Edifying and Strengthening English Literacy for Latino Second-Language Learners
Through the Use of their Native Language: A Language Arts Curriculum

By

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Abstract

Edifying and Strengthening English Literacy For Latino Second-Language Learners Through the Use of Their Native Language: A Language Arts Curriculum

This project unites Paolo Freire’s definition of critical literacy, Jim Cummin’s definition of basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALPs), Steven Krashen’s and Tracy Terrell’s work on language acquisition and development and Howard Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences (MI) theory for the development of a Language Arts curriculum for Middle School Latino English-language learners. The curriculum focuses on poetry. The activities, 19 lessons that are 45-90 minutes long, included in the curriculum address the following areas: figurative language, grammar, vocabulary building, and the use of technologies. The use of Spanish to facilitate English acquisition is emphasized throughout. The underlying theme for this curriculum is literacy as a tool for empowerment and emancipation.

The curriculum for this project anticipated four outcomes: 1) the treatment of the native language as a valid and legitimate vehicle of knowledge 2) the fostering of a strong environment of cooperation between teacher and student in the co-construction of knowledge and learning 3) the expedition and facilitation of English acquisition and schema building via the native language and 4) the use of varied activities that incorporate technology which access distinct learning styles and intelligences of students.
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Appendix B
Abstract

Edifying and Strengthening English Literacy For Latino Second-Language Learners Through the Use of Their Native Language: A Language Arts Curriculum

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Chapter One

Edifying and Strengthening English Literacy for Latino Second-Language Learners

Through the Use of their Native Language: A Language Arts Curriculum

This project unites Paulo Freire’s definition of critical literacy, Jim Cummin’s definition of basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) and cognitive academic language proficiency (CALPs), Steven Krashen’s and Terrell’s Natural Approach model and Howard Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences (MI) theory for the development of a Language Arts curriculum for Middle School Latino English-language learners. The curriculum focuses on poetry. The activities (thirty, 45-minute lessons) included in the curriculum address the following areas: figurative language, grammar, vocabulary building, and the use of technologies. The use of Spanish to facilitate English acquisition is emphasized throughout. The underlying theme for this curriculum is literacy as a tool for empowerment and emancipation.

Introduction:

The high number of Latino students viewed as academically unsuccessful along with the disproportionate number of Latino high school dropouts (Wilds, 2000) has been a driving force behind an increase in studies as well as programs intended to address this reality. Studies done and theories developed in the past twenty years, but as far back as thirty, have brought more forcibly the complex nature of learning a second language. This valuable research has shed a bright light on language, both oral and written, that reveals language to be a living and evolving entity. The information brought about in these studies present language not as an inert aspect of a people, defined in terms of
grammatical structures, phonemes and lexicon but is much more. Recent research and theory has shown that when defining language one must take into account cultural, economic and social aspects as well (Krashen and Terrell, 1983, 2000; Vygotsky, 1978; Cummins, 1996; Freire, 1987; Perez, McCarty, Watahomigie, Torres-Guzman, Dien, Chang...et al.,1998; Halcon, 2001). It is in recognizing these aspects as part of the process of language acquisition that one might begin to realistically expect to see a decline in the Latino drop-out rate as well as the decrease in the high number of Latinos termed as academically unsuccessful or low achieving.

Background:

It is a great sadness for me to see in my classroom students who have been the victims in many respects of a system that has both knowingly and ignorantly taken away part of their being. Growing up in a bilingual home where both Spanish and English were spoken, I not only know the experience of living “two lives” and all it’s beauty but also the more complicated and frustrating side of bilingualism. As I recall the instruction I received throughout primary and Middle School in Texas and later High School in California, I consider myself very fortunate to have the strong willed parents that I have. Contrary to the advice given them by teachers I was encouraged to develop and be proud of my ability to speak Spanish. My father and mother, native Spanish and speakers of various other languages themselves, knew that my development of Spanish would in no way be a hindrance to my acquiring English or any other language for that matter.

Unfortunately, one too many well-intentioned and loving but misguided parents in their desire to provide a better life for their children sacrifice part of their rights as a
parent. Parents not wanting to "interfere" and lessen their child's chance at success were and continue to be silenced because they do not know the "language of success". Their role as authorities and imparters of truths are debilitated because a language barrier has been created and accepted as necessary for their child's progress and success. No longer able to communicate with their children in their native language parents are alienated from their children and greatly incapacitated in giving the affect and psychological nurturing that all child needs to grow happy and healthy.

It really wasn't until my freshman year at U. C. Berkeley that I become really aware of what I had been spared. With great sadness I listened to a roommate explain why she hardly spoke to her parents. During her schooling in a small southern California town her parents had been advised not speak to her in Spanish if they wanted her to learn English (and succeed). She relied on her older sister to translate for her. Yes, she had made it to Berkeley but at a much too high of a price and as I sat there next to her as testimony to the total injustice and unnecessary nature of it all. As university enrollment shows we are the exceptions, the rule points to High school dropouts, teenage pregnancies, drug abuse, gang membership, and criminal activities.

As a bilingual (Spanish/English), and limited French and Portuguese proficient individual I know that speaking two languages is more than using appropriate grammatical forms and vocabulary in two languages. The bilingual experience goes beyond this simplistic notion. It is being able to function under and between two systems that incorporate their own set of beliefs, traditions, celebrations, gestures and postures that many times are at odds with each other. Many of these dissonances can be resolved
and alleviated by the classroom teacher. Those who have chosen the honorable path of educating children must embrace this responsibility.

Many good intentioned, hardworking and enthusiastic educators have taken on this responsibility but they are quick to find that they are on their own to address the needs of English-language learners with little or inadequate curriculum not to mention administrative support. For the past six years as a bilingual classroom teacher, I have lived the frustrations due to lack of funding and training; but what has been the most hindering frustration has been the scarcity of substantial ready-made materials that motivate, challenge, inspire, and most importantly use the primary language as a bridge and link to further English proficiency.

There are wonderful English language development teacher-made lessons that are readily accessible through the Internet that I have found helpful such as Lesson Plans Page and Discovery school-lesson plan library. Materials I’ve ordered through catalogues have also been useful but these materials were mini-lessons or short units that were supplemental or extensions to the core curriculum. California state approved textbooks such as Voices in Literature and Making Connections do a good job at providing high interest reading for English language learners (ELLs) they fail to access native language abilities explicitly and do not build and reinforce abilities already in place. It is out of this frustration, also expressed by fellow colleagues, that has encouraged me to develop materials that address Language Arts standards, use student’s native language skills explicitly to strengthen English proficiency, and most importantly motivate and encourage students to recognize their worth and value as individuals and as part of the world community.
Second-language learners are not “tabula rasa”. They bring to the classroom a wealth of knowledge that must be cultivated and shared. It is in the careful and respectful treatment and usage of this knowledge that all may come to see and enjoy the treasure at the end of the world’s rainbow of languages. A student’s language and culture is never a stumbling stone on the path to learning. It can only be a stepping-stone on the path to growth and happiness.

Purpose:

The purpose of this project is to give access to educators in second-language learner classrooms to an interactive Language Art unit that will facilitate literacy in English for native Spanish speakers. This curriculum may be used for English language learners in levels one-four. An emphasis will be placed on vocabulary building, grammatical functions, identification of literary devices, and the “Writing Process”. This interactive “tool” has at its core four anticipated outcomes:

1) The treatment of the native language as a valid and legitimate vehicle of knowledge

2) The fostering of a strong environment of cooperation between teacher and student in the co-construction of knowledge and learning

3) The expedition and facilitation of English acquisition and schema building via the native language

4) The use of varied activities that incorporate technology which access distinct learning styles and intelligences of students
Significance:

The anticipated impact that this project will have for students is a sense of belonging and active engagement in the learning process. They will feel that learning is about them and for them. Students’ voices will be heard and developed allowing for an awakening to their strength and power. A new type of bond will develop as the once well-defined line of teacher/student loses its rigidity. Students will come to realize that they are givers of knowledge and are not restricted to being on the receiving end. Learning will cease to be a necessity and an obligation imposed upon them. Learning will not be about what they are not or do not have. Learning will be about cultivating and honoring the beauty that each one of their lives embodies as they awaken to the realization that they are unique and irreplaceable gifts to this world. They will feel and know that they really matter.

Procedure:

The “I Am From” poem prompt (see Appendix D) in Reading, writing and rising up: Teaching about social justice and the power of the written word by Christensen (2000) will be used as the starting point for the creation of original “I Am From” student poems. Students’ will use their own poem as a reference point and foundation for all the subsequent activities. The completion of all the lessons will require a minimum of five weeks to complete. The 20 lessons vary in duration. Each lesson will demand 40-50 minutes. Additional time may be needed for technology instruction and usage. The various “intelligences” as defined by Gardner will be incorporated throughout the activities. Students will have a broad range of opportunities (using specially designed
academic instruction in English, SDAIE) to demonstrate and build on their learning. Lessons also will be designed to allow for and encourage an environment where students and teacher are filling the role of learner and teacher interchangeably.

Vocabulary building and Spelling activities will be developed around the students' “I Am From” poems. The steps in the writing process will be implemented intermittently with activities which introduce and focus on the introduction, recognition and usage of: a) literary elements (metaphors, similes, euphemisms) b) grammatical elements and structures (nouns, adjectives, synonyms, antonyms, punctuation, etc…) and c) oral and written production of reflective pieces by students on their learning and language development.

I am presently developing and implementing these lessons with twenty-four Latino students (ages 11-13). These students are with me for four, 50- minute periods every day (bilingual Reading, Language Arts, Social Studies and English Language Development levels 1-4).

Parameters and Constraints:

The target student population for this project is the Spanish native speaker who has at least a third grade literacy level in Spanish whose needs are distinct from English only speaking students. This project also presupposes a teacher who has a solid command of English and Spanish comprehension and production. The teacher must know the similarities and differences between the two languages grammatically and phonetically. A strong oral comprehension of Spanish on the part of the teacher especially for the beginning level of English language learners is needed.
It is important for the teacher to have a high level of Spanish language competency, especially when working with students who are at the beginning level of English acquisition. The use of the native language will be used significantly by students at this level and the teacher must be able to understand and guide students according to their language as well as skills needs in their native language as well as in English.

The teacher must also be familiar with the computer programs Clarisworks and Hyperstudio. Part of the curriculum involves the use of these programs and so the teacher must be able to instruct students on how to use the various features in each. Basic knowledge of how to use the Internet is also needed. Computers, that are set up on a network that allows for printing from multiple computers, needs to be accessible. Lastly, Spanish-English/English-Spanish dictionaries for each student will be needed. Possible modification for some of the parameters and constraints will be discussed in chapter five.

