then, I talked with Alejandra’s mother and we scheduled the interview at Erika’s home. When I arrived, Alejandra and Erika opened the door. They were both wearing pajamas, but I think Alejandra was ready for the interview because she took me to a small living room at the right side of the entrance and sat in the couch. I explained to her that I needed to discuss the matter of permission with her mother, so she ran upstairs and called her mother. When she came back she asked me if she, like her cousin, was going to get the folder and the documents to play the teacher’s role. Then, when I signed the informed consent forms, I put them into the folder and gave them to her. She was radiant, with a mixture of happiness and pride.

Alejandra is short and stout. She wore the microphone and took the recorder in her right hand. I looked at her, thinking that after her initial excitement, she looked tense. Alejandra is twelve years old and is going to start sixth grade at Memorial School. She came to live in the US six months ago when she was eleven years old. In Colombia she lived in Itagüí, a town close to Medellín. In New Jersey she lives with two cousins, one

370 Delicious and different. The taste is different. It has different foods [such as] empanadas and arepas.
aunt, one uncle, one grandmother, and her mother. Her mother works taking care of one of her cousins at home. Alejandra said she did not have a father and she did not know about her mother’s education. During the whole interview her answers were similarly short and precise.

When I asked her how well she thinks she speaks Spanish, she looked amazed and asked what I meant. I rephrased the question and she answered “bien.” About English, she said “no sé hablarlo bien, pero sé decir cosas como gato, perro o suelo.” At home she speaks Spanish but she prefers to speak English most of the time. When I listed the options for answering how she identifies herself, she looked at me and answered “Colombiana,” with an intonation meaning obviously.

One of her friends is from Colombia and the others are Americans. Alejandra watches soaps on Spanish TV channels and cartoons on English ones. She does not listen to the radio but she likes to hear Spanish and English music on the CD player. Her favorite book both in English and Spanish is Harry Potter.

When she talked about her favorite foods, she smiled timidly and began to look more relaxed. Her favorite foods are spaghetti, hamburgers, and arroz con pollo. For snacks she likes to have fruit salad. However, at her home they do not buy fruits as much as in Colombia. Foods that Alejandra dislikes are brocccoli, onions, red pepper, celery, cauliflower, and bread. She dislikes bread because it makes her get fatter.

On weekdays when she goes to school, Alejandra wakes up at 7 a.m., takes a shower, gets dressed, and at 8 a.m. for breakfast she has “un pan con Milo o galletas.” Usually she prepares the Milo and has breakfast with her cousin. At school she chats with her friends while the teacher arrives. She takes sewing class, then mathematics, and then at noon with two girlfriends and one male friend “nos tomamos el algo.” Sometimes she has a hamburger with orange juice and other times potato chips and juice, and she always

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371 Later when her mother told me that she is illiterate I realized that Alejandra knew it.
372 Good.
373 I don’t know to speak it well, but I know how to say things such as cat, dog or floor. [I suspect she actually speaks little English but she did not want to say it to me].
374 In Colombia, usually people are concerned about bread as a food that makes you get fatter.
375 Bread with chocolate or crackers.
376 We have the algo (something). Algo is the traditional name by which Antioqueños refer to snacks. I think it comes from the idea of “eating something while one can eat a meal.”
takes her lunch from home. Sometimes her grandmother prepares the hamburger, and other times Alejandra prepares it: “Es un pan como en bolas. Le echa uno la lechuga, una carne, el tomate, una salsa de tomate y ya!” She also knows how to prepare rice and roasted meat.

She attends school from 9 a.m. until 3 p.m., and when she gets home she eats her almuerzo right away. Sometimes, she has “pollo sudado con papas, un jugo y arroz y un caldo.” Other times she has “carne asada con arroz, con ensalada de tomate y un jugo de manzana.” She has lunch with her cousin and Esther, her aunt, or her uncle prepares lunch. Then, around 9 p.m. she has Cheetos or cereal for algo. On weekends all her family (her aunt, cousins, mother and uncles) who live in New Jersey get together. They play and eat fried ribs with rice, patacones, and juice, which her grandmother prepares. Last Christmas they all gathered at her aunt’s home and had tamal with soda and fruits. When I asked her about Thanksgiving she said “Yo no sé qué es eso.” For her birthday they have cake, arroz con pollo, and soda.

In Colombia for breakfast she used to have “arepa con mantequilla y chocolate. A veces comía la arepa con mantequilla, pero a veces con una carne encima.” For Christmas there she ate natilla, buñuelos, soda, and arroz con pollo. Recalling Colombia, she said it was very boring for her there, but then she immediately corrected herself and said that actually it was not boring for her because she used to go out to play with her friends, and for her birthday they went to swim in a pool.

At first, Alejandra answered that her food has not changed since she came from Colombia. Then she said that some foods have changed and others have not. For example, her cousin Erika has taught her about waffles. While in Colombia she rarely went to restaurants, but in the US she goes out to eat with her aunt, her cousins, and her

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377 It is like a rounded bread. One puts the lettuce, one meat, the tomato, ketchup and that’s it!
378 Chicken with potatoes, a juice and rice, and a broth.
379 Roasted meat with rice, with tomato salad and an apple juice.
380 Although people in Colombia eat tamal at any time, it is typically a food of Christmas time. Alejandra is the only participant who talked about eating tamales for Christmas.
381 I don’t know what it is.
382 Arepa with butter and hot chocolate. Sometimes I ate the arepa with butter and other times with a meat on it.
mother at “El Típico, Comidas Colombianas y La Montaña” At Colombian restaurants she likes to have arroz con pollo, bandeja paisa and strawberry juice. She also goes to eat out at McDonald’s where she likes to have French fries, hamburger, and Coca Cola.

Among the foods she ate in Colombia and still eats in the US are spaghetti, hamburgers, arroz con pollo, roasted meat with rice, pollo sudado, cucumber, corn, avocado, tomatoes, plantains, patacones, Milo, empanadas, bocadillos, bandeja paisa, buñuelos, pan de bono, guava, papaya, watermelon, lemon, blackberries, mangoes, bananas, strawberries, apples, tangerines, peanuts, pineapple, guanabana, tacos, and yoghurt. Foods that she ate in Colombia and is not eating any more or eats very little here include carrots, mushrooms, cabbage, natilla, arepas, arequipe, cantaloupe, cereal, crackers, cookies, chicken, pizza, ice cream, and chocolate bars. New foods since she came to the US include waffles, burritos, and soups.

For Alejandra Colombian food is like “bandeja paisa, espagueti, sudado de pollo y arroz con pollo. Esas son mis cosas favoritas. Yo no comía más.” She said she does not know how to explain what American food is, but she thinks it is normal food.

Carolina

I met Carolina at TICH where she is a very active student in the oldest class of children. At twelve years old, she is thin and taller than even her oldest classmates and she speaks both Spanish and English very well. Her mother, who is also a TICH’s volunteer, once invited me to have lunch at her home. She cooked a delicious dish of chicken and vegetables accompanied with rice, salad, and blackberry juice. Since by that time, besides developing my research proposal, I was working on writing the educational materials about Hispanic food for use with students at TICH, we were talking about recipes and the meanings of food. She explained that for Hispanics food is rooted as a central part of their culture and identity. Food is associated with fondness for specific persons and means affection and gathering; food is a bridge for sharing and for having moments of contact with others. Reflecting about her immigrant experience and based on

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383 The Typical, Colombian Foods and The Mountain.
384 Bandeja paisa, spaghetti, boiled chicken, and chicken with rice. Those are my favorite things. I did not eat anything else.
385 I suspect “normal” for her means known food.
her quite ample knowledge of Hispanic recipes, she said that although different groups of Hispanics have common recipes and ingredients, Hispanic food is also quite diverse. For her, being an immigrant in America has been an opportunity to get to know foods from many different places and developing new tastes. Since she came to live in the US she has learned to cook both traditional Colombian recipes as well as new ones from different places she finds on the internet. For her, food is a means of taking care of people and particularly of her family. Likewise, when she has guests she focuses on food as a mean for gratifying them. In this context, she regards food very highly and wonders how it is possible to get children to love food and cooking. After that day when I met Carolina at TICH she began to greet me with a cheek kiss, a custom that many children from upper classes of some large cities in Colombia use for greeting their friends and their parents’ friends.

When I was on my way to interview Carolina, her mother called and asked me if I could pick up Carolina at Rebeca’s home a few minutes away, because she was a bit delayed. All Rebeca’s family as well as Carolina and a friend of Rebeca’s father were there. Rebeca’s father and his friend were interested in knowing about the research. While I talked with them Carolina asked me to wait for her a while so she could play longer with Rebeca. She was wearing blue jeans, a red T-shirt with a NIKE logo, short white socks, and gray sneakers with a red strip. She also wore long gray earrings and a light blue watch. Then, about 7 p.m. Carolina and I reached her home. The house where Carolina lives was large with big front and back yard, and its living room, dining room, kitchen, and halls, were quite spacious.

When we arrived, her parents were at home. Carolina’s mother said that even though she feels tired of cooking sometimes, it is important for her to have hot food ready for her husband when he arrives tired from his job. Colombia was different for the family because a woman, who also helped her to raise Carolina, cooked the family’s meals. Then, she asked where I preferred to conduct the interview, and she suggested the den where we could have privacy and quiet. The den was a small room with bookshelves, a computer desk, a couple of chairs, and a couch. Carolina sat on the couch and I sat at her right side. Carolina’s mother brought us grapes and closed the door.
I think Carolina and Rebeca had been talking about the interview because without telling her anything, Carolina said she would speak in Spanish. She took the recorder in her hands, set it up, said she preferred not to wear the microphone, and asked me if it was true that I was going to take pictures. Then, she asked me what happens to the recording if she says something incorrect. I explained her that what was important is what she knew and remembered and there was no right or wrong; if she did not know there was no problem. She looked relieved and said she was ready to begin.

Carolina is going to advance to seventh grade at Weightman Middle School. She came from Cali four years ago when she was eight. She lives with her mother and her father. Sometimes her aunts, her cousins, or her mother’s friends stay with them for some days or a couple of weeks. Her oldest stepbrother, who is finishing university studies in Cali, visits them every summer. Her father studied accountancy in a university in Colombia and works as supervisor at a recycling center, “pero él no hace eso sino que él supervisa a la gente.” Her mother is an industrial engineer and works in the computing department of a company that sells sports clothes for men.

Carolina thinks she speaks “normal” English and Spanish. At home she speaks Spanish, which is the language she prefers speaking most of the time. She identifies herself as Colombian-Hispanic and her friends are from Puerto Rico, America, and Colombia. Her favorites television channels are The Disney Channel and Caracol, a Colombian channel she watches daily. Her favorite music is “la música hispana y la música en inglés.” Among the several books she has read, she recalled Harry Potter in Spanish and English. Then she explained that her mothers makes her read in Spanish.

Her favorite dishes are frijoles, carne al bistec, and arroz con pollo. She also likes grapes, mango, orange, papaya, Oreos with milk, papitas, chocolate chips, pieapple, brownies, ice cream, mushrooms, plantains, bananas, tostones, corns and all kind of beans, even the white beans. Her favorite snacks are salad with lettuce, granola, cookies, and all kind of fruits except for watermelon. Foods she dislikes include pretzels, hamburger, cucumber, avocado, tacos, and cantaloupe.

386 But he does not do that; he supervises people.
She recalled that in Colombia when she went to her grandmother’s house she and her cousins helped to make arepas, which they shaped like hearts\(^\text{387}\). She also talked about snacks in Colombia, explaining:

> [Comía] como fruta, pero no era snack sino que íbamos a la tienda a comprar *mecato*\(^\text{388}\). No era como un snack. [Comprábamos] chicles, papitas, bombones, dulces.\(^\text{389}\)

On weekdays when she goes to school, Carolina wakes up at 5:30 a.m., takes a shower, gets dressed, and then around 5:45 a.m. prepares her desayuno with cereal or waffles and orange juice and has it while watching TV. Sometimes instead of cereal or waffles, her mother prepares egg for her.

Then she takes the school bus and there around 10 a.m. she has a snack. About the food she has at school she explained:

> Como a mí no me gusta casi lo que venden en el colegio, yo compro es lo que venden de snack… No como lo del lunch, sino los snacks. Yo compró a veces un *Gatorade* y unas papitas, o a veces un Gatorade con una galleta, de esas grandes… Yo estoy en la cafetería con mis amigas… Tú tienes dos opciones: comprar el lunch, que hay ese día o comprar los snacks. Yo siempre escogía los snacks porque no me gusta el lunch, es feo. La pizza es como rara, la hamburguesa es como cruda y a veces hay pelos, no me gusta tanto el sabor.\(^\text{390}\)

Around 2:30 when Carolina gets home, she has a salad or fruits for snack. At 4 p.m. she has the almuerzo in the dining room with her parents. For almuerzo sometimes her mother prepares frijoles, rice, tostones, and natural juices with mango. Sometimes her mother prepares juices with frozen pulp of fruits such as lulo and blackberries. Other times her mother prepares spaghetti with chicken, chicken fricassee, or lentils. Later, around 6:30 or 7 p.m. Carolina, accompanied by her mother, has a snack of cake her mother has baked or something sweet with milk.

\(^{387}\) It is the first time that I hear about shaping arepas like hearts. All the arepas that I have seen are rounded.

\(^{388}\) No translatable word. Its meaning is close to snack but as Carolina said it does not have the same meaning. When I think in *mecato*, it comes to my mind images of eating delicious foods and going with somebody or by myself to make the “little white sin” of gluttony.

\(^{389}\) [I had] like fruit, but it was not a snack. Rather, we went to the store to buy *mecato*. It wasn’t a snack. [We bought] chewing gum, papitas, sweets, and candies.

\(^{390}\) Since I don’t like what they sell at school, I don’t eat what they sell for lunch but buy snacks. Sometimes I buy Gatorade and papitas and other times Gatorade with a big cookie. I am at the cafeteria with my friends. You have two options: either buying the lunch or buying snacks. I always choose snacks because I don’t like the lunch…its nasty… The pizza is weird, the hamburger is raw and sometimes has hairs on it. [Besides] I don’t like its taste.
She recalled breakfasting on eggs, toasted bread with butter and jelly, hot chocolate, and arepa back in Colombia. Then, she explained that on weekdays here she does not usually have egg and arepa for breakfast because here there is no time to cook. “En Colombia había tiempo, acá no hay casi tiempo.” Yet, on weekends here she usually has eggs, arepas and hot chocolate for breakfast. In winter she also drinks hot chocolate. While she was speaking, I thought that unlike most participants, who usually needed to mix in many English words when speaking Spanish, Carolina had a quite ample Spanish vocabulary.

Since they often have guests on weekends, Carolina’s father makes barbecue with chorizos, meat and arepas. Other times she goes to eat out with her parents, cousins, or with friends to Colombian restaurants such as Mi Pequeña Colombia, or to buffet restaurants such as Golden Corral or the Chinese buffet. At Colombian restaurants she likes to have chorizo with arepa, frijoles, bandeja paisa, and Manzana Postobón.

Her cousins from New Jersey came to stay with them last Christmas. She excitedly recalled having buñuelos, hot chocolate and natilla, and told me about the old friend of her father who dressed like Santa Claus and distributed the gifts. For Thanksgiving she recalled her mother and her aunt preparing turkey, as well as chicken for those who did not like turkey. Additionally, her mother prepared potato salad, salad with vegetables, and pie.

For her birthday, her cousins who live in Orlando and her friends and her cousins from Tampa visited her. Since she was quite aware that I was particularly interested in food, she added that they ate cake, and lasagna, and that her father gave her Manzana Postobón which she loves.

Besides her breakfast Carolina prepares some desserts such as brownies, cookies and cakes, and this summer her mother is going to teach her how to cook rice.

Among the foods she ate in Colombia and still eats in the US are frijoles, carne al bistec, arroz con pollo, granola, cookies, ice cream, desserts, sandwiches, bocadillos, natilla, bandeja paisa, buñuelos, pan de bono, soups, arepas, tostones, papaya, mangoes, strawberries, pineapple, rice with shrimps, and meat. Foods that she ate in Colombia and

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391 In Colombia there was time. Here, there isn’t much time.
392 Antioqueños traditionally eat buñuelos, tamales, and natilla for Christmas.
is not eating any more or eats less here include arroz con pollo, pizza, chocolate bar, candies, nuggets, spinach, cauliflower, Milo, empanadas, obleas, arequipe, guava, tangerines, guanabana, popcorn, eggs, and fish. Foods she ate less in Colombia and eats much more include frijoles, carne al bistec, lettuce, cereal, brownies, pies, tomatoes, broccoli, apples, peanuts, almonds, milk, cheese, and shrimps. New foods since she came to the US include waffles, chocolate chips, pretzels, cinnamon roll, bagels, guacamole, dips, and paella.

Carolina affirmed that she prefers the pizza and hot dogs she ate in Colombia. There, pizza tastes better and hot dogs have onions, papitas, pineapple sauce, and cheese. Carolina explained differences between Colombian and American food and complained that here they don’t have some foods she likes, like green beans or some tropical fruits. I recalled a moment, months previous, when her mother said that here the music is not the same because here there is no emotion like there is in Colombia.

When I asked about American and Colombian food, she adopted a serious gaze, thought a while and said American food is like “pizzas, hamburguesas, perros y pastas. Como [comida] más en el grupo de los cereals” Then, when I ask about Colombian food, she softened her gaze, laughed gently and exclaimed “Rica! Es como los frijoles y las lentejas. Está más como en el grupo de la carne con los frijoles y el pescado.”

Jessica

Jessica is thin and tall. She wears her long hair in two pony tails. She has an easy, sweet smile that reveals her lost teeth. During play time at TICH she usually walks around or sits and has potato chips and soda on a chair by a large tree. My first impression was that she was quiet and did not want to talk much, but then I changed my mind when I saw her playing with her friends. At dancing classes she looks really happy; she enjoys dancing as all kinds of artistic activities.

When she heard me talking with Bryan (her cousin) about the research, she gave me her mother’s phone number and asked me to promise to call her. Unlike most mothers,

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393 She is talking about the groups of the food pyramid.
394 Pizzas, hamburgers, hot dogs and pastas. Like [food] of the group of the cereals.
395 Delicious! It is like frijoles and lentils. It is more in the meat and fish group.
hers did not talk about food or food concerns related to her daughter. Rather, she focused on scheduling the appointment for the interview.

When I arrived at Jessica’s home, Bryan opened the door. Jessica’s mother and her younger brother were in the living room but she was at her bedroom. After a while, the mother called Jessica and asked her to finish eating her dinner. She sat on a high chair by a high table located between the dining room and the kitchen, and when she finished, we sat in the dining room. While I prepared the materials, Bryan took the recorder and told Jessica that her voice would be recorded which made her open her eyes and mouth in amazement. Then, Jessica’s mother told Bryan to come with her. They left us in the dining room. Jessica wore the microphone and was very interested in knowing how the small digital recorder worked. She laughed joyfully when she heard her voice.

Jessica chose to speak English during the interview. She was at the first grade at Egypt Lake and was going to second grade at a new school whose name she did not know. So she took the recorder with her and ran to ask her mother the name of the new school. Her mother said “McFarley” and Jessica laughed because the word was hard to pronounce. Her mother did not pay attention and left us. But soon Jessica needed her again because she wanted to know where in Colombia she lived.

Jessica came from Cali to the US two years ago when she was five. When I asked who lives with her, she rephrased the question, and then answered: “Who lives here? First, mi mamá, mi papá y yo. Yo soy la sister, y mi brother…y mi tía y mi cousin.” She continued rephrasing most of the questions during the rest of the interview. When I asked about her father’s education she answered “Um… it’s hard. Can I tell my mommy?” I said yes but explained to her again that it was not necessary since what was important was what she knew. This time she did not run to ask her mother. His father’s “work is to make houses” and her mother is a dentist. When I told her we were done with questions about her family, she sighed and exclaimed: “Now I know everything about me!”

