EDUC 700 PROJECT:

POETRY AS A LANGUAGE OF LEARNING

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POETRY AS A LANGUAGE OF LEARNING

I. RATIONALE

Poetry infuses a curriculum with magic. It accesses experiential images stored in memory and focuses on these images through the filter of imagination, thus transforming them in personal and creative ways. Therein lies the value of poetry for the student. Since poetry is in essence metaphorical thinking it provides students with a bridge to connect representational thinking to language.

What pathway guided me to the field of poetry? As an educator I have asked myself the following question: "If my students were to leave my classroom with just one skill that will serve them for their entire lives, what would that one skill be?" After much inner dialog, I settled on the ability to communicate in written language. This ability is the one underlying skill that supercedes all other skills. It presupposes the ability to read and comprehend written text. If students cannot compose a letter, fill out a job application or write a research paper they will be at a disadvantage in today's world. To carry this thought further, as a teacher of students whose primary language is Spanish, perhaps the greatest service I can render my students is to guide them in writing the language of money and power. This may be the greatest service I can provide them, but it is also a great challenge that I face as an educator. By providing my students with the vehicle of poetry, I provide them with a vehicle to access the rich images of their personal world. As they gain experience in capturing the
images with language, they develop a sense of themselves as beings with something of value to share, and as beings that know how to use written language to communicate their thinking. In addition, the more I am able to learn about their inner world, the more I can facilitate their learning in all areas.

Many students have difficulty expressing themselves in written form. The notion of providing my students with ways to communicate their thinking intrigued me. After much reflection and research, and after observing what strategies students responded favorably to, I became interested in the area of poetry. The realm of poetry lies at the crossroads between the visual arts and literature. Most of my students enjoy visual arts, I wondered how I might draw some of the attention that was being directed towards visual arts into language arts. Initially, I observed that students enjoyed playing with language during poetry sessions. To be free of the conventions of the traditional writing assignment was a liberating experience for them and they enjoyed sharing their poems.

Thus, the purpose of this investigation: to collect evidence of two fourth grade students’ English and Spanish language development through the medium of poetry. I analyze poetic documents collected during English and Spanish language arts to determine if there is evidence of growth in my students ability to communicate in written language.
II. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE FOR THIS PROJECT

The theoretical background for this project is based upon the constructivist theory of how students learn. According to constructivism, we make sense of our world by making meaningful connections between new knowledge and prior knowledge (Brooks and Brooks, 1993). As the new knowledge is accreted to knowledge schemas that are already in place, these schemas become strengthened and our knowledge base becomes broader (Farnham-Diggory, 1992).

In a constructivist classroom the primary challenge of the teacher becomes one of creating an environment in which students are encouraged to reflect and explore. It is through posing their own questions and pursuing their own wonderings that students activate the neural pathways that strengthen knowledge schemas (Brooks and Brooks, 1993). In a constructivist environment, activities are based on primary sources and manipulative materials (Brooks and Brooks, 1993). The study of poetry as in this project is well suited for the constructivist classroom. Students will be exposed to original poems written by children and adults. Students will be encouraged to interact with poetry in a variety of ways, affording them the opportunity to make their own meaningful connections. Because poetry is concise, much is left unsaid. A poem can often be interpreted at many levels of meaning, and thus be enjoyed by groups of students at many different developmental levels. The quality of poetry produced by each child in the
constructivist classroom is valued because the teacher recognizes that each student is exactly where he or she needs to be in terms of his or her cognitive development (Brooks and Brooks, 1993).

The study of poetry can be adapted to accommodate different learning styles as suggested in Howard Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences. The linguistic learner can draw upon the capacity to use language to write or recite poetry (Armstrong, 1994). The logical-mathematical learner may enjoy the challenge of determining how to arrange the words of the poem in a pattern, (Armstrong, 1994) paying attention to line breaks and white space (Heard, 1989). The spatial learner may respond to graphic interpretations of poems as well as designing poems with visual impact, e.g., "headline poems", "found" poems (Dunning and Stafford, 1992), and "shape" poems (Graham, 1994). The emotional content of much poetry is excellent subject matter for the bodily-kinesthetic learner who may enjoy expressing ideas and feelings through creative interpretation (Armstrong, 1994). The natural rhythm of poetry, lyrical poems (songs), and poetry that is recited to the beat of musical instruments may appeal to the musical learner (Armstrong, 1994). Many poems are written for two voices, and many can be adapted to choral readings, giving students with interpersonal skill an opportunity to influence others to work together (Armstrong, 1994). Finally, poetry can be a vehicle for introspection and increased self-knowledge. This kind of poetry may benefit all students but may especially appeal to students with intrapersonal intelligence (Armstrong, 1994).
III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction: Poetry and Critical Thinking

Language classes, whether they be Spanish or English as a Second Language, should offer the student many and varied opportunities to develop a repertoire of strategies for language development (Maschler, 1990). Research suggests that the study of poetry employs many strategies that may make students more proficient language learners as well as developing their critical thinking skills (Maley and Duff, 1989; Maschler, 1990; Comstock, 1992; Lenz, 1992; Carroll and Wilson, 1993).

Poetry and the Cognitive Domain

A. Metaphorical Thinking

The thinking that enables us to expand our understanding or conceptual knowledge base is metaphorical in nature (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). In creating a metaphor, we link a previously acquired concept to a new concept based upon some perceived common element (Pugh, 1992). The interaction between the previously learned concept and the new concept creates new meaning or understanding (Fry, 1994). Metaphorical thinking essentially links the familiar with the unfamiliar, connecting understanding in one area to understanding in another area (Pugh, 1992). It is this transfer of meaning from the known to the unfamiliar that reflects the notion that the learner is a metaphorical thinker engaged in the construction of knowledge (Pugh, 1992).

Poetry is rich in metaphors. It is about creating the verbal
link between the word and that image in the mind’s eye. Poetry goes beyond defining an object or a feeling or a memory; it gives us a connotation of that object, feeling or memory so that we relate to it on a personal level (McKim and Steinbergh, 1983, 1992).

Poetry helps students develop critical thinking skills through the use of metaphor (Claggett, 1992; Pugh, 1992; Carroll and Wilson, 1993). A metaphor is the transfer of a term from one object to another on the basis of a perceived similarity. As students become familiar with the use of metaphoric thinking as a bridge to connecting the familiar with the unfamiliar, they can transfer this ability to other areas of the curriculum to facilitate their construction of meaning. Poetry can be used as a vehicle for understanding in mathematics, science, and social studies (Goldberg, 1995; Chatton, 1993).

B. Memorization

Learning a second language or expanding vocabulary in the native language depends upon making meaningful connections to existing knowledge as discussed earlier. Poetry is well suited for making these connections because new words or concepts in a poem can attach to known words or concepts through several avenues such as rhyme, rhythm, or metaphor (Maschler, 1990). Language learning therefore depends to some extent on the memorization of new phonemes, combinations of phonemes, words, patterns of words, and the like (Maschler, 1990).