Summary:

This project attempts to provide classroom teachers with a Language Arts curriculum for Latino students that views and uses Spanish as a valuable tool to further English Literacy. The lessons use the theories and principles developed by distinguished researchers, educators, theorists such as Krashen, Terrell, Freire, Cummins, Gardner, Vygotsky and others in the area of second language development as a foundation. The anticipated outcomes of this project are fourfold. This project intends to: 1) foster a classroom environment that encourages cooperation between students and teacher which breaks down the barrier that traditionally places the teacher as the sole imparter of knowledge and the students as the recipients. 2) to use biliteracy to empower students and
help them continue to grow into their strength and responsibilities as citizens of the world as well as their more proximal community. 3) to help students transfer skills from one language to another as well as strengthen their English language skills using similarities and differences between the two languages, and 4) make full use of the distinct ways or intelligences that students possess to demonstrate and incorporate knowledge.

Summaries of Chapters Two- Five:

Chapter two provides the reader with the grounding theories and research surrounding second language development in general and more specifically, language development for bilingual Latino students. The theories and research done by Steven Krashen, Tracy Terrell, Jim Cummins, Lev Vygotsky, Paolo Freire, Howard Gardner and other distinguished educators in the area of language acquisition are highlighted. This project has four anticipated outcomes, which I consider and refer to as the four pillars on which this project rests. Each pillar is addressed individually.

Chapter Three discusses the thought and processes that took place as the lessons were taking shape and being implemented. The motivating factors prior to the manifestation of the lessons as well as the reflections that guided me in a specific direction are discussed.

Chapter Four is the presentation of the lessons/activities that make up this project with accompanying teacher guidelines.

Chapter Five looks as student works in order to assess and evaluate how well or if the intended outcomes were made manifest. This chapter provides a professional and
personal reflection on the efficacy of this project taking using personal observations as well as student reflection/evaluations as primary sources. Suggestions for modifications and additions based on these reflections and observations will conclude this chapter.

Definition of Terms:

The following terms as defined in Magda Costantino’s Research Report (1999) will be used throughout the chapters.

Affective filter: A filter governing how much input is received by the mechanism that processes language. The lower the filter the more open a student will be to acquiring new language.

Basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS): The aspects of language proficiency strongly associated with the basic fluency in face-to-face interaction.

Cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP): The aspects of language strongly associated with literacy and academic achievement.

Comprehensible input: The amount of new language, either written or heard, that a learner is exposed to and understands.

Decoding: The aspect of the reading process that involves “sounding” out a printed sequence of letters based on knowledge of the letter-sound correspondences.

Early-exit bilingual education: A program model in which, initially, half the day’s instruction is provided through English and half through student’s native language. This is followed by a gradual transition to all English instruction that is completed in approximately 2-3 years. This program model is alternately termed transitional bilingual education.
**English language development (ELD):** a method for teaching English to speakers of other languages in which English is a medium of instruction. This may also be referred to as English as a second language.

**English-language learner (ELL):** A student in the United States who is learning English as his or her second language.

**First language (L1):** The language a normal child acquires in the first few years of life. Alternately termed native language.

**Immersion bilingual education:** A program model in which academic instruction is provided through both the first and second languages for Grades K-12. Originally developed for language minority students of Canada, it is used as one model of two way bilingual education in the United States.

**Language-minority students:** Children in Grades K-12 from homes where language other than English is spoken.

**Late-exit bilingual education:** A program model in which half the day’s instruction is provided through students’ first language and half through a second language during Grades K-6. Ideally this program was planned for grades K-12, but has rarely been implemented beyond the elementary school level in the United States. The goal of this program is bilingualism. This program model is alternately termed maintenance bilingual education.

**Learning styles:** Patterns of thinking and of interacting that affects a student’s perceptions, memory and reasoning.

**Limited-English-proficient students (LEP):** Language minority students who have difficulties in speaking, comprehending, reading or writing English that affect their
school performance.

**Multiple Intelligences**: Conceived by Howard Gardner, seven ways to demonstrate intellectual ability.

**Phonemes**: The smallest distinct sound unit in a given language.

**Primary language**: The language that an individual is most fluent in. It usually is the first language but not always.

**Second language (L2)**: A language acquired at the same time as or with an individual’s first language.

**Second language acquisition**: The subconscious process that takes place, as when children are developing language abilities in their first language.

**Second-language learning**: The process by which a conscious knowledge of a second language is developed. This includes knowing the rules, being aware of them and being able to talk about them.

**Specially designed academic instruction in English (SDAIE)**: Subject matter instruction provided to English-language learners that is modified to address the different levels of English proficiency. It involves simplified speech, repetition, visual aids, contextual cues etc…

**Tabula Rasa**: The Latin term meaning blank tablet or clean slate.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

This project takes Paolo Freire’s (1987) empowering notion of literacy, Lev Vygosky’s (1978) stance that higher learning is a social construct, Stephen Krashen’s and Tracy Terrell’s various hypotheses concerning second language acquisition, along with Jim Cummins’ (1996) distinctions between Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALPs) and other contributions as an inspirational point of departure. The contributions of the theorist/psychologist Howard Gardner (1993) concerning learning styles and distinct “intelligences” form an integral part of this project as well. In addition, the work and insights of classroom teachers, and teacher-educators closely related to second language development will provide concrete teaching strategies, techniques and activities that have contributed greatly towards understanding second-language development. All of this valuable guidance comes together to form what I will refer to as the four sustaining pillars on which this project rests.

In the following sections I will discuss how each of my intended outcomes (pillars) are rooted in sound and compelling theory and practice. Prior to this discussion, a brief summary of the history of language and bilingualism in the United States, prior to the 1960’s, will help in setting the stage for the theories, research and practices that followed, which are the fundamental underpinnings of this project.

Historical Overview:
Bilingualism in the United States is not a new phenomenon. As early as colonial times it was not an uncommon occurrence to hear German, Dutch, French, Swedish, Irish and Welsh being spoken. German-Americans in the late 1790’s in Philadelphia had their own schools carrying out instruction in their native tongue. During the Revolutionary War many official documents were in French and German (Crawford, 1995, p.21). Spanish would soon be added to the languages spoken soon as Spanish-speaking territories were being acquired. Multilingualism and multiculturalism was a reality from the beginning of the formation of the United States as a nation. Although there were concerns regarding the linguistic and cultural pluralism at this time because of its implications for national cohesion, loyalty and allegiance it wasn’t until the twentieth century that it went from a concern to an urgent and pressing threat.

The twentieth century would mark the clear beginning of what Halcon (2001) refers to as “mainstream ideology”. This ideology has at its core a strong nationalistic sentiment that glorifies all that which is considered “American” at the exclusion and devaluation of other beliefs. American according to mainstream ideology is White, Anglo-Saxon, English-speaking Protestant. All “others” were evaluated against these criteria. Mainstream ideology was further complimented by the “melting pot” theory that emerged during this time as well. The “melting pot” theory along side “mainstream ideology” supported the belief that foreigners “should and would somehow ‘melt’ their linguistic and cultural differences and become ‘real Americans’” (Halcon, 2001, p.66). Mainstream ideology provided the definition of “American” and the “melting pot” theory provided the method and set it into practice.
The impact on immigrants and their children that these beliefs would bring about are lamentable. Due to such hegemonic views and discriminatory policies starting as early as the late nineteenth century, Latino students were robbed of their self-worth, language and culture. This stance placed foreignness, be it physically, culturally, or linguistically as undesirable at best and was a source for the derogatory views held towards Latinos who tenaciously refused to give up their identities. Latinos were viewed as irresponsible, dirty, stupid, immoral, superstitious, spreaders of diseases and criminals that were not worthy of attending schools along side Anglo children (Donato, 1997; San Miguel & Valencia, 1998). In addition to being placed in segregated schools, hundreds of thousands of predominantly Mexican students were mislabeled mentally retarded (Halcon, 2001; Carter, 1970). A substantial amount of recent investigations and studies have since negated the “scientific research” that backed the deficit and disadvantaged views regarding second-language learners (Halcon, 2001; Bartolome & Balderrama, 2001). These views although rejecting the genetic explanation for underachievement attributed failure to environmental factors such as parents’ failure to stress the value of education, lower-class values that stressed living day to day rather than planning for the future, and lack of English language skills (Crawford, 1995). Recent research obtained in the past thirty years has gone on to show that, in fact, being able to function and access two distinct linguistic codes enhances students intellectually rather than incapacitates and obstructs cognitive development. (Collier, 1992; Costantino, 1999, Cummins, 1996; Halcon, 2001; Ramirez, Yuen & Ramney, 1991).

Halcon (2001) and other scholars such as Donato (1997) Crawford (1997) and Carter & Segura (1970) sustain that due to these negative and ill-informed views born out
of faulty and mal-constructed research designs, complimented by anti-immigrant sentiments, languages other than English were not only seen as undesirable but altogether inferior. These views led to the implementation of pedagogical practices and passing of policies that worked and continue to work against the professed and intended goal to support and educate all students.

Halcon (2001), focusing on California, enumerates three significant propositions that reflect these sentiments of fear and rejection of immigrants, in the great majority Spanish- speaking. Proposition 187, passed in November of 1994 and later declared unconstitutional, sought to identify and limit public schooling to Latino children if they could not provide proper documentation showing U.S. citizenship or resident alien status. In November of 1996 Proposition 209 was placed before voters and passed reversing many civil right gains made by Latinos during the 1960's. This proposition reversing Affirmative Action did not allow preferences (selection quotas) based on race or gender in public education, employment and contracting. This resulted in the denial of Latinos, other minorities, and women equal access to public institutions of higher learning. Yet a third most damaging proposition for immigrants passed in 1998, Proposition 227, which succeeded in prohibiting bilingual education in Californian public school (2001). These Propositions and others reveal the lack of clear and true commitment to the education of immigrant and minority children by policy makers as well as the voting public.

Many educators working with multilingual populations have embraced in this inhospitable atmosphere of fear, resentment, nationalism and intolerance the hope, clarity and optimism that Paolo Freire and Macedo, Vygosky, Jim Cummins, Krashen, Terrell and other researchers, educators, and theorists, have brought to the area of language
development and bilingual education. Their work and research has broken through the darkness and confusion allowing rays of light and clarity to shine through. Their work in the field of Education and language acquisition has given added hope and vitality to disillusioned advocates of bilingual education and Affirmative Action . All of their contributions have also given sound documentation that negates previous faulty and inconclusive findings that support English-Immersion programs revealing proven effective practices in second language acquisition (Costantino, 1999; Cummins, 1996; Krashen, 1996; Reyes, & Halcon, 2001). From this framework, supporters of bilingual education have been given a steadier and elevated podium on which to stand and demand that equal opportunity for all not be mere rhetoric but an observable reality.

