1993

Effective structuring of the classroom for Spanish-speaking children with delayed oral language development

Dorothy Gutierrez Cordova

EFFECTIVE STRUCTURING OF THE CLASSROOM FOR SPANISH-SPEAKING CHILDREN WITH DELAYED ORAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

A Project

Presented to the

Faculty of

California State University,

San Bernardino

In Partial Fullfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Education: Bilingual/Cross-Cultural

---

by

Dorothy Gutierrez Cordova

December 1993

EFFECTIVE STRUCTURING OF THE CLASSROOM FOR SPANISH-SPEAKING CHILDREN WITH DELAYED ORAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

A Project

Presented to the

Faculty of

California State University,

San Bernardino

---

by

Dorothy Gutierrez Cordova

December 1993

Approved by:

[redacted]

Dr. Esteban Diaz, First Reader — Date 10/1/93

[redacted]

Dr. Lynne Diaz-Rico, Second Reader — Date 10/5/93

ABSTRACT

This project uses a case study approach in order to examine how different educational approaches and practices in the classroom will promote language and literacy development for a Spanish-speaking child who has been identified as having significantly delayed oral language development in the primary language. A careful observation and analysis of the educational program, teacher practices, classroom environment, and classroom work of one Spanish-speaking child who has been identified as having a significant delay in the oral language development of his primary language will provide this researcher with knowledge about appropriate structuring of the classroom for the language and literacy development of this child and other Spanish-speaking children who have demonstrated academic problems due to delayed oral language development in their primary language.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The completion of this Master's project has been possible because of the continuous, and extraordinary support and patience of my husband, Miguel, and my four children, Christina, Miguel, Adriana and Zenon. My fellow bilingual teachers, who formed a strong support group, have also helped me through this challenging project.

The supportive professors at CSUSB who caused me to question my traditional approach to teaching and presented a new, more constructive perspective also deserve my deepest thanks. I would especially thank Dr. Esteban Diaz and Dr. Lynne Diaz-Rico, who so generously agreed to take time to read my project.

Most especially, I would like to thank Dr. Barbara Flores who has come to share her abundant knowledge, who continues to guide us in our shift to more effective teaching practices, and who knows the challenge of truly educating the children of our hispanic community.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

As a bilingual kindergarten teacher I noted that Spanish-speaking students with a delay in the oral language development of their primary language are apt to encounter academic difficulties in the traditional classroom setting. After providing primary language instruction to Spanish-speaking children for nine years I observed that children who appear to have a delay in the oral language development of their primary language do not progress as rapidly as their peers in acquiring reading readiness skills in either English or Spanish.

In comparison to the other children in the class there is a very apparent difference in their language use. The majority of kindergarten children are willing to contribute to classroom discussions, but these children are distinguishable because they participate only slightly or not at all in these discussions. Most kindergarten children enjoy singing, rhyming and fingerplay activities, but these children usually sit quietly or participate only minimally during these activities. During storytime

or sharing time, most kindergarten children are able to respond with extended sentences and/or phrases but these children usually respond with one word answers, if at all.

Teacher observation is not the only indication of the delay in oral language development of these children. Another indication is the low score achieved on the Bilingual Syntax Measure (BSM) in their primary language. Most children who enter kindergarten score four or five in their primary language on this measure, which indicates that they have intermediate or proficient Spanish skills. There are some who score three, which indicates that they have survival Spanish skills. The children with a delay in the oral language development of their primary language however, enter kindergarten with a score of one or two in their primary language. This low score indicates that they have a low productive skill in Spanish, or have receptive Spanish skills only (Burt, Dulay, and Hernandez-Chavez 1976).

Although the BSM testing cannot be considered a thorough oral language assessemnt of primary language development, the low BSM score, combined with teacher observation of language difficulties and lack of progress in reading readiness skills indicates that

these children require special attention and instruction if they are to have academic success.