When presented in an enjoyable and rich context, memorization
can be an activity that leads to student learning (Hughes, 1958; Painter, 1970; Maschler, 1990). Meaningful memorization of poetry in the second language may help the student integrate new information with existing information. By memorizing a poem instead of isolated bits of information, students are learning larger, connected chunks of information with greater potential for integration into existing knowledge schemas (Maschler, 1990).

Aspects of poetry which make a poem easy to memorize are: metaphors which draw the students' attention to images, rhyme and rhythm which draw attention to sound, shape poems and acrostic poems which draw attention to spelling, and the emotional quality of a poem which evokes an emotional response in the reader (Maschler, 1990).

Memorization comes easily when a student identifies with a poem and when he hears the poem frequently. When a poem is recited by heart, rather than read, eye contact with the audience is made possible, thus increasing the audience's engagement and appreciation of the poem (Painter, 1970). For second language learners that memorize poems, the rhyme, rhythm and repetition that is built into poetry may improve their second language fluency (Ford, 1992). Several studies indicate that children of all grade levels prefer to listen to narrative poems that include humor and rhyme (Chatton, 1993). These would be excellent poems to encourage children to memorize.

Rote and meaningless repetition of facts is associated with traditional classroom practice. Educators today avoid any activity
that suggests that students mindlessly memorize information (Painter, 1970; Maschler, 1990). On the other hand, the press, government, and business constantly remind us that the American educational system is failing to teach students basic facts. Students are unfamiliar with memorizing and unsure of how to study for a test where they might have to memorize dates, names or important events. If they were encouraged to memorize poetry for their own enjoyment (and for their language development), and felt confident that they could do so, they might be inclined to memorize facts in other areas of the curriculum.

C. Student Anthologies

For a second language learner, the process of copying a self-selected poem into a poetry anthology may serve as a bridge to writing in the second language (Goldberg, 1995). Before a student copies a poem, he must read the poem to himself, reflect on the meaning of the poem (analysis) and then share it with a classmate. After reading and sharing, the student must make a choice whether to include the poem in his anthology or not. Either way he is evaluating the poem. If he decides to copy the poem, the student must then interact with the second language by paying attention to its orthography, syntax and punctuation (Goldberg, 1995), all of which actively promote language development.

Poetry and the Affective Domain

Poetry offers immediate appeal to children because of its play value. Through play, children make sense of the world around them (Goldberg, 1995). Close behind the narrative poem in appeal to
children is the limerick and the humorous poem (Ford, 1990; Chatton, 1993). The sense of playing with words, the sense that there is a riddle to be figured out, the way the language in poetry may be lyrical or a tongue-twister, the charm of the nursery rhyme, all hold great interest for children.

When writing their own poems, all students and particularly second language learners, can experience a sense of freedom from the conventions of language. They do not have to concern themselves with punctuation, grammar or unfinished sentences (Goldberg, 1995). They don’t have to fill a whole page with writing. Because students generally enjoy poetry it may reduce their level of anxiety and contribute to their learning success (Goldberg, 1995). As students experience more success as learners, their self-esteem and their motivation to learn is strengthened (Goldberg, 1995).

Poetry is often about feelings and may speak to the reader at an intense emotional level (Heard, 1989). Many children have experienced the traumas of violence, drug and physical abuse, neglect, separation, and poverty. Often these children have no strategies to explore their inner worlds; they have no outlet to express the emotions that result from such traumas. This is potentially another function for poetry. It can serve to initiate a healing process for the student, making visible such heavy emotions as buried sadness or fear (Hammond, 1993; Cecil, 1994). In a more positive light, poetry may also serve as a vehicle to express joy, elation or surprise. In this sense, writing poetry
can be empowering.

In addition to making students more proficient learners of language, poetry is an important literary form which enhances the language curriculum. Research indicates that many elementary school teachers often neglect to include poetry in their language programs (Ford, 1992; Cecil, 1994). In recent studies it was determined that only three percent of the literature taught to fourth graders is poetry (Atwell, 1991). The key to impacting positively on students' concepts and attitudes about poetry is daily exposure to good poems from an enthusiastic teacher (Ford, 1992; Comstock, 1992). Poetry may well instill in children a love of language which will serve them throughout their lives.

IV. THE POETRY PROJECT

For the purposes of this descriptive study, two Limited English Proficient students working successfully at grade level were selected.

Dámaris

Dámaris has been enrolled in bilingual programs in Oceanside and Vista School Districts since kindergarten. She is a smiling, polite, cheerful child who exudes self confidence. On her poetry survey, in answer to the question "In your opinion, what is poetry?" Dámaris wrote: "Poetry is something beauty and funny. Poetry is like rhymes," and "I recognize poetry because it rhymes."

Looking back at the journal she kept at an earlier date during Instructional Block I, I observed that Dámaris had written many
one-liner poems that rhyme and are humorous. Here are some examples of her early poems:

La medicina

El doctor me dio una medicina que sabe a gallina.

The medicine

The doctor gave me a medicine that tastes like chicken.

Mi tía Sofía

Mi tía Sofía tiene patas de gallina.

My aunt Sofia

My aunt Sofia has the legs of a chicken.

During this first instructional period, Dámaris also wrote a revealing piece about her garden. It is revealing because from it we learn where she gets the inspiration for some of her poems written later on during the Poetry Project of Instructional Block II.

Mi lugar especial

Cuando yo vivía en una casa yo tenía un jardín que tenía muchas flores. Y luego mi papá quiso que nos moviéramos a unos apartamentos. Yo me sentía muy feliz cuando vivíamos en una casa. Me gustaba oler las flores y tachar los manzanos y los girasoles. Mi papá se quería mover porque los apartamentos tenían alberca. También los apartamentos tenían un balcón grande. También se oían los pájaros cantando. A mí me gustaba mucho los manzanos y la miel de los árboles. Me gustaba mucho mi jardín.

My special place

When I lived in a house I had a garden that had many flowers. And then my dad wanted us to move to some apartments. I felt very happy when we lived in the house. I used to smell the flowers and touch the apple trees and sunflowers. My dad wanted to move because the apartments had a pool. Also the apartments had a big porch. Also you could hear the birds singing. I liked very much the apple trees and the honey from the trees. I like my garden.
Dámaris’ love of nature and appreciation of beauty that she revealed during her garden piece surfaces in her first poem entitled "Cuando estoy feliz y cuando estoy triste." Dámaris writes:

Cuando estoy feliz me siento como una mariposa del bosque. Cuando estoy enojada me siento como una pantera negra que está en la selva. Cuando estoy triste me siento como una iguana del desierto. Cuando estoy sola me siento como una flor de la selva.

