

Making Connections

Language, Literacy, Learning

APS A publication of the Department of Language and Cultural Equity LCE

Eugene Field Strives for Multicultural Education, Social Action, and Awareness

By James D. Luján, Principal, Eugene Field Elementary

OVERVIEW

Our schools are a reflection of our society where people from different ethnic, racial, and cultural groups live in close physical proximity. However, just because a group of people coexist, it does not mean that they know, relate to, and care deeply about one another. The challenge for educators is to teach students to understand unfamiliar groups, cultures, traditions, and languages.



Principal Luján works with students on their writing during literacy block.

Multicultural education isn't something that educators need to **add** to existing curriculum as separate lessons or units. It can and should be an integral part of everything that happens in the classroom. Almost all aspects of multicultural education are interdisciplinary. Curriculum and instruction should always reflect

the learner, their immediate social context, and the world in which they live.

LEADERSHIP IN MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION, SOCIAL ACTION, AND AWARENESS

James A. Banks has identified five dimensions of multicultural education. They are content integration, the knowledge construction process, prejudice reduction, an equity pedagogy, and an empowering school culture and social structure. As an instructional leader, it is essential that I facilitate these dimensions in various ways, such as setting an example in my own work; ensuring that Eugene Field is a site where empowering and anti-discriminatory education occurs; and encouraging teachers and students to demonstrate their own social and cultural uniqueness. At Eugene Field we strive on a daily basis to create lived experiences that reflect the five dimensions which I describe through examples below.

Content Integration deals with the involvement of teachers using examples and content from a variety of cultures and groups to illustrate key concepts, generalizations, and issues within the subject area or disciplines. During literacy block, students read literature which reflects their cultures and write about their own lives. On a larger scale, I support activities like International Week Celebration, where each classroom

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represents a different country. Students research the culture, resources, language, music, food, etc., and share with other classrooms what they have learned. Teachers are encouraged to integrate this research into content-area curriculum throughout the year.

The Knowledge Construction Process describes how students learn to understand, investigate, and determine how biases, frames of reference, and perspectives within the different content areas influence the ways in which knowledge has been historically constructed. Students learn how to build self-knowledge and how their identities are being socially and institutionally constructed. Eugene Field enjoys a biliterate and multicultural environment. As principal, I encourage several strategies. Students can do the following:

- identify their historical and cultural origins in the content;
- respond through activities and assignments which are accepted as their unique cultural expressions;
- receive instruction in Spanish; and
- learn in an environment that reflects both Spanish and English, e.g., social studies reports may be written in English, class book reports in Spanish.

Prejudice Reduction occurs through providing students with activities and lessons created by teachers and school personnel that help develop positive attitudes toward different racial, ethnic, and cultural groups. When issues of prejudice do occur, we address them through open dialogue and consciousness-raising and community-building activities with guidance from the school counselor. Teachers implement lessons that include content about various racial and ethnic groups which help our students to develop more positive images of all groups.

An Equity Pedagogy is developed when teachers modify their teaching in ways that will facilitate the academic achievement of minority and diverse students. This occurs when teachers shift their “traditional” instructional methods to utilizing cooperative learning strategies; when teachers create an atmosphere where all are

valued and supported; and when teachers encourage students from different racial groups to work together. Teachers at Eugene Field meet on a weekly basis to collaborate about ways that they can transform their instruction. They are redefining learning as a co-construction of experiences, knowledge, new learning, and perspectives of both teachers and students. My role is to support the teachers by providing stipends to pay for these meetings, constantly giving feedback and encouragement, and offering suggestions to move toward a multicultural approach in curriculum and pedagogy for educating our students.

An Empowering School Culture and Social Structure is created when the culture and organization of the school are transformed in ways that enable students from diverse racial, ethnic, and gender groups to experience equality and equal status. When students learn content that reflects who they are and who others are, they learn about their world from the perspectives of various groups that have shaped historical and contemporary events. Given our strong curriculum, we believe that our students will become biliterate, competitive, and knowledgeable, thus better able to participate in society in personal, social, and equitable ways.