Pillar Number One: The treatment of the native language as a valid and legitimate vehicle of knowledge

The recognition and treatment of the native language as a legitimate and valuable along with a clear understanding of the stages and processes involved in developing a second language is one of that support this project. The most appropriate place to begin to address the need for recognizing and legitimizing native languages in the context of literacy is with Paolo Freire. It is his definition of literacy, more precisely “critical literacy”( Freire and Macedo, 1985) that allows for an adequate mindset when approaching literacy and its acquisition. Although there are other definitions of literacy it will be Freire’s definition that will be emphasized throughout this project. Freire defines critical literacy as a “social construction that is always present in organizing one’s views of history, the present and the future...” and is “grounded in an ethical and political
project that dignifies and extends the possibilities for human life and freedom (p.2)”. Literacy defined as such then is a means by which the learner is guided to discover and transform his/her future history. This is a significant departure from the definition that simplifies literacy to being able to decode, follow the arbitrarily established written grammatical constructs of a given language and the recognition and reproduction of appropriate sound symbols.

Being able to read and write is much more. James Crawford (1995), echoing Freire, quotes Sabine Ulibarri to capture very important aspects of language:

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was made flesh. It was so in the beginning and it is so today. The language, the Word, carries within it the history, the culture, the traditions, the very life of a people, the flesh.” Language is people. We cannot conceive of language without a people. The two are one and the same. To know one is to know the other (p.11).

Language is the means through which a language community can actively participate and transform its collective life as well as the individual lives of each of its members. Critical literacy as presented in Literacy: Reading the world and the word (Freire and Macedo, 1987) is the path to an awakening from the stupor and passivity of victimization and fatalism to an energetic engagement and state of “being truly present” in the creation and transformation of one’s identity and history, in essence one’s world. It’s the road of empowerment and responsibility. It is being truly alive and living.
Freire (1987) puts into practice critical literacy most clearly in the four-year implementation of a program in the republic of Sao Tome and Principe, which was intended to address illiteracy there. As exemplified in the “Popular Culture Notebooks” the learning of vocabulary and the mechanical elements of language were addressed within the context of the participants’ realities. The themes and readings were pertinent to the participants’ lives. The activities built on the participants’ ability to “read their world in order to develop their ability to read the word. They were learning and adding to their life experiences a different way of representing their world and lives via the written word. (Freire and Macedo, 1987, pp. Ch.4).

The structure of the literacy program that Paulo Freire implemented in Sao Tome and Principe both recognized the participant’s language and knowledge as legitimate and considered it fundamental and necessary for the development of literacy. He was able to place literacy within a relevant and applicable context for the participants. This in turn made reading and writing another tool with just as much importance that an axe or plow could have for a farmer.

Other experienced researchers, theorists and educators that corroborate and expand on Freire’s notion concerning literacy and its development are Stephen Krashen and Terrell (1983, 2000), Leyba, (1994) and Jim Cummins (1996). Krashen and Terrell (1983, 2000) with their hypothesis and theories on second language development and Cummins (1996) differentiation of Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) when addressing literacy development contribute significantly to a clear view of the process that goes into acquiring a language in general but more specifically a second language. Both Cummins
(1996) and Freire and Macedo (1987) greatly emphasize that the primary language or the language that is used to "read the world" (Freire and Macedo, 1987) must be valued and used as the vehicle that introduces, facilitates and strengthens the reading of the word if critical literacy is to be the main focus.

Krashen and Terrell (1983, 2000) present five hypotheses regarding how language is developed that support this notion. His theoretical model of second language development goes a long way in providing the necessary grounding and clear understanding of what is required when learning a second language.

The first hypothesis in Krashen's and Terrell's model (1983, 2000) makes a distinction between language acquisition and language learning. Language acquisition as viewed by Krashen and Terrell is a subconscious process that occurs in a natural way and at subconscious level. This goes along with the distinction maintained by Cummins (1996), who differentiates between skills that are developed in context rich environments that allow for a variety of external cues (such as gestures, tangible objects and referents, immediate feedback and clarification). This falls under what Cummins refers to as Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS). Krashen's and Terrell's definition of language acquisition and Cummin's definition of BICS both coincide and compliment each other. Both emphasize the oral and aural aspects of language development, the highly social aspect involved and the low level demand for cognitively demanding processing. Both of these definitions also uphold the notion that at this point language is developed naturally and subconsciously out of a natural desire to communicate. (Cummins 1996, Krashen and Terrell, 1983, 2000; Perez, McCarty, Watahomigie, Torres-Guzman, Dien, Chang & et al., 1998).
Krashen and Terrell (1983, 2000) differentiate language acquisition from what he refers to as language learning. Contrary to language acquisition, language learning is a conscious process that requires formal knowledge of a language supported by formal and explicit teaching. This again aligns well with what Cummins (1996) refers to as Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALPs). Both of these terms emphasize the higher level of cognitive processing that is involved as well as the more structured, context reduced and context-embedded nature that is characteristic of this point in the process of language development. Both Krashen’s and Terrell’s definition of language learning and Cummin’s definition of CALPs emphasize the need for direct and explicit instruction given by the teacher in order for more cognitive and demanding skills such as evaluation, analysis, persuasion etc… to be developed.

The recognition and legitimation of all languages as valuable vehicles of knowledge along with a clear understanding of the distinctions made between language acquisition and language learning as presented by Krashen and Terrell (1983, 2000) and Cummins’ distinctions made between BICS and CALPs are fundamental for the true manifestation of critical literacy.

Pillar Number Two: The fostering of a strong environment of cooperation between teacher and student in the co-construction of knowledge and learning

It is necessary to begin this section with a clear understanding of what the classroom represents. It is not a mere space filled with desks and chairs that accommodate student bodies. Moll (2001) citing Vygotsky presents the enormous power
and influence that all classrooms (environment) have on the overall social and intellectual success of students. Vygotsky (1978) maintained that higher psychological functions began in human sociocultural activities. These activities mediated through artificial means such as cultural artifacts, tools and especially language have both social and intellectual consequences. Socially these activities would mediate how humans communicate. Intellectually they would mediate how humans think. These social and intellectually shaping activities first begin at home but as the child becomes school age the classroom becomes a very important setting that will either further or hinder communicative and cognitive development. The classroom then becomes more than a space with chairs and desks for students. It is a “cultural setting” that shapes student’s social and intellectual futures.

Viewing the classroom as having such an impacting role in the social and intellectual development of students, the classroom (setting and activities) should then provide students with a high level of comfort and confidence. In creating and maintaining a comfortable and pleasant space both social and intellectual development will be greatly facilitated. (Moll, 2001. To view the classroom in this way necessitates a different definition of the teacher’s role. If the classroom is a sociocultural and sociohistorical setting in a Vygotskian sense, the teacher can no longer be viewed as the strict imparter of knowledge and the students the strict recipients of that knowledge. The teacher must assume the role of what Diaz and Flores (2001), in agreement with Vygotsky view of human development, refer to as a sociocultural and sociohistorical mediator. This denomination requires a whole new dynamic between teacher and students. As such, the teacher becomes an additional tool, which mediates and is used in the formation and
construction of knowledge. The teacher under the title of sociocultural and
sociohistorical mediator becomes an instrument that "mediates" teaching-learning
experiences so that students may achieve their highest potential. The classroom is then a
setting for social and intellectual development that is mediated by cultural artifacts, tools
and language. The teacher also serves as a mediator who collaborates and cooperates with
students not as the sole imparter of knowledge but as a co-constructor of knowledge
(Diaz and Flores, 2001).

The classroom and the role of the teacher now defined, I would like to explore
how the classroom teacher may create the optimal environment for the social and
intellectual develop of second-language learners. There are three key terms that must be
included in the definition of an optimal language-learning environment for second-
language learners. These are: affective filter, comprehensible input, and zone of proximal
development.

One of the hypothesis that make up the Natural Approach model for second
language development (Krashen and Terrell, 1983, 2000) indicated the existence of an
"instrument" that indicates the receptivity a student has for receiving new information.
This indicator is referred to as the affective filter. Some affective filter variables that
come into play include student motivation, self-image, anxiety level, and attitude. In
order for the receptors for learning to remain open the students must have a low affective
filter. Due to the high level of anxiety that learning a second language may present for
students, the teacher must make it a priority to create a classroom atmosphere that
provides second-language learners with a sense of security and competence. In this way
the affective filter will be low and the language-learning process will not be shut down
(Krashen and Terrell, 1983, 2000; Tabors, 1997; Wiley & Hartung-Cole, 1998). This may be achieved through the understanding of certain concepts and implementation of various processes.

This brings us to another Hypothesis in the Natural Approach model (Krashen and Terrell, 1983, 2000). This second hypothesis emphasizes that a student must be presented with input that is understandable but that also presents a realistic challenge for the student. This is to say that what the student is expected to learn is slightly beyond the student’s current comprehension but within reach. He refers to this as comprehensible input plus 1, “i +1” (p.32). This stresses that students must be gradually introduced to new information. New information should not be presented in a vacuum but should be presented in a way that allows students to access prior knowledge serving as an anchor for the new learning. Student’s ability to “read the world” (Freire and Macedo, 1987) must be accessed and used in order to provide comprehensible input. This in turn will ensure that the affective filter remain low and that the language-learning receptors are maintained open. (Tabors, 1997; Wiley & Hartung-Cole, 1998; Costantino, 1999). The teacher serving as sociocultural and sociohistorical mediator accessing and using students’ cultural artifacts and tools may build and add on to students knowledge from there (Perez, 2001).

In agreement the comprehensible input hypothesis (Krashen and Terrell, 1983, 2000) Gutierrez, Banquedano-Lopez & Alvarez (2001) references Vygotsky (1978) to emphasize how crucial collaboration and cooperation is in language acquisition and learning. Vygotsky (1978) speaks of what he refers to as the zone of proximal development (ZPD). The ZPD is defined as “the distance between the actual development
level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential
development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in
collaboration with more capable peers” (p.86).

Allowing students to act as mediators along with the teacher for each other, this
helps provide the necessary grounding that supports further development and learning. In
this way students will receive comprehensible that will allow them to experience a sense
of competence and accomplishment. The presentation of comprehensible input will then
contribute to the conservation of a low affective filter and will assure that further
communicative and cognitive development will be obtained.