Jessica thinks she speaks “a lot!” of English and “a little bit” of Spanish. She prefers speaking English most of the time. At home she speaks Spanish with her mother, her father and her aunt, and English with her friends, her brother, and her cousin. She

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396 Who lives here? First, my mother, my father and me. I am the sister, and my brother…and my aunt and my cousin.
identifies herself as Colombian Hispanic “‘cause I’m from Colombia and I’m Hispanic.” Her friends are from Tampa and her favorite television channels are Nickelodeon, Disney Channel and Cartoon Network. The music she likes includes “Lizzie McGuire…That’s so Raven” and her favorite one is “I Want Candy.” When I asked about her favorite books she spoke slowly and waited until I wrote *Green Eggs and Ham*.

Her favorite snack is Sun Chips and when I asked about food advertisements she sang a song from one of the Pizza Hut’s ads. Her preferred foods are “pizza, Jello, pizza sticks, chocolate *pan con mantequilla*,397 cookies, Cheerios and Honey Buns!” While listing the foods she laughed when she said “pizza” and she looked proud when she exclaimed “Honey Buns.” At the end of the interview when she asked me to take a picture of her with the box of Honey Buns, her mother said she does not eat them; I suspect they are her cousin, Bryan’s.

Other foods she likes are empanada, buñuelos, donuts, chocolate, brownies, arequipe, cookies, arepas, cup cakes, orange juice, soups at home, orange, banana, apple, strawberry, grapes, lulo juice, watermelon, and tomato. She also likes beans, bocadillo, corn, carrots in soup, tomatoes with rice at home, and avocado. She also likes soups and sancocho at home as well as potatoes at home but she also eats potatoes at the beach and in the picnic. She dislikes broccoli, mushrooms, onion, pretzels, and pickles. From Colombia she recalled eating arepas, bocadillo, tajadas and “empanada, buñuelo. A mí me encanta la empanada!... Empanada me gusta mucho, mucho mucho!”398 Later, she also said “I love chicken nuggets.”

On weekdays when Jessica goes to school first her father takes her to her mother’s bed where she sleeps a while more. Then, her mother calls her to the shower. Jessica takes a shower, dries with the towel, puts on her clothes, combs her hair, and then eats. For breakfast sometimes she eats cereal with milk and “other days *comemos* egg sandwich *también!*”399 Though usually her father, her mother, or her aunt prepares the breakfast for the three children, sometimes Jessica prepares her own cereal.

397 *Bread with butter.*
398 *Empanada, buñuelo. I love empanada…I like empanada much, much, much.*
399 *Other days we eat egg sandwich also!*
At school at 12:30 p.m., with her friends, she eats “pizza sticks, pizza y sandwiches y Burger King.” Then, she added laughing “no Burger King but burgers.” For snack at school she has things like “juice, Sun Chips, pretzels, and cookies fishes.” When her mother picks her up at school, she takes her home where Jessica has “arroz con carne y algo de tomar” for lunch.

For her birthday she went to the pool and ate Cheetos and papitas. She eats out with her cousin, her brother, her daddy and her mother at la Pequeñita Colombia, where she likes to have “empanada, arroz, chuleta, fish…tajadas, and I drink Manzana.”

I continued asking questions, but Jessica began to answer, “I forgot” or “I don’t know” several times and then responded to questions that she selected. Though I think sometimes she actually did not know, other times she looked at me as if to ask what I meant by my silly questions. Suddenly, she exclaimed “I’m tired!” so I asked her if she wanted to stop or if would like to see the cards, which produced a new exclamation “Las cards!” She took off the microphone and said she wanted to hear herself. Later, she excitedly, took up the cards and said “yo las cojo.”

Though I attempted to use the cards for comparing foods she ate in Colombia with foods she eats here, she paid little attention to what I was saying and focused on the foods she likes and dislikes. When I asked about Colombian food she answered “empanada!” and said that American food is “bien.”

Anastasia

I met Anastasia’s mother at CFH on May. She was about eight months pregnant. She told me to call her in June. When I called her she said it was not possible to schedule the interview because her daughter had a stomach ache. Although Anastasia’s mother prepares soups, frijoles, and other home-made foods when she is at home, and she does not buy junk food, she felt that when she was working Anastasia did not eat well. Besides, her daughter tended to gain weight easily. She asked me to call her back the
following week. Every time I called, something was happening but she asked me to continue calling her.

We finally made an appointment. When I arrived, Anastasia and her mother, who was carrying her Anastasia’s one-month old brother, opened the door. As I entered the house, I saw the dining room in front of me, the living room at my left side, and then the door to the kitchen where Anastasia’s mother was cooking a soup that smelled delicious.

Anastasia is eight years old. She was wearing blue jeans, a pink short-sleeved top and light gray sneakers.

In the living room there were two couches, two more chairs, and several decorations on the walls and coffee tables. Anastasia sat on a couch and I sat at her right side. She preferred not to wear the microphone and was not interested in the recorder.

Anastasia attends third grade at Town and Country Elementary School. She came from Medellín to live in the US when she was three years old. She lives with “my dad, mom, my brother, and my grandmother.” Her father works with glass and her mother works with the elderly. Since she spoke in a low and she was not wearing the microphone, I became concerned about how good the recording would be. Since her answers were quite short and precise, I decided to write all that she said directly on the questionnaire.

She thinks she speaks “bien” both English and Spanish. At home she speaks Spanish, which is also the language she prefers to speak most of the time. Anastasia identifies herself as Colombian American and most of her friends come from Colombia and the United States. Her favorite television channels are Disney Channel and ABC Kids and her favorite radio station is 93.3. She likes any kind of songs in English. Books she likes are Arthur and Berenstein Bears.

Her favorite foods are fries, chicken, rice and soup. Snacks she likes are yoghurt and juice. She also likes guanabana, pineapple, peanuts, almonds, grapes, bananas mangoes, lulo juice, papaya, beans, cabbage, carrots, potatoes, cucumber, Milo, natilla, buñuelos, pan de bono, ajiaco, guacamole, arepas, patacones, arequipe, pizza, chicken nuggets, macaroni and cheese, muffins, pretzels, candies, chocolate bar, ice cream, cup cakes.

\[405 \text{ Good.}\]
tortillas, tacos, and oranges. Foods she dislikes include watermelon, mushrooms, broccoli, corn, bocadillos, bagels, and brownies.

On weekdays when she goes to school, Anastasia wakes up at 7 a.m., takes a bath, gets dressed, and then about 7:30 a.m. has cereal for breakfast with “my mom and my grandma.” Sometimes she has waffles, or sometimes eggs and “galletas.” Though her mother usually makes her breakfast, sometimes Anastasia prepares her own cereal, and she is the one who heat the waffles in the microwave. She also knew how to prepare hamburgers and rice:

First you get 2 or 3 cups of water, put it in a pan and then you take it out. Then you put water, and then you wash it; and then you throws out the water again and then you wash it; and then you put two or three cups of water, and then you put oil and then the salt. And you put to make it.

Then, her mother “drives me to school and then I unpack and then we do some work.” At 11:45 a.m. she sits with her friends and has for lunch “any kind of food. Pizza, pizza sticks, hamburger, or cheese burger, and fruits...[such as] apples, pears, grapes, pineapple or peaches.” At school she also buys snacks such as ice cream, cookies and gummy bears. After lunch “I do work, then read a book, and then do more work.”

About 2:15 or 2:30 p.m. her aunt or sometimes her father picks her up. When she gets home “I do my homework” and about 3 p.m. she has soup, chicken, rice and vegetables for dinner. She eats with her dad because her mother is working and her grandma “comes at five.” Her mother prepares different soups but one Anastasia recalled has chicken and vegetables. Later, around 8:00 p.m. she has a snack of juice and Kellogg’s that she prepares by herself.

She recalled that on Sundays she eats soups or sometimes broccoli with other vegetables and rice. Once a week she goes with her mom and dad to eat out at La Hacienda where she likes to have soup, rice, fries and Manzana. She did not remember what she ate last Christmas. For Thanksgiving she went to “my mom’s friends” and ate rice, turkey, and soup that her mom and her mom’s friend prepared. Though she does not like fish soup, for her birthday she had it with cake, and her uncles and cousins came to visit her.

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\[406\] Crackers.
At first she said that because she came here when she was three years old, she did not remember foods from Colombia. Yet, with the help of the cards she recalled some foods. Among the foods she ate there and eats in the US are rice, soup, Milo, obleas, and frijoles. Chicken nuggets are new food since she came to the US. Anastasia said that American food like Colombian food is “good and delicious.”
CHAPTER FIVE

THE GROUP SESSIONS

The main purpose of the group sessions was providing a creative context in which participants were able to freely express representations related to food through play-based activities. In this context, my role was limited to making available materials and refreshments, introducing the purpose of the group and taking notes and pictures. For each group session I presented a general introduction and suggested a main theme (e.g., eating in a restaurant). Materials were available to facilitate different possible activities (e.g., role play, drawings, and pictures) and refreshments. Participants decided what activities to develop and the only requirement was that it related to food.

Group sessions were developed with a sub-sample of eleven children, eight boys and three girls. The three groups were conducted at TICH. Originally the sessions were planned to take place in one of the classrooms at TICH, but due to a fire that destroyed the house where the classroom was located, the groups were developed in another building of the church that serves as a day care during weekdays. This change turned out to be very productive for the purposes of the study because, besides the foods and materials I provided, there were several food related toys such as a kitchen, and plastic figures that participants used creatively.

This chapter presents the narratives of the group sessions. In these narratives I use visual material and participants’ voices in order to present what they said about food and their interactions and agency in producing the materials.

Group 1

Group one took place on May 1st 2004. I had planned to conduct one group with girls and another one with boys. However, as a result of schedule changes at TICH on that
Saturday, I found myself with three girls and two boys who were excited and ready for the session. Though concerned with IRB implications, I decided to conduct the group with all of them. First, there were Juanes, Usher, Lizzie, Angela and Valentina, but soon Valentina had to leave. Later, Angela also left. In the introduction of the session I explained the activity for the session: Here you have different materials (play-doh, color pencils, colored markers, crayons, blank cards, drawing sheets, paper dishes and utensils, and food related toys) and some refreshments (bread, peanut butter, butter, mustard, jam, jelly, cheese sticks, apple juice). You can choose to do a performance, to draw, to do sculptures with the play-doh, or to play with the materials as you want. The main theme for their work was to be food.

After having refreshments, they started to discuss whether to make sculptures with play-doh, or drawings, or a performance as if they were in a restaurant. I suggested they could play as if they were in a Colombian restaurant first, and later if there were time they could either make sculptures with the play-doh or drawing. Yet, very soon I realized they were more interested in playing than in my suggestions. Juanes, Angela, and Usher said they wanted to pretend be in the restaurant and also wanted to make sculptures; Lizzie said she wanted to draw. Then, they decided to play restaurant. Within this activity, they also made sculptures with play-doh and Lizzie did a drawing. Rapidly Juanes chose being the cook and Usher the waiter, so Lizzie and Angela were the customers. Juanes said they were at Malio’s the restaurant where his parents work. Excited, Juanes sat on the back of the room where the kitchen was located; Lizzie and Angela sat on the table, and Usher stood at their side ready to write down the order.

Fig. 10. Series of photos representing group 1.

Based on this event, I submitted a modification request to the IRB of the University of South Florida to include not only groups of boys and groups of girls, but also mixed groups. Such change was approved.
The order contains dishes they eat at their homes and in Colombian restaurants such as beans, meat and rice. Though also available in Colombia, I think that apple juice, French fries and water represent more American items.

Then, Lizzie and Angela decided to help out with the order and started to prepare the meat, while Juanes and Usher prepared frijoles.

Lizzie: I want frijoles… meat, peanut butter, fries.
Usher: fries? Oh! Ah! French fries…and what do you want to drink?
Lizzie: Apple juice, water.. oh! water.
Usher: That’s it?

Lizzie: This is my meat….ay qué bueno!
[Oh, so good!]

Usher: Voy a hacer frijoles
[I’m going to prepare beans]
Then, Angela left and Lizzie decided to draw.

Lizzie: yo quiero colorear…
[I want to draw with colors]

Using play-doh, Juanes first cooked meat with frijoles at the kitchen.

Juanes: Estoy haciendo la carne en pedazos. Qué le echo? Le echo la salsa de tomate? Ah! los frijoles…Esta carne se pegó! Es que esta cocina siempre está caliente…
[I’m doing the meat in pieces. What do I add to it? Ketchup? Ah! Beans…This meat stuck to the pot! This is because this stove is always hot].

Then, Juanes sat at the table with Usher who continued modeling frijoles with red play-doh.

Juanes: Estos son papitas, frijolitos y chicharrón. [These are papitas, frijolitos and chicharrón].
Juanes began to make frijoles while Usher cut potatoes. Usher shaped a chorizo with yellow play-doh.

Usher: Yo aquí estoy cortando las papas para que sean chiquiticas y duren más. Y este largo es un chorizo. [Here, I am chopping potatoes so they will be smaller and will last more. The long one is a chorizo].

When Lizzie finished her drawing, she explained it. In the drawing she represented her separated family reunited and eating sandwiches in the beach. She drew all her family members around the dinning table in the beach.

All my family
Lizzie represented Colombian values related to food such as family, union, and sharing as well as her life here where she lives close to the beach where she frequently goes with her family. Then, proudly, Juanes and Usher showed the papitas and frijolitos that they made.

Group 2

Along with Lizzie, Angela, and Valentina, we developed Group 2 on May the 8th, 2004. In the introduction of the session I explained the activity for the session: Here you have different materials (play-doh, color pencils, colored markers, crayons, blank cards, drawing sheets, paper dishes and utensils, and food related toys) and some refreshments (bread, peanut butter, butter, mustard, jam, jelly, cheese sticks, apple juice). You can choose to do a performance, to draw, to do sculptures with the play-doh, or to play with the materials as you want. The main theme for their work was to be food. I also
suggested: If you choose a performance, I would like you to represent lunching at school or going to a picnic with your family.

Lizzie, Angela, and Valentina discussed what activity to play. Lizzie led the idea of playing the restaurant. Angela supported Lizzie’s idea, and Valentina followed them.

![Series of photos representing group 2.](image)

Lizzie: I can do this, so we can pretend, so you guys pretend that [we are in a restaurant]

During the first scene, Angela was the customer; Lizzie the waitress and Valentina the cook. Angela’s order contained mostly American items.

![Shopping list](image)

Angela: I want French fries, steak, rice, and coke. And for desert ice cream
Angela stayed sat at the table, while Lizzie explored the materials and toys, and Valentina prepared the materials to cook.

Lizzie: We need food. We got eggs!

Valentina sat at the table preparing the order while Lizzie began to cook in the kitchen.

Valentina: la, la, la, la, [singing]

Meanwhile, Angela looked at them and ate chips.

What are you cooking?

This is a French fry!
Valentina: What’s a steak?
Lizzie: A meat

Lizzie served the food and Angela looked happy while eating the *green ice cream*.

Lizzie proposed to change the roles. So, during the second scene, Angela played a waitress, Lizzie a customer, and Valentina stayed as cook.

Lizzie was excited with the cell phone, playing like a customer in an American restaurant.
Lizzie: I have meat.
Angela: what kind of meat?
Lizzie: Pork, or whatever. I got water; I want coke, and rice.
Angela: For desert?
Lizzie: Yeah! Ice cream and one cookie.
Angela: Cookie, what cookie?
Lizzie: Chocolate chip.
Angela: Sugar cookies. We get some sugar cookies.
Angela: Do you want something else?
Lizzie: Perhaps orejas [laughs].

Like Angela’s order, Lizzie’s order contained coke, rice, and ice cream. However, she also included: pork meat, instead of steak; orejas (a kind of cookie they buy at Latino bakeries in Tampa); water; and sugar cookies. This order mixed diverse foods that they eat at home, school, and restaurants.

Lizzie continued at the cell phone while Angela and Valentina prepared the food.
Angela and Valentina put the foods on the table. Valentina asked me to take pictures of every item. Since they were not sure other people would understand what they had represented with the play-doh models Lizzie suggested to label them.

So, they all began to label each item. Lizzie had ordered rice; however, Valentina called it special rice.
Then, Lizzie suggested sticking the cards on the wall and displaying them as the menu of the restaurant. At the same time they added new food items to the original order. Thus, they posted the menu on the wall.

I suggested that maybe they could play either lunching at school or a picnic. They did not pay attention to my suggestion and continued the performance.

Valentina: Do you want to do this again?
Lizzie: Yeah!
Valentina: Okay, vamos (let’s go), give me my cell phone.
So, they began a third scene at which Valentina was the customer, Lizzie the waitress and Angela the cook. They ruined the old forms in order to make new ones.

Valentina: I want ice cream; meat, sugar cookies, cheese, and soup…And special rice, sugar cookie, and oreja.

C: do you want drink?

Like Angela and Lizzie, Valentina ordered ice cream and rice. She introduced some new items: cheese and soup. All the girls’ orders mixed items. For example, rice, soup, and meat represent more foods they eat at home or at Colombian restaurants. Ice cream, cheese and sugar cookies are foods they have more commonly at school or at American restaurants.

As customer, Valentina first was interested on playing with the cell phone, but soon she got bored with it and began to play with the play-doh.
Valentina found that the covers of the play-doh cups had models.

Valentina: It’s a cute little puppy!
Lizzie: Now that, we should take a photo.
Angela: I wana see… I wana see.

They continued cooking and preparing the food, but also started to introduce new forms based on such models.

Angela: This is the piggy. Do you want salad or mashed potatoes?
Angela: here it is. Today is disgusting day, so it’s a thing disgusting.
Valentina: I got a beautiful piggy!
They displayed the forms that they made on the table and Lizzie asked me to take pictures of them. Suddenly, she realized that the colors of the models were also the colors of the Colombian flag.

Lizzie: Take the Picture of all of them. Oh look! *Amarillo, azul y rojo* [Yellow, blue and red!]

So, they took cards and colored markers, asked me how to spell the name of the colors in Spanish, and labeled each one. They also placed the label Colombia at the top, using the colors of the Colombian flag. Valentina concluded the activity exclaiming: Colombia!
Group 3

I conducted group 3 with 8 boys on May 8th, 2004. In the introduction to the session I explained the activity for the session: Here you have different materials (play-doh, color pencils, colored markers, crayons, blank cards, drawing sheets, paper dishes and utensils, and food related toys) and some refreshments (bread, peanut butter, butter, mustard, jam, jelly, cheese sticks, apple juice). You can choose to do a performance, to draw, to do sculptures with the play-doh, or to play with the materials as you want. The main theme for their work was to be food. I also told them: When you finish you will present your work to all of us. Usher, Asprilla, and 50 Cent chose drawing. Ron, Rocky, Juanes, Juan Felipe, and Bryan played and worked making several food related sculptures with play-doh.

Fig. 12. Series of photos representing group 3.

Usher, Ron, Luigi, and Asprilla waiting for other boys to start the session.
Juanes jumped around and shouted several jokes that produced laughter among participants.

*Juanes: Huevo... mis huevos se están quemando! (laughs) [Eggs... my eggs are burning].

Una arepa, mire! [An arepa, look!]

Juanes shouts:
Meatball, *haga* meatball.
Quién quiere comer huevos o arepa? [Who wants to eat eggs or arepa?]
Mire un hígado, hígado. [Look! A liver, liver].

*Ron: A mí me gusta hacer esto* [I like to do this].

Bryan roars with laughter

Mira! Una cara [Look! a face].

Ron took a slice of mortadella, bit and cut three pieces and made a rounded face with two eyes and the mouth.

Readily, Bryan made desserts with play-doh.
Usher, Asprilla and 50 Cent began drawing.