When I am happy I feel like a butterfly in the woods. When I am angry I feel like a black panther in the jungle. When I am sad I feel like an iguana of the desert. When I am alone I feel like a flower in the jungle.

Wondering about her choice of imagery in this poem, I am struck by the imaginative imagery of the last line. Flowers suggest beauty, while the jungle suggests a wild, perhaps dark and frightening place. The image of a single exotic orchid amidst the green exuberant foliage of the jungle comes to mind. Dámaris seems to add a mysterious touch to her poem with this last line.

Poetic imagery is a language of its own, a language within a language. Dámaris’ imagination is again apparent in her use of vivid poetic imagery which appears in a Haiku poem she wrote during the Project:

Otoño
Corazones bonitos en el mar.
Hojas marineras color rojo, verde, y amarillo.
Soldaditos yendo al yacusi.

Fall
Beautiful hearts in the sea.
Sailing leaves the color red, green and yellow.
Little soldiers going to the jacuzzi.

She explained to me that when she wrote this poem she envisioned little schools of fish all wearing the same uniform
going to play in the warm sea. She entitled the poem "Otoño" because she knew that Haiku is about nature.

I noticed that Dámaris often uses color in her poems: "Hojas marineras color rojo, verde y amarillo," (Sailing leaves the color red, green and yellow), and "cuando estoy feliz soy de color rojo ardiente" (when I am happy I am the burning color red), and "cuando estoy triste soy un coyote de color gris" (when I am sad I am a grey coyote). I wonder if this indicates that she is actively visualizing, or imaging, before writing. She added color to her poems written with random words selected from bowls full of interesting words:

Zumbido con miel hecho de oro.
Abrir y cerrar de ojos.
Oro y tranquilidad.
Chancleta rosada de oro azul.
Cielo azul estrellado dorado.

Buzzing with honey made of gold.
Closing and opening the eyes.
Gold and tranquility.
Pink slipper of blue gold.
Blue, starry golden sky.

In the third week of the Poetry Project I introduced the topic of color poems by reading Hailstones and Halibut Bones by Mary O’Neill. Many students incorporated some of the images of these poems into their own color poems, but Dámaris was the only student who added a little introduction to her color poem and a little conclusion to her poem. She wrote as an introduction:

Los colores

Los colores son los colores májicos de todo el mundo.

The colors are the magic colors of the whole world.
Then she proceeded to show how colors are everywhere in the world:

El rojo es un corazón.
El rosita es la palma de tu mano.
El blanco es el humo.
El azul son las nubes.
El negro es la noche.
El amarillo es el sol.
El morado es tu sangre y el gris es el tronco de un árbol.

Red is a heart.
Pink is the palm of your hand.
White is the smoke.
Blue is the clouds.
Black is the night.
Yellow is the sun.
Purple is your blood and grey is the trunk of a tree.

This was followed by a conclusion to the color poem:

Los colores son bonitos si tú quieres usar uno trata de hacerlo.
Te gustará.

Colors are beautiful and if you want to use one do so.
You will like it.

This seems to be evidence of original thinking because she was the only student that did not simply write, for example, "Red is a heart; Blue is a cloud; Yellow is the sun etc. It may also show evidence that Dámaris sees herself as a poet writing to an audience.

Judging from the following poem, Dámaris also seems to be attending to the sound of language when she writes poetry:

El perro y el gato

"Juau, juau," dice el perro.
"Miau, miau," dice el gato.
"Sh, sh, sh," dicen los dos.
"Cállense, cállense, cállense," dice toda la gente.

The dog and the cat

"Bow wow," said the dog.
"Meow, meow," said the cat.
"Sh, sh, sh," said the two.
"Be quiet, be quiet, be quiet," said all the people.

In this poem, one can almost hear the animals talking to each other. When asked why she wrote this particular dialog poem, she said that she wrote it because cats and dogs are noisy animals. It is interesting to note that Dámaris wrote the above poem before I presented the notion of onomatopoeic poetry. She appeared to be already attending to the sounds of language even before I introduced the idea of sounds in poetry as part of the Poetry Project. I was also struck by her facility with capturing poetic images with few words. This was a lesson I emphasized often during the poetry project, and Dámaris seemed to do this with ease. I noted from these examples that Dámaris has shown growth as a poet during the Poetry Project.

Leonel

Leonel is an outgoing student who has been attending Vista schools since kindergarten. Enthusiasm for learning is one of Leonel’s charming traits as evidenced by the gusto with which he threw himself into the Poetry Project. His was always the first hand up when time came to share poetry, to read poetry or to ask questions about poetry.

Let’s take a look at a sample of Leonel’s writing from the very end of Instructional Block I. Like Dámaris, Leonel wrote about his special place:

Mi lugar pribado

Mi lugar pribado es el parque porque puedo estar solo con los conejos me yebo mi agua de limon porque ase mucho calor melebo mi maquina por si me sale un oso mi maquina ase que el sea mi amigo embeses se me olvida mi maquina de animales y luego viene el oso
mi amigo. pelea con el otro animal. el parque está lleno de animales.

My Private Place

My private place is the park because I can be alone with the rabbits I take my lemon water because it is very hot I take my machine in case of a bear my machine makes it become my friend sometimes I forget to take my animal machine and soon my bear friend comes. he fights with another animal. the park is full of animals.

In this writing sample written during Instructional Block I, Leonel displays a preoccupation with many of the typical concerns of young boys, bears, wild animals, machines. Compare that piece of writing to one of Leonel's early poems written during the Poetry Project:

Mi mamá

Cariñosas, linda,
Comprensiva, amorosa,
Mamá huele como un perfume de rosa.
Le gusta bailar.
Se preocupa por mí y por mis hermanos.

My mother

Affectionate, beautiful,
understanding, loving,
Mother smells like the perfume of a rose.
She likes to dance.
She worries about me and my brothers and sisters.

In the second piece of writing, Leonel more clearly communicates his inner world where his mother is important. In this poem, we are able to observe the way many boys from the Latin culture are so open about their feelings towards their mothers. In my experience, this kind of writing would be very unlikely to come from the average Anglo boy of this age.
Though Spanish dominant and Limited English Proficient, Leonel, unlike many LEPs, is highly motivated to write in English. A unique strategy that Leonel used in writing poetry was to translate into English models that I wrote during the Spanish portion of the Poetry Project. He would then give the poem his own twist. This seems like a clever strategy for English language development which Leonel used at first to help him compose poems. It is a way to work with English syntax using a familiar structure in Spanish.

Here is my model of a poem used during Spanish Language Arts.

Yo quisiera bucear en el lindo azul del mar.
Yo quisiera ir al planeta Venus con Mickey Mouse.
Yo quisiera ir a Francia a vivir en un castillo.
Yo quisiera que Rabin nunca muriera.