Schools are faced with many problems, many of which can be resolved by transforming our schools in ways that reflect the very students they are supposed to serve. Schools built upon a multicultural curriculum can begin to close the achievement gap; help students grow academically; revitalize faith and trust in the promises of democracy, equality, and social justice; build education systems that reflect the diverse cultural, ethnic, racial, and social contributions that forge society; and provide better opportunities for all students.

References

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Picturing African Americans in the Southwest— a traveling museum exhibit *by Greg Hansen*

I watch as a small group of eighth graders stands in front of an old photograph. The students are looking at a man on horseback, holding the reins looking like the quintessential cowboy. The image, dated 1911, is of George McJunkin, a ranch foreman and discoverer of the Folsom fossil site. Mr. McJunkin is black.

"Did you know that African Americans were cowboys too?" I ask the group. "Yes," comes the response. "Our teacher told us."

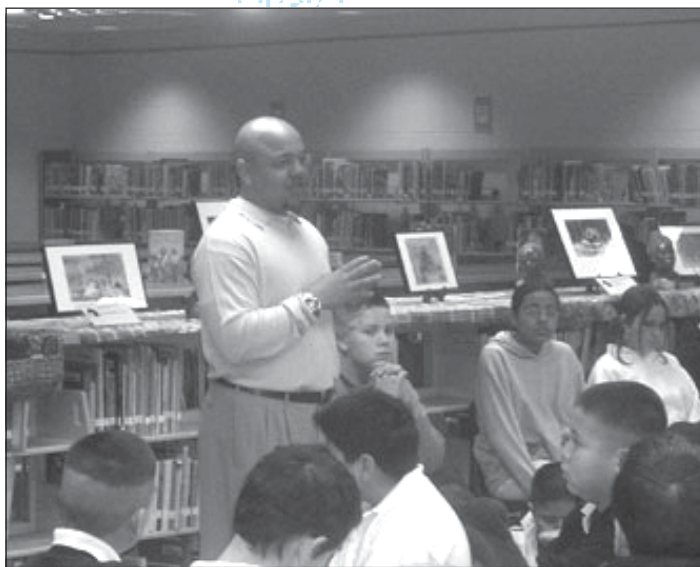
The photograph is part of an amazing collection that is available to schools as a traveling exhibit. The exhibition, *Pioneers of the American Southwest*, is from the Charlie Morrissey Research Hall, a division of African American Studies at the University of New Mexico. The photographs document the achievements and contributions of people of African descent in New Mexico and the Southwest, showing images of African American cowboys, cooks, soldiers, scouts, teachers, entrepreneurs, artists, politicians, community leaders, and many others whose presence and whose contributions have often been overlooked.

Charles Becknell Jr. speaks to students at Truman Middle School about the presence of African Americans in the Southwest. To help students understand more about the thousands of people of African descent who settled on the frontier, he presented "Pioneers of the American Southwest," a collection of rare photographs by and about Black people here in New Mexico and neighboring states. These engaging photographs are available to schools as a traveling exhibit. Contact information for Mr. Becknell Jr. and the "Pioneers of the American Southwest" exhibit is listed above.

Although New Mexico is often said to have a "tri-cultural heritage," *Pioneers of the American Southwest* helps students learn a more complete history of our state and one that reflects the true diversity and multiculturalism of our past and present. As exhibit coordinator Charles Becknell Jr. explained to students at Truman Middle School recently, "The problem with being a tri-cultural state is that it leaves some people out. And when you are left out, you become invisible, and being invisible doesn't feel very good."