There is a significant amount of educational research and writing showing the relationship between oral language difficulties and academic failure. Yaden (1984) states that for children, meaning in reading is a function of their oral language; and that without that language there is no source of meaning available. Zirkelbach and Blakesley (1985) state that since oral language is the foundation upon which written language is built, when it is weak, there is significant impact on the student's reading, writing and spelling. Lipson (1986) writes about the effect of deprivation of adequate language stimulation in early life; this results in slower reading progress.

Research reported by Levine (1987) indicates that children who were identified early as having language processing and/or production problems had persistent learning problems throughout their school years. According to Norris and Bruning (1988) there is a considerable amount of research that supports the link between language and reading. They state that the research demonstrates that poor readers have problems with acquiring and processing some elements of language. It is evident that children who enter

school with oral language difficulties are almost certain to have academic problems.

Thonis (1981) cites the importance of well-developed speech, functional literacy and adequate thinking ability for success in school as the basis for primary language development. She acknowledges the importance of well-developed speech for providing a foundation for skill development in reading and writing. She also reports that among language researchers, developmental psychologists, and reading theorists there is agreement about language and literacy skills being mutually supportive and necessary for cognitive growth.

Cheng (1987), in a paper on communication and communicative competence of language minority students, reports that research on literacy indicates a strong relationship between oral language competence and literacy. She states that the language ability that children bring to school forms the foundation for their future literacy development.

Langdon (1989) reports that language performance is very much linked to academic success. She states that for language minority students, the problem of differentiating a language disorder from a bilingual, cross-cultural difference is crucial. She has also

found that it is difficult to interpret the literature related to the definition of language disorders in bilingual or limited English-speaking students. Langdon's observation about this difficulty is indicative of the confusion over just what is required for an effective educational program for Spanish-speaking children with delayed oral language development in their primary language. Generally, the educational system has not begun to address the particular problems of the language minority child who demonstrates delayed oral language development. The literature clearly indicates, though, that learning to read appears to be a problem for children with oral language difficulties.

There is still much studying and research that needs to be done in order to clearly understand the particular problems of Spanish-speaking children with delayed oral language development and how this delay relates to the development of literacy skills. There does, however, appear to be information and research relating to appropriate educational practices and approaches for bilingual children with special needs. The purpose of this paper is to examine innovative pedagogical approaches and practices in an effort to understand which ones will more likely promote

literacy development for Spanish-speaking students who demonstrate a significant delay in the oral language development of their primary language.

As Cummins (1984) states:

> ...educators should first critically examine the appropriateness of their own programmes and pedagogical approaches for particular children and creatively experiment with alternative approaches before attempting to explain children's academic difficulties in terms of cognitive processing deficits (p. 5).

Background to the Study

The Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (Public Law 94-142) requires that all handicapped children have available to them a free appropriate education and related services designed to meet their unique needs. According to Webb, Metha, and Jordan (1992), this law requires that those children who have been found to have a "learning disability" including delayed development in the processing of speaking, reading, writing, and/or listening are to receive services through Special Education.

Currently, however, an appropriate program that will meet the unique needs of Spanish-speaking children who have been identified as having a "learning disability" due to delayed oral language development in their primary language has not been

articulated. The issues surrounding Spanish-speaking children with learning disabilities relate to inappropriate assessment procedures and tools, inaccurate differential diagnosis (inability to spearate language and culture from learning problems), lack of effective instructional interventions, and inappropriate placement (Rueda, 1989). As Webb, Metha and Jordan state "there appears to be a disproportionate representation of minority students in classes for the learning disabled (p. 286)."