Here is Leonel's English version of this poem:

I wish going diving on the blue sea, I wish I could go to the planet Venus with Mickey Mouse. I wish I could go to Francia and buy a castlo, I wish mi father and mother never dyng.

In his translation, Leonel changed the last line to say that he wished his mother and father would never die. It impressed me that Leonel thought up this strategy on his own. As the Project progressed I experienced many an occasion when Leonel would ask me to spell his ideas out in English so that he could write poems in English, even during Spanish Language Arts. For example during "Mentiras" (Lies) which we wrote during Spanish Language Arts, Leonel composed this poem in English:

I culd jump to Pluton.
I was the first men that step on all the planets.
I am the famous persen on the world.
In addition to the lines mentioned in his "Lies" poem, there are many other instances where evidence of Leonel’s imagination and humor are apparent. Lines such as "My brain is like an elevator that my ideas go up and down," and "cuando estoy enojado me pongo como un tomate muy rojo," (when I get mad I get red like a tomato) are charming lines taken from other poems written during the course of the Poetry Project.

His dialog poem also suggests a vivid imagination:

The Sun and The Moon

The sun said: "I need a bath and then I’m drinking a coca cola to cool down."
"But I need hot fire," said the moon.
Then the sun said: "I will trade hot and you trade me cold."

When I asked him what he was thinking when he wrote this poem, Leonel mentioned the beginning of a filmstrip we had seen during the Project which illustrated Lewis Carroll’s poem "The Walrus and The Carpenter". It begins with an interaction between the moon and the sun regarding the sun having come out in the middle of the night, much to the chagrin of the moon. The humor in that nonsense poem appeared to spark Leonel’s imagination when he wrote this dialog poem. Leonel and I both agreed that his poem also reminds us of a popular coca-cola television commercial.

Leonel shows evidence of critical thinking during a discussion we had recently about intelligence. I asked the students which they thought was more important, the mind or the heart. Leonel was very adamant that it was the heart because only the heart loves. It struck me that Leonel was expressing the attitude of the Latin American culture which places a high value on feelings. Further
evidence of the Latin American mindset is evident in his poem entitled "A que se parecen los colores" (To what are the colors like).

Rojo se parece al amor.
Azul se parece a la alma.
Verde se parece al campo por la mañana.
Morado es como la flor.
Anaranjado se parece a la calabaza.
Amarillo se parece al tesoro.
Blanco se parece a una margarita.

Red looks like love.
Blue looks like the soul.
Green looks like the country in the morning.
Purple looks like a flower.
Orange looks like a pumpkin.
Yellow looks like a treasure.
White looks like a daisy.

While all of Leonel’s images are interesting, I have never had a student who referred to the soul. I wondered, therefore, from what philosophical perspective Leonel was writing this line.

V. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This descriptive study took place over a period of five weeks in October and November of 1995 at Bobier Elementary School in Vista, California. Bobier Elementary School is a year-round school located in the northwestern section of the city of Vista, a community of approximately 70,000. The student body at Bobier numbers 1,079 students, with a 63% Hispanic population. The school community has a high transiency rate which is due to many families connected with Camp Pendleton, a large military base about six miles from the school. Other families of the school are in the low to middle income brackets and have a tendency to move to other
locations. The parents of the majority of students are employed in semi-skilled positions, with some parents holding professional positions requiring college degrees. Both parents of many children are employed.

The study was conducted in a bilingual fourth grade classroom with 30 Hispanic students ranging from those recently arrived from Oaxaca, Mexico, to those who have been attending Bobier since kindergarten. As is typical in this educational setting, the students are in varying stages of Spanish and English language development. The school year in this year-round school is divided into four instructional period. The Poetry Project took place during English as a Second Language and during Spanish language arts of the second instructional block. The goal of this project was to document growth in students’ language development.

Introduction of the Poetry Project to the Class

To get a sense of my students’ prior experience with poetry, I gave them a survey before launching into our study. Three questions were asked on the survey:

1. In your opinion, what is poetry?
2. What experience have you had with poetry in school?
3. How do you recognize a poem? What makes a poem different from other forms of writing?

The survey was given to stimulate their thinking about poetry and to sound their knowledge of poetry. From their comments on the survey, it was clear that they were unfamiliar with poetry.

After the survey, the notion was introduced that poetry can
be about beautiful special feelings and things like love, butterflies and sunsets or about commonplace, ordinary, everyday things like a pencil, a pebble or waking up in the morning. Examples of poems about everyday things were read as well as examples of poems to show them that poetry doesn’t even have to rhyme. In this initial session, the collection of over 100 poetry books in Spanish and English, assembled from various libraries and purchased with classroom library funds, was shared with the students (See Appendix I). The concept of poetry anthologies was introduced by showing several anthologies and also by showing them my own personal anthology of fairy poems. The students were told that they would be compiling their own personal anthologies of poems that they composed and poems that they copied from the poetry books.

Understanding what poetry anthologies are, the characteristics of different anthologies and how each anthology is organized is important to becoming literate in poetry (Heard, 1989; Duthie and Zimet, 1992). When students create their own anthologies, they exercise the critical thinking skills of analysis, design and evaluation. Students may select a title for their anthology and write an index and table of contents. These activities promote organizational skill (Duthis and Zimet, 1992).

During the first sessions I also outlined the procedures for the Poetry Project so that students would know exactly what was expected of them during our poetry sessions. Here are the procedures I determined to be important for the smooth functioning
of the project:

Procedures for the Poetry Project

- When finished writing a poem, read it to a peer or to the teacher.
- Accept feedback; revise poem.
- Re-copy poem and illustrate finished poem.
- Write another poem or copy poems for student anthology.

The procedures were reviewed often during the beginning of the Project.

As I collected student work, I sought common themes from which I would be able to construct a picture of how my students were using poetry to write meaningfully. Writing that is meaningful to students may show evidence of humor (as humor is very attractive to this age group), evidence of higher level thinking which indicates that they are exploring ideas in original ways and evidence of imaginative thinking, which means playing with meanings, imagery or the sounds of language. Growth in English as a Second Language was an integral part of this goal.

Strategies for Inspiring Students to Write Poetry

Several strategies were used to inspire students to write compelling poetry. One such strategy was to expose the students on a daily basis to a wide range of quality poetry written by adults and by other children (Comstock, 1992; Heard, 1989). Poetry written by other children motivates children to write, and poetry written by adults for children can be enjoyable for students. Poetry written by adults for adults is also necessary for the
students to cultivate an ear and a love of the language. The subject matter of the poetry may be complex for young students, but by reading poetry written for adults, the teacher is creating a poetic zone of proximal development (Comstock, 1992). This concept is parallel to the Vygotskian concept of zone of proximal development which refers to the area between what children can do on their own and what they can do with the help of others (Vygotsky, 1986). The poetic zone of proximal development refers to the area between poetry that is easy to understand because it was written specifically for (e.g., the poetry of Jack Prelutsky) or by children and complex adult poetry (e.g., the poetry of Emily Dickenson) (Comstock, 1992).