This exhibit is appropriate for students and teachers from elementary through high school. For information on how to schedule the traveling exhibit for your school, please contact:

Charles Becknell Jr., Program Coordinator
The Charlie Morrissey Collections
African American Studies
University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87131
505.277.4883



Instituto para el desarrollo de la lectoescritura

por Susana Ibarra Johnson y Cecilia Gonzales de Tucker

La enseñanza de la lectoescritura requiere la implementación de diversas actividades que conlleven al estudiante a la adquisición del lenguaje escrito. Para lograr el dominio de la lectoescritura se deben desarrollar procesos simultáneos de decodificación y codificación del lenguaje oral así como también la comprensión de la lectura. Basados en estos principios, en septiembre de 2003, bajo la dirección de Elia María Romero, Susana Ibarra-Johnson, Annette Maestas y Cecilia Gonzales de Tucker, del Departamento de Equidad de la Lengua y la Cultura, nos reunimos para establecer el *Instituto para el desarrollo de la lectoescritura*. El propósito de este instituto es proveer instrumentos pedagógicos que apoyan el proceso de aprendizaje de la lectoescritura, para las maestras y los maestros de los programas bilingües, con la finalidad de mejorar los métodos de enseñanza que garanticen el éxito académico.

A continuación presentamos una entrevista con Elia María Romero con el fin de compartir información sobre la filosofía y el método freiriano, conocido como Fono-Analítico Sintético (FAS).



Maestras de la escuela Valle Vista participando en el Instituto Freiriano para la lectoescritura.

¿Nos puede hablar de su educación y trabajo en torno a la lectoescritura en Nicaragua y aquí en los Estados Unidos?

Mi trabajo en Nicaragua inicialmente fue el participar en una Campaña Nacional de Alfabetización en el año de 1979. Como una de las tareas de la revolución, se me asignó trabajar en la parte Atlántica de Nicaragua, donde la mayoría de las personas de ese lugar hablaban diferentes dialectos indígenas, español e inglés. Teníamos que organizar un programa de alfabetización multicultural y bilingüe para esa región que nunca había tenido la oportunidad de recibir educación bilingüe, como es su derecho humano. Paulo Freire, uno de los grandes líderes y defensor de las masas oprimidas, llegó como asesor de la campaña. Nos recomendó que para lograr una alfabetización liberadora los ciudadanos de Nicaragua tenían que recibir por primera vez una educación en su idioma materno. El método consistía en escribir cartillas con temas relacionados a la realidad de esa región. Yo participé en la organización del currículo de esta región con ayuda de Paulo Freire. Se organizaban talleres de educación, programación y capacitación educativa (TEPCE). Allí organizamos todo el programa, y la campaña fue un éxito. Teníamos muchos maestros de Nuevo México y especialmente maestros de Albuquerque. Ellos también nos ayudaron en la alfabetización bilingüe. Esa experiencia enriquecedora me ayudó cuando llegué a los Estados Unidos ya que pude hacer conexiones porque era la misma realidad y problemática que existían en los Estados Unidos en cuanto a la educación bilingüe.

Freire habla de la conexión entre la alfabetización y el contexto sociocultural. ¿Puede comentar sobre este tema?

Freire siempre enfatizó la conexión entre la alfabetización y el contexto sociocultural en las masas oprimidas. La cultura y la experiencia de la gente son la base del proceso de su liberación.

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Cada persona tiene un pensamiento crítico y se le debe tratar como un ser humano que tiene su propia voz. Hablar de Freire es percibir al maestro como estudiante y al estudiante como maestro, es decir todos enseñan y todos aprenden.

¿Nos puede hablar sobre las fases del método Fono-Analítico Sintético?

Paulo Freire revolucionó la enseñanza de la lectoescritura en los idiomas en donde la unidad básica es la sílaba, como lo es en portugués, español, etc. El método Fono-Analítico Sintético sigue el proceso siguiente.

Método Fono-Analítico Sintético



Millones de niños y adultos alrededor del mundo han aprendido a leer su mundo a través de este método. Aquí en Estados Unidos se ha utilizado en las comunidades empobrecidas y en las cárceles con buenos resultados.