50 Cent: Puedo dibujar una bandera de Colombia? 
[May I draw a Colombian flag?]

“Yo estoy dibujando la bandera de Colombia” 
[I am drawing the Colombian flag].

After a while, all of them were doing the activities each one chose to do. They sat at two places in the room. One group was drawing and the other was making sculptures.

Juan Felipe worked alone, between the two groups.
Soon, Bryan made another sculpture, and also Rocky. Participants continued making several sculptures during the session and they presented them to everybody.

Bryan: *Esto es un tractor pastel. Es un pastel que es en forma de tractor.*

[This is a tractor cake. It is a cake shaped like a tractor.]

Later, Rocky added a plastic strawberry to his cake.

Luis Eduardo: *Esto es un pastel de fresa revuelto con chocolate y vainilla. Todo lo azul es chocolate. El verde es la fresa y el amarillo que está debajo del azul es vainilla.*

[This is a strawberry cake mixed with chocolate and vanilla. The whole blue is chocolate. The green is the strawberry and the yellow which is under the blue is vanilla.]

Later, Rocky added a plastic strawberry to his cake..
Juanes: Esto es mi chicharrón y tiene carne por dentro y es de diferentes colores para que se lo coman los marranos.

[This is my chicharrón. It has meat inside and it is made with different colors so the pigs will eat it].

Juanes: Mira! aquí está Estados Unidos, y aquí está el corazón de Estados Unidos. Bryan: (y él) lo quiere mucho, lo quiere mucho.

Juanes: [Look! Here is the United States and here is the heart of the United States. Bryan: (and he) loves it so much, he loves it so much].

Juanes: Oye! mira mi barba. Es de chocolate, de chocolate azul. Me puedes tomar una foto?

[Hey! Look my beard. It’s made with chocolate, blue chocolate. Can you take a picture of me?]
Bryan: Es un bombón con ojos, es un bombón con patas. Es de banana. Es colombiano porque lo compré en Colombia.

Luis Eduardo: Mire, mire un bombón con una espada. Es un bombón que tiene una cara y una boca, tiene ojos, tiene ojos azules, y tiene una boca verde, y el bombón es amarillo y tiene una espada.

Luis Eduardo: Un bombón hecho de él y yo!
Bryan: *El bombón de libertad!*

*[The candy of freedom!]*

Juan Felipe: *Tengo una pizza de pepperoni. Aprendí a prepararla en Colombia. It has Pepperoni y queso azul ah! y lo normal!*

*[I have a pepperoni pizza. I learned how to prepare it in Colombia. It has pepperoni and blue cheese, and the normal stuff!]*

Juan Felipe: *Esta es una sopa de gargajos, es de Colombia. Por encima está lleno de papita a la francesa, por debajo es hecha con no más una crema bien rica.*

*[This is a phlegm soup; it is from Colombia. It is topped with French fries and is done with a delicious cream]*.
Luis Eduardo: *Es un helado de fruta y la crema es de fruta.*

[It is a fruit ice cream made with fruit. The cream is fruit].

Luis Eduardo: *Esto es una sopa con pollo y con un pescado grandotote*

[This is chicken soup with a very big fish].

Ron: *Esto es un puerco volador. Un día él estaba volando y después se cayó, porque él creía que tenía alas pero era un sueño.*

[This is a flying pig. One day he was flying and then fell because he thought he had wings but it was a dream].
50 Cent: Esta es la bandera de Colombia y una casa que valió mucho y aquí están haciendo un picnic. Están un niño y otro niño y los papás se fueron a comprar más cosas. Está esperando hasta que vengan y después van a comer.

[This is the Colombian flag and a house that cost a lot. They are having a picnic. There is a boy with another boy. Their parents are buying things. They are waiting for their parents and then they will have dinner together].

50 Cent, who is Asprilla’s brother, represented himself and his brother at home, waiting for their parents while they are buying groceries. His drawing mixes different elements such as the Colombian flag, and his family with the American “picnic.”
Asprilla: Estos son comidas de Colombia. Esto es café de Colombia, arroz, acá hay un sancocho, frijoles, un buñuelo que me encanta, y empanada, carne y un chorizo.

[These are Colombian foods. This is Colombian coffee, rice; here is one sancocho, beans, one buñuelo which I love, and empanada, meat, and one chorizo].

During group 3 Asprilla chose Eminem as his pseudonym. Later, he shifted it to Asprilla a famous Colombian soccer player. Asprilla’s drawing represents typical foods from his original region in Colombia which culture has been greatly shaped by coffee production. So, he placed in the first place the Colombian coffee.
Usher’s drawing mixes Colombian foods and the Colombian flag with the title of his drawing and his pseudonym both in English.
CHAPTER SIX

MAIN TRENDS

In this chapter I summarize in tables some main trends of the interviewees’ narratives and the group sessions.

Interviewees

Tables 4 and 5 present trends of sociodemographic data of interviewees. Table 4 includes characteristics of the family and the people living with the participant, as well as occupation and educational level of the parents living with the child. Most participants live with their both parents and siblings; some do not live with their fathers, and some live with their maternal or paternal grandmothers. Besides their family, some children live with roommates, who generally are Colombians. Most participants resided in Colombia in cities with roots in the Antioqueña culture (Table 5).

Table 4.
People Living with the Child

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Trends</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People living with the child</td>
<td>Main trend: nuclear family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Halley, Lizzie, and Anastasia also live with their grandmothers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Halley, Bryan, Mark, Ron, Andrea, Erika, and Alejandra do not live with their fathers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Juanes, Mark, Ron, Andrea, and Erika also live with roommates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some participants are visited by close relatives such as aunts, uncles or grandparents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Main trend: services: lodging, domestic, food, building and related services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Others: construction: plumbing; miscellaneous: transportation; processing: glass; professionals: architecture; and sales.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Main trend: services: domestic, food, and building related services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Others: Sales and health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational level</td>
<td>High school and university.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 5.
**Age, Gender, and Residence in Colombia**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Trends</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 – 8 years-old:</td>
<td>8 participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 – 10 years-old:</td>
<td>9 participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 – 12 years-old:</td>
<td>3 participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Girls</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Boys</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence in Colombia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antioqueña culture:</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Cali</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Medellín and other cities in Antioquia:</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Pereira and Belén de Umbría (Risaralda):</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific and Caribbean Coast culture:</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Barranquilla:</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Neiva:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andean American culture:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Bogotá:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 6.
**Acculturation and Ethnic Identity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Main Trend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Length of residence in the US</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 1 year:</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – 2 years:</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 – 4 years:</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 years:</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age coming to live in the US</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 – 4 years old:</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 – 6 years old:</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 – 8 years old:</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 – 11 years old:</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How well English</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How well Spanish</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language at home</td>
<td>Spanish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferred language</td>
<td>Half of the participants said English and half said Spanish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>Blended origins: Colombia, Latin American countries, America and Asian countries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television</td>
<td>Blended with higher number of English channels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio stations</td>
<td>Blended with higher number of English radio stations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Blended Spanish and English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books</td>
<td>English books.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Identity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombian:</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Lizzie, Asprilla, Juanes, Usher, Mark, Ron, Andrea, and Alejandra</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyphenated or mixed ethnic identity:</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Colombian-American:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Bryan, Angela, Rocky, Elisa, Erika, Rebeca, and Anastasia.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Hispanic:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Halley and Valentina.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Colombian-Hispanic:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>– Luigi, Carolina, and Jessica.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6 presents trends on acculturation and ethnic identity. Most participants have been living in the US between three and four years and most of them came here when they were five or six years old. Even though some children think they speak regular English or Spanish, most of them said they speak well both languages. At home all of them speak Spanish, half of them prefer to speak English most of the time, and most of them only read books in English. Participants’ friends and media and music preferences show a mixed pattern of American, Colombian, and Latino origins. Most participants chose whether a single Colombian or a hyphenated Colombian-American ethnic identity.

Table 7. Food in the US

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Main Trend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic Meal Plan Weekday</td>
<td>- Breakfast at home: cereal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Lunch at school: pizza, hamburgers, fruits, juices, milk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Almuerzo at home: big meal with foods from their region of residence in Colombia, such as beans, rice, and meat accompanied with fruit juices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Dinner: small meal or snack. Mixture of food items from their region of residence in Colombia such as arepas with other foods such as cereal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekends</td>
<td>Most participants did not talk about variations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Among those who talked about variations:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Breakfast at home is a big meal like in Colombia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Eating out at restaurants: Colombian, American, and Chinese.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas</td>
<td>- Different kind of foods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Traditional Colombian dishes for Christmas were hardly mentioned.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Participants recalled better people they met for Christmas celebrations than foods they ate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thanksgiving</td>
<td>- Most participants talked about eating turkey for Thanksgiving.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- With the exception of Alejandra all talked about celebrating Thanksgiving with family, relatives, and friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Foods eaten in Thanksgiving were recalled easier than those eaten at Christmas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birthdays</td>
<td>- All participants talked about celebrating their birthdays and eating cake. This is the way birthdays are usually celebrated in Colombia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurants</td>
<td>- All participants talked about eating out at several restaurants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Blended Colombian, American and Chinese restaurants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferred and other liked foods</td>
<td>- All participants talked about mixed American and Colombian foods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Asprilla and Usher who in Colombia lived in Risaralda, as well as Alejandra, who recently came from Colombia, included more food items from their region of residence in Colombia than other participants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disliked foods</td>
<td>Blended American and Colombian foods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snacks</td>
<td>Blended American and Colombian items.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table 7 I present the foods that participants said they eat in the US. During the weekdays most of them have breakfast at home with cereal. Then, at school they typically
lunch American foods. After school, most of them have almuerzo at home which is a big meal that includes dishes from their region of residence in Colombia. Diner is usually a smaller meal with mixed Colombian foods such as arepas and American snacks or cereal. Variations in the weekends include having a large meal for breakfast with foods they used to have in Colombia, and eating out at Colombian, American or Chinese restaurants. As a general trend, participants recognized better foods eaten during Thanksgiving than foods eaten for Christmas; specifically, Colombian traditional foods for Christmas were rarely mentioned. For their birthday, participants usually have cake as they did in Colombia. Preferred, liked, and disliked foods as well as snacks include a wide variety of mixed American and Colombian foods.

There have been continuities and changes of the food patterns among all participants (Table 8). Most participants have continued eating mixed Colombian and American foods. New foods in the US include a large number of sugar based items. There have been also changes on proportions, timing, and places where they eat some foods.

Table 8.
Continuities and Changes of Food

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Main Trends</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foods participants have continued eating since they came to the US</td>
<td>- Blended American and Colombian foods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Colombian foods from their region of residence in Colombia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- American foods: pizza and hot dogs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Cake for birthday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Most participants said first that there have not been changes in their food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>They explained this continuity because at home the mother prepares the same food, or because in Colombia they also ate American foods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New foods since participants came to the US</td>
<td>- Sugar based foods, pastries and candies such as gummies, brownies, cookies, chocolate chips, and sodas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- American foods such as macaroni and cheese, pancakes, cinnamon roll, pies, waffles, bagels, muffins, lasagna, and chicken nuggets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Most participants talked about eating pizza, hot dogs and pop corn in Colombia. Yet, such foods were new for some of them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Multicultural foods such as tacos and burritos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Some participants talked about eating for first time fruits that are common in Colombia such as strawberries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foods not eaten anymore</td>
<td>- Few Colombian foods such as Milo and obleas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The list of foods not eaten anymore also includes American foods such as hamburger and pizza.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The main reason for not eating anymore some foods seems to be more related to changes on preferences than on accessibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes</td>
<td>- Changes in quantity: eating more some foods here (i.e. pizza, ice cream, candies).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Changes in timing: eating on weekends the kind of breakfast they had on weekdays in Colombia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Changes in places: eating Colombian food at restaurants or eating pizza at school.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 9. Recalled Foods in Colombian and in the US by City of Residence in Colombia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residence in Colombia</th>
<th>Foods in Colombia</th>
<th>Foods in the US</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cali (Valle del Cauca)</td>
<td>Meals based on the regional food mixed with several foods from other regions in Colombia and American items such as pizza and hot dogs.</td>
<td>Continuity of meals at home based on the regional food mixed with several foods from other regions in Colombia and American items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Breakfast with eggs, bread and Milo or coffee with milk.</td>
<td>Great increment in the consumption of cereal for breakfast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Weekends: breakfast like in Colombia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increment in the consumption of cookies, pizza, hot dogs, candies and cereals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Larger number of new foods which mainly include items such as: bandeja paisa, tacos, burritos, waffles, brownies, chicken nuggets, brownies, bagels, biscuits, macaroni and cheese, and pancakes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barranquilla (Atlántico)</td>
<td>Meals based on the regional food mixed with several foods from other regions in Colombia and American items such as lasagna, pizza and hot dogs.</td>
<td>Continuity of meals at home based on the regional food mixed with several foods from other regions in Colombia and American items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Breakfast with eggs, bread and Milo or coffee with milk.</td>
<td>Great increment in the consumption of cereal for breakfast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Weekends: breakfast like in Colombia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increment in the consumption of cookies, pizza, hot dogs, candies and cereals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Larger number of new foods which mainly include items such as: bandeja paisa, tacos, burritos, waffles, brownies, chicken nuggets, brownies, bagels, biscuits, macaroni and cheese, and pancakes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bogotá - Casanare</td>
<td>Meals based on the regional food mixed with several foods from other regions in Colombia and American items such as lasagna, pizza and hot dogs.</td>
<td>Continuity in the consumption of meals based on the regional food in Colombia at home and in restaurants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Breakfast based on regional food with soup of potato, eggs, and bread.</td>
<td>Great increment in the consumption of cereal for breakfast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Weekends: breakfast like in Colombia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increment in the consumption of cookies, pizza, hot dogs, candies and cereals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Larger number of new foods which mainly include items such as: bandeja paisa, tacos, burritos, waffles, brownies, chicken nuggets, brownies, bagels, biscuits, macaroni and cheese, and pancakes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medellín (Antioquia)</td>
<td>Meals based mainly on the regional food.</td>
<td>Continuity in the consumption of meals based on the regional food in Colombia at home and in restaurants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Breakfast with eggs, arepa, and chocolate.</td>
<td>Great increment in the consumption of cereal for breakfast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American items such as pizza, hot dogs, and cereal were limited to special occasions or eaten seldom.</td>
<td>Weekends: breakfast like in Colombia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increment in the consumption of cookies, pizza, hot dogs, candies and cereals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New foods include items such as: bandeja paisa, tacos, burritos, waffles, brownies, chicken nuggets, brownies, bagels, biscuits, macaroni and cheese, and pancakes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pereira and Belén de Umbria (Risaralda)</td>
<td>Meals based mainly on the regional food.</td>
<td>Continuity in the consumption of meals based on the regional food in Colombia at home and in restaurants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More salads (vegetables), fruits, and fruit juices.</td>
<td>Great increment in the consumption of cereal for breakfast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American items such as pizza, hot dogs, and cereal were limited to special occasions or eaten seldom.</td>
<td>Weekends: breakfast like in Colombia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increment in the consumption of cookies, pizza, hot dogs, candies and cereals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New foods include items such as: tacos, burritos, waffles, brownies, pretzels, chicken nuggets, muffins, and pies.</td>
<td>Lesser consumption of salads (vegetables), fruits, and fruit juices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neiva (Huila)</td>
<td>Meals based mainly on the regional food.</td>
<td>Continuity of meals at home based on the regional food mixed with several foods from other regions in Colombia and American items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More salads (vegetables), fruits, and fruit juices.</td>
<td>Great increment in the consumption of cereal for breakfast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American items such as pizza, hot dogs, and cereal were limited to special occasions or eaten seldom.</td>
<td>Weekends: breakfast like in Colombia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Increment in the consumption of cookies, pizza, hot dogs, candies and cereals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Larger number of new foods which mainly include items such as: bandeja paisa, tacos, burritos, waffles, brownies, chicken nuggets, brownies, bagels, biscuits, macaroni and cheese, and pancakes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Even though all participants have experienced changes in their food patterns since they came to live in the US, I found some differences related to their city of residence in Colombia (Table 9). As a trend, participants from Cali, Barranquilla and Bogotá in Colombia used to have meals with mixed foods from their region of residence and from other regions, as well as American foods such as pizza and hot dogs. Participants from Medellín, Risaralda, and Neiva in Colombia used to have meals based on their regional foods and seldom ate American foods. Participants from Cali, Barranquilla, Neiva, and Bogotá have continued eating at home in the US, mixed Colombian and American items with an increment of American foods and the introduction of other Colombian and a couple of Mexican foods. Participants from Medellín and Risaralda have continued eating at home meals based on the food of their region of residence in Colombia.

Table 10. Feelings and Concepts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Main Trend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American food</td>
<td>– Denigrated as bad food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Unhealthy, greasy and makes you get fatter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Some participants did not make a moral judgment but defined American food as pizza, hot dogs and hamburgers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombian food</td>
<td>– Idealized as good food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Good and healthy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Some participants defined did not make a moral judgment but defined Colombian food as frijoles, empanadas, or sancocho.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison between Colombian and American food</td>
<td>– Dichotomy: Colombian food is good and American food is bad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Some participants said that American and Colombian food are not bad or good but different.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings</td>
<td>Pride of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Speaking English.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Knowing how to prepare foods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Feeling knowledgeable in general.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Being Colombian.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– American food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Colombian food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love and fondness toward certain foods</td>
<td>– Use of diminutives: mainly for Colombian foods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– Exclamations expressing love and disgust toward certain foods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hate toward certain foods</td>
<td>– Use of exclamations and use of words such as “nasty.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

408 Rebeca’s food pattern in Colombia mixes foods from Bogotá and Casanare, two places where she lived.
Talking about concepts (Table 10) of Colombian and American food, several participants tended to define them in two extremes. American food was denigrated as bad an unhealthy and Colombian food was idealized as good and healthy. Interviewees expressed feelings of pride related issues such as their ability to speak English, their knowledge, and being Colombian. In general, participants used English to name American foods and Spanish to name Colombian foods, and frequently used diminutives when talking about Colombian foods.

Table 11.
Participants’ Agency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Main Trend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agency in the production of culture</td>
<td>All participants are blending meanings from their immigrant culture with those they find in the context in the US. Thus they are active agents in shaping their identities and in producing culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food preparation</td>
<td>All participants prepare simple foods such as cereal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Most participants described how to prepare Colombian foods such as rice or patacones.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Though participants are more knowledgeable about Colombian foods, they also talked about how to prepare American foods such as macaroni and cheese and hamburgers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in the research activities</td>
<td>All participants actively engaged in the research activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participants used diverse strategies to control the setting of the interview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>During the group sessions participants defined the activities to develop.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Participants’ agency (Table 11) was reflected in their active role as producers of new blended cultural meanings, in their ability and knowledge on preparing several dishes, and in their active engaged participation on the research activities.

Table 12.
Interactions and Influences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Main Trend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents and siblings</td>
<td>The Mother cooks. She is an outstanding person who represents the main link to Colombian food and Colombian identity. When present, grandmothers represent relevant roles in participants’ lives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ friends. Family networks</td>
<td>Present on special occasions such as birthdays, Christmas, and Thanksgiving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends and peers</td>
<td>Relevant at school and sometimes present at home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>Lunch ladies prepare food at school. Participants talked little about teachers. When participants talked about teachers, they were represented playing disciplinary roles. Participants talked little about media. Few of them described food advertisements in Colombian and American television channels.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participants interact with several people in their daily life (Table 12). Parents (particularly their mothers) are the most influential actors affecting their food preferences. Parents’ friends and family networks were also identified by children as relevant people present in special occasions such as Christmas and Thanksgiving. Peers and friends (American, Colombian, and Latino) were also present in the narratives of most participants. They did not talk much about advertisements and media influence. Yet, I think it does not mean that media are not important. Rather, I think that media have a subtle presence that would require another type of research to study their influence.

