Telecollaboration Project "Latinos in the U.S."

Saint Xavier University, Queens College, Center for Integrated Languages Communities (CILC)

**Latinos in the U.S.** is a telecollaboration project that explores the application of online communication tools to bring together Spanish heritage speakers from different parts of the country. Project financed by the US Department of Education through CILC

### WHY TELECOLLABORATING?

**Heritage language teaching:**
- Connections beyond the immediate community
- Topics and ideas generated by speakers from diverse communities
- Exploration of bicultural and bilingual identity

**ACTFL Standards:**
- Communicative skills: presentational, interpersonal and interpretative
- Intercultural competence
- Virtual community of learners

**21st century learning:**
- Collaborative critical thinking
- Digital literacy skills
- Interdisciplinarity
- Experiential learning
- Lifelong job skills

### MODULE 1: IDENTITIES

Students explore the discursive nature of group identities through readings, questionnaires, and a discussion with a telecollaborator.

**WEBSITE**

### MODULE 2: STORIES

- Students learn about the history of Latinos in the US and share family stories by posting a narrated picture in the webpage and discussing it with their telecollaboration partner.
- During the telecollaboration, they will reflect on the similarities/differences in their personal histories, and talk about the significance of general historical events in the relocation and dislocation of human groups.

### MODULE 3: COMMUNITIES

Through ethnographic and historical research students learn about the past and present of a number of communities in Chicago and New York with a significant Hispanic population. Through class discussion and the telecollaboration they critically reflect on the changes and challenges of those communities, as well as the sociopolitical forces and processes that fuel those changes and challenges.

### TOOLS

- Google Sites
- Hangouts On Air
- YouTube
- Slides in Google Drive

### WEBSITE

### CHALLENGES

- **Designing phase**
  - Identifying partner institutions and common learning objectives
  - Aligning syllabi and calendars
  - Creating multimedia materials
  - Selecting appropriate and accessible technology tools

- **Implementation phase**
  - Issues with technology
  - Schedules and miscommunication between students
  - Limited number of interactions and topics

### RESULTS

1. Development of linguistic skills: modified versions of OPI and WPT at the beginning and end of the semester.
   - The progress in students’ oral and written proficiency was superior to the general findings in the literature for non COIL-enhanced heritage speakers courses.
2. Critical thinking and intercultural competence: reflective essays and quizzes.
3. Critical language awareness and heritage appreciation: course assignments and class presentations.
4. Digital literacy skills: survey.

### REFERENCES