Queremos agradecerle a Elia María su dedicación a los niños y maestros de Nuevo México y su apoyo en el proceso educativo. Ha sido un placer para nosotras dos trabajar en este instituto con una colega que tiene tanto conocimiento de los instrumentos pedagógicos necesarios para mejorar el proceso de la adquisición de la lectoescritura en los programas bilingües. Gracias Elia María.

Una lección usando el método FAS con el tema de las calabazas...

Experiencia con el lenguaje oral y los juegos... La maestra les enseña a los estudiantes una calabaza y hablan sobre las características de la calabaza, luego pueden cantar una canción, *Calabaza, calabaza*, para practicar el sistema de codificación del lenguaje oral para luego transferirlo al lenguaje escrito.

Lee en voz alta... La maestra lee un libro relacionado con las calabazas ya sea ficción o realidad, p. ej., *Tómas y la calabaza*. Esto le permitirá al niño percibir el lenguaje escrito como un proceso gradual donde notará reglas de correspondencia entre fonemas y grafemas.

Discusión del cuento... La maestra comienza el diálogo preguntándoles "¿Qué saben ustedes de las calabazas?" Escribe las oraciones. Luego ella les da información sobre calabazas usando vocabulario e información académico. Escribe las oraciones en el tablero.

Saca una oración clave... Elige una oración que tenga una palabra relacionada con el tema y que se pueda dividir en sílabas.

Ej. La **calabaza** tiene mucha vitamina C y zinc.

Escoge una palabra con significado... La palabra que la maestra elige tiene que tener significado y las sílabas apropiadas según el nivel de lectoescritura de los alumnos.

calabaza

Dividen en sílabas y forman palabras con significado...

Ejemplo:

ca	la	ba	za
co	lo	bo	zo
cu	lu	bu	zu
	li	bi	zi
	le	be	ze

Ejemplos de palabras:
cubo, cazo, ala, ola, acá

Forman oraciones...
Ejemplo de oraciones: El cubo tiene muchos lados.

Escritura creativa...
Los estudiantes pueden escribir un cuento, un poema, una anécdota, una canción, etc.

Scaffolding Mathematics for all Learners

by Gregg McMann, Mathematics Resource Teacher, Adobe Acres E.S.

There is a common misconception among teachers that mathematics is one content area in which second language learners will not struggle. Reasons for this thinking include the notion that numbers and algorithms can be taught and understood independently of language. While this may seem to be true, it is only if arithmetic problems involve “naked numbers,” i.e., numbers with no connection to a problem or real world situation.



Denisse, Roberto, and Diana (left to right) work on making sense of a division problem.

In working with third grade students at Adobe Acres Elementary School this year, we learned that it was impossible to teach mathematics without considering the needs of second language learners. The experiences that follow took place in Melissa Evans’s third grade dual language classroom, where each content area is taught alternately in English and Spanish for nine weeks.

As teachers, we may not always delve into the complexity of multiplication and division. Most of us remember how to do long division through memorizing the steps of divide, multiply, subtract, and bring-down. But this only works if we are given the problem with the dividend and divisor already set up, such as: $528/16 = \square$.

However, when children are given situated problems where they must determine which numbers are useful and what to do with them, it is extremely important that challenges for second language learners be considered. Think about the following set of problems:

1. Robert has 3 packages of pencils. There are 12 pencils in each package. How many pencils does he have in all?
2. Robert gives 3 pencils to each of his friends. How many friends can get 3 pencils each?
3. What if Robert shares his pencils equally among himself and 11 friends? How many pencils does each person get?

Problems from Everyday Mathematics, Grade 3, p.35, 1998.

Mathematics educators describe each of these differently. When the number and size of groups are known, the problem involves multiplication.