In order for profound learning to take place the teacher as sociocultural and
sociohistorical mediator (Díaz & Flores, 2001) must maintain a classroom environment
that draws upon students’ ability to “read the world” (Preire and Macedo, 1987). The
classroom must be seen as an environment where social and intellectual development
manifests itself through teacher student cooperation and collaboration mediated by the
various artificial tools (cultural artifacts, tools, language etc…) that each one possesses
and uses. Activities must encourage and create a strong spirit of collaboration. In this way
students along with the teacher will be active participants in the discovery and creation of
knowledge and the transformation of their futures. They will be part of cultures of
collaboration that allow teacher and students to take on a variety of roles which permits
continuous shifts in responsibility for teaching and learning for both teachers and students
(Gutierrez…et al 2001).
Pillar Number Three: The expediation and facilitation of English acquisition and schema building for native Spanish speakers via the native language

One grave injustice that has been committed against non-native English speakers is the suppression of their native language and culture under the guise of giving them the tools for success in an English language culture. Prior to the 1960's the prevalent belief saw Spanish as a hindrance for English language development. The use of Spanish according to "scientific research" referenced and discredited by Cummins (1996) and Banks (1994) only caused confusion in thinking, emotional insecurity and reduced the child's ability to fit in and identify with English speaking culture. Recent research exposes the invalid nature of these views. In opposition to these views, properly designed and extensive research in the area of bilingualism carried out by respected scholar shows that Spanish is not a hindrance for English acquisition (Collier, 1992; Cummins, 1996; Krashen, 1996; Ramirez ...et al., 1991). In fact, his studies have found that there is a considerable overlap or interdependence across languages. Cummins (1996) substantiates his findings with that of many others amongst which is the seven series studies carried out by A.K Mohanty in Orissa, India between 1978 and 1987. Mohanty concludes:

The development of additive bilingual and biliteracy skills entails no negative consequences for the children's academic, linguistic, or intellectual development. On the contrary, although not conclusive, the evidence points clearly in the direction of metalinguistic, academic and intellectual benefits for bilingual children who continue to develop both their languages " (p.109).
The four case studies conducted over a three year period by Maria de la Luz Reyes (2001) goes even further and not only shows that instruction in Spanish does not obstruct English development but that English and Spanish literacy may be developed spontaneously. Reyes found, in documenting the progress of four bilingual elementary-school aged girls whose dominant language was either Spanish or English, that after a two year period all the girls were making remarkable progress in Spanish and English fluency although they were receiving instruction only in their dominant language. They also demonstrated an equally impressive rate of literacy development in both languages although, again, they were only receiving literacy instruction in their dominant language. Given such compelling, well documented and sound findings contributed by numerous researchers in the fields of psychology, linguistics and education it is difficult to conceive how the native language can be perceived to pose a threat or be an obstacle for the acquisition of a second language.

These studies delineate the transferability that exists between languages and how this serves to strengthen both languages. This is not to say that students should not be encouraged and guided explicitly to compare and contrast skills from one language to another. Teachers should whenever possible encourage students to use their knowledge of and about one language to help them in the second language. Teachers should also explicitly guide students in the similarities and differences between the two languages strengthening even further communicative as well as higher level thinking skills (Costantino, 1999; Cummins, 1987; Reyes, 2001; Jimenez, 2001).
Pillar Number Four: The use of technology and varied activities that access the distinct intelligences of students

Intelligence before the appearance of Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory (1993) was widely accepted as being defined as a single general capacity that everyone has to a greater or lesser extent. Along with this simplistic notion also comes the notion that intelligence can be measured accurately by standardized verbal instruments. Howard Gardner (1993) discards this definition and proposes that "if we are to encompass adequately the realm of human cognition, it is necessary to include a far wider and more universal set of competencies...and remain open to the possibility that many, if not most, of these competencies do not lend themselves to measurement by standard verbal methods" (p.X). Gardner's Multiple Intelligences (MI) theory suggests that there is not one intelligence but seven distinct intelligences (and more recently an eighth and ninth). "An intelligence" according to Multiple Intelligence theory is "the ability to solve problems, or to create products that are valued within one or more cultural settings", which says nothing about where these abilities come from nor how they may be properly tested. The implications of such a definition are great. By viewing cultural values and norms along with the tangible artifacts available and used by a people places the idea of intelligence in a different light. Howard Gardner provides the pedagogical community with a far-reaching view of intelligence that has tremendous implication for classroom practices and curriculum development and design. The implication are even far greater for thousands of school aged children who under the classical definition of intelligence will have been viewed as lacking in intelligence, learning disabled, and/or having attention deficit disorder (ADD). These are a few of the devastating labels that
were and are to this day far too easily and carelessly given to unsuccessful learners by educators who subscribe to the classical and simplistic definition of intelligence (Gardner, 1993).

Gardner’s Multiple Intelligence theory distinguishes the following seven intelligences as defined in Learning Styles and Multiple Intelligence (February 19, 2002):

1) Visual/Spatial Intelligence: ability to perceive the visual.
2) Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence: ability to use words and language.
3) Logical/Mathematical Intelligence: ability to use reason, logic and numbers.
4) Bodily/Kinesthetic Intelligence: ability to control body movements and handle objects skillfully.
5) Musical/Rhythmic Intelligence: ability to produce and appreciate music.
6) Interpersonal Intelligence: ability to relate and understand others.
7) Intrapersonal Intelligence: ability to self-reflect and be aware of one’s inner state of being.

Each individual according to MI theory has a preference for certain learning styles. This preference, in turn, is guided by his/her strongest developed intelligences. It is easy to see how those learners who are tactile/kinesthetic, interpersonal, and musical learners may be viewed as “unable to learn” when subjected to traditional classrooms that favor verbal/linguistic, visual/spatial and logical/mathematical learners. If educators in and out of the classrooms are to belong to an educational system that’s inclusive rather than exclusive they must fully understand and apply MI theory. To do otherwise will only perpetuate the loss of a tremendous amount of potential and promise that all those who are not traditional learners (visual, linguistic, mathematical) represent.
One very useful tool that helps students access the various intelligences, used more and more by classroom teacher, is the computer. The computer and its vast capacities allows students to view and represent knowledge in a combination of ways that best suits their individual needs. It allows students to express their competencies in more non-traditional ways (Casacanada, 2000).

The use of the Internet provides students with information in their language directly or by way of on-line translators allowing more access to students where language is a barrier. Word-processing programs allow students with dexterity challenges and difficulties with spelling, for instance, to use tools that identifies the misspelled words along with the possible modifications. For the students who have problems with writing legibly word-processing programs help tremendously. The mechanical barrier of legible handwriting is lifted significantly allowing for a clearer flow and expression of ideas, hence, more opportunities for cognitive growth.

The kinesthetic learner is also aided by computer programs. Software that allows students to listen to the written word provides a variety of passage-ways which facilitate the comprehension and internalization of information. The nature of these programs helps the non-traditional learner, one who needs interaction, movement, aural and visual stimuli, to access information (Casacanada, 2000).

Summary

In this chapter I present theories and contributions by very well respected educators, theorists, researchers, psychologists that serve as the framework and grounding for the four pillars of this project. Paolo Freire (1987) provides this project with the definition of “critical literacy”. Literacy is and must be used as a means for
empowerment and emancipation and is not simply being able to read and write. Lev Vygotsky brings to this project the notion that higher learning is a social construct that is mediated through cultural artifact, tools and language that begin at home but continues on into the classroom. These social activities in the classroom, ("cultural setting") play a significant role in the communicative as well as cognitive development of students. Krashen, Terrell and Cummins present elements that help establish a classroom setting that is the most conducive to knowledge building. They sustain that children must be presented with comprehensible input (i+1) so as to allow students to access prior knowledge in order to learn new information that is slightly and not overwhelmingly challenging. Students' stress level, monitored by the affective filter, also must be maintained low in order to keep the channels to learning clear and open. The teacher functioning as sociocultural and sociohistorical mediator is an additional tool that may either further or hinder learning and he/she must carefully gage the input being provided as well as monitor the affective filter in students. Lastly Howard Gardner supports this project with his MI theory which does not limit intelligence to a number on a IQ or Standardized test but speaks of at least seven intelligences that people possess and should be encouraged to use in order to further learning.
Chapter Three

Student population:

This project focused on the second language learner whose native language is Spanish. The age range of the students spanned from 11 years to 13 years of age. The level of Spanish proficiency varied just as greatly as the English proficiency. The proficiency level of the students ranged from a third grade literacy level to an eighth grade literacy level. The number of years each student attended U.S. public schools ranged from five to eight months. These students received Spanish instruction for Language Arts, Reading and Social Studies. For ELD instruction they were placed according to their English proficiency level. Approximately 1/3 of students were at an ELD level one another 1/3 at an ELD level 2 and the other 1/3 at an ELD level three.

As defined in the ESL glossary by Williams (2002, May), those in ELD level 1, pre-production also referred to as the silent period, are students who predominantly listen and respond nonverbally by way of gesturing, nodding, pointing and drawing. Students in ELD level 2, early production, will begin to respond with single word utterances (yes/no) and be able to respond to questions with key words. Students in ELD level 3, speech emergence, will exhibit the ability to answer and write complete sentences, although grammatical accuracy will still be quite low. Those students in ELD 4, intermediate fluency, will be able to write more complex sentences and think more creatively and critically in English. Students’ writing will also have fewer grammatical errors than those students in ELD level 3.

Project Methodology:
The prompt for the poem "I am from..." (Christensen, 2000, appendix A) allows students to access what they already know about the world and who they are right from the beginning. The original creation of each student then will serve as the springboard for the learning of literary elements, modes of expression and grammatical constructs. Within the context of communicating who they are and their history, students will be able to discover and internalize the necessary writing process. They will see a greater purpose behind the recognition of grammatical function of words and their usage. Nouns, adjectives, metaphors, synonyms, antonyms and functional aspects of language will have found a magnificent stage (the written poem itself) on which to perform adhering to the more complex and profound purpose of literacy. No longer will these elements be isolated and irrelevant aspects of a language, to be learned for the purpose of scoring high on a standardized test. They will have shifted to being useful tools that will serve the student in the introduction of their unique and valuable self, their "I". It's no longer about nouns, verbs, adjectives similes and metaphors really, it's about "stepping out", being seen and counted.