**The Group Sessions**

During the group sessions (Table 13) participants expressed their agency in the production of blended meanings of food based on the use of Colombian and American symbols and foods. During group 1 and group 2 the restaurant emerged as a main theme. Restaurants are places where they express their mixed identities at the same time that play a central role in the display of prestige.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Main Trends</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Let’s pretend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sculptures with play-doh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drawings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Themes</td>
<td>The restaurant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preferred foods such as beans, candies, desserts, pizza, rice, and meat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colombian foods such as beans, chorizos, rice, empanada, sancocho, and buñuelo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colombian symbol: Colombian flag.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>American symbol: freedom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The picnic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food items</td>
<td>Blended Colombian and American items: beans, rice, ice cream, meat, French fries, apple juice, chorizo, sandwiches, Coke, orejas, sugar cookies, cheese, soups, desserts, candies, pizza, and cakes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed items</td>
<td>Special rice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The candy of freedom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pepperoni pizza learned to prepare in Colombia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The heart of the United States.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A Colombian candy with legs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Colombian picnic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eminem, representing an American singer, (Asprilla) drew Colombian foods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Usher, representing an American singer, drew Colombian foods.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Summary of Main Trends

Table 14.  
Summary of Main Trends

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Trend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family</strong></td>
<td>- Nuclear family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Parents’ occupation: services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acculturation</strong></td>
<td>- Average time living in the US: 3.15 years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Average age when coming to live in the US: 5.85 years old.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Languages ability: Well English and Spanish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Language at home: Spanish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Mixed preferences: friends, language, television channels, radio stations, and music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Ethnic identity: Colombian and Colombian-American.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Food in the US</strong></td>
<td><strong>Weekdays</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Breakfast at home: cereal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Lunch at school: medium meal with American foods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Almuerzo at home: large meal with foods from their region of residence in Colombia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Dinner at home: small meal with mixture of Colombian and American foods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Weekends</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Breakfast at home: large meal with foods as they used to have when living in Colombia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Eating out at Colombian, American, and Chinese restaurants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preferred, liked, and disliked foods: Mixture of Colombian and American foods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Continuities and changes</strong></td>
<td><strong>Continuities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Foods from their region of residence in Colombia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Pizzas and hot dogs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Changes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- In quantity: Increment in the consumption of candies, sugar based foods and candies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- New foods: Sugar based foods and pastries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Changes on timing and places for eating some foods such as pizza and hot dogs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concepts</strong></td>
<td>- American food is judged as bad and unhealthy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Colombian food is judged as good and healthy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Feelings</strong></td>
<td>- Pride</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Love and fondness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Disgust and hatred.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agency</strong></td>
<td>- In producing new cultural meanings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- In knowing how to prepare and preparing foods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- In participating and engaging on the research activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foods related to residence in Colombia</strong></td>
<td>Participants from Cali, Barranquilla and Bogotá⁴⁰⁹ used to have in Colombia meals with mixed foods from their region of residence, from other regions, as well as American foods such as pizza and hot dogs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participants from Medellín, Risaralda, and Neiva used to have meals based on the regional food and seldom ate American foods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participants from Cali, Barranquilla, Neiva, and Bogotá have continued eating at home in the US, mixed Colombian and American items with an increment of American foods and the introduction of other Colombian and a couple of Mexican foods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participants from Medellín and Risaralda, have continued eating at home meals based on the food of their region of residence in Colombia.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⁴⁰⁹ Talking about foods in Colombia Rebeca mixed items from Bogotá and Casanare, two places where she lived.
CHAPTER SEVEN

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the narratives I present how participants’ representations of food symbolize the change that they have experienced as Colombian immigrant children. In this chapter I discuss the emerging themes from the narratives integrating the study’s conceptual framework presented in the Literature Review Chapter.

In this context, discussions are organized and integrated around emerging themes. The chapter is structured around the central questions of the research about how Colombian immigrant children adjust to live in the US, and how does food symbolize the change that they have experienced. After the discussion I present some suggestions to parents, nutritional education programs that work with immigrant children, to nutritional anthropologists as actors interested on the intersection between culture and nutrition, and to anthropologists and other scholars working in the field of immigration studies.

Discussion

Literature on children and immigration presents two main trends, one of which focuses on the immigrant experience as related to health and adjustment problems, and other, which looks for understanding of the immigrant experience from the perspective of children themselves. Within the second trend, the literature on segmented assimilation (Portes and Zhou 1993) has yielded concepts to understand different patterns of assimilation and the variety of experiences of immigrant children (Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco 2001:17). Even though there are several studies based on the concept segmented assimilation that focus on ethnicity (Fernández-Kelly and Schauffler 1994; Rumbaut 1994; Stepick and Stepick 2002), there are no studies that focus on the process of change itself. As a contribution, this study suggests a framework for understanding
how the process of adjustment of immigrant children is evolving. As such, in the
discussion I will document how this process is represented by food as a symbol of
immigrant children’s changes and transformations.

The purpose of this study was to explore how Colombian immigrant children adjust
to life in the US as expressed by representations of food. The study was divided into
several domains that explored the participants’ representations of food they eat during
weekdays, weekends, and holidays and at restaurants; continuities, changes and
differences between the food they ate in Colombia and they eat here; concepts, feelings
and values associated to food they eat; meaningful interactions in their food
representations and how participants’ agency is expressed in their food and in the
research activities.

The segmented assimilation theory provides a framework to understand the process
by which the children of contemporary immigrants become incorporate into the system of
stratification in US society and the different outcomes of this process (Zhou 1997:975).
However, this theory does not provide elements to understand either how children and
families are living the process of adjustment or the role that they are playing in the
acculturation process, as the concept of creolization does. Within a segmented
assimilation framework, Foner (1997) proposes that in the process of creolization
immigrants blend cultures, values, and attitudes brought from home and shifting them in
the context of the new hierarchies, cultural conceptions, and social institutions they
confront in the US. Thus, acculturation does not mean full assimilation, but rather a blend
of meanings, perceptions and social patterns where a new culture, different from both
home and host society, emerges.

I conclude that creolization, the concept proposed by Foner to explain patterns of
acculturation of families, is the central idea articulating and providing meaning to
participants’ representations. The emerging relationships and themes were the same as or
closely related to the themes of creolization and to the main concepts that Foner, as well
as other scholars in the literature of immigrant children, such as Rumbaut and Portes
(2001), have discussed with regard to patterns of adjustment and acculturation. However,
among the participants the process of creolization is far from completed. Thus,
creolization is an underlying idea that I used to weave the discussion together, but the concepts that explicitly articulate it are: the immigrant culture; the context in the US; the continuities, changes and blending of meanings of representations; ethnic and self identity; social class; and agency.

**The Immigrant Culture**

Following Foner (1997:962-963) immigrant cultures “have a powerful influence in shaping family values and norms as well as actual patterns of behavior that develop in the new setting.” Participants’ representations of food reveal that the immigrant culture, though rooted in the past, is alive and transformed in the present. It shapes identities, interactions, and concepts.

Among participants, the immigrant culture is not defined by Colombia as a country, but rather by the city of residence, which is part of a regional culture. As Brown and Mussell (1984) point out in their study of regional foods in the US, regions are embodied cultural systems that allow for better understandings of food sharing patterns than the political and administrative defined boundaries of states. Colombia, like many countries is a nation of diverse geographic and cultural regions. Colombian regional cultures have been defined by the interaction of geographical determinants and the influence of diverse ethnic traditions represented in a great diversity of indigenous ethnicities, white Europeans, and African Colombians. In most regions, present food practices have resulted from the blending of indigenous with European and African culinary traditions. Currently the American influence, represented by foods such as pizza, hot dogs and hamburgers, is part of the food patterns of most Colombians living in urban areas - particularly of those living in the major cities such as Bogotá, Cali, Medellín, and Barranquilla. Such a pattern was consistently present among participants who in Colombia used to eat pizza and hot dogs. Participants see differences between the pizzas and hot dogs they ate in Colombia and the ones they eat here. In Colombia, many of them remembered eating Hawaiian pizza with pineapple, which in Colombia tasted better and they rarely eat here. Likewise, hot dogs in Colombia included many other items such as potato chips, sauce of pineapple, quail egg, and pink and tartar sauce. Besides, unlike
here, where most of them eat pizzas and hot dogs as part of their daily diet, there such foods were eaten only in restaurants or on special occasions. In this context, though similar, actually such foods are different here and there.

Based on a long-term research study first published in 1968 that recognized an “apparent geographical determinism” 410 (Gutiérrez de Pineda 2000:5), the anthropologist Virginia Gutiérrez de Pineda defined four regional cultures in Colombia: the Andean American; the Santandereano or neo-Hispanic with a marked trend toward a kind of patriarchal societies; the mountain or Antioqueño; and the negroide 411 from the Pacific plains and the Caribbean Coast, which show a marked trend toward matriarchal societies. Such a categorization reflects the lower classes and is not intended to characterize the upper classes. Indeed, in the fifth edition in 2000 Gutiérrez de Pineda points out that even though modernization, urbanization and acculturation, as well as violence, guerilla and paramilitarism, have affected the lower classes, much of the described patterns are still present. As I identified variations among participants’ perspectives and realized that such differences were related with some regional characteristics in Colombia, I found that the study still provides valid elements to understand the role that the regions have in the participants’ representations of food.

In brief, one element from Gutierrez de Pineda’s study that is relevant for this discussion is that the original culture of participants is better described as regional, since I found a link between some regional cultural characteristics and the symbols expressed in their foods changes and continuities. Among people from Barranquilla and other Colombian Caribbean areas, as well as among people from Neiva, Gutiérrez de Pineda describes (2000: 317-322) the maternal role as central in structuring the family, as the father is not always present. In time the grandmother becomes the focus of the extended family living around her. The grandmothers’ influence and relevance was evident in Halley and Elisa, who are from Barranquilla and in Mark, who is originally from Neiva.

410 All quotes from Virginia Gutiérrez de Pineda are free translation.
411 African influence.
Participants from the department of Risaralda, Medellín (capital of the department of Antioquia), and Cali\textsuperscript{412} (capital of the department of Valle del Cauca), share a common cultural origin in the complex of the mountain or Antioqueño. Living in fertile lands in the mountains, people from Risaralda and Antioquia have the highest levels of human density in Colombia. Though there are scattered groups of unmixed whites, indigenous, and African Colombians, most Antioqueños are ethnically mixed of these three groups. Among them, religion works as an important element controlling both individual ethics and family structure, at the same time that it is a reliable source of hope, security and encouragement in their pursuit of successful enterprises. Marriage is the basis of the domestic unit and Gutiérrez de Pineda (2000: xxxi) reported the highest percentages of legal marriage among the regions she studied. Historically, Antioqueños have been colonizers and farmers who first cultivated corn and then succeeded producing coffee in family enterprises. Indeed, most Colombian coffee is produced by Antioqueños who own small and medium size plots and have developed a commercial agriculture based on such product. Since coffee is an intense, permanent production crop, it supports, in small plots, the family life (Gutiérrez de Pineda 2000: 356-358). Antioqueños have also developed industries focused on cities: first in Medellín, and then Manizales, Armenia, and Pereira. Likewise, they have been traditionally clever, and successful traders.

Gutiérrez de Pineda (2000:358) asserts that in Antioquia the colonial system of large estates was broken. Instead of being linked to land, wealth was related to hard work and initiative. Thus, the spirit of initiative, autonomy, and freedom, along with a pride of cultivating coffee resulted on this “extremely uncommon case of a democratic society constituted by small owners within a continent dominated by the traditional Latin large estates.” (Gutiérrez de Pineda 2000:358). Gutiérrez de Pineda also describes Antioqueños as a society that does not mark ethnic differences, with a powerful middle class, and without major social class disparities which formed “a racial concoction that deleting money and racial borders, produced a cultural homogeneity. All the social classes got

\textsuperscript{412} People from Cali also have cultural characteristics of the Pacific plains and the Caribbean Coast culture. However, I believe that participants who are from Cali (as related to their food patterns) are better represented as part of the Antioqueña culture. It is also necessary to point out that participants from Cali demonstrated more westernized food patterns than participants from Medellín and Risaralda both in Colombia and in the US.
equal within the same corpus of beliefs, values and behaviors, so combining race and culture.” (Gutiérrez de Pineda 2000:437).

In brief, among Antioqueños, the cultivation of coffee -developed in familiar enterprises- has been the basis of the family’s structure, as well as a symbol of pride. At the same time they have defined values such as family and land, and an identity characterized by independence, initiative, constant effort, and the pride of being owners of their own land. As Antioqueños or paisas, as they are called, leave their lands and go to live in cities, Gutiérrez de Pineda (2000:439) points out how they maintain their identity within their established institutions by linking them to the family and the land.

Participants from Medellín, Cali and Pereira usually have common foods such as frijoles and arepas and keep strong feelings of identity with their families, even though they come from quite large cities that have experienced longer and wider processes of modernization and globalization. Thus, Usher and Asprilla, who were originally from Pereira, showed a higher linkage to the original culture patterns of food than the other participants.

As documented in the narratives, the immigrant culture represents a significant portion of the participants’ representations of food and is a central element of their daily lives and identities. The immigrant culture is represented by participants when they talk about going to Colombian restaurants such as la Cabaña Antioqueña, o la Hacienda. Such restaurants as well as other Colombian restaurants and bakeries in Tampa typically sell more dishes and products from the Antioqueña culture than from other regional cultures, which are less represented among Colombian immigrants in Tampa.

The place where the immigrant culture is daily and continuously present is at home. Since all participants usually eat at their homes where their eating habits follow similar patterns they used in Colombia, their homes, mothers, grandmothers, and other family members represent a direct link between the immigrant culture and the context in the US.

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413 Indeed, coffee is a symbol of national pride for Colombians.
The Context in the US

Even though one participant lives in New Jersey—a place where 79,902 Colombians live (Camarota and McArdle 2003:10), the contextual experience of the children I interviewed is in the US, primarily in Florida, particularly Tampa. After California, New York, and New Jersey, Florida is ranked as the fourth state in the number of immigrants from diverse nationalities (Camarota 2002:5). Indeed, after California and Texas, Florida is ranked as the third highest state of immigrant population (Camarota 2002:6). In Florida, 25.6 percent of school-age population are children with immigrant mothers (Camarota 2002:16) Based on the 2000 Census, after Cubans, Mexicans and Haitians, Colombians are the fourth largest group of immigrants living in Florida. There are 157,307 Colombians in Florida (Camarota and McArdle 2003:8). Between 1990 and 2000 an additional 92,241 Colombians migrated to Florida, an increment of more than 100 percent (Camarota and McArdle 2003:8). Spanish speaking people represent the largest number of immigrants in Florida. Maybe motivated by networking immigration, Tampa is a city where many Colombians have chosen to live in Florida. For the Tampa Bay Area (Tampa, St. Petersburg and Clearwater), the Census 2000 reports that 45.1 percent of the foreign born population are originally from Latin America; 10.1 percent from South America. After Mexicans (11.5 percent), and Cubans (10.8 percent), Colombians (3.7 percent) constitutes the third largest group, by percentage, of foreign born population from Latin America in the Tampa Bay Area.

The cities in the US where immigrants settle define contrasts and differences between immigrant groups from the same cultural background (Foner 2003:21). Some specific characteristics of the context of the receiving culture are present in participants’ representations of food, for example when they talk about Colombian, Hispanic, or Latino restaurants and groceries stores. The social context in Tampa provides an environment where participants live their lives with other Colombians and Latino people with whom they share some commonalities such as language and foods. Indeed, speaking Spanish is common everyplace in Tampa and Colombian and Latino restaurants and stores are part of the landscape of the city.
Thus, Tampa provides a context where participants are able to integrate into their daily lives regional Colombian foods with new American foods both in private spaces such as home and in public spaces such as restaurants and groceries stores.

Tampa also provides a multicultural context where participants meet with immigrants from different Latin American countries as well as from several other countries around the world. For example, several participants mentioned eating at Chinese restaurants, and some included among their preferred new foods Cuban sandwiches and tacos; Luigi likes to drink Materva, a Cuban soda.

Schools are among the institutions representing the US context. In them, teachers, lunch ladies, classmates, and friends play different roles that impact the process. Lunch ladies are generally recognized as women who prepare the food at school and at times also represent a link with the immigrant culture. For example, Asprilla talks how he and his friend make jokes with the Colombian lunch lady, asking her for traditional Colombian foods. Teachers are seldom mentioned. They are represented as disciplinary figures who exercise control and provide rules, or in the case of Valentina, as not being culturally sensitive personages who threw away her cherished and valuable bocadillos.

While it may be easy to think about the immigrant culture and the US context as two different elements located in different places and times (i.e., the immigrant culture as part of the past), among participants such elements are intertwined in the present and are encountered in places such as home, school or restaurants. In general, restaurants are places where both the Colombian and the American elements are equally represented, since all participants go to both Colombian and American restaurants. Homes are privileged places for the immigrant culture, but to an extent are quite permeable to American foods and traditions. For example, with the exception of Alejandra (who came to live in the US in December 2003), all participants talk about celebrating Thanksgiving, and Angela and Carolina displayed pride when talking of their fathers organizing barbecues with friends during weekends. Schools are the least permeable spaces in terms of the encounter of the two cultures. Mostly the food they eat there corresponds to the foods they defined as American foods, such as nuggets, pizza, and hamburgers. For participants, tacos represent either a Mexican food or an American food but are not
identified as a Colombian food. Nevertheless, schools are important places where children live, as Americans do, a multicultural experience with friends and classmates from diverse ethnic and national origins. At school, participants interact with teachers, friends, classmates, and lunch ladies. Just as home represents the main source of the elements of immigrant culture, school represents the main source of knowledge and experiences of the context in the US. As Gordon (1964:245) pointed out, schools have acculturative powers. There, interacting with lunch ladies, teachers and peers, children are learning and inserting values, rules, concepts and behaviors from American culture. However, I do not believe, like Gordon (1964:245), that such acculturative power will bring one American identity and, eventually, will alienate native-born children from their parents and the culture they represent. Rather, I think it more likely that participants and their future American children will continue adopting, transforming and projecting into the society where they live the elements of their immigrant culture, producing a new and different culture. As this study documents, in the present context in US cities with large foreign born population, like Tampa, cultural differences and diverse ethnic identities are determining a trend not toward complete assimilation, but the emergence of blended identities in which immigrants, native born Americans and the social context are being transformed.

**Continuities, Changes and Blending Meanings**

The immigrant culture and the US context integrated in participants’ representations, operate as backgrounds where continuities, changes and blending of meanings are taking place. Zhou (1997:982) affirms that immigrants bring with them cultural patterns, norms and values. While some are unpacked once settled, others are changed, transformed and negotiated during the immigration adjustments (Zhou 1997:982). Participants’ representations of food reflect a kind of adjustment characterized by continuities, changes and blending of meanings.

In general, the participants’ first thought was that no changes had taken place in the food they have been eating since they came to live in the US. Yet, deeper exploration reveals such changes. For example, at the beginning Mark, like other participants, did not
find food changes since he came to the US. But then, looking at the food cards, he realized that he had begun to eat some new foods and stopped eating others. Likewise, participants talked about changes in proportions expressed by eating some foods “less” or eating “more”; changes in times such as eating on weekends the kind of breakfast they had in Colombia and changes in places such as eating pizza at school, a food in Colombia they used to have in restaurants.

Studies with rural to urban migrant populations have documented that children develop new appetites by experiencing new tastes at school (Jerome 1980:276), and they increased their consumption of foods containing sugar, such as cookies, candies, soft drinks, and ice cream (Witcher, Kolasa, and Bond 1988:195). Participants have been introduced to a wide and diverse variety of new foods since they have been living in the US, including some foods that could be from Colombia such as avocado, flan, papaya, and strawberries. But truly new foods included some typically American concoctions as brownies, pancakes, biscuits, muffins, bagels, macaroni and cheese, cinnamon rolls, and pies.