When either the number or the size of the sets is unknown, it is division. (Van de Walle, J., *Elementary and Middle School Mathematics...*, 2001) Within multiplication and division there are further categories. The first problem above is multiplication and is named “equal groups with whole unknown.” The second is “measurement division with equal groups,

number of groups unknown.” The third is “partition division, equal groups: size of groups unknown.” While children don’t need to know these categories, as teachers we must be aware that each requires a different way of thinking and grouping or sorting to solve the problem.

Now let us look at some of the language issues involved in these problems. Outside of the mathematical question, in problem 1, students have to know what “packages” means and also distinguish between “in each” and “in all.”

The second problem is even more challenging. Children see two numbers in this problem, and if divided, they equal 1; if multiplied, they equal 9. Neither of these results answers the question. To answer problem 2, children must use the result of problem 1, yet nowhere is this explicitly stated. If a child has experienced a mathematics program in which all the problems are presented as naked numbers or the word problems are straightforward and follow an algorithmic model, he or she may be especially confused by situational word problems.

In the third problem, students face a similar dilemma. There is only one number to deal with, and it has not been used before, though the problem still involves Robert and pencils.

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“Among” and “himself” confused students at first. Also, the answer here is supposed to be in “persons,” but the question discusses “friends.” As in problem 2, the answer from problem 1 must be used to reach a solution.

It helps second language learners to make a matrix to categorize the information they have and/or need. We used the matrices below.

1.

units	packages	pencils per package	pencils
numbers			

2.

units	friends	pencils per friend	pencils
numbers			

3.

units	Robert and friends	pencils per person	pencils
numbers			

Introducing these matrices and other graphic organizers helped second language learners organize their thinking and capture ideas about knowns and unknowns. Using this matrix also introduced a new word, “per,” that confused our students until we discussed what it meant. Through discussion, the students defined it as “for each.” Denisse mentioned “miles per hour,” and this helped the students agree that “for each” made sense.

In this third grade class, we spent two days discussing the three problems and determining which number would go where in the matrix. We did not try to answer the problem at first; rather, our time was spent understanding the language, vocabulary, the question, and what we knew from the information that was given.

To help the children fill in the information and find the solution, we gave them objects to count, such as Unifix cubes. For example, we

read problem 3 together and defined the number for each group. We counted Robert as 1 and then added 11 more. This told us we needed 12 circles or groups on the paper. We then took 36 objects to represent the pencils and put one in each group until all were placed. We saw that each person would get three pencils.

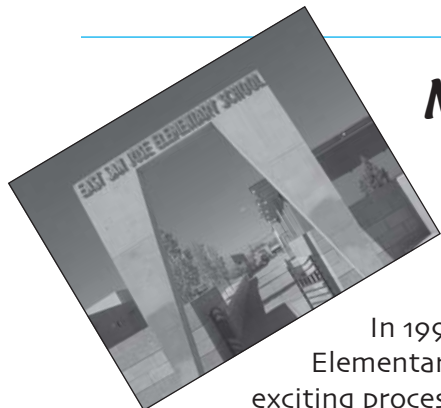
In this way, we discussed each problem as a whole group and then broke into pairs or triads to work on a solution. We returned to the whole group to share ideas, allowing students to practice and refine their language while they clarified the mathematics. This process was repeated for each problem until we were all satisfied with a solution.

Finally, we asked the children to create a number model to represent the question. They kept the groups, objects, and matrices in front of them to help think through what the model would look like. The students knew the three numbers involved, but this was still challenging because the information in the matrices did not always align with the number model. In problem 1 it did; the matrix numbers were 3, 12, and unknown, as in the number model: $3 \times 12 = \square$. But in problem 2, the matrix numbers were 12, 3, and unknown. The number model was: $36 / 3 = \square$. In problem 3, the matrix numbers were 12, unknown, and 36. But the number model was: $36 / 12 = \square$. When Olivia saw this, she said, “Oh, we’re switching 3 and 12 because they’re different things!”