**Background**

An August morning, six years ago, in room seventeen, with twenty-six smiling nine-year-olds looking at me, unknowingly, this project began. Those twenty-six students would begin setting the stage for what I would later see as a reoccurring frustration. In the six years working as a bilingual teacher, the lack of materials has been the principal source of my frustrations. I must recognize that each year I had been provided with more material but this still did not address the issue of its appropriateness or quality. A large part of the activities followed the typical question/answer format, and
did little to access the prior knowledge of students. It did not take me long to realize that students do not tolerate nor learn from activities that are uninspiring, isolated, and foreign to their lived experiences. For those more accommodating and tolerant students, I saw that the learning that took place was superficial and the retention of new information was difficult.

Consequently, I found myself spending an inordinate amount of time, outside of the classroom, creating activities for the required content that would motivate, inspire and challenge students in an impacting fashion. I obtained materials from fellow colleagues, the public library, the Internet, and bought materials to use along with the materials I was provided with by my school. As I incorporated a great array of activities and teaching strategies I saw that there were certain activities and strategies to which students reacted more favorably. If I observed great resistance with a certain method or strategy, I used it as little as possible.

Being fluent in both Spanish and English and competent in French and Portuguese has helped a great deal. Speaking the language of my students not only has helped me communicate with them but is but it allows me to understand what students need to be doing cognitively that will help them build lasting connections and facilitate their learning. In and out of the classroom, I have always needed to relate all new learning to something that is already familiar to me. I observed that there were some students who naturally did this; but most students, due to the types of materials used and the activities that went along with them, were trying to learn in isolation making little if any connections to prior knowledge.
These frustrations have been very beneficial. An undeniable consequence of these obstacles and frustrations is a greater and clearer understanding of language and its many facets and levels. I have been given the opportunity to experience first hand the theories that I've heard, read and written about throughout my schooling. This has allowed me to grow both professionally and personally. This project is a reflection of that growth.

The methodology used for the creation of the curriculum included in this project is no different than what has been previously described, although there is a very important distinction to be made. This project is a very conscientious application of theories and methodologies that have been proven to be greatly effective through extensive research and studies as well as smaller case studies done by recognized authorities in the areas of Linguistics, Psychology, and Education (Chapter Two).

**Developing the Curriculum**

I began by reflecting on what concepts in Language Arts presented the most difficulties for Jr. High (6-8 grades) students. Poetry interestingly may be seen as both liberating and restrictive, very easy and very difficult. Poetry due to the unrestricted and varied nature of its written presentation (form and grammar) allows for unhindered expression making it inclusive. At the same time it incorporates great use of imagery, figurative speech and a very astute command of language, which makes it quite exclusive. In my experience working with 11-13 year olds the duality that poetry presents is met with resistance and frustration. The exclusive nature as well as the inclusive nature of poetry encouraged me to use it as the springboard for developing literacy (in the native language, [L1] as well as in the second language, [L2]).
Freire's definition of critical literacy (1987) guided me in respects to the nature of the material/content that would be used and its purpose. The content needed to be relevant to my students' lives and it needed to serve the purpose of helping students discover their self-worth, significant place in the world, and personal responsibility. The prompt of the poem "I Am From" (Christensen, 2000), I felt, would facilitate the accomplishment of both of these.

The prompt for the "I Am From" poem encourages students to participate in a very intimate way with the content. The familiarity with the content I felt would both lower the affective filter (Krashen and Terrell, 1983, 2000) for students and provide them with a strong foundation for the learning of new information. Motivation for students would also be aided due to the great personal nature of the content. The assignments go beyond being relevant to students' lives. It is a recognition and validation of their lives by a much larger, influential and powerful community, the school community.

The personal content of the poem, although working as a highly motivational factor, places the student in a position of high vulnerability and exposure. It is for this reason that I needed to ensure that students felt free to express themselves without fear of being ridiculed or made fun of. A part in creating a safe and secure atmosphere for students involved my own modeling. With this in mind and in accordance with the view of the teacher as a sociocultural/sociohistorical mediator, I could accomplish this I felt by creating and sharing my own poem with students. I would read my poem (see appendix B) and carefully explain the special significance of each detail just as they would be asked to do.
As I developed the lessons I made a very conscientious effort to incorporate activities that would allow for both individual as well as group participation. For instance after students were asked to look for their own person adjectives or nouns from their poem they could then use their classmates or the dictionary to look for synonyms. Those who liked working alone had the option while those who wanted to work with a partner also had that option. Throughout most of the activities students were encouraged to seek out the help of their peers as well as the teachers or the teacher's aide.

I took special care in structuring activities that would allow students to access as many different intelligences as possible. The poem prompt allows for student to access personal knowledge that is at their level. The vocabulary used is theirs and so students are working from comprehensible input. Although the guideline of the content of the poem is structured the output is respectful of each student's present cognitive capacities. Grade or age does not determine the expected output.

Most, if not all the activities needed to have an aural, visual, and tactile component at least. The more kinesthetic learners were served through activities that allowed for physical mobility and expression. In most activities students had the freedom to get up and share their work with each other, ask a classmate for help or borrow materials, draw etc...

Another area that activities would need to support would be the creation of an atmosphere of reciprocal teaching and learning. Students would be able serve as teachers for each other. This detail would in turn give me a great deal of opportunities to aid students individually. For instance after I taught one class a certain program I paired students up to instruct a classmate as I went around and monitored and answered
questions. As I saw that some students were catching on more quickly I was able to individually instruct them about other features or guidance individually. This allowed me to give mini-lessons in grammar, spelling, vocabulary building to students that were specific to their needs. This made getting bored and feeling overwhelmed less likely for all students. Activities needed to be flexible enough to allow students to progress at their own pace while continuing to maintain high expectations for everyone. Activities would also encourage students to discover their strengths as well as the areas that posed the most difficulties for them.

Vocabulary building activities centered around the words used by each student in his/her poem. These activities guided students towards learning and accessing techniques that have shown to be effective for Latinos learning English as a second language. (Costantino, 1999, May; Cummins, 1996; Krashen, 1983, 2000). Activities would need to encourage students to translate, find cognates, compare and contrast, look up words, draw and use images, and repeat the written word (visual and aural).

Another area that I felt this project needed to address was parent involvement. In the literature that speaks of effective programs for Latino second-language learners, parent involvement plays a positive and significant role (Perez, 1998 pp. 251-331, Ada and Zubizarreta, 2001; Brisk and Harrington, 2000). This activity that required the student to read his/her completed poem to a parent or caregiver brought the parent or caregiver for a closer view into their child's life as a student. The student then helping the parent or guardian to create their own poem brought parents yet even closer to their child's learning. Both caregiver and student had an assignment (homework) that required cooperation and an active participation by both child and parent/guardian. Caregivers
were given an opportunity to participate in an activity that would have a dual function. They gave their child the gift of their history and legacy as well as helped their child progress and grow on the path of literacy. The extent of the "bonding" that occurred will be discussed in chapter five.
Chapter Four: Bilingual Language Arts Curriculum

"Each second we live is a new and unique moment of the universe, a moment that will never be again. And what do we teach our children? We teach them that two and two makes four, and that Paris is the capital of France. When will we also teach them who they are?

We should say to each of them: Do you know what you are? You are a marvel. You are unique. In all the years that have passed, there has never been another child like you. Your legs, your arms, your clever fingers, the way you move.

You may become a Shakespeare, a Michelangelo, a Beethoven. You have the capacity for anything. Yes, you are a marvel. And when you grow up, can you then harm another who is, like you, a marvel?

You must work, we all must work, to make the world worthy of its children.

Pablo Casal (1870-1973)
Spanish Cellist
Teacher Guidelines/ Lesson Plans

Lesson One: Introducing the Project

Purpose: Introduce the “I am From” project, brainstorming for “I am From” poem

Materials: a copy for each student of “I am From”/ “Yo soy de”: brainstorm (English or Spanish), “I am From folder”/ “Yo soy de” for each student

Duration: 2, 45-minute sessions

Procedure:

Teacher should make a personal I am From/”Yo soy de” poem to use as an example for students prior to introducing the project

1. Introduce the project. Explain that their poems will be used throughout the four to five weeks for different activities that will cover different skills (grammar, spelling, literary devices, and vocabulary building). They will also be learning how to use the computer for word processing. They will learn a program that will allow them to make a slide presentation (movie-like) of their poem. They will also be using the Internet in various ways.

2. Pass out “I am From”/ “Yo soy de” file folders that students will put all of the work they do for this project in. This folder will stay in the classroom.

3. Pass out “I am From”/ “Yo soy de”: Brainstorm” worksheet

4. Guide students by reading each detail that they need to brainstorm about and give them
time to fill in the spaces. Make sure to emphasize that they should write down things that are special for them and that when they think of them they know that they are home. If they have moved around a lot they may use details from one or all the homes they have lived in.
Lesson Two: Writing the Poem

Purpose: Creating their own poem/second step in the Writing Process (first draft)

Materials: a copy for each student of your (teacher) "I am From"/"Yo soy de" poem, copy for each student of "I am From"/"Yo soy de" First Draft worksheet.

Duration: 45 minutes

Procedure:

Have students use the information from their "I am From"/"Yo soy de": Brainstorm to fill in the blanks on the "I am From"/"Yo soy de" First Draft worksheet.
Lesson Three: Sharing the Poem

Purpose: oral production, getting feedback from peers and added insight, community building

Materials: "I am From"/"Yo soy de" First Draft (already filled in by students), a copy for each student of "Pair-Share" worksheet

Duration: 45-minutes

Procedure:

1. Students in pairs should read each other their poems
2. Each student should then fill in the "Pair-Share" worksheet
3. This should be collected and returned later
4. Have students share their poems to the class as a whole (ask for volunteers) to share what they learned about their classmate
Lesson Four: Word processing

Purpose: learn word processing and basic features/parts of the computer

Materials: a computer floppy disk, student "I am From"/"Yo soy de" First Draft (completed), a computer with word-processing program (Clarisworks or Microsoft Word)

Duration: 2, 45-minutes sessions (depending on students word-processing skills it may take longer)

1. Instruct students collectively on the parts of the computer (mouse, drives, cursor) and their uses.

2. Have students collectively open the word-processing program and type the first line of their poem.

3. Instruct students on the various places that they can save and what they need to fill in when saving for the first time. Have them save the first line of their poem on the floppy disk. Give them the title they are to save their poem as.