The continuity of food emerges as a deep feeling associated with participants’ homes. In this sense, for them, mothers, grandmothers and families are playing a central role in maintaining food continuities between the immigrant culture and their new US context. For most participants, as Erika’s mother said, lunch at school is regarded as eating something to hold them until they get home. They will have the main meal at home, and it is usually prepared with the same foods they ate in Colombia. As Valentina said, at school she just eats the food and then at home she eats her things.

Participants’ accounts about foods on special occasions also reveal continuities, changes and emergence of blended meanings. Though Thanksgiving is an American holiday, Christmas and birthdays are deep-rooted traditional celebrations in Colombia. Christmas time there lasts around one month and includes several kinds of religious and social celebrations with family, friends, and coworkers in which specials foods are central elements. Compared to the way that we celebrate Christmas in Colombia, with joyful parties and several days off, the American style looks sad and poor. Thus, participants and their families continue celebrating Christmas with family and friends. Some of them
talked about going to visit relatives who live in New York, and, for example, Rebeca described how in 2001 her family, along with other friends’ families, had parties every night celebrating here the traditional novenas. Yet, among participants, memories about Christmas were not always clear. In general I found that they recognized turkey more easily as a Thanksgiving food rather than a traditional Colombian Christmas food. This reveals to me that Thanksgiving is being adopted as a relevant celebration and Christmas is beginning to be experienced differently than in Colombia.

Indeed, participants’ accounts reveal continuities in the networks from the immigrant culture, and changes expressed through the creation of new networks within the new context. Special celebrations such as birthdays, Christmas, or Thanksgiving are occasions when participants and their families meet relatives who live in Tampa or in other cities in the US, as well as Colombian friends and Latino friends they have met here. It is relevant to note that even though some participants recalled foods from special occasions, what seemed more relevant to them were the people they met in such celebrations. They recalled very well uncles, aunts, cousins, mother’s friends, grandmother’s friends, and parents’ friends from different Latin American nationalities.

Foner (1997) points out that family networks facilitate immigrants’ adjustment and adaptation at the same time that immigrants themselves and their families play an active role reconstructing and redefining family life in the US. The meals with family’s networks provide participants not only a sense of continuity but also support them in their adjustment to life in the US and thus contributing to shaping their identities. Transnational ties to the sending society also play an active role in helping participants to keep traditions alive (Foner 1997:963). For example, Halley and Carolina proudly asked me to take pictures (appendix) of their valuable snacks sent by relatives in Colombia: Bon Bon Bum, Maní Moto, Chocolatinas Jet, and Bubble Gum.

The names that participants give to their daily meals provide a good example of how participants simultaneously keep traditions alive albeit transformed. Former beliefs and social institutions may change, if only subtly, in form and function as they integrate the new ones (Foner 1997:965). In general, participants call the first meal in the morning either “breakfast or desayuno,” and refer to “comida or dinner” to indicate the meal they
have with evening. However, lunch and almuerzo do not always have the same meaning. In general, participants refer to the meal they have anytime around noon at school “lunch,” but sometimes almuerzo means a big meal they eat at home either when they arrive from school or later; it may also mean the meal eaten around noon either at home, school, or at restaurants. Such different meanings reflect the transformations of the Colombian concept “almuerzo” as used in the US. Thus, what we see are pieces of a blending process that is happening at present. The original concept “almuerzo” maintains its original meaning at home, the new concept “lunch” works at school, and in between there are mixed uses. Based on the definition from their immigrant culture, almuerzo is the meal at noon or around noon, which corresponds to the time they are at school. However, in Colombia almuerzo is also a big meal, larger than dinner or supper, which usually includes rice, potato, a kind of meat (beef, pork or chicken), and may also include a grain such as beans, vegetables, or other foods such as plantains. Lunch in the US is a noon meal that as a norm is lighter than the evening meal\textsuperscript{414}. Some participants talked about eating two different lunch meals: lunch at school and almuerzo at home. Thus, they solve the conflict by assigning two different names to these meals: lunch is the meal they have at school and almuerzo the meal they have at home when they come from school. Yet, other participants use both almuerzo and lunch to talk about the meal they eat at school or at home, and the conflict is solved having two almuerzos or two lunches.

Restaurants are places where blended meanings are also represented. In general, participants recognize several restaurants and frequently eat out at diverse Latino, Chinese, and American restaurants. As part of the American experience participants often eat at restaurants, recognize names, and differentiate dishes, drinks, and desserts they have in each one and even the companions they go with to each one. In Colombia where eating is home centered and eating out is not as common as in the United States, going to a restaurant is a kind of prize for most children. In the US where family activities may leave less time for cooking, and where real or relative incomes are better, eating out is part of the American experience. For Americans, eating out is part of their daily life and the

\textsuperscript{414} This represents the Latin/Mediterranean custom of having a big mid-day meal, and then a light meal later on. The northern European/North American custom consists on having the big meal in the evening which may even contribute to obesity, since it is usually not followed by exercise.
kind of fast food and buffet variety restaurants where participants usually go does not represent prestige. However, for Colombian children, eating out at restaurants represents a form of entertainment, like a fancy restaurant to Americans, and a means to display taste, status and distinction where need and luxury are closely linked. (Warde and Martens 2000:1). This became evident in the interviews when the participants displayed clear knowledge about the restaurants that they go to and the foods that they eat in each one. Further, during group sessions 1 and 2, they chose to pretend they were in a restaurant. Likewise, for example, Rocky, who was the only one that valued American food as better than Colombian food, proudly listed the names of the several restaurants he used to go. In the same way, I think it is interesting that most participants first talked about Colombian restaurants as if they represented more prestige for them. Yet, such meaning is not the same for parents who, based on a Colombian middle class perspective, may regard eating out at typically American restaurants with more prestige. For example, when I asked about restaurants Luigi talked just about Colombian ones; then he asked her mother the name of a restaurant he did not remember, but she said such a restaurant was not important and asked him to talk about McDonald’s and Wendy’s.

In the context of continuities and changes, other blended meanings emerge. Blended meanings are not isolated but ever present phenomena in the participants’ representations of food. Preferred, liked and disliked foods included a mixture of varied items such as pizza, arepas, frijoles, soups, nuggets, fruits, vegetables, fish, rice or hamburgers. Foods that they stopped eating since living in the US include mixed items such as arequipe, pizza, obleas, mango, and hamburgers. Such mixture of food items, and the reasons participants used to explain such changes allow us to conclude that though restricted access might be a factor for stop eating obleas and arequipe (though arequipe is found at several stores in Tampa), personal taste is a more relevant factor. Also Thanksgiving, a distinctive and traditional American holiday, is celebrated by most participants in gatherings with relatives and friends where they mix turkey with rice, beans, potato salad, mashed potatoes, or apple pie. Some Mexican traditions are mixed in some celebrations.
For example, Valentina talks of eating tacos for Thanksgiving and Juanes was excited about having a piñata\footnote{The piñata is a tradition among people from Bogotá and other cities in Colombia. What is interesting in this case is that piñata, which is not a tradition originally from the US, is representing to Juanes a new experience here.} for the first time in his birthday.

Some blended patterns that outline emerging Creole styles were found for example in Valentina’s preparation of apple with lemon and salt or when friends visit her family for Thanksgiving and they eat tacos. In this case, traditional values from the culture of origin, such as family, hospitality, taking care of friends, and sharing food in special occasions, are blended within the most meaningful and relevant American holiday in the context of a multicultural society.

\textit{Ethnic and Self-Identities}

The segmented assimilation theory describes three distinct possible patterns of adaptation: the \textit{upward mobility} pattern, the \textit{downward-Mobility} pattern, and a third pattern that combines \textit{upward mobility and heightened ethnic awareness} with a deliberate preservation of the immigrant community’s values and solidarity (Rumbaut 1994:753-754; Zhou 1997:984). Rumbaut affirms that changes in immigrant children’s identities “has been not toward assimilative mainstream identities…, but rather a return to and a valorization of the immigrant identity for the largest groups and toward pan-ethnic identities among the smallest groups as these youths become increasingly aware of the ethnic and the racial categories in which they are classified by mainstream society” (1997a:942). Scholars studying immigrant children in the US, also argue that racial discrimination is a main factor determining that children do not identify themselves as American and rather prefer to adopt complex and shifting identities (Rumbaut 1994:780; Stepick and Stepick 2002:250). Some argue that depending on the context, disadvantaged children shift ethnic identity as a “defense from stigma and an incentive to defy leveling pressures” (Fernández-Kelly and Schauffler 1994:684).

Eight of the participants identified themselves as Colombians, ten chose a hyphenated identity (six said Colombian-American, one American-Colombian and three Colombian-Hispanics), two identified themselves as Hispanics, and none selected the
category American. However, most data from this study do not support racial
discrimination for explaining the selection of complex ethnic identities. Such differences
might be related to the fact that participants in this study are younger than those studied
by the cited scholars since ethnic identity varies developmentally over one’s life span and
identity is a more critical issue for older children and adolescents (Phinney 2002:73-75;

Participants’ selections also fail to support Rumbaut’s argument that “The children’s
ethnic self-identities strongly tend to mirror the perceptions of their parents’ (and
especially their mothers’) own ethnic self-identities, as if they were reflections in an
ethnic looking-glass.” Rather, I believe that participants’ selected identities represent a
link between their parents, their own identities, and the plain American identity. In this
sense, what I find is a continuum which includes Colombian identity at one end and
American identity at the other. In the middle, there are mixed and complex identities such
as Hispanic, Colombian-American, American Colombian and Colombian Hispanic. Since
the participants are Colombian-born, their parents are Colombians, and they are having
daily significant experiences with Colombian foods, and other Colombian cultural
elements, a Colombian identity is part of the identity selected by most participants. It is
also worth mentioning that even though I was expecting that children from TICH –where
being Hispanic is regarded a central value- would most frequently select the Hispanic
category, such was not the case.

Such mixed identities are also represented in the pattern I found in participants’
preferences regarding entertainment, which usually include Colombian as well as
Hispanic and American television channels, radio stations and music. Yet, this was not
the case for books. For those who do not read Spanish or for whom reading Spanish is
very difficult, English books are the only books they read. Participants’ language
preferences also reflect a blended pattern characterized by speaking Spanish with their
parents and other relatives and English with siblings, friends, and peers.

In the context of the relationship between food and identity, cultural identities are
established, expressed and enacted on food consumption and food production practices
(Harbottle 2000:5-6). Harbottle suggests high variability in the symbolic potency of food
in relation to identity formation, being of relatively minor significance within the ethnic majority. “However, for minority groups…for whom identity-construction may be a more conscious and potentially a more problematic process, food consumption may be ascribed much greater symbolic weight” (2000:7). Like immigrant children in Harbottle’s study of Iranian families in Britain, participants in this study demonstrate “flexibility and variety in their food consumption practices” (2000:6). Such flexibility is represented in a variety of preferred and liked foods and the range of restaurants they use to go to eat out.

Food is also related to identity in the processes of socialization “both in terms of the formation of individual identity and the transmission of culture from generation to generation” (Beardsworth and Keil 1997: 54). Among participants, food plays a central role in their socialization and development of blended identities. Some of them know quite well how to prepare rice or hamburgers and some of them prepare not only cereal, but also macaroni and cheese. Thus, participants’ knowledge shows they are having blended processes of socialization as related to Colombian and American foods.

“Anthropologists have been in the forefront theorizing about the significance of gender in immigration and insist that immigration is a gendered process” (Foner 2003:18). The studies have generally focused on the changes of women roles as result of immigration. In Colombia, in general, cooking is a gendered activity and food and feeding family members is part of a woman’s expected role. Such pattern continues among participants’ since the mother continues being the person responsible of cooking at home and at schools they recognize the lunch ladies as those who prepare food there. Likewise, as a trend, girls have wider and more complex knowledge about cooking than boys. For example, besides her grandmother Halley has learned how to prepare arepas and rice, and Valentina not only knows how her mother prepares some dishes, but also has invented herself her own version of pizza. However, some changes are occurring that are related to the context in the US. In general, all participants prepare simple foods such as cereal, chocolate milk or chopped fruits. There are some boys who described how to prepare Colombian and American dishes. For example, Luigi described his own recipe of hamburgers –which he called meatball burgers- Bryan described how his mother
prepares patacones and Mark has very good knowledge about how to prepare rice and other dishes.

The context in the US, where gender roles are less restricted and daily life requires cooperation of men and women in home tasks, is contributing to the transformation that participants are doing of the traditional gender roles from Colombia. There, the kitchen is defined as a place for women where men are not welcome and men that cook or serve children’s meals are not always well-regarded. Among participants I did not recognize expressions of such gender stereotypes. Rather, they talked about men cooking or serving meals and boys did not express any concern because they are the ones preparing their cereal instead of their mothers or sisters, as it may happen in Colombia. For example, Asprilla takes as a normal issue that his father is the one who serves his almuerzo at home, while his mother works; Valentina laughs at the thought of his father burning the food while learning to cook but is not ashamed of him; Rocky and Juanes talked about their fathers preparing their breakfasts; and even Ron, who appeared not to be interested in food or cooking, described how he prepared the scrambled eggs and said that sometimes he normally prepares his own breakfast.

Finally, it is relevant for this discussion on identities to analyze the presence of Colombian coffee in the drawings that Usher and Asprilla drew in group 3. But before it is necessary to take into account three facts. First, participants rarely mentioned coffee during the research activities. Elisa said that sometimes she has coffee with milk for breakfast and during Group 2, when Lizzie was exploring the box with food toys, she said that a toy was for coffee, but rapidly forgot it. Moreover, I suspect some of them may regard coffee a drink for adults. Second, all the other food items that Asprilla and Usher included in their drawings (chorizo, arroz, frijoles, carne, empanada, buñuelo, and sancocho) were common foods in their own interviews, as well as in the interviews of other participants and during the group sessions. Third, both Asprilla and Usher are originally from Risaralda which is one of the major departments producing Colombian coffee. Actually, coffee is a central element in the socioeconomic and cultural lives of people from Risaralda. Asprilla and Usher also identified themselves as Colombians, and quite important for the purpose of my analysis is that they put the Colombian coffee at
the first place between the foods they drew. Besides, Asprilla did not give the adjective Colombian to any other food, but only to the coffee.

What does all this mean to me, an anthropologist researcher, but also a Colombian who has lived the experience of coming as temporary immigrant to the US? At first, I think that Colombian coffee is a symbol meaningful to Usher and Asprilla as part of their immigrant regional identity. However, I also suspect that the experience of being a Colombian immigrant is strongly contributing to place Colombian coffee as an outstanding positive icon on their drawings. At present, Colombia has a negative international image, less associated with a desirable product like coffee and more associated with illegal drugs. It is often depicted negatively as a nation full of delinquents, drug dealers, murderers, kidnappers, and corrupt. Officially, the appearance of well known drug dealers, such as Pablo Escobar, as well as the emergence of highly structured “cartels” and the emergence of the evil profitable relationship between drug producers and illegal armies (leftist guerrillas and right-wing paramilitaries), not only has resulted in the weakness of the Colombian state and the expanding of the dirty war, but has contributed also to an international image of Colombians as undesirable people. Thus, along with a tremendous affection for our country, which sometimes grows until an idealized image of it as the best place in the world to live416, most Colombians are aware of the negative image and the great limitations we face when trying to obtain visas from almost every other country. Such stigmatization goes along with the necessity of having icons that provide a positive image of the country. We also know that Juan Valdez and Colombian coffee satisfy our need to be recognized not by a harmful stereotype but by the images that such icons represent: good quality, hard workers, honesty, and a link with the land. Juan Valdez and Colombian coffee also represent the paisa culture, not the violent side expressed in drug dealers and murderers that do anything for money, but the positive one in which making money as the result of hard work is greatly valued.

416 “Colombia es el mejor vividero del mundo,” Colombia is the best living place of the world, is the argument that many Colombians use for, whether expressing nostalgia when living outside, or for explaining why they decide to come back to the country, or to justify why they have not emigrated.
Social Class

Within the segmented assimilation theory it is recognized that new immigrants themselves differ greatly in their social classes (Rumbaut 1997a:943). Social class, ethnicity, nationality, and educational level determine different starting-points in the US. For example, studies among Haitian children in Miami have documented rapid assimilation of children into the subculture of the impoverished black inner city (Portes and Stepick 1993); research with Vietnamese youth in New Orleans has found that ethnic communities and immigrant culture can prevent immigrant children from assimilating into the underprivileged segments of American society where their community may be located (Foner 1997: 962-963; Zhou and Bankston 1994:821-822,841-842). The literature on segmented assimilation implicitly assumes that children of high income, highly educated and highly skilled immigrants generally face better economic chances. When they immigrate to the US they live in suburban neighborhoods, study in private or the better public schools, and have much more opportunities to access higher education and obtain economic advancement.

In this context, social class is recognized as a factor determining starting-points in the US. It was not a purpose of this study to analyze social class as a factor determining the process of adjustment. Likewise, Foner’s model assumes class as a structural variable in the immigrant culture but does not use it to analyze the process of adjustment. So, it may be thought that is not really necessary to include class as part of this discussion. However, data showed some interesting information that I think is relevant to discuss, particularly because they illustrate differences and relativity of the definition of social class as well as some changes that occur during the immigration process.

Based on indicators such as the neighborhoods and the houses where participants live, and on parents’ occupation and educational level, I would describe most participants as living in middle class homes. Rebeca and Carolina might be more middle- to high-class and Erika and Alejandra might be middle- to low-class. None of them seem to be on welfare or dependant on food stamps. Though, based on symbols of class in Colombia, participants came from different social classes there (high, middle and low).

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417 Alejandra’s mother is illiterate and Erika’s mother receives weekly free food from the church.
here I classify all of them as middle class people. However, trying to define social class of participants in the context of the US represents several problems as symbols of class are transformed in the process of immigration and subsequent life in the US.

For example, though educational level is an important indicator of social class in the US, in Colombia it is not always the case. There, it is not uncommon that people without professional studies are in the upper classes. This seems to be the case of Rebeca whose parents worked in business in Colombia and look like upper classes there. If I used educational level and occupation as main indicators for social class classification, I would cluster Erika with Rebeca in the same group. However, there are several other indicators of their actual living in the US that challenges such classification. Erika lives with her mother and roommates in a middle size home; her mother told me she finished high school and studied accounting. Now she works as janitor in a hospital. Rebeca’s parents did not go to the university; her father may have finished high school but not her mother: here they work cleaning houses, work that in Colombia is on the lower end of the social scale. Rebeca lives in a big house located in a suburban area where I saw large, fancy cars and she talked about a farm they own in north Florida. Though both Rebeca’s and Erika’s parents work hard in cleaning services and have a similar level of education, certainly other indicators such as the houses where they live reveal a different social class, with Rebeca at a higher level. In this context, the case of Rebeca’s parents might be explained as part of the normal pattern of immigrants who usually descend in their social class when they come to live in the US.

However, what is of interest in this study is the question if such differences are related to diverse processes of adjustment. Segmented assimilation theory predicts different patterns of integration as result of structural determinants such as socioeconomic backgrounds and place of residence (Zhou 1997:984). Though Rebeca and Erika come from different socioeconomic backgrounds in Colombia and here live in places that reveal different economic strata, they do not have different patterns of food changes or ethnic identification. Erika identified herself as Colombian American and Rebeca as American Colombian. Even though Rebeca’s parents seem to exert less control on their children’s eating habits than Erika’s mother, both participants have a similar
pattern of eating more Colombian food at home, more American food at school and eating out at both Colombian and American restaurants. Thus, both are blending Colombian and American foods and following a similar pattern of adjustment. I do not find that this study supports the idea of differential patterns. However, as discussed above, it may be explained because actually Erika and Rebeca are both living in the US as middle class girls and they do not represent different American social classes.