After students had been immersed in poetry, and before beginning the actual writing of their own poem, I allowed a few minutes for students to reflect before writing. They were encouraged to reflect by visualizing their thoughts on their mental screen (Hammond, 1993). Visualization is the ability to bring forth images and hold them in short-term memory while reflecting upon them or manipulating and/or transforming them in some way (Roth, 1992). Suggesting the use of a mental screen provides a backdrop for imaging.

After allowing a few minutes for visualizing, the student was ready to begin the pre-writing process. This was done by creating a web or list of images, with associated sensory impressions and feelings. Webbing makes visible an invisible process of related images, associations, experiences from which the student may draw
to find subject matter for a poem (Carroll and Wilson, 1993). For example, before modeling the writing of a poem about Halloween, the students and I created a web of images which included such vocabulary words as ghosts, Pocahontas, Trick or Treat, haunted houses, scary and the like. Webbing was an especially important pre-writing activity for ESL because it provided students with new vocabulary words as well as familiar words correctly spelled that they could use in their poems.

Access to dictionaries in Spanish and English, Spanish and English thesauri and bilingual English/Spanish, Spanish/English dictionaries were also readily available to assist students as they grappled with the task of finding vivid language for their poems (Heard, 1989). For second language learners, poetry scaffolds were used to make poetry writing less threatening and more accessible (Cecil, 1994). A poetry scaffold is similar to a cloze activity where the student fills in the blanks with his own language.

There were many other useful strategies that helped the students write poetry during the Poetry Project. Word games, lists of words, the use of real objects, taking on the persona of objects or things from nature, pictures, family, toys, pets, sports, sounds, dreams, monsters, holidays were some of the many ideas that were used as the subject matter of poetry.

During the Poetry Project the poetry writing assignments were grouped into five themes for Spanish Language Arts and reflected also in the ESL portion of the day. These themes were: self; family and friends; how we change and grow; lies, wishes and
dreams; animals, nature; and playing with language. Since the Project took place during the Holiday Season, holidays were a theme for many of the poems written in English. Nursery rhymes in English was also a theme used only during ESL. Please refer to Appendix II for an outline of the actual poetry assignments used during the course of the Project.

A poetry gathering took place during the course of the Poetry Project. The gathering was a forum for students to share their copied poems, their composed poems, and to read poetry to a first grade bilingual class. The collaborating first grade teacher had also incorporated poetry into her language arts curriculum. They were working with simple rhymes, and the teacher was intrigued with the idea of extending their study of poetry with the free verse style of poetry.

The format of our gathering was simple (See Appendix III for a copy of the event program.) First I buddied a fourth grader with a first grader, then they all sat with their buddies and listened while I read a poem entitled The Keys to My Kingdom: A Poem in Three Languages illustrated by Lydia Dabcovich. Following this, I invited partners to share the poetry folders each student had brought to the event. It was charming to watch the initially shy first graders warm to the attention of their big "buddy." The responsible, self-assured air the fourth grade partner assumed was also a treat to watch. They read poems from their folders and also poems from our poetry collection that had been set up in a corner of the cafeteria. After about 20 minutes of the buzzing and hum of
reading and sharing, the students had cookies and juice. To wind up the event, I had students volunteer to come up to the microphone and recite or read a favorite poem. Both first grade and fourth grade students volunteered to share, and while they were up there, their audience listened carefully and exhibited appropriate behavior. I remember fondly the sight of Angel standing proudly at the microphone reading "Star light, star bright, first star I see tonight, I wish I may I wish I might, have the wish I wish tonight" to an admiring audience. The event was an exciting experience that all students seemed to enjoy. Everybody went home with a smile on their faces after the poetry gathering!

VI. CONCLUSION

Poetry books are being returned to the libraries, personal anthologies are being assembled, anthology covers are being gaily decorated, and charts with poems are being taken down from the walls as the Poetry Project draws to an end.

One exciting outcome of the Project was the anthology that I compiled of the students’ favorite poems. I asked the students to select their favorite poems for a class anthology, and then collectively we picked out a title from their list of suggested titles. "Poemas de pajaritos" (Poems of Little Birds) struck me as the perfect title! The image of birds chirping noisily while perched in the high branches of trees, is consistent with the sense I have of my students perched at their desks chirping cheerily to each other and to me — it was an irresistible image! Irresistible
too are the sentiments and humor that shine in their poems (See Appendix IV).

The language development, the enthusiasm for poetry, and the poetry anthologies were important outcomes of the Poetry Project. However, this too was my implicit goal - to give my students a gift they can enjoy forever - the gift of the love of poetry.
References


Fillmer, H.T., May 1990. *Imagery, A Neglected Correlate of Reading Instruction.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Reading Association, Atlanta, GA.


Graham, Joan Bransfield, Nov./Dec. 1994, "It’s A Shape Poem", *Instructor.*


APPENDIX I

POETRY BOOKS USED IN THE POETRY PROJECT

Poetry books borrowed from California State University, San Marcos, Centro de libros en español para niños y adolescentes:

Solano, Enrique, *Poesías para niños.*

Poetry Books borrowed from the Escondido Public Library:
Kennedy, X.J. and Dorothy M. Kennedy, 1982. *Knock at a Star.*
Boston, Toronto: Little, Brown and Company.

Poetry books borrowed from San Diego Public Library Children’s Room:
Lopera, José María Garrido, Juan Ramón Jiménez y los Niños. Madrid, Spain: Editorial Everest.
Ruiz, Clarisa, 1987. Palabras que me gustan. Bogotá, Colombia:
Carvajal, S.A.

Poetry books borrowed from Bobier School:

Poetry books from Louisa Schofield's personal collection:
Dabcovich, Lydia. The Keys to My Kingdom: A Poem in Three Languages.
Edens, Cooper, 1979. If You're Afraid of the Dark: Remember the Night Rainbow. La Jolla, California: Green Tiger Press.
Neruda, Pablo, 1974. The Book of Questions. Port Townsend,
Washington: Copper Canyon Press.
APPENDIX II

Poetry Project - Week 1, Day 1 10/30/95

- Poetry Survey

Read Arrow Book of Poetry, pg. 8 and Viorst, pg. 36.

English - Mini lesson: "What is poetry?"
- Present poetry collection.
- Introduce the idea of a student anthology. Show my own fairy anthology.
- Allow time for students to begin browsing through the collection and gather ideas for their own anthology. Anthologies will also include poems students write.
- Introduce the idea of a student selected each day to present a poem to the class. This student will copy the poem on chart paper, illustrate it, and the teacher will make copies of the poem for the class anthology.

Spanish - Mini lesson: "Poetry doesn’t always have to rhyme, poetry can be about everyday things.
Poem model from Ode to Common Things by Neruda (refer to lesson plan).