4. They should then finish typing the rest of their poem.

5. Have students print two copies of their first draft. One for evaluation purposes the other is to stay in the "I am From"/"Yo soy de" student folder.
Lesson Five: Translating

Purpose: accessing resources, learning and teaching collaboratively

Materials: typed “Yo soy de” poem, Spanish/English dictionary, binder paper

Duration: 2, 45-minute sessions (time will vary depending on students’ level of English proficiency)

Procedure:

Students will translate their Spanish poem into English using the dictionary and classmates as resources. Students in collaborative groups will be encouraged to use classmates, the dictionary as well as the teacher (functioning more as a monitor) as resources to translate their poem into English.
Lesson Six: Drawing

Purpose: producing a visual representation that compliments the written word

Materials: white drawing paper (letter size), crayons, colored pencils, markers, a lead pencil

Duration: 45-minutes

Procedure:

1. Students are to draw and color a picture that illustrates a part of their poem.

2. Any work that has not been completed may be done at this time also.
Lesson Seven: Picture Poem

Purpose: learn how to copy and paste graphics from Internet, create a visual representation of the poem, affirm student identities

Materials: Typed poem, computers with Internet access for each student

Duration: 2, 45-minute sessions

Procedure:

1. Teacher before hand should find a clip art page that will be used for teaching how to copy pictures from the Internet on to a blank document (Clarisworks or Microsoft Word word-processing program). An explanation on how to search for information/graphics should also be provided

2. Teacher should have students as a class copy and paste the same clip art for practice. (Instructions should be written on the board for reference or on a handout on the proper procedure to copy and paste from one document to another).

3. Allow students to use the Internet to find pictures that they will use for their collage and print them out.

4. Students should also bring in pictures, cut outs from home that they want to use for their collage. All pictures/clip art should be kept in the “I am From”/“Yo soy de” folder.
Lesson Eight: Nouns and Adjectives

Purpose: define and identify nouns and adjectives, discover differences between placement of adjectives in Spanish and English

Materials: copy of "Nouns and Adjectives"/"Sustantivos y Adjetivos" worksheet for all students, typed copy of their Spanish poem (English if students are at the intermediate level of English development), overhead of teacher "I am From"/"Yo soy de" poem

Duration: 45-minutes

Procedure:

1. Go over definition of a noun and an adjective
2. Using overhead of teacher poem underline nouns once as example
3. Have students underline ten nouns from their poems and transfer them onto worksheet
4. On overhead using teacher poem underline adjectives twice
5. Have student underline the adjective twice that goes with the noun they chose. If they do not have an adjective to go with the noun they should think of one that they could add to that noun and write it on the worksheet. All nouns they chose form their poems should have an adjective to go with it.
6. Translate into Spanish the nouns and their adjectives. Have students discover the differences in the placement of adjectives in English and in Spanish.
Lesson Nine: Synonyms

Purpose: define and practice using synonyms, vocabulary building

Materials: completed "Nouns and Adjectives" worksheet (lesson eight), binder paper, pencil/pen

Duration: 45-minutes

Procedure:

1. Have students fold a piece of binder paper in half (east/west). In one column they should title Nouns/Adjectives and the other column should be titled Synonyms.

2. Students should choose five nouns or adjectives from the Nouns and Adjectives worksheet and write as many synonyms as they can for each word they have chosen.

3. Call on students to share some of the words that they have come up with. Write them on a transparency to aid students having difficulties. Allow students to finish.
Lesson Ten: Synonym Poem

Purpose: practice using synonyms, vocabulary building

Materials: lesson nine (synonyms) work, copy of their "I am From" / "Yo soy de" poem
pencil

Duration: 45-60 minutes

Procedure:

1. Explain to students that they will be writing a synonym poem based on their original
   poem.

2. Students should use the words they wrote in lesson nine as replacement to the original
   words.

3. Teacher should model how to create poem on overhead using his/her own poem.

4. Students should have a handwritten rough-draft of their synonym poem
Lesson Eleven: Synonym Poem Draft

Purpose: practice word processing and computer skills

Materials: handwritten copy of "I am From"/"Yo soy de" poem. Computers with word-processing for all students, a network printer, student disks

Duration: 2, 45-minutes sessions

Procedure:

1. Go over how to retrieve a document as a class. Have students print out a copy of the original poem in Spanish (English for intermediate learners). They should give these to the teacher.

2. Students should type the rough draft of "I am From: Synonym Poem" and save on disk. Instruct students on how to open a new document.

3. Have students then make the changes in their original poems. Give students fifteen minutes to work and then have them save the new document. ("I am From"/"Yo soy de": Synonym poem).

4. Instruct students on how to highlight and change the font, text the spacing of a document. Have them practice with several words and with the whole text.
Lesson Twelve: Editing

Purpose: identifying and correcting grammatical errors, handwriting practice

Materials: printed version of original "I am From"/ "Yo soy de" poem of a selected student for all students, a transparency of selected poem, pencil or blue pen

Duration: 2, 45-minute sessions

Choose a student’s poem that has typical grammatical errors to use as a grammar/spelling lesson. Prepare a transparency of poem.

Procedure:
1. On the overhead number the lines of the poem. Have students do the same on their own copy.
2. Give the number of mistakes in the margin of each line. Have students find as many mistakes as they can in fifteen minutes.
3. Call on students to go up to the overhead to make the needed correction. They should explain their corrections.
4. Place students in pairs/groups and have them do peer editing
5. Teacher should collect the peer-edited poems and finish the editing.
Lesson Thirteen: Learning Hyperstudio

Purpose: learn to use features of Hyperstudio, learn and go through the third stage in the Writing Process (proof reading/editing), fourth stage (final draft) in Writing Process, practice word processing skills, affirm student identity and culture, include parents into the student’s academic development

Materials: computers with the program Hyperstudio for all students, copy of “I am From/”Yo soy de” poem, hard disk

Duration: 2, 45-minute sessions

Procedure:

1. Instruct students on how to find Hyperstudio on their computer.

2. Have students pull out the “tools”. Explain and have students play with the various functions.

3. Instruct students on how to get Hyperstudio clip art. Choose a clip art image that they all will have to cut and paste. Allow students to experiment with Hyperstudio features.

4. Give back proof-read copy of student poems and have students type final copy and print 2 copies.

Homework:

5. Students should bring in materials for collage (see “I am From”/”Yo soy de”:Collage Guidelines)
6. Student should read their "Yo soy de" poem to their mother/father/guardian. Give students a copy of the Yo soy de" Primer borrador. Student should then help mother/father/guardian fill in the "Yo soy de": Primer Borrador worksheet. Parent should dictate the information to be written in by the student.
Lesson Fourteen: “I am From” Collage

Purpose: use the Internet to find images, create a visual representation of the poem. Learn to use a scanner

Materials: 11in. X 15in. construction paper for each student, edited copy of “I am From”/“Yo soy de” poem, crayons, glue, scissors, colored pencils, rulers, pictures, cut-outs, stickers

Duration: 2, 45- minute sessions

Teacher should make a collage of his/her poem to serve as a model.

1. Collect the poems that the students helped their mother/father/guardian make and keep for a future assignment.

2. Inform students of the guidelines for their collage

3. Scan photographs that students bring if a scanner is accessible

“I Am From” Collage: Guidelines

You will be making a collage for your “I am From” poem. Your collage needs to include the following:

1. a typed and edited version of your poem (final copy)
2. a minimum of seven pictures/graphics that have to do with something or someone in your poem. Three of those graphics need to be from an Internet source. Others graphics may be personal drawings, photographs, magazine cut-outs, stickers etc…
3. a minimum of three colors must be used for you collage.
Requisitos para el visual del poema “Yo soy de”

Vas a hacer una representación visual para tu poema “Yo soy de”. Tu visual necesita tener lo siguiente:

1. una versión del poema pasado a máquina
2. Por lo menos siete gráficas que tiene algo que ver con lo que está en tu poema. Tres gráficas los tienes que haber conseguido del Internet. Otras gráficas pueden ser dibujos, fotografías, revistas, recortes etc…
3. por lo menos tienes que usar tres colores en tu visual
Lesson Fifteen: Parent/Guardian Poem

Purpose: practice word processing, and copying and pasting from one document ot another

Materials: computer for each student with access to the Internet, completed mother/father/guardian of “Yo soy de” poem from homework assignment given in lesson thirteen, hard disk

Duration: 45-minutes

Procedure:

1. Type as much of the “Yo soy de” poem that they helped their mother/father/guardian make. Have them save it to the disk.

2. Use the Internet to find graphics/ pictures/ clip art to illustrate poem
Lesson Sixteen: Hyperstudio Presentation

Purpose: learn Hyperstudio features, practice word processing

Materials: computers for each student with Hyperstudio program, hard disk

Duration: 4, 45-minute sessions

Procedure:

1. Guide students on how to use the “text box” feature. Review how they can change the font size color background etc…

2. Have them write the first stanza (five minutes) of their I am From” (English version) poem into text box as a class.

3. As a class have them save their work. Note: Explain that they must always save to the same “stack” and that they will have a total of four cards (one for each stanza of their poem) that will be saved to the same stack. Students will want to save each card separately under a different name. Make sure that they understand that they should have only one stack with four cards.

3. Students are to make a card for each stanza of their poem. Each card should use the “text box feature for word-processing and have at least two graphics (drawing, clip art) that compliments what is being presented in the stanza.
Lesson Seventeen: Hyperstudio Buttons

Materials: computers for all students with Hyperstudio

Duration: 2, 45-minute session

Procedure:

1. Instruct students on how to create "buttons" to transition from one card to another as a class.

2. Allow students to finish their cards and add buttons.
Lesson Eighteen: Organizing the “I am From” Packet

Purpose: evaluation of work, complete incomplete or missing work

Materials: “I am From” folders, a copy of the Packet requirements for all students

Duration: 2, 45-minute sessions

Procedure:

1. Give students a copy of all the work that should be organized in their “I am From Packet”. They should number and organize them accordingly. They should put a check by the ones that are missing or incomplete.

2. Give students the Review of terms to students to work on in pairs.

3. Go over student answers as a group

4. Collect student work
Lesson Nineteen: Hyperstudio Presentation

Purpose: share Hyperstudio presentations, community building

Materials: computers for all students with Hyperstudio, binder paper, pencil/pen

Duration: 2, 45-minute session

Procedure:

1. Have students pull up their Hyperstudio stack

2. Have students read and comment (handwritten on binder paper) on classmates (at least three) Hyperstudio stack for the poem. They should indicate how they related to the poem and what they liked best about it and why.
I am From: Brainstorm

1. Write five things that are around your house that have a special meaning for you.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

2. Write five things inside of your house that have special meaning for you.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

3. Write down three sayings or phrases that loved ones say (to you) and that reminds you of them.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
4. Write down the name of your mother and father or other caregivers.