Agency

In several parts of this chapter I have discussed some elements related to the participants’ agency. In this section I just want to briefly point out some final conclusions.

Scholars generally point out that little is known about subjective aspects of children’s experiences in the acculturation process (Hernandez and Charney 1998; Portes 1994; Rumbaut 1994; Zhou 1997) and about “their subjective experiences as immigrant children, their abilities to cope and adapt, their ability to grow, and the impact that immigration has in their life” (García Coll and Magnuson 1997:94). There are no studies about immigrant children’s own experiences of the acculturative changes in food consumption. This lack may be related to traditional stereotypes that judge children as immature and dependent subjects. When discussing research with children, several anthropologists and social scientists lament that children have been disregarded either as unworthy informants or as interactive actors in producing culture (Bucholtz 2002; Friedl 2002; Gottlieb 2000; Hardman 1973; 2001; Hirschfeld 2002; Korbin and Zahorik 1985; Toren 1993). Schwartzman also laments that in anthropology children “have always existed on the sidelines and margins of the discipline” (2001:1). However, children are not passive receptors of acculturation and socialization processes. Rather they are persons and active subjects constructing their cultural worlds interacting with others, deploying relations of power, authority, and status, developing roles in social situations in tentative processes where they are producing themselves, shaping their own identities while at the same time shaping others’ identities, through historic and situated interactions (Gottlieb
From an initial view of participants’ narratives, one may erroneously conclude that their food preferences are restricted by the choices that are made by mothers and other adults at school. However, this study documents that they are not passive actors but rather they are actively combining and blending elements from their immigrant culture with those of the context in the US producing new meanings and shaping their own identities. Participants’ food preferences are not just the result of adults’ decisions, rather children’s preferences interplay in shaping the choices they have at home, at school, and at restaurants. For example, Halley talked about the pizza-flavored macaroni and cheese that she likes her mother to buy for her. Carolina proudly showed me the Colombian chocolate bars and chewing gum that she loves; her relatives in Colombia send it to her. Menus at schools are defined by children’s preferences of foods such as pizza, hamburgers and chicken nuggets, and even at Colombian restaurants, such as La Cabaña Antioqueña, they include a menu for children with French fries and chicken nuggets.

However, where the active role of children is even more evident is in the process of creolization as a process of production of new meanings and identities. As presented in individual and group narratives and discussed in this chapter, participants are producing cultural meanings in their interactions with family members, peers, school teachers, and other immigrants. The restaurant represents an example of how participants are actively blending elements from the context in the US with those of the immigrant culture. Indeed, participants’ marked interest in pretending that they were in a restaurant during groups 1 and 2 reveals how this setting represents not only a place of prestige but also a place where their own blended identities are enacted. During group 1, Juanes represented the cook at Malio’s, the restaurant where his parents work. Yet, participants were not interested in performing the real Malio’s, but the restaurant as a setting where they put together American items such as French fries and apple juice with Colombian items such as rice, beans and chicharrón. During group 2, Angela first ordered more American foods such as French fries, ice cream and coke. Then, Lizzie ordered coke, ice cream, sugar
cookies, and included *orejas*, a kind of cookie they buy at Latino bakeries in Tampa. Then, Valentina’s order mixed ice cream, meat, cheese, sugar cookie, and water with soup and *oreja*, and included a new mixed food item: the *special rice*. This rice represents a new and different version of the traditional Colombian rice, now named in the context of their lives in the US as special rice. During group 3, they also represented blended identities. Though Usher and Asprilla drew only Colombian foods, they chose American pseudonyms. In fact, during group 3 Asprilla chose Eminem, an American singer, as his pseudonym but later when I called him he changed it to Asprilla a Colombian soccer player. When I called, he also explained that he is not eating much hamburgers and pizza because now he prefers “delicious food” – meaning Colombian food. During group 3, participants simultaneously represented their food preferences and their mixed emerging identities which reflect their experiences living in the US. For example, Bryan and Rocky, who loves sugar based foods, first made sculptures with strawberries, chocolate and vanilla, and then together produced *El bombón de la libertad* a candy that mixes elements of their preferred foods. This item has both the Colombian name for candy and for freedom, which is the main American icon for immigrants. Juan Felipe made pizza with pepperoni – which is a very American-style pizza – that he learned to prepare in Colombia. And 50 Cent drew the Colombian flag with two boys – boys like him and his brother here in the US – waiting for their parents who went to buy something to have for dinner at home.

In the performance of groups 1, 2, and 3 participants mixed the food of their immigrant culture, the food they eat at home in the US, and the food they eat at school and American restaurants. Thus, even though beans and French fries are not a traditional mixture in either American or in Colombian cuisines, at the end of group 1 Usher and Juanes proudly asked me to take a picture of the papitas and frijolitos they prepared. Likewise, during group 2 Lizzie, Angela and Valentina produced a menu that mixed diverse foods such as orejas, beans, rice, and chorizo with green ice cream special rice, sugar cookies, cake, and cheese.

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418 Though there are different kind cookies in Colombia; the term of “sugar cookies” represents an item from the US.
419 Ears.
420 The candy of freedom
In brief, the session groups and participants’ narratives of their food preferences reveal the emergence of blended identities in the names they chose and the foods they depicted. However such identities are not fixed, but are better displayed as shifting identities that may change in time and place. For example, as discussed, Asprilla first chose the pseudonym Eminem and then asked to be called Asprilla; during the interview, Valentina first adopted the identity of a girl who eats Colombian healthy food, which mixes Colombian food with the American value of health, and then showed her identity of American girl who also loves junk food.

Finally, during the interview participants used diverse strategies of power. Some means of control related to handling the recorder and the food cards were part of the context of the interview created by the researcher. Likewise participants selected many of the pictures I took during the group sessions and all the food items I photographed at the end of the interviews. Yet, others were deployed by them with different purposes. For example, among others Asprilla not only helped me to write down some words I was not sure how to spell in English but often during the interview watched what I was writing in order to assure that I was placing his answer in the correct place. Likewise, Ron, Bryan and Jessica answered “I don’t know” to several answers when I felt they were anxious for finishing the interview soon and Bryan, and Elisa asked their parents questions about their occupations and educational level which they did not know. As discussed on the Chapter on Methods, participants also contributed to the analysis and the identification of categories.

Besides, their participation in the interviews and during the group sessions worked as an element of prestige. Handling the recorder, being taped, getting the educational materials, or having refreshments in the group sessions, were some means that participants used interacting with their siblings at their homes or with peers at TICH.

In conclusion, this study reaffirms children’s agency in producing culture and in their active participation on the construction of their lives and others’ lives. Colombian immigrant children living in the US are agents actively blending elements from their immigrant culture with elements they encounter in the US context from which new food patterns closely related to their identities are emerging. Tampa provides a context where
it is easy for mothers to get foods to prepare Colombian dishes and to take participants to eat at Colombian restaurants. Likewise, Tampa and Florida provide a context which facilitates and promote such blending of meanings both in private spaces such as home and school and in public ones such as restaurants.

**Anthropology and Immigration Studies**

Besides being a study based on the anthropology of food, my research with Colombian immigrant children is based on the field of immigration studies. Even though a large amount of the literature about immigration in the US has been produced by sociologists and other social scientists, immigration studies are an increasingly interdisciplinary field in which anthropologists are contributing with methods and theories (Foner 2003). In 2003, Nancy Foner published *American Arrivals* an edited book in which she along with Marcelo Suárez-Orozco, Patricia Pessar, Alex Stepick, Carol Dutton Stepick, Caroline Brettell, Leo Chavez, and other anthropologists discuss their works and the relevant contribution of ethnographic research and cultural anthropology in the cross-fertilization of social sciences and in shaping the immigration studies field.

The concept of culture and cultural change as well as the use of ethnographic tools were cornerstones shaping all the steps of my dissertation research. Culture has been a central concept for anthropologists since the birth of the discipline. “Culture is encompassing social relations, social structure, and transgenerationally transmitted patterns of action, belief, and language” (Schiller cited by Foner 2003:31). My main purpose with this research was to understand how a group of immigrant children are transforming their lives and producing culture in their process of adjustment to the life in the US. Immigration implies a process of cultural change in which I assume that children are not passive objects but rather active agents producing new meanings and thus producing cultural meanings. Participants in the study are active actors in the production of culture, producing new meanings, and blending elements from their immigrant culture with those they encounter in the US.

Ethnographic research has contributed to immigration studies. It can “uncover trends or patterns that inform other studies, including large-scale surveys...[and] can illuminate
virtually every area of concern in immigration studies” (Foner 2003:29). In my research I used traditional ethnographic tools such as participant observation and semistructured interviews to understand participants’ representations of food and to uncover how food changes are symbolizing their process of adjustment.

**Recommendations**

Even though I approached participants at TICH and through the NLGH project, those did not work as internship settings. Likewise, my dissertation research was not conducted in a specific agency. For that reason recommendations are not specifically addressed to a specific agency, but are general and directed to different actors that I think share my interests on immigrant children and the anthropology of food and nutrition. In this context, recommendations are general and directed to parents, nutritional educational programs, nutritional anthropologists, and immigration studies.

**Parents**

A brief report of the study will be sent to parents and participants. This report written in English and Spanish, will include a brief description of preferred foods in order to illustrate how both American and Colombian foods are part of participants’ preferences. Likewise, the report will include suggestions to parents about the importance of recognizing that their children’s identities are shaped both with elements from Colombian culture and elements from the culture in the United States. In this context it is important to recognize both cultures as part of their children’s identities.

**Nutritional Education Programs**

- The United States of America is a nation built by immigrants from many ethnic backgrounds. New and old immigrants all are part of the country, and as such it is recommended that nutritional educational programs integrate diversity in foodways. One example of assuming such diversity is presented by Jones and Darling (1998) in a document titled *Ethnic Foodways in Minnesota*. Based on an structuralistic approach and promoting cultural sensitivity, the authors propose
several tips for nutritional counseling with African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic/Latino Americans and Native Americans.

- Mennell, Murcott and van Otterloo (1992:38) cite a study conducted by Mary Harris et al. with a multicultural community at the southwestern United States. They point out the importance of developing nutritional programs adapted and tailored to fit the needs of children of different cultures, sexes and ages. Since immigrant children are active agents making decisions about their foods, nutrition education programs require including not only nutritional information but they also need to be based on children’s perspectives (Sullivan 2003).

- Knowing what immigrant children actually eat requires an understanding of the complex circumstances of their lives in the process of acculturation. Nutritional programs should be based not only on education about “appropriate” choices but also based on what “appropriate means under varying circumstances” (Crooks 1999:2). In order to prevent nutritional related problems among Colombian and other Latino immigrant children, it is necessary to develop tailored programs that take into consideration the role acculturation is playing in their food consumption patterns, as well as programs that take into account children’s agency in defining food consumption patterns and other health related behaviors.

- Even though mothers and children share many cultural elements, they are also different. Nutritional education programs that intend to solve children’s nutritional problems should target not only mothers but also children themselves.

- Nutritional programs such as NLGH and others targeting immigrant children should take into account both the immigrant culture and the US context and how they are interacting in shaping children’s food preferences. Besides, taking into account the great cultural diversity among Hispanics from different nationalities, and the little presence of Mexican foods among participants in this study, it is important to rethink and redesign models of nutrition education for Hispanic
immigrants (at present based on Mexican foods, or Cuban foods in Tampa) adapted to other Hispanic populations.

- It is also recommended that nutritional programs such as NLGH take into account the participants’ tendency of idealizing Colombian food as good and healthy and denigrating American food as bad and unhealthy. Even though pizzas, chicken nuggets, and hot dogs in general are greasy foods, and participants may have had greater access to fruits and vegetables in Colombia, it does not mean that Colombian foods are not greasy. Thus, it is important that nutritional educators do not make the same analogies, but rather that they discuss with immigrants about the nutritional values and the health risks of different foods and unbalanced diets.

**Nutritional Anthropologists**

- Food is a privileged symbol to understand cultural changes and the several micro and macro elements defining current immigrants. As discussed, food representations of immigrant children integrate at the same time local contexts such as home, school and restaurants with macro level processes such as transnationalism and networking immigration.

- Children are reliable informants. It is important that research on issues related to children’s nutrition expand to doing research with children where their representations and experiences are analyzed. For example, I suggest to analyze the children’s nutritional knowledge and how it is related to their food preferences.

- Based on the categories and some methodological tools I used in this study, a following step I suggest for NLGH is conducting a major nutritional survey with immigrant children in order to document food intake and food changes. This survey would yield orientations to develop nutritional educational programs with immigrant children from diverse nationalities.
**Immigration Studies**

- This study suggests that children and parents are not experiencing in the same acculturation process. I suggest developing comparative studies of the processes of acculturation lived by parents with those lived by their children.

- This study shows the relevance of studying and understanding the role that the immigrant culture is playing in the process of adjustment and acculturation. I suggest documenting the process of acculturation of diverse groups of immigrant children conducting comparative studies of the process of adjustment of children from diverse nationalities and ages.

- It would be also interesting developing qualitative research studies focused on diverse dimensions of the daily life such as food, dress, or entertainment.
GLOSSARY

A

**Achira, achiras.** Kind of biscuit made with a dough from a plant called *achira*, with curd, eggs and butter. It is original from the department of Huila.

**Agua de panela.** Hot drink made with water and “panela.” Panela is a pure, wholesome, traditional, unrefined, non-centrifugal whole sugar.

**Ajiaco.** Soup made with three different kinds of potatoes, chicken, corn, onion, garlic, cilantro, and a herb called *guascas*. It is accompanied with milk cream, capers and avocado. It is a typical dish from Bogotá.

**Algo.** Literally means something. Used by Alejandra. People from Antioquia use it meaning a small meal. Though it has a meaning similar to snack, it is not exact.

**Almuerzo.** Lunch.

**Almojábanas, almojábanas.** Kind of bread made with a dough of corn meal, cheese, eggs and butter.

**Antojitos Colombianos.** Colombian bakery in Tampa.

**Arepa, arepas, arepa de chócolo.** Cornbread. People from each region prepare several kinds of arepas. All are prepared with dough of corn meal mixed with water. Arepas
may also have salt, cheese and butter. Though commonly arepas are grilled, they may also be fried or roasted.

**Arequipe.** Sweet made with milk, sugar, and cinnamon. Though originally from Antioquia, it is a typical Colombian sweet.

**Arroz con leche, arroz de leche.** Rice with milk. Sweet made with rice, milk, cinnamon, sugar and raisins.

**Arroz con pollo.** Rice with chicken. Rice prepared with chicken and chopped vegetables such as peas, red pepper, and carrots. Though common in other Latin American countries, it is a typical Colombian dish.

**Arroz de coco, arroz con coco.** Rice with coconut. It is a typical Colombian Caribbean dish.

B

**Bandeja paisa.** Dish original from Antioquia. It includes beans, and ground meat accompanied with rice, patacones, bacon, chorizo, arepas, fried egg, and avocado.

**Bistec.** Meat cooked with tomatoes, onions and condiments.

**Bocadillo, bocadillos.** Sweet made with guava paste.

**Bollo limpio.** Literally, clean bun. It originated in the Colombian Caribbean region and is prepared with corn meal, water, and salt. The dough is wrapped with corn leaves and then boiled. It is a widespread food consumed by everyone, rich and poor, in the Colombian Caribbean coastal region.
Bon Bon Bum®. Lollipop.

Buñuelo, buñuelos, buñuelito. Kind of fritter made with a dough of corn meal.

C

Cabaña. Cabaña Antioqueña. See La Cabaña Antioqueña.

Café con Leche. Coffee with milk.

Carne al Bistec. See Bistec

Cena. Super or dinner.

Ceviche. Appetizer made with marinated seafood.

Chicharrón. Fried crackling made with pork meat.

Choco Cris. Name given by Juanes to Kellogg’s Choco Krispies®

Chocoramo®. Cake covered with chocolate.

Chorizo, chorizos. Kind of sausage made with pork meat and condiments.

Chuleta. Chop. Cut of meat, usually taken from the rib, shoulder, or loin and containing a bone.

Coca Cola®. Coke®

Colombiana®. Colombian red colored soda.
Desayuno. Breakfast

Empanada, empanadas. Patty prepared with dough of either corn meal or flour and stuffed with different items such as rice, potatoes and meat. In general, they are deep fried. There are diverse recipes depending on the region.

Frijoles, frijolitos. Beans. In general, Colombians eat red, white and green beans.

Kumis. Koomis. In Colombia is a non alcoholic beverage made with fermented milk.

La Cabaña Antioqueña. Colombian restaurant in Tampa located at N. Armenia Ave.

La Hacienda. Colombian restaurant in Tampa located at N. Armenia Ave.

La Pequeña Colombia. Colombian restaurant in Tampa.

La Típica Colombiana. Colombian restaurant in Tampa located at W. Waters Ave.

Lulo. Sour fruit used to prepare juices.
M

**Maduro, maduros.** Fried ripe plantains. Also called “maduro frito,” “plátano frito” or “tajadas.”

**Maizena®.** Corn starch.

**Maní Moto®.** Penaut.

**Manzana®.** Colombian pink colored soda.

**Milo®.** Chocolate powder similar to Nesquik®.

**Mi Pueblo, Mi Pueblito.** Colombian cafeteria and bakery located at N. Lincoln Ave.

N

**Natilla.** Dessert made with corn starch, milk, panela, cinnamon, and sugar.

O

**Oblea.** Wafer. Usually, it is eaten with arequipe.

**Opita.** Name given to people original from the department of Huila.

P

**Paisa.** Name given to people original from the departments of Antioquia, Risaralda, and Quindío. They all belong to the Antioqueña culture.
Panela. Pure, wholesome, traditional, unrefined, non-centrifugal whole sugar.

Papa, papas. Potato, potatoes.

Papita, Papitas. Diminutive of potato chips.

Patacón, patacones. Fried green plantains. Caribbean populations and several Hispanics in Tampa call them “Tostones.”

Perro, perro caliente. Hot dog.

Pericos. Scrambled eggs with tomato and onion.

Plátano frito. See Maduro.

Pony Malta®. Colombian soda made with malt.

Q

Queso, quesito. Cheese.

S

Sancocho. Clear soup made with chicken, beef and pork meat, and cassava, potatoes, plantains, corn, cabbage, onion, garlic, and condiments.

Sudado. Stew.
Tamal, tamales. Dish prepared with dough of corn meal, chicken, beef and pork. The dough is wrapped with plantains leaves, tied and then boiled.

Tostón, tostones. See patacón.

Tajada, tajadas, tajaditas. See Maduro.
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Parental Informed Consent
Social and Behavioral Sciences
University of South Florida

Information for Parents
Who are being asked to allow their child to take part in a research study

The following information is being presented to help you decide whether or not you want to allow your child to be a part of a minimal risk research study. Please read this carefully. If you do not understand anything, ask the person in charge of the study.

Title of research study: Food Consumption Patterns of Colombian Immigrant Children
Person in charge of study: María Claudia Duque
Where the study will be done: Center for Family Health, Taller Intercultural Hispano Americano or if participants’ and their parents prefer at participants’ home.

Your child is being asked to participate in this research because this study expects to gain knowledge of what Colombian immigrant children are actually eating. Such knowledge will be useful to give ideas to nutritional educators about how to design culturally appropriated materials for Colombian and Latino children.

General Information about the Research Study
The purpose of this research is to study the food consumption patterns of Colombian immigrant children in their process of adaptation and acculturation in the U.S.

Plan of Study
The study will be conducted in two phases. Your child will participate in Phase One. During Phase One, about 50 boys and girls will be interviewed individually. Supported by the researcher and using food cards your child will be asked to answer questions related to some demographic characteristics and the food he/she eats on a week day, on weekends, and on special occasions. Depending on the preference of your child, the interview will be conducted either in English or Spanish and will last approximately 60 minutes or no longer than 90 minutes. Depending on your convenience and/or your child’s convenience, the interview can be developed at your home or at the Center for Family Health, or at Taller Intercultural Hispano Americano. Interviews will be audio taped and the researcher will write your child’s answers in each questionnaire.