Week 1, Day 2 10/31/95

Read from collection of Halloween poems.

English - Mini lesson: Poems are perfect for holidays.
- Visualize first then wordstorm ideas associated with holidays of this time of the year.

Poem model: Halloween
- Write a group poem using words from the wordstorm and following the scaffold which will be written on an overhead transparency.
- Student may work on anthologies after they have written one or two poems. They may also illustrate their favorite written poem. Work on anthologies is on-going!

Spanish - Mini lesson: Where do we get our ideas for writing poems? From common things and also from our experiences.

Poem model: Yo recuerdo (List Poems, pg. 32; Cecil pg. 38). Note that it is a form of poetry called a list poem and lists memories in no particular order.
- Visualize earliest memory. Then write a group poem of the Room 15's earliest memories.

- Each student then may write a list poem of six memories. Either alternating good and bad memories or just good memories.

Week 1, Day 3 11/1/95

Begin all poetry sessions by reading selections of poetry related to the topic of the lesson.

English - Mini lesson: Our own bodies may be sources of ideas for poems, or we may create new creatures much like the beasts from mythology.

Poem model: (Fagan, pg. 68; McKim, pg. 49)

- Each student visualizes what they might compare their body to. They can write about themselves or they can work in groups of three and write a group poem in which they create a fantastic animal.

Spanish - Mini lesson: Our feelings may be the source for ideas for poems. Feelings come from things about which we feel strongly.

Poem model: (McKim, pg. 52)

- Students visualize what they are like when they are happy, and what they are like when they are sad. Students write a poem sing the scaffold, "cuando estoy feliz soy como" and "cuando estoy triste soy como..."

Week 1, Day 4 11/2/95

English - Mini lesson: We form special relationships with the students in our classroom. They may be sources of poems.

Poem model: Symmetrical Bios (Cecil, pg. 88) or Group History (Maschler, pg. 22).

- Group write a symmetrical bio using Mr. Lacey as a model.

- Project a transparency with the symmetrical bio scaffold.

- Students write bios of each other.

Spanish - Mini lesson: Our memories of our neighborhood can be a source for a poem. Continue for two days.
Poem model: (Dunning, pg. 95, McKim, pg. 66)
- Follow Dunning's plan (draw a map of the neighborhood, answer questions regarding our neighborhood, write a paragraph based on answers and delete excess verbage.)

Week 1, Day 5 11/3/95

English: All students work on anthologies.

Spanish - Mini lesson: Refer to Heard's notes on revising. Also refer Carroll, pg. 129 on strategies to shape poetry.

Show the children how to peer coach for improved quality of their poetry.

Continue with Day 4's plan.

Week 2, Day 1 11/6/95

Theme for English: Nursery Rhymes, Limericks, Tongue Twisters
Jump Rope Rhymes

Mini lesson: Nursery rhymes are the first form of poetry that children are exposed to. Show video.

Group read three nursery rhymes that have been written on chart paper.

Distribute copies of most popular nursery rhymes for children to copy and illustrate.

Theme for Spanish: Lies, Wishes and Dreams

Spanish mini lesson: Everyone wishes for something he or she doesn't have. (Cecil, pg. 18; Maley and Duff, 115, Fagan, pg. 105).

Poem model: Viorst, pg. 4.

Week 2, Day 2 11/7/95

Group read the same nursery rhymes.

English mini-lesson: Group dramatization of a poem from Mother Goose (Louise Thistle or Choral Speaking) using musical instruments.

Week 2, Day 3  11/8/95

English mini-lesson: What is a limerick? Read samples of limericks from various limerick books.

- Give students first line of a limerick have them guess the second line. (Maley and Duff, pg. 49)
- Use a limerick for Jumbled Lines (Maley and Duff, pg. 41).
- Write their own limerick (Maley and Duff, pg. 125).

Spanish - mini lesson: Sometimes it is OK to tell a lie. (Fagan, pg. 107).

Poem model: Fagan, pg. 107

- Students work in groups of four to write outrageous lies of eight lines.

Week 2, Day 4  11/9/95

English: Read Jumping Rope rhymes and Tongue Twisters.

Write more limericks and have students practice for a tongue twisters contest.

Spanish - Dreams can be a source of poetry. Dreams have vivid imagery. Dream Write One, pg. 53 of Dunning and Stafford.

Word Bowl Game.

Note: Prepare brown paper bags for Monday.

Week 3, Day 1  11/13/95

Theme: Nature, Animals, Vegetables

Read Japanese Poetry by Children.

English - Mini lesson: Vivid imagery is necessary to paint pictures with words (Heard, pg. 65). Show examples of imagery in Haiku (The Haiku Handbook, pg. 267).

- Visualize favorite season. Wordstorm etc. refer to Cecil, pg. 94.
Use paper bags on which to write finished Haikus.

Spanish - Mini lesson: Showing not telling, using vivid language. Use realia from my nature bowl. Personification of objects (McKim, pg. 72).

Poem model: McKim pg. 74.

- Visualize an object from nature (seed pod, flower, insect). Wordstorm images after visualizing. Write using the persona of the object.

Week 3, Day 2 11/14/95

English - Mini lesson: Introduce the idea of a Friday Afternoon Poetry Gathering with first grade. Explain that the students will perform a group dramatization then with pair off with first grade to show them their anthologies and read poetry to them. Announce that we will serve cookies and milk. Ask for volunteers to bring food.

- Practice again the dramatization of the earlier Mother Goose for our Friday Afternoon Gathering.

Mini lesson, continued: Animal Alphabets (Cecil, pg. 98)

Poem Model: Cecil, pg. 98.

- Groups of 8 students collaborate on writing their own Animal/Plant/Vegetable/Mineral Alphabet. Use big sheets of chart paper and the dictionary as reference.

Spanish - Mini lesson: Continue with the idea of a being from nature as persona.

Poem model: Select another example from McKim.

Week 3, Day 3 11/15/95

English:

- Practice again the dramatization of the earlier Mother Goose for our Friday Afternoon Gathering.

- Continue working on animal alphabets.

Spanish - Mini lesson: Read The Sailor's Book to introduce the concept of metaphors. Show an example of a mandala and tell the students they will be drawing their own personal mandalas. Follow the lesson as outlined on page 14 of Drawing Your Own Conclusions.
Week 3, Day 4 11/16/95

- Practice the dramatization of the earlier Mother Goose for our Friday Afternoon Gathering.
- Work on anthologies.

Spanish - Sun/Shadow Mandalas

Week 3, Day 5

English:
- Work on anthologies, write a new poem using any of the ideas we have studies, revise a poem written during an earlier lesson.
- Prepare for Poetry Gathering.

Spanish - Finish Sun/Shadow Mandalas.

POETRY GATHERING WITH FIRST GRADE STUDENTS 1 - 2 P.M.