5. Write down three names of famous or historical people from your culture that you admire.


6. Write down five celebrations, holidays, foods, music or other traditions from your culture.


7. Write down three things that you remember doing as a young child


8. Write down three things that you have that are special to you and where you keep them.
Yo soy de: Tormenta de Ideas

1. Escribe cinco cosas que se encuentran alrededor de tu casa que tienen un significado especial para ti.

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

2. Escribe cinco cosas que se encuentran dentro de tu casa que tienen un significado especial para ti.

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

3. Escribe dichos o refranes que tus papás te dicen o que te hacen recordarles a ellos.

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
4. Escribe los nombres de tus padres o guardians


5. Escribe tres nombres de personas famosas o históricas que son de tu cultura.


6. Escribe cinco tradiciones, costumbres, música, celebraciones o comidas que vienen de tu cultura.


7. Escribe tres cosas que hacías cuando eras pequeño/a.


Escribe tres cosas/objetos que son especiales para ti y dónde los guardas.
I Am From: First Draft

Using the information from your “I Am From: Brainstorm” worksheet fill in the blanks with the information asked for in the parenthesis.

I am from ________________________ (outside) and ________________________ (outside)

From ________________________ (outside) and ________________________ (outside)

I’m from ________________________ (inside) and ________________________ (inside)

I am from ________________________ (inside home) and ________________________ (inside)

I’m from “________________________” (quote)

From “________________________” (quote)

I am from ________________________ (caregiver) and ________________________ (caregiver)

And from ________________________ (famous person) and ________________________ (famous person)

I am from ________________________ (celebration) ________________________ (celebration)

From ________________________, ________________________ and ________________________ (food, music, dances)

I’m from ________________________ (what you did as a child)

From ________________________ (what you did as a child)

I am from ________________________ and ________________________ (special things)

That are/ That I keep/ That I have ________________________.
Yo soy de: Primer Borrador

Usando la información de la hoja de trabajo “Yo soy de: Tormenta de ideas” rellena los espacios con lo pedido dentro los paréntesis.

Yo soy de _______________ (por fuera) y _______________ (por fuera)

De _______________ (por fuera) y _______________. (por fuera)

Soy de _______________ (por dentro) y _______________. (por dentro)

Yo soy de _______________ (por dentro) y _______________. (por dentro)

Soy de “________________________” (cita)

De “________________________” (cita)

Yo soy de _______________ (madre) y _______________. (padre)

De _______________ (persona famosa) y _______________. (persona famosa)

Soy de _______________ (celebración) _______________. (celebración)

De _______________ y _______________. (comida, baile, música)

Yo soy de _______________. (lo que hacías de niño/a)

De _______________. (lo que hacías de niño/a)

Yo soy de _______________ y _______________. (cosas especiales)

Que están/ Que guardo/ Que tengo en _______________.

...
Nouns and Adjectives

1. Find ten nouns in your poem and underline them once. Write them down under the “Nouns” column.

2. Find the adjectives that you used in your poem that describe the ten nouns that you wrote down. If the noun does not have an adjective, think of one that you could use and write it down in the “Adjectives” column.

Noun: a person, place, thing or ideas = rooms, furniture, piano, rosebushes

Adjectives: a word that describes a noun = small, mixed-matched, homemade

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<tr>
<th>Adjectives</th>
<th>Nouns</th>
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Sustantivos y adjetivos

1. Encuentra diez sustantivos en tu poema y escríbelos en la columna titulada "Sustantivos".

2. Encuentra los adjetivos que usaste en tu poema para describir las palabras que están en la columna de "Sustantivos" y escríbelas. Si no tiene un adjetivo el sustantivo piensa en un adjetivo que podrías usar y escríbelo en la columna de "Adjetivos".

Sustantivo: una persona, lugar, cosa, o idea = cuartos, muebles, piano, rosales

Adjetivo: una palabra que describe a un sustantivo = pequeños, mezclados, caseros

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<th>Adjetivos</th>
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Metaphors and Similes

Metaphor: a comparison of two objects by speaking of it as if that object were the other. For example: The moon is a silver coin. The sun is a ball of fire.

Simile: a comparison of two objects by the use of the words “like” or “as”. For example: The moon is like a silver coin. The sun is like a ball of fire.

1. Choose five nouns from your “I Am From” poem and write them in the Noun column.

2. Write the adjective that you used to describe that noun in the Adjective column. If you did not write an adjective think of one that you could use to go with that noun and write it down.

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<th>Nouns</th>
<th>Adjectives</th>
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Now choose two of your nouns including and write a metaphor and simile for each.

1. noun and adjective(s)

metaphor:

simile:

2. noun and adjective(s)

metaphor:

simile:
Metáforas y súmulas

Metáfora: la describes de dos objetos hablando de ellos como si uno fuera el otro. Por ejemplo: La luna es una moneda de plata. El sol es una bola de fuego.

Simil: la comparación de dos objetos usando la palabra "como". Por ejemplo: La luna es como una moneda de plata. El sol es como una bola de fuego.

1. Escoge cinco sustantivos de tu poema "Yo soy de" y escribe los bajo la columna "Sustantivos".

2. Escribe los adjetivos que usaste para describir a esos sustantivos y escribe los bajo la columna Adjetivos. Si no usaste un adjetivo piensa en uno(s) y escribe los.

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Ahora escoge dos de los sustantivos de arriba y escribe una metáfora para cada uno.

1. sustantivo: ____________________________
   metáfora: ____________________________
   simil: ____________________________

2. sustantivo: ____________________________
   metáfora: ____________________________
   simil: ____________________________
Review of Terms

1. Noun=

examples:

2. Verb=

examples:

3. Adjetivo=

examples:

4. Synonym(s)=

examples:

5. Antonym(s)=

examples:

6. Metaphor=

examples:

7. Simile=

examples:
Repaso de términos

1. Sustantivo = 
   ejemplos: 

2. Verbo = 
   ejemplos: 

3. Adjetivo = 
   ejemplos: 

4. Sinónimo(s) = 
   ejemplos: 

5. Antónimo(s) = 
   ejemplos: 

6. Metáfora = 
   ejemplos: 

7. Simil = 
   ejemplos: 

Metáforas: Más práctica

Piensa en las características (en qué adjetivos) de las siguientes cosas y escribelas.

Ejemplo: los brazos = largos, bronceados, gruesos, elásticos

Los escrib (las mejillas) __________________________

Un libro __________________________

La luna __________________________

Un osito de peluche __________________________

Los ojos __________________________

Los labios __________________________

La nariz __________________________

Escoge cinco de los sustantivos de arriba con los adjetivos que usaste para describirlos y escribílos abajo. Ahora piensa en cosas que tienen las mismas características que los sustantivos que escribiste pero que generalmente no se piensa que son similares. Escribe una metáfora por cada sustantivo y su adjetivo

Ejemplos: Sus brazos estaban bronceados como el arroz tostado

Sus brazos eran gruesos como chorizos

Sus brazos son elásticos como una liga

Metáforas:

1. __________________________

2. __________________________

3. __________________________

4. __________________________

5. __________________________
Metaphors: More practice

Think of characteristics (adjectives) of the following things and write them down.

Example: arms=long, tan, elastic

The Cheeks

A book

The moon

A teddy bear

The Eyes

The Lips

The nose

Pick five of the nouns from above along with the adjectives you used to describe them and write them below. Now think about things that have similar characteristics as those things but that you do not usually think about as being similar.

Example: His arms were tan like toasted rice

His arms are thick like stuffed sausages

His arms are elastic like a rubber band

Metaphors:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.
Pair-share

Finish the following sentences:

The part I like best about __________ poem is…(make sure you write why you liked it)

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

I learned that _________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Compartiendo con un compañero/a

Lo que me gustó más del poema de ___________ es... (escribe porqué te gustó)

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Yo aprendí que...

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
"I am From" Packet: Table of Contents

Paquete de "Yo soy de": Página de contenido

1. Brainstorm/ Tormenta de ideas
2. I am From: First Draft/ Yo soy de: Primer Borrador
3. I am From poem typed/ Yo soy de poema pasado a máquina
4. Pair-Share/ Compartiendo con un/a Compañero/a
5. Nouns and Adjectives/ Sustantivos y adjetivos
6. Synonyms/ Sinónimos
7. Synonym poem rough draft/ Poema sinónimo borrador
8. Parent/ Caregiver poem rough draft/ Poema de padres/guardianes borrador
9. Parent/ Caregiver poem typed / Poema de padres/guardians pasado a máquina
10. Metaphors/ Metáforas
11. Metaphors: More practice/ Metáforas: Más práctica
12. Review of Terms/ Repaso de terminos
Chapter Five: Reflections

This project has made a great impact on me both professionally and personally. It has provided through the challenges as well as successes I experienced new insight about second language development and literacy. I feel more capacitated to carry out my responsibilities as a teacher. It provided me with a great opportunity to develop and apply what I believed to be true about second language development and bilingualism. As I encouraged students to embrace their bilingualism I too discovered how deep the vein of bilingualism runs inside of me. This project allowed me to get to know my students and how to better serve them. The benefit was not one sided by no means. In the patience and collaboration that the students demonstrated I was equally served.

Project Mechanics:

One of the reoccurring challenges that I encountered was taking for granted the comprehension of the students concerning the direction for an assignment. I found myself having to re-introduce and model more precisely what I expected of students. The need for the expectations to be understood clearly was one of the factors that I found that led to the weakening of a lesson. In particular the lesson that I wanted students to identify the new words that they learned, I did not specify English or Spanish, or whether spelling counted. The lack of clarity as to what was expected made this activity less than successful. I had envisioned this activity as a vocabulary building activity but it turned out be for some more of a spelling activity. Another activity that I felt did not accomplish what I had anticipated was the creation of a personal dictionary. My intentions were to
give students practice in alphabetizing as well as building on their vocabulary and organizational skills. The more advanced students were finishing very quickly and had a lot of words to include, while the less advanced had a few. I decided then to make a class dictionary and divide the words up more equitatively. I observed that students were getting frustrated and that the activity was looking like “busy work” activity so I ended the activity. I feel that this activity can be structured differently so as to meet the desired results of vocabulary building and developing organizational skills. I left this lesson out but will return to it to see how it needs to be set up so that students may benefit.