Payment for Participation
You and your child will not be paid for your child’s participation in this study.
APPENDIX A  (Continued)

Benefits of Taking Part in this Research Study

- Your child will receive written material about the food pyramid and advice about healthy nutrition.
- You will receive written material about the food pyramid.

Risks of Being a Part of this Research Study

There are no known physical or mental risks to those that participate in this research.

Confidentiality of Your Child’s Records

You and your child’s privacy and research records will be kept confidential to the full extent required by law. Authorized research personnel, employees of the Department of Health and Human Services, and the USF Institutional Review Board and its staff, and others individuals acting on behalf of USF may inspect the records from this research project.

Phase One: In order to assure confidentiality your child’s name will not be registered in questionnaires. Instead an identification number will be given to her/him.

Data will be kept in a locked box at the principal investigator’s home. Only the principal investigator will have access to questionnaires and other materials.

The results of this study may be published. However, the data obtained from your child will be combined with data from other children in the publication. The published results will not include your child’s name or any other information that would personally identify your child in any way.

Volunteering to Take Part in this Research Study

Your decision to allow your child to participate in this research study is completely voluntary. You are free to allow your child to participate in this research study or to withdraw him/her at any time. If you choose not to allow your child to participate or if you remove your child from the study, there will be no penalty or loss of benefits that you or your child are entitled to receive. You and your child will receive the educational material about the food pyramid and the information about healthy nutrition.

Questions and Contacts

- If you have any questions about this research study, contact María Claudia Duque at (813) 205-5960 or Michael V. Angrosino at (813) 974-0786

- If you have questions about your rights as a person who is taking part in a research study, you may contact the Division of Research Compliance of the University of South Florida at (813) 974-5638.
Consent for Child to Take Part in this Research Study

I freely give my consent to let my child take part in this study. I understand that this is research. I have received a copy of this consent form.

Investigator Statement

I have carefully explained to the subject the nature of the above protocol. I hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge the subject signing this consent form understands the nature, demands, risks, and benefits involved in participating in this study.

Signature of Investigator __________________________
Printed Name of Investigator _______________________
Date _______________________

Or authorized research investigator designated by the Principal Investigator

Information for Children Who are Being Asked to Participate in a Research Study about the Food they Eat

You were invited to participate in an interview for a research about what you eat.

- As a participant of this research you will be asked some questions about yourself, your family and about what you eat.
- Cards with food items will be used to help you to remember.
- You are free to decide if you want to be interviewed or not. If you feel that you would prefer not to participate but you would participate because you want to please another person, it may mean that you prefer not to participate.
- You can choose if you prefer to talk either in English or in Spanish.
- To protect you and your privacy, your name will not be written in the questionnaire. Instead, you will be recognized with a number. Thus anybody else than the researcher will not know the answers you given.
- You are free to withdraw at any time that you want without any penalty.
- You will receive nutrition educational material on the food pyramid as well as nutrition advising whether you finish your participation or not.
APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT INTERVIEW - SPANISH

Consentimiento Informado de los Padres

Social and Behavioral Sciences
University of South Florida

Información para los Padres a
Quienes se les ha Pedido que Permitan participar a su hijo(a) en una investigación.

La información que se presenta a continuación tiene como finalidad ayudarle(s) a decidir si usted(es) quieren permitir que su hija(o) participe en un estudio de investigación de riesgo mínimo. Por favor léalo cuidadosamente. Si no entiende algo, o si tiene alguna duda, pregúntele a la persona encargada del estudio.

Título de la investigación: Patrones de Alimentación de Niños Colombianos Inmigrantes

Persona a cargo del estudio: María Claudia Duque

Dónde se va a desarrollar el estudio: En el Centro de Salud Familiar y en el Taller Intercultural Hispano Americano, o si los participantes o sus padres lo prefieren, las actividades de la investigación pueden realizarse en la casa de los participantes.

A su hijo(a) se le ha pedido que participe en este estudio porque con este estudio se espera conocer lo que algunos niños inmigrantes están comiendo realmente. Este conocimiento servirá para dar ideas a quienes trabajan en educación nutricional con el fin de que diseñen materiales culturalmente apropiados para niños colombianos y Latinos.

Información General del Estudio de Investigación

El propósito de esta investigación es estudiar los patrones de alimentación de niños colombianos inmigrantes durante su proceso de adaptación a la cultura de los Estados Unidos.

Plan del Estudio

El estudio se desarrollará en dos fases. A su hijo se le ha pedido que participe en la Fase 1. En la Fase 1 se entrevistarán de manera individual aproximadamente 50 niñas y niños en total. A su hija(o) se le pedirá que responda preguntas relacionadas con algunos datos demográficos y a preguntas sobre los alimentos que come en un día de la semana, en los fines de semana y en ocasiones especiales. Para ello la investigadora apoyará su hija(o) con preguntas y con dibujos y fotos de comidas que le ayudarán a recordar. La entrevista se puede realizar en inglés o en español, dependiendo de lo que su hija(o) prefiera. La entrevista tendrá una duración de aproximadamente 60 minutos y no durará más de 90 minutos. Dependiendo de dónde sea más conveniente para usted(es) o su hija(o), la entrevista puede realizarse en su casa, en el Centro de Salud Familiar o en el Taller Intercultural Hispano Americano. Las entrevistas serán grabadas y la investigadora escribirá las respuestas de su hija(o) en cada formato de la entrevista.
Pago por la Participación de su Hijo(a)

Ni usted(es) ni su hija(o) recibirán ningún pago en dinero por la participación de su hija(o) en este estudio.

Beneficios de Participar en este Estudio

- Su hija(o) recibirá material educativo sobre la pirámide nutricional y consejería sobre nutrición saludable, es decir ideas sobre cómo elegir alimentos que le ayuden a su nutrición y salud.
- Usted (es) recibirán material escrito en español sobre la pirámide alimenticia.

Riesgos de Participar en este Estudio de Investigación

No se conoce de ningún riesgo físico o mental por el hecho de participar en esta investigación.

Confidencialidad y Privacidad de los Archivos de su Hija(o)

Su privacidad y la de su hija(o), así como los archivos con información se mantendrán de manera confidencial como lo ordena la ley. Sólo el personal autorizado como empleados del Departamento de Salud y Servicios Humanos, el Comité de Revisión Institucional (IRB) de la Universidad del Sur de Florida y sus empleados, u otras personas de la Universidad del Sur de Florida puede revisar los archivos resultantes de este proyecto.

Fase 1. Con el fin de mantener la privacidad y asegurar la confidencialidad, no se escribirá el nombre su hija(o) en el formato de la entrevista. Cada participante se identificará con un número.

Los datos y la información que sus hijos den serán guardados bajo llave en la casa de la investigadora principal quien será la única persona que tendrá acceso a esta información. Los resultados de este estudio pueden ser publicados. Sin embargo, la información que sus hijos brinden será combinada con la de otros participantes. Las publicaciones no incluirán el nombre de su hija(o) o ninguna otra información que permita identificarlos personalmente.

Participación Voluntaria

La decisión de permitir que su hijo(a) participe en esta investigación es completamente voluntaria. Usted(es) es(son) libre(s) de permitir que su hija(o) participe en este estudio así como de retirarlo en cualquier momento. Si decide(n) no permitir que su hijo participe o decide(n) que se retire en cualquier momento antes de terminar la investigación, ni usted(es) ni su hija(o) tendrán ningún castigo, ni tampoco perderán los beneficios que ya haya obtenido. Si su hijo(a) se retira antes de terminar, en todo caso recibirá el material sobre la pirámide alimenticia y la consejería nutricional.
Preguntas y Contactos

- Si tiene cualquier pregunta acerca de esta investigación, puede comunicarse con María Claudia Duque al (813) 205-5960 o con Michael V. Angrosino al (813) 974-0786.
- Si tiene preguntas acerca de sus derechos o los de sus hijos como participantes en un estudio de investigación, puede comunicarse con la División de Servicios de Cumplimiento de la Universidad del Sur de Florida al (813) 974-5638.

Consentimiento para que el Niño (a) participe en esta Investigación

De manera libre doy mi consentimiento y permito que mi hija(o) participe en este estudio. Entiendo que esta es una investigación. He recibido copia de esta forma de consentimiento informado.

Declaración del Investigador

De manera cuidadosa he explicado a los niños y a sus padres la naturaleza del protocolo arriba enunciado. Certifico que, basada en lo mejor de mi conocimiento, los padres que leen este consentimiento informado entienden la naturaleza, los requisitos, los riesgos y los beneficios involucrados por participar en este estudio.

________________________ ______________________ ___________
Firma del Investigador Principal Nombre del Investigador Fecha
O del investigador designado por el investigador principal

Información para los Niños(as) a Quienes se les ha Pedido que Participen en una Investigación sobre su Alimentación

Usted ha sido invitado a participar en una entrevista para investigar sobre lo que come.

- Como participante en esta parte de la investigación le pediré que responda algunas preguntas sobre usted, su familia y sobre lo que come.
- Para ayudarle a recordar le mostraré tarjetas con dibujos y fotos con comidas.
- Usted es libre de decidir si quiere que lo entreviste o no. Si siente que preferiría no participar pero que lo haría sólo por darle gusto a otra persona, esto puede querer decir que prefiere no participar.
- Puede escoger si quiere hablar en español o en ingles.
- Para proteger su vida privada no escribiré su nombre en el formato de la entrevista. En vez de eso, le daré un número por el que será reconocido. Así nadie más que la investigadora sabrá cuáles fueron las respuestas que usted dice.
- Usted es libre de retirarse en cualquier momento y no será castigado si lo hace.
- Recibirá material educativo hecho para niños sobre la pirámide de la salud. También recibirá algunas ideas que le ayudarán a hacer elecciones saludables sobre lo que come. Si decide no terminar la entrevista, en todo caso recibirá el material y las ideas.
APPENDIX C: INFORMED CONSENT GROUP SESSIONS -ENGLISH

Parental Informed Consent
Social and Behavioral Sciences
University of South Florida

Information for Parents
Who are being asked to allow their child to take part in a research study

The following information is being presented to help you decide whether or not you want to allow your child to be a part of a minimal risk research study. Please read this carefully. If you do not understand anything, ask the person in charge of the study.

Title of research study: Food Consumption Patterns of Colombian Immigrant Children

Person in charge of study: María Claudia Duque

Where the study will be done: Center for Family Health, Taller Intercultural Hispano Americano or if participants’ and their parents prefer at participants’ home.

Your child is being asked to participate in this research because this study expects to gain knowledge of what Colombian immigrant children are actually eating. Such knowledge will be useful to give ideas to nutritional educators about how to design culturally appropriated materials for Colombian and Latino children.

General Information about the Research Study

The purpose of this research is to study the food consumption patterns of Colombian immigrant children in their process of adaptation and acculturation in the U.S.

Plan of Study

The study will be conducted in two phases. Your child will participate in Phase Two. Phase Two will be developed in no more than four or five sessions. The group interviews will be developed both with separated groups of boys and girls and mixed groups of boys and girls. During the group sessions your child will participate in activities such as role plays, drawings, sculptures, and writing letters to explore what he/she eats. Each session will include a discussion of the theme, a selection of the technique, individual or collective development of the technique and a final discussion and presentation of the product developed. Your child will be encouraged to engage as co-researcher asking questions to get a deeper understanding in an atmosphere of respect and cooperation. Each session will be audio taped and the researcher will take notes. Each session will last approximately between 60 and 70 minutes.
 Payment for Participation
You and your child will not be paid for your child’s participation in this study.

Benefits of Taking Part in this Research Study
• Your child will participate in pleasant, fun and interesting activities.
• Your child will have the opportunity of learning from own and other children’
experiences and participating in a cooperative task interacting with other children.
• Your child will receive written material about the food pyramid and advice about
healthy nutrition.
• You will receive written material about the food pyramid.

Risks of Being a Part of this Research Study
There are no known physical or mental risks to those that participate in this research.

Confidentiality of Your Child’s Records
You and your child’s privacy and research records will be kept confidential to the full
extent required by law. Authorized research personnel, employees of the Department of
Health and Human Services, and the USF Institutional Review Board and its staff, and
others individuals acting on behalf of USF may inspect the records from this research
project.
Phase Two: In order to assure confidentiality your child will choose a pseudonym (false
name) for group sessions.
Data will be kept in a locked box at the principal investigator’s home. Only the principal
investigator will have access to questionnaires and other materials.
The results of this study may be published. However, the data obtained from your child
will be combined with data from other children in the publication. The published results
will not include your child’s name or any other information that would personally
identify your child in any way.

Volunteering to Take Part in this Research Study
Your decision to allow your child to participate in this research study is completely
voluntary. You are free to allow your child to participate in this research study or to
withdraw him/her at any time. If you choose not to allow your child to participate or if
you remove your child from the study, there will be no penalty or loss of benefits that you
or your child are entitled to receive. You and your child will receive the educational
material about the food pyramid and the information about healthy nutrition.
Questions and Contacts

- If you have any questions about this research study, contact María Claudia Duque at (813) 205-5960 or Michael V. Angrosino at (813) 974-0786.

- If you have questions about your rights as a person who is taking part in a research study, you may contact the Division of Research Compliance of the University of South Florida at (813) 974-5638.

Consent for Child to Take Part in this Research Study

I freely give my consent to let my child take part in this study. I understand that this is research. I have received a copy of this consent form.

Investigator Statement

I have carefully explained to the subject the nature of the above protocol. I hereby certify that to the best of my knowledge the subject signing this consent form understands the nature, demands, risks, and benefits involved in participating in this study.

________________________ ________________________ ____________
Signature of Investigator Printed Name of Investigator Date
Or authorized research investigator designated by the Principal Investigator

Information for Children Who are Being Asked to Participate in a Research Study about the Food they Eat

You were invited to participate with other children in some sessions for a research about what you eat.

- You will participate in no more than four or five sessions with other children.
- For each session the researcher will propose some topics such as: eating in a restaurant, going to a picnic, dinners at home, or eating at school. You will be able to use materials such as color pencils, play doh, food toys, and food cards. In such sessions you, along with the researcher and the other children will select the topic and the materials you want to use for the session.
• You will have the opportunity of sharing your experiences at the same time as learning from other’s experiences.

• You can choose if you prefer to talk either in English or in Spanish.

• You are free to decide if you want to participate in the group sessions. If you feel that you would prefer not to participate but you would participate because you want to please another person, it may mean that you prefer not to participate.

• You will receive nutrition educational material on the food pyramid as well as nutrition advising.

• You are the author of the materials you will produce, such as drawings, or letters. You have the right to keep the originals or you can give them to the researcher. If you want to keep the originals the researcher will ask you permission to make copies. Or if you decide to give the originals to the researcher you will be given copies.

• To protect you and your privacy, your name will not be written in any record. Instead, you will be recognized with a pseudonym (false name). Thus anybody else than the researcher and other participants of your group will not know the answers you given.

• You are free to drop at any time. If you choose not to continue participating there will be no penalty or loss of benefits. Your will receive the educational material about the food pyramid and the information about healthy nutrition as well as the materials you produced.
APPENDIX D: INFORMED CONSENT GROUP SESSIONS -SPANISH

Consentimiento Informado de los Padres
Social and Behavioral Sciences
University of South Florida

Información para los Padres a
Quienes se les ha Pedido que Permitan participar a su hijo(a) en una investigación.

La información que se presenta a continuación tiene como finalidad ayudarle(s) a decidir si usted(es) quieren permitir que su hija(o) participe en un estudio de investigación de riesgo mínimo. Por favor léalo cuidadosamente. Si no entiende algo, o si tiene alguna duda, pregúntele a la persona encargada del estudio.

Título de la investigación: Patrones de Alimentación de Niños Colombianos Inmigrantes
Persona a cargo del estudio: María Claudia Duque
Dónde se va a desarrollar el estudio: En el Centro de Salud Familiar y en el Taller Intercultural Hispano Americano, o si los participantes o sus padres lo prefieren, las actividades de la investigación pueden realizarse en la casa de los participantes.

A su hijo(a) se le ha pedido que participe en esta investigación porque con este estudio se espera conocer lo que algunos niños inmigrantes están comiendo realmente. Este conocimiento servirá para dar ideas a quienes trabajan en educación nutricional con el fin de que diseñen materiales culturalmente apropiados para niños colombianos y Latinos.

Información General del Estudio de Investigación
El propósito de esta investigación es estudiar los patrones de alimentación de niños colombianos inmigrantes durante su proceso de adaptación a la cultura de los Estados Unidos.

Plan del Estudio
El estudio se desarrollará en dos fases. A su hijo se le ha pedido que participe en la Fase Dos. La Fase 2 se desarrollará en no más de cuatro o cinco sesiones. Las entrevistas grupales se desarrollarán tanto con grupos separados de niñas y niños así como con grupos mixtos. Durante las sesiones de grupo su hija(o) participará en diferentes actividades como: juegos de roles o dramatizaciones, y también podrá escoger si quiere hacer dibujos, esculturas con plastilina o escribir cartas. Todas las actividades servirán para conocer lo que ella(él) come. Cada sesión incluirá una introducción sobre el tema, la selección de una técnica (dibujos, cartas, etc), desarrollo de la técnica y una presentación final del producto elaborado. Su hija(o) será invitada(o) a participar como coinvestigadora(o) haciendo preguntas a sus otros compañeros, todo en un ambiente de respeto y colaboración. Cada sesión será grabada y la investigadora tomará notas de lo que sucede en la sesión. Cada sesión durará aproximadamente entre 60 y 70 minutos.
**Pago por la Participación de su Hijo(a)**

Ni usted(es) ni su hija(o) recibirán ningún pago en dinero por la participación de su hija(o) en este estudio.

**Beneficios de Participar en este Estudio**

- Su hijo(a) participará en actividades interesantes y agradables.
- Al participar en actividades con otros niños, su hijo(a) tendrá la oportunidad de aprender de sus propias experiencias y de las de los otros niños en un ambiente de colaboración.
- Su hija(o) recibirá material educativo sobre la pirámide nutricional y consejería sobre nutrición saludable, es decir ideas sobre cómo elegir alimentos que le ayuden a su nutrición y salud.
- Usted (es) recibirán material escrito en español sobre la pirámide alimenticia.
- Su hijo(a) recibirá un refrigerio durante cada sesión de grupo.

**Riesgos de Participar en este Estudio de Investigación**

No se conoce de ningún riesgo físico o mental por el hecho de participar en esta investigación.

**Confidencialidad y Privacidad de los Archivos de su Hija(o)**

Su privacidad y la de su hija(o), así como los archivos con información se mantendrán de manera confidencial como lo ordena la ley. Sólo el personal autorizado como empleados del Departamento de Salud y Servicios Humanos, el Comité de Revisión Institucional (IRB) de la Universidad del Sur de Florida y sus empleados, u otras personas de la Universidad del Sur de Florida puede revisar los archivos resultantes de este proyecto. Fase 2. Con el fin de mantener la privacidad y asegurar la confidencialidad, su hija(o) escogerá un seudónimo con el que se identificarán en las sesiones de los grupos. Los datos y la información que su hija(o) de serán guardados bajo llave en la casa de la investigadora principal quien será la única persona que tendrá acceso a esta información. Los resultados de este estudio pueden ser publicados. Sin embargo, la información que su hija(o) brinde será combinada con la de otros participantes. Las publicaciones no incluirán el nombre de su hija(o) o ninguna otra información que permita identificarla(o) personalmente.