Week 4, Day 1  11/20/95

THEME: Word Play

English - Mini lesson: Wordshapes (Maley and Duff, pg. 131; ESL conference).
- After students have written some wordshapes of their own, they may use the Holiday scaffold and wordstorm Thanksgiving.


Week 4, Day 2  11/21/95

English - Mini lesson: Dictapome and Alliteration (Maley and Duff, pg. 135).


Week 4, Day 3  11/22/95

English - Mini lesson: Place Alphabet (Maley, pg. 147; Cecil, pg. 104).

Spanish - Mini lesson: Dialog poem (El libro, pg. 20). Student may create a cartoon poem with their dialog poem.
Week 5, Day 1  11/27/95

THEME: Dialogue Poems, Recipes, Poems of Instruction, Onomatopoeia, Colors

English - Mini lesson: Dialogue Poems (Dunning, pg. 157; Maley, pg. 77). Suggest that students write dialogs for characters in Island of Blue Dolphin.

Spanish - Mini lesson: Dialogo (El libro de la escritura, pg. 20).

Week 5, Day 2  11/28/95

English - Mini lesson: Read Arnold Adoff Eats, suggest students write similar poems instructing how to make something.

Read Keys to the Kingdom (poem in three languages)

Spanish - Mini lesson: Dialog poem between English and Spanish (El libro, pg. 28) and Translation (El libro, pg.30). Consider having students actually translate some poems into English or Spanish.

Week 5, Day 3  11/29/95

English - Mini lesson: Poem of Instruction, read To Make the Portrait of a Bird. Suggest that a group of students translate poem to Spanish and illustrate it to make a book. (Fagan, pg. 120) Other students write How to poems.

Spanish - Mini lesson: Colors as a source of poetic inspiration, read Hailstones and Halibut Bones. (Maley, pg.165)

Week 5, Day 4  11/30/95

English - Mini lesson: Color in Cecil, pg. 28.

Spanish - Mini lesson: Sound in Cecil, pg. 130.

Week 5, Day 5  12/1/95

English: Group poem Rayford’s Song. Consider allowing groups of students to select their own poem to dramatize.

Spanish: Free Write. Consider allowing groups of students to select poem from the Spanish Poesia coral to practice for presentation at next weeks Poetry Gathering.
un evento poético

PROGRAMA PARA 17-11-95
Escuela Bobier

1. La bienvenida.
2. La presentación de compañeros.
3. Lectura de “Las llaves de mi reino.”
4. Compartir poemas.
5. Refrescos y galletas.
Poemas de Pajaritos
cuarto grado
Escuela Bobier
INTRODUCCION

La poesía es el arte de decir un mundo de sentimiento con pocas palabras.

Esta antología de poemas fue escrita por alumnos de cuarto grado. Los poemas fluyen de sus almas y se les ofrecen a sus padres, hermanos, abuelos y amigos.

Es un regalo muy especial para compartir y leer juntos.

¡Qué disfruten!

Maestra Schofield
diciembre de 1995
Escuela Bobier
Cuando estoy feliz
Soy un conejo que se encontró
Un montón de zanahorias.

Cuando estoy triste
Soy un tigre enojado.

Cuando estoy feliz
Soy el color blanco de rayos.
Cuando estoy triste
Soy una rosa rosita
Con sus pétalos abiertos.

Cuando estoy feliz
Soy un círculo dando vueltas.
Cuando estoy triste
Soy una mancha negra.

- Pedro Andres
Rojo es el color de una rosa de amor.
Verde es el color de un árbol de Navidad.
Azul es el color de una nube.
Amarillo es el color del centro de una flor.
Anaranjado es el color de una naranja.
Morado es el color de unas uvas.

- Sandra Arroyo
Yo soy una flor.
Soy una flor que huele bonito como un perfume de rosas con muchas flores bonitas.
Yo vivo en un jardín bonito con muchas rosas.
- Sandra Arroyo
Mi mamá
Mi mamá está muy linda
A mi mamá le gusta cocinar
Cocina bien delicioso
Mi mamá es como una rosa
Que está en el bosque.
¡Mi mamá es un amor!

- Dámaris Bahuman
Otoño
Corazones bonitos en el mar
Hojas marineras
Color rojo, verde y amarillo
Soldaditos yendo al yacusi.
- Dámaris Bahuman
Yo quisiera ir volando como un pájaro.
Yo quisiera ir escarbando como un perro.
Yo quisiera subir a un árbol como una ardilla.
Yo quisiera ser astronauta de color blanco.
Yo quisiera ir a Guadalajara México para celebrar el día de la virgen de Guadalupe.
Yo quisiera ir a la luna con Miki.

- Maura Barrera
POEMA DE UNA FRESA

Si yo fuera una fresa
yo me metería a una
playa de nieve.
Si viniera un niño gigante
me agarraría en mi playa
de nieve
y me comería.

— Maura Barrera
Halloween
Monsters Clowns Pumpkins
Trick or Treat
Black cats
Vampires Pocahontas
Cats Witches
Halloween

- Ramiro Bolaños
Feliz y triste

Cuando estoy feliz
soy un bulldog. Corro mucho.
Cuando estoy triste
soy un gatito triste
color gris.

- Ramiro Bolaños
Yo quiero ir al mar azul.
Yo quiero salir en caricaturas.
Yo quiero ir a Brasil porque esta bonito.
Yo tengo miedo a la oscuridad.
A mi me gusta verano.
Yo quisiera que mi abuelita viviera.

- Lizbeth Canseco
Yo puedo comemne un elefante.
Yo puedo volar hasta el cielo.
Yo puedo alzar los planetas.
Yo puedo ganarle a un tren.
Yo nací en Plutón.
Yo me puedo sentar y andar.
Yo me puedo ser un animal.
Yo soy un artista que canta.

MENTIRAS
- Moises Cardenas
LOS COLORES

Rojo es color de una manzana.
Verde es color de sacate.
Amarillo es color de oro.
Azul es color del cielo.
Anaranjado es color de una naranja.

- Marco Carrillo
Azul es el color más bonito
porque
es el color del cielo
y del mar.
Rojo es el color de la lava
y de la lumbre.

- Jaime Diego
Suave, cariñosas,

Linda, comprensiva,

Mama huele como un clavel.

A mamá le gusta cocinar.

Mamá es cariñosa conmigo.

- Julio Elisea
Cuando estoy feliz
soy una mariposa
volando en el bosque.

Cuando estoy triste
soy un gato
que no le dan de comer.

Cuando estoy feliz
soy un conejo
brincando en el pasto.

Cuando estoy triste
soy un perro
aullando en la calle.

- Shayla Estrada
I LIKE BUGS

I like bugs, any kind of bugs,
Bad bugs, mean bugs,
Round bugs, green bugs, fat bugs.
A bug in a field,
A bug on a fence,
A bug in a store,
A bug in your mouth,
A bug in your eyes.