This experience with multiplication and division was but one of many lessons we taught. It is important for all learners, but especially second language learners, to take the time to make meaning of the mathematical problems they encounter. Shared reading, whole group discussion, and structured peer interaction all helped children understand the task. These students now readily use manipulatives when confronting a new problem and information matrices as graphic organizers to help them get a handle on the numbers in a question. They have also learned to use prior knowledge, or information from a previous question, to help solve problems. We will continue to revisit multiplication and division this year and beyond, but now the children will bring new strategies and understandings to their efforts.

Making Every Minute Count— A Curriculum Alignment Plan in a Dual Language Setting...

by Ruth Kritegan, Resource Teacher, East San José E.S.



In 1995, East San José Elementary School began the exciting process of developing a dual language program. Like many schools in Albuquerque, for many years East San José had a traditional maintenance program that relied on resource teachers to maintain and build on the students' Spanish language skills. While a maintenance strand was retained to accommodate those parents who preferred that program, the dual language strand has grown to the point that this year there are twenty-two dual language classes ranging from pre-K to the 5th grade. The growth of our program has caught the attention of families outside our neighborhood who would like their children to become bilingual and biliterate. As a result, our student population is slowly becoming more diverse, with many more native English speakers opting for dual language instruction. While we celebrate the growth of our program, the success of our students, and the professionalism and preparation of our teachers, we know that the work of improving never ends.

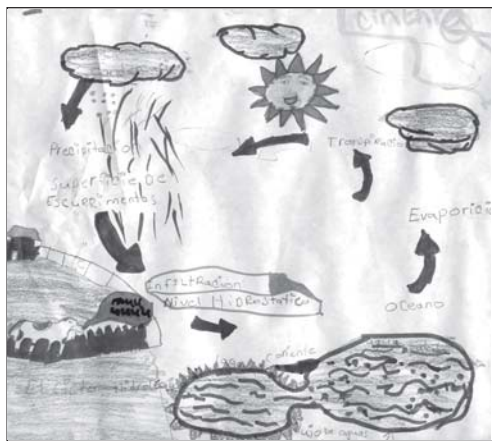
About four years ago, one of our resource teachers, Regina Whitmore, attended a presentation given by Rosa Molina of River Glenn Elementary School in California, in which she described a CAP, or Curriculum Alignment Plan. This plan was based on the notion that a dual language program constantly needed to be fine-tuned in the amount of time instruction was provided in each of the languages, which content areas were taught in each language, and the methodology and materials used to provide that instruction. Regina thought that East San José would benefit from this process and presented it to the principal, Richard Baldonado. And so CAP was launched!

The Curriculum Alignment Plan has given East San José the structure to study and improve the effectiveness of our dual language program.

The staff began by looking again at the research for effective dual language education. The criteria for a high-quality dual language environment hinge on an additive model, where both languages are given equal value, they are used both in the service of content instruction and in language arts, they are kept separate, and students are given many varied opportunities to practice each one.

The first activity was to revisit our adopted 90/10 dual language program and calculate exactly how many classroom minutes that model provided in each language. We had to consider what the language of instruction was in classes such as library, physical education, music, art, and computers and include that in our calculations. Each teacher was then asked to list all of the content areas he or she covered in a week and list the language used to teach them. Did their lists conform to the 90/10 model? Then grade-level teachers shared their lists with one another. Was the grade-level

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Students use graphic organizers to tie language and content together. Here, a student has illustrated and used key vocabulary to describe the water cycle.

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team consistent in the language used to teach a given content area, or was each teacher following his or her own plan? If, in fact, each teacher was following his or her own plan, how did that affect the next grade level? Were some students fluent in the Spanish of third grade math while some were more comfortable doing math in English?

Later, a grid was devised for each grade-level group to input the language used to teach each content area including the four blocks in literacy development. In this way the entire dual language program could be seen at a glance: grades pre-K to fifth were listed on the side and content areas were listed along the top. The first thing that was noticed was that math was being taught in Spanish in each grade level! The lack of English language development through math created a large gap for our students as they entered middle school. Would there be a Spanish-language math program at that level? If not, had we, as a school, prepared our students to benefit from English language instruction? These basic activities were enormously eye-opening and helpful.