Another challenge that I came across was due to the great variances of skill levels both in Spanish and English of the students. I quickly realized that instead of trying to establish a midway point prior to the assignment, that I needed to pay close attention to my more advanced student and my least advanced. By doing this I could get a better notion of how long the average student would need to complete the assignment. One instance where I found this to be particularly a challenge was in the basic word processing activities that the students were expected to complete. Most of the students had little to no experience with computers or word-processing. I had to begin then by giving some lessons on basic keyboarding skills. Some picked up quite quickly while others were having a hard time typing out their work. I was able to resolve this by teaching those more advanced students more complicated features that they needed to use in their assignment. This allowed additional time for those students who hadn’t caught on as quickly. On other occasions I assigned the more advanced students a classmate that they would need to help and collaborate with. For instance they would read what they
needed to write so that they didn’t need to look in three different places, the computer
screen, the keyboard and their paper.

Content:

As I discussed in chapter three, I had chosen a poem to be the principal work from
which all other activities would be developed because of poetry’s inclusive nature. It
would allow students freedom to express themselves in ideas with the absence of a
stringent enforcement of grammatical structures. The students with low skills in Spanish
did not feel intimidated with neither the structure of the poem nor did they fail to
understand the content of the poem because they provided the content. This was very
gratifying to observe because it made all students feel successful and gave me a clearer
understanding of where I needed to take each student in regards to their present skill
level.

The selection of Christensen’s “I am From” prompt was very well received. This
project was presented to students in the last three months of the school year, which
accounts for the much of the great acceptance that it received right from the beginning.
As the Background section of chapter two discusses immigrant children and specifically
Mexican children were not allowed to express who they were or where they came from.
Instead they were made to “melt” into a “pot” that would strip them of their self-worth
and dignity (Carter, 1970; Halcón, 2001). The students that I worked with expressed
some of the same experiences that Carter and Halcón mention in their works, so to be
encouraged to talk and write about who they are and where they come from was an
activity they didn’t need to be persuaded or forced to do. My reaction to doing the poem
was also very positive and I envisioned the same reaction from the students I would be presenting the activities to. I my vision was indeed confirmed.

The acceptance and the need that students felt to be heard is quite clear in the self-reflective activity that I asked them to fill out. Many also commented on what they discovered about themselves. One student quite emphatically writes on how he learned that a child can also write a poem not only the experts the poets and writers: "Lo que yo aprendi acerca de mi es de que tambien un niño puede escribir un poema no solamente los expertos, los poetas o escritores." Another students says that not only did he learn about himself but that he would recommend it to another teacher "...porque las maestras tienen un mejor chance de conocer a sus estudiantes" (...because teachers will have a better chance of getting to know their students). These responses were typical of the type of impact that this poem and the activities had on them.

One very rewarding activity for me and for my students was lesson thirteen that had students share their poems with a parent or caregiver and then help the person they chose to make a poem of their own. I asked the students to write about how the activity was received by the person they had chosen as well as how they felt about it. I expected the students and parent/caregiver to enjoy the activity but I hadn't anticipated the depth of the impact on the students and parents, caregivers. All students spoke of the congratulations that they received because of their poems. As one student writes, "Ellos tuvieron una reaccion fantastica me dijeron que me felicitaban" (They had a fantastic reaction they told me that they congratulated me). Parents expressed their surprise as they learned something new about their child's inner self as well as their child's academic abilitie: "Mi mama y mi papa estaban muy orgullosos de mi porque no me die verguenza
compartir cosas que nunca les había yo dicho a ellos” (My mom and dad were very proud of me because I wasn’t embarrassed to share things that I had never told them about). A couple of students expressed that their mother/father had gotten emotional and that the poem had prompted nostalgic memories to surface as well as new stories to be shared and enjoyed: “Me gusto mucho porque mi mamá sabia de lo que estaba hablando y me hizo caso y me gusto porque mi mamá estaba agradecida y orgullosa de mi porque fue como un poema y le recordó a México…” (I like it because my mom knew what I was talking about and she payed attention to me and I liked it because my mom was grateful and proud of me because it was a poem and she remembered Mexico). This for me is one of the most worthwhile lessons that I have assigned because it brought parent and child together in collaboration and respect. Both played an essential part in the assignment and allowed both parent and child to feel mutual respect and pride during the process and as a result of the completion of the assignment. It was a real joy to have been able to facilitate such an interaction.

The Four Pillars:

The objective to treat Spanish as a valid and legitimate source of knowledge I feel was addressed in several ways. First students were allowed based on their level of English proficiency to think about the content that was to be provided for the poem in Spanish. Secondly the content used for the development of the Language Arts lessons were based on the student’s own language. Also the inclusion of the language of the parent or caregiver indirectly communicated the importance and value that Spanish has for their academic as well as their psychological development.
In regards to a second objective, that of creating and maintaining an environment of reciprocal learning and teaching between student and teacher, the lessons in this project allowed me to learn from students what their strengths rested and how I could help them progress in their academic development. Encouraging students to seek each other out for help allowed me to sit down with each student at least once and share the great progress already accomplished as well as to push them to move on even further. I learned of their traditions and their life back in their homeland and could share with them also my life experiences. The sense of “Family” that I felt towards my students as well as the closeness and collaboration that students demonstrated amongst themselves motivated a sense for and a desire for collective success. Students felt empowered and did not feel a need to compete. Many times after the reading of a poem to the class as a whole a spontaneous round of applause arose. They saw each other as an ally that was there to show and help them also reach the goal.

The development of English literacy through the use of Spanish was addressed by the lessons developed in several ways. In lessons that focused on grammatical structures and vocabulary building students were encouraged to find cognates as well as seek out other similarities or differences in form between the two languages. They were explicitly instructed to seek out how to “latch” the new information onto what they already knew in Spanish. Although I have in the past whenever possible verbally and by way of example stressed this practice, this project allowed me to present lessons such as lesson eight, which focused on the correct placement of adjectives in both Spanish and English. Students then could discover the differences and similarities consciously incorporate
them into their knowledge base and continue to use this practice when learning something new.

The understanding that students began to develop about the transferability of some words (cognates) was apparent when they were able to define and understand vocabulary words and spell the words correctly in English when in their ELD class. Also more hands began to go up in ELD class when asked if they recognized any words.

Students were becoming more confident in themselves as they realized the similarities that already existed between English and Spanish.

Students also demonstrated a better understanding of literary devices such as metaphors and similes. When given the two odes to analyze by Pablo Neruda, "Oda a la Abeja" (Ode to the Bee) and "Oda a la cuchara" (Ode to the Spoon) students could identify the comparisons and write about what the author was trying to accomplish with the use of the particular metaphor or simile.

The fourth and final objective that this project anticipated addressing was the use of varied activities that would tap into the strengths and "intelligences" of students using these as tools to further social as well as cognitive development. The use of technology served as a great tool for allowing students to build on visual and kinesthetic intelligence by providing the visual stimuli (clip art, images off the Internet, using Hyperstudio features) as well as using the mouse and the keyboard. The linguistic and aural learners were throughout the project given opportunities to write, listen and speak in whole group discussions or in small groups or pairs. The intrapersonal learner was able to work introspectively and independently as most assignments could be accomplished independently or in collaboration with classmates. The interpersonal learner also had the
same choices and was provided with many opportunities to interact with classmates or the teacher for help or affirmation.

Recommendations:

The students that this project had in mind as it was being developed limits the applicability and success that it may have with other English language learners whose native language is not Spanish. Yet there are some aspects that are not language dependent. Encouraging students to compare and contrast prior knowledge with new information goes beyond language skills. It is a skill that promotes making connections of concepts and ideas not only words and structures.

Another characteristic of this project that limits the implementation of this project is the use of the specific computer programs, Clarisworks and Hyperstudio. There are other programs like Microsoft Word that could easily be substituted for Clarisworks. Hyperstudio could be replaced by the program Powerpoint which lessens the extent of this limitation.

Many extension activities may also be added to this Language Arts curriculum that can provide great opportunities in the area of Social Studies. For instance a writing assignment that involves researching one of the historical figures mentioned in the poem could be incorporated. In the area of Science, a project could be assigned that would require students to learn and write about the development, from the beginning stage of the ingredient to its appearance into the food that was mentioned in their poem.
Conclusion:

I have been blessed with being able to participate in many years of academic study. This project has been a whole hearted attempt to give form to all that which I have been given by way of all my mentors and teachers who not only taught me about history, cultures, languages but most importantly how to think. This project for me is an attempt to honor and give back a little of the great gift that the work of dedicated educators, theorists and researchers such as Vygotsky, Cummins, Krashen, Terrell, Freire and many others have given me as a second language learner as well as a educator of second language learners. Their works have given a voice to the silenced. Their works have given power to the oppressed. Their works have lifted the fallen. The job to be done is great and is yet to be finished. What is most important though is what has been provided for all those in the arena of life who are here to serve others. They have been given the strength and tools to not only give fish to the hungry man, as an old Chinese proverb goes, but to teach the hungry man to fish.
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Appendix A

I Am From ...
By María Isabel Díaz

I am from small rooms
From mixed-matched furniture and a piano
I am from rosebushes and trees and violet lilies that hid Easter eggs
From mud cookies and leaf soup.

I am from tunnels and ditches and slurpies from 7-11
and tadpoles and tumbleweeds.
I'm from “Hay que estudiar” (You must study) and “El que no trabaja no come” (If you
don't work you don't eat).
“I'm from salteñas and “choclo” (corn). I'm from “api” and “torta chiffón”.

I am from Herminia and José Carlos and Matilde.
I'm from Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, El Cid Campeador, and Atahualpa.
From the summers chasing away the birds and looking for four leaf clovers
To the homemade slip and slides and wall-ball.

I am from those moments stored in boxes,
In my drawers on my dresser and in my albums
But mainly motion pictures in my mind that tell me
Where I've been, where I am, and where I want to go.
Appendix B

Yo soy de...
Escrito por María Isabel Díaz

Yo soy de cuartos pequeños
De muebles impares y de un piano
Soy de Rosales y árboles y lirios que escondían huevos de Pascua
De galletas de barro y de sopa de hojas

Yo soy de túneles, desagües y slurpies de 7-11
De renacuajos y hierbas rodantes
Soy de “Hay que estudiar” y “El que no trabaja no come”
Soy de salteñas y humintas. Soy de api y torta chifón.

Soy de Herminia y José Carlos
Yo soy de Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, El Cid Campeador, y Atahualpa.
De los veranos espantando a los pájaros de las uvas y buscando tréboles de la suerte
A los resbalines de agua caseros y “wall-ball”

Yo soy de los momentos guardados en cajas
En mis cajones de mi armario y en mis álbumes de fotos
Pero principalmente las películas en mi mente que me dicen
Dónde he estado, dónde estoy, y dónde mis sueños me llevarán.