Ugly bugs, dumb bugs,
Big bugs, white bugs,
Any kind of bugs!
I like bugs.

- Oscar Fernandez
en que se parecen los colores

rojo se parece al amor
azul se parece a la alma
verde se parece al campo
por la mañana
morado se parece a la flor
anaranjado se parece a una calabaza
amarillo se parece al tesoro
blanco se parece a una margarita.

- Leonel Fuentes
Cuando estoy feliz
soy un color que se sale.
Cuando estoy triste soy
un color encerrado en casa.

Cuando estoy feliz soy
un borrador suelto.
Cuando estoy triste soy
un borrador usado.

Cuando estoy feliz soy
un radio prendido.
Cuando estoy triste
soy un radio apagado.

- José García
LULLABY FOR A DAISY

I love daisies.
A daisy is a soft puppy.
A daisy is a friendly flower.

I love daisies.
A daisy is a golden gold.
A daisy is a ray of sunny day.

I love daisies.
A daisy is a gift from the moon.
A daisy is a gift, candle of night.

I love daisies.

- Angel Hernandez
"Ouch!" said the tongue,
"Sorry," said the teeth.
"I won't do it again."
"Let me out of here!" said the tongue.
"I can't let you out," said the teeth.
"Why can't you get me out of here?" asked the tongue.
"Because you are in jail!" said the teeth.

- Angel Hernandez
Azul es el color del cielo.

Morado es el color de unas uvas.

Rojo es el color de un corazón.

Amarillo es el color de oro.

Anaranjado es el color de una naranja.

Verde es el color del pasto.

- Angel Hernandez
LAS TIJERAS Y EL PAPEL

"No te acerques a mi. Soy filosa," dijeron las tijeras. "Entonces no me cortes porque me vas a desfigurar," dijo el papel.

"Si. Te voy a cortar porque eres malo," dijeron las tijeras. Lo cortó y lo desfiguró. El papel gritó: "¡Ay, ay, ay!" Las tijeras susurraron: "¡Ahora te comportas mejor!"

- Vanessa Hernandez
EL CABALLO

Yo soy un caballo.
Corro mucho
y recio.
Tengo mucho pelo.
Tengo los pies
muy grandes
para correr recio
y para dar los pasos
muy grandes
y anchos.

-Eduardo Jimenez
THE BALL AND THE FOOT

"Don't kick me hard," said the ball, "because I will get a headache."

"Too bad ball," answered the foot.

"Well you have to stop," said the ball.

"I'll have to make a goal and then I will stop kicking you," said the foot.

"OK," said the ball, "but bring me some Tylenol for my headache!"

- Abraham Lopez
SOX AND SHOES

"You shoes stink," said the soxs.
"I don't care," said the shoes. I have to smell. If I don't smell I don't have a life!"

- José Alfredo Maldonado
LA GALLINA Y LA VACA

La gallina le dijo a la vaca:
"Tu tomaste todo la leche."

La vaca contestó:
"Tu has tomado mi leche."

La gallina dijo:
¡Ay qué me voy a enfermar!

La vaca le gritó:
"Pues si mi leche es buena!"

La gallina dijo:
"Creo que no voy a la escuela."

- Juan Carlos Mondragon
Lo que cocina mama

Mi mamá cocina hamburguesa y les salen buenas.
Mi mamá es muy hermosa como una flor.
Ella invita a sus amigas a comer a nuestra casa y ellas le dicen a mi mamá que le sabe buena la comida.
Mi mamá es muy china yo la llamo "chinita."
Mi mamá cocina espageti y sabe riquísimo.
Yo quiero mucho a mi mamá.

- Nereyda Morales
Yo soy una mariposa que vuela alto.
Yo soy una paloma blanca.
Yo soy un árbol con manzanas.
Yo soy muy alta y ancha.
Yo soy una palma.
Yo puedo andar en bicicleta sin dos manos.
Yo puedo voltear mi lengua.
Yo puedo ser artista.
Yo puedo patinar en hielo recio.
Yo puedo cantar como Selena.
Yo puedo ser bebita.

- Nereyda Morales
Antes yo era un diablo 🤡
Pero ahora soy un ángel.✨

Antes yo era un policía 🕵️
Pero ahora soy un papel.잎

Antes yo era como un niño 🎀
Pero ahora soy como un tonto.🎁

Antes yo era como un payaso 🎭
Pero ahora soy como un pelón.하실

Antes yo era como un mundo 🌍
Pero ahora soy como Plutón.🪐

Antes yo era como un tigre 🦁
Pero ahora soy como un tonto.👶

- Guillermo Nuñez
Mentiras

Tengo muchas bicicletas
Tengo muchos amigos
Soy rica y famosa
Estoy viejita y arrugadita
No tengo dientes
Tengo viruela loca y antenas largas
Tengo una jirafa en mi zapato.

- Patsy Pastor
FELIZ Y TRISTE

Cuando estoy feliz
Soy un pájaro libre
que vuela por el cielo
que va a donde el viento lo lleve.

 Pero...
Cuando estoy triste
me siento como una flor muerta
como que nadie me quiere
en medio de las otras flores felices.

- Martha Rodriguez
Rojo es el color de una rosa bonita de amor.
Verde es el color del sacate verde.
Azul es el color del cielo muy grande
y los pajaritos volando.
Amarillo es el color del sol muy brillante como oro.
Anaranjado es el color de una mandarina dulce y sabrosa.

- Erika Rosas
Antes yo no podía agarrar la cuchara para comer. Pero ahora yo puedo comer bien.

Antes yo le mordía a mamá. Pero ahora ya le agarro la mano.

Antes yo no podía hacer letras. Pero ahora escribo muy bien.

Antes yo vivía en México con mi abuelita. Pero ahora vivo en California.

Antes yo jugaba muñecas y trastecitas. Pero ahora estudio.

- Laura Tapia
Yo tengo un limousine.
Mis dientes son rositas.
Tengo una mansión.
Tengo cinco ojos y umbiligos.
Mis mascota es un tiburón.
Soy cantante de rock 'n roll.
Tengo muchas joyas.
Tengo mil lámparas.

"Mentiras" - Rosana Ruiz
Mom is nice.
Mom loves me.
Mom is beautiful.

Nice, affectionate, pretty!

- Kenia Torres
El sol es de oro
La luna de plata
y las estrellitas
De hoja de lata.

The sun is of gold
The moon is of silver
And the stars
Are made of tin.

Translation by Kenia Torres
EL PAJARITO

Cuando estoy feliz
soy un pajaroito
cantando en la mañana.

Cuando estoy triste
soy un pajaroito
que no encuentra comida.

- Rebecca Valdovinos
Los ángeles en la noche
Están bailando el tango.
Se trasnochanchan por estar bailando.
Cuando se duermen se cruzan el pecho con las manos.

- Juan Zuniga