Many teachers saw that they needed to make adjustments to their program to stay in line with the 90/10 model. In addition, the need for high-quality, focused professional development became clearer. As more English-dominant students join our dual language program, teachers are shifting their instructional practice to include not only well-sheltered lessons, but direct language arts instruction in Spanish.

East San José has found the CAP process to be essential as we begin each new school year. Teachers new to our school benefit from a clear understanding of the dual language program and more veteran teachers refocus with each new group of students. The CAP process provides excellent professional development information. Sheltering strategies have recently taken center stage as we discuss and share ways to scaffold both content and language learning. This year the dual language staff has focused on the ways in which teachers add English



Jardineros del Corazón, East San José's environmental sciences program, includes math, science, and literacy development in planning and maintaining our gardens. Here, students record weather patterns.

instruction year by year, as the percentage of English is increased from 10% in kindergarten and first grade to 50% by the second semester of fourth grade. We have had to look carefully at our Four Blocks literacy framework to see where more direct English instruction makes sense as well as the content activities that would provide our students with the opportunity to practice and use academic English with their peers.

We have also focused our financial resources on materials and teaching aids that support high-level literacy development in both languages. East San José students need to be able to read and use as a resource appropriate content material at advanced reading levels in both languages. The CAP gives us the information we need to pinpoint the level, language, and subject areas for ordering materials that best serve our students.

The Curriculum Alignment Plan has given East San José the structure to study and improve the effectiveness of our dual language program. We invite schools who may be looking for a similar structure to contact us!

Expanding Story Patterns, Expanding Possibilities...

by Kathy Waldman

In her presentation at *La Cosecha*, Kathy Escamilla, Ph.D. (University of Colorado, Boulder) talked about the importance of incorporating Latino children’s literature into literacy programs. The stories of Alma Flor Ada, Gary Soto, and Rudolfo Anaya are rich with experiences shared by many of our students, and making their stories a part of literacy programs is essential. However, it was the next part of her presentation that was most riveting for me. She presented the elements of Spanish story structure and then noted that the English story structure is quite different.

might have been that the story was engaging, full of wonderful images, but nevertheless hopelessly disorganized.

The idea that story patterns are *not* universal, but vary from culture to culture, has huge implications for teachers. As one kindergarten teacher said, “I always wondered why some of my students seemed to have such trouble understanding simple folk and fairy tales. That particular pattern of story-telling is so much a part of my inner map that I just assumed it was the same for everyone. I think I’ll spend much more time looking at story structure with my students from now on!”

Spanish story structure	English story structure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •polemic/struggle •contradictions •digression •group focus •visual image •family unity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •problem/resolution •happy ending •linear logic •individual focus •visual images •family conflict

That’s what Dr. Escamilla calls *language transparency*—what people know about their first language and culture is such a part of them that they don’t notice that it is there. Both teachers and students bring their own cultural norms with them. They are reflected in each student’s writing, in the understanding and empathy each has for the stories he reads, and the background knowledge he brings to his understanding of them. As teachers, we need to be aware of our students’ cultural and discourse patterns. We also can’t assume that everyone has the same “inner map,” even within the same cultural group. It’s important to be aware of general cultural patterns that may be present in

At *La Cosecha*, Dr. Escamilla read two stories by fourth graders—one that had an individual focus, a linear pattern, and a happy ending; and the other, a story with digressions, rich visual images, and several contradictions. This was her key point: if she had read the second story without telling her audience about elements of Spanish story structure, the reaction for many



A group of students in Mr. Manny Ramos’s class at Atrisco Elementary work on a story based on an illustration from Carmen Lomas Garza’s “Family Pictures.”