**Participación Voluntaria**

La decisión de permitir que su hijo(a) participe en esta investigación es completamente voluntaria. Usted(es) es(son) libre(s) de permitir que su hija(o) participe en este estudio así como de retirarlo en cualquier momento. Si decide(n) no permitir que su hijo participe o decide(n) que se retire en cualquier momento antes de terminar la investigación, ni usted(es) ni su hija(o) tendrán ningún castigo, ni tampoco perderán los beneficios que ya
haya obtenido. Si su hijo(a) se retira antes de terminar, en todo caso recibirá el material sobre la pirámide alimenticia y la consejería nutricional.

**Preguntas y Contactos**

- Si tiene cualquier pregunta acerca de esta investigación, puede comunicarse con María Claudia Duque al (813) 205-5960 o con Michael V. Angrosino al (813) 974-0786.
- Si tiene preguntas acerca de sus derechos o los de sus hijos como participantes en un estudio de investigación, puede comunicarse con la División de Servicios de Cumplimiento de la Universidad del Sur de Florida al (813) 974-5638.

**Consentimiento para que el Niño (a) participe en esta Investigación**

De manera libre doy mi consentimiento y permito que mi hija(o) participe en este estudio. Entiendo que esta es una investigación. He recibido copia de esta forma de consentimiento informado.

**Declaración del Investigador**

De manera cuidadosa he explicado a los niños y a sus padres la naturaleza del protocolo arriba enunciado. Certifico que, basada en lo mejor de mi conocimiento, los padres que leen este consentimiento informado entienden la naturaleza, los requisitos, los riesgos y los beneficios involucrados por participar en este estudio.

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<th>Firma del Investigador Principal</th>
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**Información para los Niños(as) a Quienes se les ha Pedido que Participen en una Investigación sobre su Alimentación**

Usted ha sido invitado a participar en unas reuniones con otros niños para investigar sobre lo que comen.

- Si decide participar usted estará en no más de cuatro o cinco reuniones con otros niños.
- En cada sesión propondré algunos temas como por ejemplo: comiendo en un restaurante, yendo e picnic, comidas con la familia, o comidas en la escuela. Podrá usar colores, plastilina, y tarjetas con fotos o dibujos de comidas. En esas reuniones usted, la investigadora y los otros niños escogerán el tema y los materiales que usarán en cada sesión.
APPENDIX D (Continued)

- Tendrá la oportunidad de compartir sus experiencias al mismo tiempo que podrá aprender de las experiencias de los otros participantes.
- Puede escoger si quiere hablar en español o en inglés.
- Usted es libre de decidir si quiere o no participar en las reuniones de los grupos. Si siente que preferiría no participar pero que lo haría sólo por darle gusto a otra persona, esto puede querer decir que prefiere no participar.
- Recibirá material educativo hecho para niños sobre la pirámide de la salud. También recibirá algunas ideas que le ayudarán a hacer elecciones saludables sobre lo que come.
- Usted será el autor de los materiales que produzca, como por ejemplo dibujos o cartas. Tiene el derecho de quedarse con los originales o si lo desea puede dárselos a la investigadora. Si quiere quedarse con los originales le pediré permiso para hacer copias. Si quiere dejarle los originales a la investigadora, en todo caso recibirá copias de todo lo que haya producido.
- Para proteger su vida privada no escribiré su nombre en los registros. En vez de eso, usted escogerá un seudónimo (nombre falso). Así nadie más que la investigadora y los otros participantes del grupo sabrán cuáles fueron sus respuestas.
- Usted es libre de retirarse en cualquier momento que no quiera continuar. Si no quiere continuar no va a recibir ningún castigo ni tendrá que devolver lo que ya ha recibido y tiene derecho a quedarse con los materiales como dibujos que haya hecho. Si se retira antes de terminar en todo caso recibirá el material sobre la pirámide de la salud y las ideas sobre cómo hacer elecciones saludables sobre lo que come.
APPENDIX E: CONSENT FOR TAKING PICTURES. PARENTS’ PERMISSION
-ENGLISH

I (we) agree to take pictures of my (our) child as part of the research study on Food Consumption Patterns of Colombian Immigrant Children.

I (we) understand that the researcher(s) in this study will take pictures of my (our) child in order to view and analyze his/her participation in the research group sessions.

I (we) have been informed that the pictures may be shown in the dissertation report and to other professionals at research meetings.

__________________________________________  _________________________
Signature of Investigator                  Date
Consentimiento para Tomar Fotografías. Permiso de los Padres

Yo (nosotros) estamos de acuerdo en que se tomen fotografías de mi (nuestro) hijo(a) como parte de la investigación en Patrones Alimenticios de Niños Inmigrantes Colombianos.

Yo (nosotros) entendemos que la investigadora tomará fotos de mi (nuestro) hija(o) con el fin de ver y analizar su participación en las sesiones de grupo de la investigación.

He(mos) sido informado(os) de que las fotografías pueden ser presentadas en el informe de la disertación así como a otros profesionales en reuniones de investigación.

Firma del investigador(a)  Fecha
APPENDIX G: CONSENT FOR TAKING PICTURES. PARTICIPANTS - ENGLISH

I agree to be taken pictures of me as part of the research study on Food Consumption Patterns of Colombian Immigrant Children.

I (we) understand that the researcher(s) in this study will take pictures of myself in order to view and analyze my participation in the research group sessions.

I have been informed that the pictures may be shown in the dissertation report and to other professionals at research meetings.

Signature of Investigator __________________________ Date __________________________
APPENDIX H: CONSENT FOR TAKING PICTURES PARTICIPANTS - SPANISH

Consentimiento para Tomar Fotografías Participantes

Yo estoy de acuerdo en que me tomen fotografías como parte de la investigación en Patrones Alimenticios de Niños Inmigrantes Colombianos.

Entiendo que la investigadora me tomará fotos con el fin de ver y analizar mi participación en las sesiones de grupo de la investigación.

He sido informado que las fotografías pueden ser presentadas en el informe de la disertación y a otros profesionales en reuniones de investigación.

____________________________________________________________________________

Firma del investigador(a) Fecha
APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE - ENGLISH

Food Consumption Patterns of Colombian Immigrant Children
Food Consumption Interview

Case Number __________

1. Where do you live?

2. What is the name of your school?

3. What grade are you in?

4. You are a: 1. Boy 2. Girl

5. How old are you?

6. How old were you when you came to live in the U.S.?

7. In what city or region of Colombia did you live before you came to the U.S.?
   a. City: b. Region:

8. How long have you lived in the United States?

9. In what country was your father born?

10. In what country was your mother born?

I would like to learn a little more about your family. Here are a few questions about them.

11. Which of the following people live with you, that is, in the house where you spend most of your time?
    a. Father _______
    b. Mother _______
    c. Stepmother _______
    d. Stepfather _______
    e. Brothers or stepbrothers _______ How many? ___
    f. Sisters or stepsisters _______ How many? ___
    g. Grandfather or grandmother _______ How many? ___
    h. Uncles or aunts _______ How many? ___
    i. Other relatives _______ How many? ___
    j. Non-relatives _______ How many? ___

Speaking about your father (or stepfather or adult man who lives with you)
12. What does he do for a living, that is, what is his actual occupation?

13. What is the highest level of education that he completed? (i.e. Elementary school, high school, college or university)

Speaking about your mother (or stepmother or adult woman who lives with you)
14. What does she do for a living, that is, what is her actual occupation?

15. What is the highest level of education that she completed? (i.e. Elementary school, high school, college or university)
APPENDIX I (Continued)

Let's talk about the language or languages you speak:
16. How well do you think you speak Spanish?
17. How well do you think you speak English?
18. When you are at home with your family what language do you speak?
19. In what language do you prefer to speak most of the time?
20. How do you identify yourself? That is, what do you call yourself? (Examples: American, Hispanic, American Colombian, Colombian–American, Colombian)

Let’s talk about some of your preferences:
21. Where do your friends come from?
22. What are your favorites’ television channels?
23. What is your favorite radio station?
24. What is your favorite music?
25. What are your favorites’ books?
26. What are your favorites’ dishes?
27. What are your favorites’ snacks?
28. What are your favorites’ food advertisements?

I would like to learn about what you eat. First we are going to talk about what you ate yesterday. Please, help me to fill out the following chart about what you ate yesterday. I will help you to remember with some questions and some cards.

What did you eat yesterday? What did you eat right after you woke up? What do you call the first meal of the day? Who was with you when you had this meal?
Then, when was the next time that you ate? What did you eat? Who were you with? (Similar questions will be asked until the participant indicates that the information is complete).

29. Weekday

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Meal name</th>
<th>Dish name (including main dishes, soups, drinks, breads and sweets, brands and food items)</th>
<th>Food preparation</th>
<th>Cooker and Companions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>


321
APPENDIX I (Continued)

30. What do you usually eat on Sundays?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Meal name</th>
<th>Dish name (including main dishes, soups, drinks, breads and sweets, food items, and brands)</th>
<th>Food preparation</th>
<th>Cooker and Companions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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</tbody>
</table>

31. Tell me about the dishes that you usually eat for Christmas? (or the dishes you have on your birthday)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Dishes (including main dishes, soups, drinks, breads and sweets, food items, and brands)</th>
<th>Food preparation</th>
<th>Cooker and Companions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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</table>

32. Finally, when you go to a restaurant, where do you prefer to go? How did you learn from that restaurant? What dishes do you have? Do you have dessert? What do you like for dessert? Which drinks do you have? Who do you go with?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Restaurant</th>
<th>How often</th>
<th>Dishes</th>
<th>Desserts</th>
<th>Drinks</th>
<th>Companions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION.
APPENDIX J: INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE - SPANISH

Patrones de Alimentación de Niños Colombianos Inmigrantes
Entrevista sobre Alimentación

Número __________

1. En qué barrio vive?

2. En qué escuela estudia?

3. En qué curso está?


5. Cuántos años tiene?

6. Cuántos años tenía cuando se vino a vivir a los Estados Unidos?

7. En qué ciudad o en qué región de Colombia vivía cuando se vino a los Estados Unidos?
   a. Ciudad:
   b. Región:

8. Cuánto lleva viviendo en los Estados Unidos?

9. En qué país nació su papá?

10. En qué país nació su mamá?

Quisiera saber un poco más de su familia. Ahora le voy a hacer unas preguntas acerca de ellos.
11. De las siguientes personas, quiénes viven en la misma casa donde usted vive?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. Padre</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. Madre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Madrastra</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Padrastro</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Hermanos o hermanastros</td>
<td>Cuántos? ___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Hermanas o hermanastras</td>
<td>Cuántos? ___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Abuelo o abuela</td>
<td>Cuántos? ___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Tíos o tías</td>
<td>Cuántos? ___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Otros parientes</td>
<td>Cuántos? ___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Otras personas que no son parientes</td>
<td>Cuántos? ___</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ahora vamos a hablar un poco sobre su papá (o padrastro o sobre el hombre adulto con el que vive)
12. De qué vive él, cuál es su ocupación actual?

13. Cuál es el nivel educativo más alto que él completó? (por ejemplo, primaria, bachillerato, universidad, otros)

Ahora vamos a hablar un poco sobre su mamá (o madrastra o sobre la mujer adulta con la que vive)
14. De qué vive ella, cuál es su ocupación actual?

15. Cuál es el nivel educativo más alto que ella completó? (por ejemplo, primaria, bachillerato, universidad, otros)
Hablemos acerca del idioma o de los idiomas que usted habla:
16. Qué tan bien habla español?
17. Qué tan bien habla inglés?
18. En su casa, con su familia qué idioma habla?
19. En que idioma prefiere hablar la mayoría del tiempo?
20. Cómo se identifica a usted mismo, es decir cómo se llama a usted mismo? (Por ejemplo: Americano, Hispano, Colombiano –Americanco, Americano Colombiano, Colombiano)

Hablemos sobre otras de sus preferencias:
21. De dónde son la mayoría de sus amigos?
22. Cuáles son sus canales de televisión favoritos?
23. Cuál es su emisora de radio favorita?
24. Cuál es su música favorita?
25. Cuáles son sus libros favoritos?
26. Cuáles son sus platos preferidos?
27. Cuáles son sus meriendas favoritas?
28. Cuáles son sus comerciales de comida favoritos?

Ahora quisiera que hablemos acerca de lo que come. Primero vamos a hablar sobre lo que comió ayer.Por favor ayúdeme a llenar el siguiente cuadro con la información sobre lo que comió ayer. Aquí hay unas fotos que le pueden ayudar a recordar y también, si necesita le iré ayudando a recordar con otras preguntas.

Qué comió ayer? ¿Qué fue lo primero que comió después de levantarse? Cómo le llama a esa primera comida del día? Con quien estaba cuando estaba comiendo esa comida?

Luego, Cuándo fue la siguiente vez que comió? ¿Qué comió? Dónde estaba? Con quién estaba? (Se harán preguntas similares hasta que el participante esté de acuerdo en que la información está completa).

29. Día de entre semana

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hora</th>
<th>Lugar</th>
<th>Nombre de la comida</th>
<th>Nombre del plato (incluye platos principales, sopas, líquidos, panes, dulces, alimentos y marcas comerciales)</th>
<th>Preparación</th>
<th>Persona que cocinó y Acompañantes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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324
APPENDIX J (Continued)

30. Generalmente qué come los domingos?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hora</th>
<th>Lugar</th>
<th>Nombre de la comida</th>
<th>Nombre del plato (incluye platos principales, sopas, líquidos, panes, dulces, alimentos y marcas comerciales)</th>
<th>Preparación</th>
<th>Persona que cocinó y Acompañantes</th>
</tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

31. Cuénteme sobre las comidas que come para navidad (o las comidas de sus cumpleaños)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lugar</th>
<th>Nombre del plato (incluye platos principales, sopas, líquidos, panes, dulces, alimentos y marcas comerciales)</th>
<th>Persona que cocinó y Acompañantes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>

32. Finalmente, cuando va a un restaurante a qué restaurante le gusta ir? Quién le contó de ese restaurante? Cada cuánto va a restaurantes? Qué platos prefiere pedir? Come postre? Cuál? Qué líquidos bebe? Con quien acostumbra a ir cuando va a un restaurante?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Restaurante</th>
<th>Frecuencia</th>
<th>Platos</th>
<th>Postres</th>
<th>Bebidas</th>
<th>Acompañantes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

MUCHAS GRACIAS POR SU COOLABORACIÓN
APPENDIX K: LIST OF THE FOOD CARDS ITEMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fruits</th>
<th>Vegetables</th>
<th>Common foods in the US and in Colombia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Almond</td>
<td>Artichoke</td>
<td>Beef meat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apple</td>
<td>Asparagus</td>
<td>Bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banana</td>
<td>Avocado</td>
<td>Brownie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blackberry</td>
<td>Broccoli</td>
<td>Butter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantaloupe</td>
<td>Cabbage</td>
<td>Cake – Birthday cake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grape</td>
<td>Carrot</td>
<td>Candles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guanabana</td>
<td>Cauliflower</td>
<td>Cereal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guava</td>
<td>Celery</td>
<td>Cheese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemon</td>
<td>Chiles</td>
<td>Chicken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lulo</td>
<td>Corn</td>
<td>Chocolate bar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mango</td>
<td>Cucumber</td>
<td>Cookies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>Eggplant</td>
<td>Crackers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papaya</td>
<td>Garlic</td>
<td>Egg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peache</td>
<td>Lettuce</td>
<td>Fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peanut</td>
<td>Mushroom</td>
<td>Flan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pear</td>
<td>Onion</td>
<td>Ice cream</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pineapple</td>
<td>Peas</td>
<td>Milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strawberry</td>
<td>Plantain</td>
<td>Oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tangerine</td>
<td>Potato</td>
<td>Pasta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watermelon</td>
<td>Pumpkin</td>
<td>Popcorn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Radish</td>
<td>Shrimps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Red pepper</td>
<td>Soups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spinaches</td>
<td>Spaghetti with meatballs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tomato</td>
<td>Yoghurt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colombian foods</th>
<th>Common American foods</th>
<th>Multicultural foods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Achiras</td>
<td>Bagel</td>
<td>Burritos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ajiaco</td>
<td>Biscuits</td>
<td>Fajitas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almojábana</td>
<td>Chicken nuggets</td>
<td>Guacamole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arepa</td>
<td>Cinnamon roll</td>
<td>Gyros</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arequipe</td>
<td>Cup cakes</td>
<td>Hummus Tahini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arroz con pollo</td>
<td>French fries</td>
<td>Paella</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bandeja paisa</td>
<td>Hamburger</td>
<td>Pita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bocadillo</td>
<td>Hot dog</td>
<td>Tacos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buñuelo</td>
<td>Macaroni and cheese</td>
<td>Tortillas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empanada</td>
<td>Muffins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frijoles</td>
<td>Pie</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milo</td>
<td>Pizza</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natilla</td>
<td>Pretzels</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oblea</td>
<td>Sandwich</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pan de bono</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patacón</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice with seafood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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APPENDIX L: FOODS SELECTED BY INTERVIEWEES

Halley

Fig. 13. Series of photos representing foods selected by Halley.

Lizzie

Fig. 14. Series of photos representing foods selected by Lizzie.
APPENDIX L (Continued)

Bryan

Fig. 15. Series of photos representing foods selected by Bryan.

Asprilla

Fig. 16. Series of photos representing foods selected by Asprilla.
Fig. 17. Series of photos representing foods selected by Juanes.
APPENDIX L (Continued)

Valentina

Fig. 18. Series of photos representing foods selected by Valentina.

Angela

Fig. 19. Series of photos representing foods selected by Angela.
APPENDIX L (Continued)

Luigi

Fig. 20. Series of photos representing foods selected by Luigi.

Usher

Fig. 21. Series of photos representing foods selected by Usher.
APPENDIX L (Continued)

Usher

Fig. 23. Series of photos representing foods selected by Ron.

Ron
APPENDIX L (Continued)

Elisa

Fig. 23. Series of photos representing foods selected by Elisa.

Andrea

Fig. 24. Series of photos representing foods selected by Andrea.
Erika

Fig. 25. Series of photos representing foods selected by Erika.
APPENDIX L  (Continued)

Erika

![Series of photos representing foods selected by Erika.]

Rebeca

![Series of photos representing foods selected by Rebeca.]

Alejandra

![Series of photos representing foods selected by Alejandra.]

Fig. 26. Series of photos representing foods selected by Rebeca.

Fig. 27. Series of photos representing foods selected by Alejandra.
APPENDIX L  (Continued)

Carolina

Fig. 28. Series of photos representing foods selected by Carolina.

Jessica

Fig. 29. Series of photos representing foods selected by Jessica.

Anastasia

Fig. 30. Photo representing the food selected by Anastasia.
APPENDIX M: FOOD RELATED PLACES IN TAMPA

Fig. 31. La Curva Latina at N. Armenia Av.

Fig. 32. La Típica Colombiana at Waters Av.
Fig. 33. La Cabaña Antioqueña at N. Armenia Av.

Fig. 34. Series of photos representing La Cabaña Antioqueña’s Menu
Fig. 35. La Bodeguita. Grocery store located at Hanley.

Flours to prepare Buñuelos, natilla and pan de bono

Pony Malta
Manzana and Colombiana
Bocadillos

Milo
Frozen fruit pulp

Fig. 36. Series of photos representing Colombian foods in La Bodeguita.
Fig. 37. Map of participant locations
About the Author

María Claudia Duque Páramo received her bachelor’s degree in Nursing in 1981 at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana in Bogotá, Colombia; graduated as Pediatric Nursing at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México in México City, and completed her master’s in Community Psychology at the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, where she is Professor at the school of nursing and former Chair of the department of Collective Health. She has conducted research on medical anthropology, child health, health, and health reforms in Colombia. She has also authored and coauthored several books and articles on topics related to this work. She has also presented papers at the Society for Applied Anthropology and the American Anthropological Association annual meetings, as well as on many academic meetings in Colombia, México and Canada. In Colombia she also has worked for the National Accreditation Council as academic peer for evaluation of nursing programs.