We were celebrating Thanksgiving with our Grandma and Grandpa. And my two sisters went to the backyard with our grandparents. Grandpa is in the cage getting a chicken and grandma was getting them by the neck. And then Grandma cut their heads off. We didn’t have enough money to buy a turkey. Grandma decided to make a chicken. I was dropping my snowcone. My sister was looking at the suffering chicken. Grandma left her coffee on a green chair by the tree. My grandma was trying to get the terrified chicken. The black dog was throwing saliva because he was starving. Then we decided to go inside. Then we cooked the chicken, and we had a nice Thanksgiving day. Even if we didn’t have a turkey.

In this story, *The Suffering Chicken*, written cooperatively by a small group of students, many of the elements of Spanish story structure can be seen. As teachers conferencing with young authors, we have important decisions to make about pointing out differences in organization while respecting the wonderful visual images and word choices in such a story.

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students' work, but equally important to remember that each individual is unique and brings his own experiences to literacy learning in school. While the different cultures in our classrooms need to be acknowledged and celebrated, there is more we need to do.

In *Scaffolding Language, Scaffolding Learning*, Pauline Gibbons calls for the explicit teaching of different patterns, or text types, for students who are learning in a second language or who are new to academic language. She believes in analyzing each genre of writing with students in order to give them a semantic map for studying it. In teaching writing, she asks teachers to model each type of writing for students, then construct a similar piece of writing with the group, and only then would she ask students to try writing a piece on their own. Gibbons suggests that models of reports, narratives, letters, etc., be posted in classrooms to help guide students' writing. Graphic organizers to structure writing and help with format are necessary. Rubrics let students know specific qualities of exemplary work and make expectations clear. While some teachers worry that explicit modeling will limit their students' imagination and autonomy, it in fact gives them a wider range of tools to use in making their own decisions about what form their writing will take.

The idea of cultural story patterns is also important when looking at student writing. While we might not know the traditional story structure for every student, we can be aware that what seems like a divergent story pattern may be caused by a culturally-influenced semantic map. We can point out the pattern in a specific genre of writing assigned, but we should be careful in judging a creative piece as "wrong" when it may simply reflect cultural differences. What if Sandra Sisneros's teachers had insisted she change her style? The wonderful book, *A House on Mango Street* might never have been written. Or Rudolfo Anaya's *Bless Me Ultima* without contradictions and digressions...? Different writing patterns are often what make our lives as readers so rich.

In all that we do, we must be aware of our students — where they began their journey, what experiences have shaped them, and how we can help them move forward. Culture is part of the mosaic, and many of our students have a foot in more than one culture and operate in more than one language. Part of our responsibility as educators is to help all of them live comfortably and productively in many worlds and cultures.

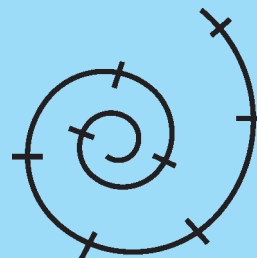
A Selection of Common Cultural Story Patterns

ENGLISH Linear construction:
 United States
 Topic ⇨ idea ⇨ idea ⇨ idea
 Britain
 Hint ⇨ hint ⇨ hint ⇨ conclusion

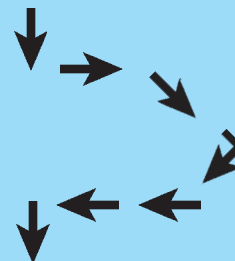
SEMITIC (Old Testament)
 Parallel construction of stories; the reader makes the connections:

Story...
 ⇨
 Story...
 ⇨
 Story...

SOME ASIAN LANGUAGES
 Circular story with eight hints:



SOME ROMANCE LANGUAGES
 Build up to a conclusion with digressions, rich detail, and elaborate language:



SOME AMERICAN INDIAN LANGUAGES
 Four major events, rich details, often a formulaic introduction and summary ending:

Opening...
 Event
 Event
 Event
 Event
 Ending