There is general agreement among educators of bilingual children with special needs that there needs to be improvement in the identification, assessment, and placement of the children. There is also great concern about appropriate programs and practices for bilingual children with special needs. There is a call for a shift from the medical-model approach, where the emphasis is on remediating the deficit of the child, to providing a more holistic, meaning-centered, experientially rich learning environment (Baca & Cervantes, 1984; Cummins, 1984, 1989a, 1989b; Rueda, 1989)

Figueroa, Fradd and Correa (1989) voice the need for "interventions embedded in linguistic and educational experiences, rich in meaning, authenticity

and social interaction (p.177)." Cummins (1989a; 1989b) advocates a framework of intervention that requires cultural and linguistic incorporation, community participation, an interactive/experiential pedagogy and an advocacy-oriented assessment. Duran (1989) and Rueda (1989) relate the need to examine and include more recent developments in cognitive and sociolinguistic research in possible restructuring of programs for bilingual special education children. Flores, Cousins, and Diaz (1991) stress a need for a paradigm shift that would restructure organization of the learning and teaching of language and literacy through social contexts that value the students' experiences.

Educators of bilingual children with special needs are advocating a shift in perspective. According to Rueda (1989) there is a significant body of literature that calls for a discarding of the medical-model approach which finds the causes of the educational problems of language minority children within the children themselves and attempts to diagnose and remediate the deficit of these children. This literature advocates a need for a fundamental change in the system.

It is this growing body of literature on the

restructuring of the classroom for optimal language and literacy development that is most valuable in understanding what specific classroom approaches and activities will promote literacy acquisition for the Spanish-speaking child with delayed oral language in the primary language. Literature in the field of whole language will provide a clear understanding of the importance of making "meaning" the focus of instruction and learning in the classroom. Literature dealing with the interactional approach to teaching and learning will clarify the importance of practices and strategies that allow teacher and student to mutually construct the knowledge in the classroom.

In addition to investigating literature, this project will also examine closely the educational program of one Spanish-speaking child who has been identified and placed in a special education program due to a significant delay in the oral language development of his primary language. He also has been chosen to study because he has shown progress in acquiring literacy skills and because he is involved in special education and regular bilingual education classrooms in which the teachers are in the process of instituting a holistic approach to teaching and learning.

The Problem

In order to have a successful educational career, it is generally acknowledged that children must learn to read. As has already been discussed, children who have delayed oral language development in their primary language have difficulty in learning to read. In order to provide an appropriate educational experience which will promote reading development for these children it is necessary to acquire knowledge about specific approaches and practices that will promote language and literacy development for them.

This thesis will examine this issue by conducting a case study which will involve extensive observation and gathering of data about one particular subject. The subject of the study is a Spanish-speaking child who has been identified as having a significant delay in the oral language development of his primary language. This significant delay and lack of progress in all academic areas has qualified him for placement in a special education program for over fifty-one percent of the school day. This child was chosen as the subject of this study because of his identified problems and because he has demonstrated significant progress in acquiring language and literacy skills.

This study will examine this child and his educational program in order to better understand what activities he participated in and how these activities promoted his academic progress. The wide range of information required by a thorough case study will provide valuable insights into what educational approaches and classroom activities will best promote literacy development for a Spanish-speaking child with delayed oral language development in the primary language.

Statement of the Problem

How can classrooms be structured in order to provide the most effective learning situation for the language and literacy development of a Spanish-speaking child with academic problems due to a significant delay in the oral language development of his/her primary language?

Research Questions

1. What instructional activities and conditions promote development of language and literacy skills for a Spanish-speaking child with delayed oral language development in the primary language?

2. What social interactions promote language and literacy development for the Spanish-speaking child with delayed oral language development in the primary

language?

3. What literacy skills are demonstrated as a result of whole language strategies by the Spanish-speaking child with delayed oral language development in the primary language?

Definition of Terms

1. Reading: A process by which children can, on the run, extract a sequence of cues from printed texts and relate these, one to the other, so that they understand the message of the text (Clay, 1991, p. 22).

2. Literacy: Functional literacy is often related to basic writing (coding) and reading (decoding) skills that allow people to produce and understand simple texts (Williams and Snipper, 1990, p. 1).

3. Delayed oral language development: If a child is at a disadvantage in language processing and production (for whatever reason), a problem exists, at least during school (Levine, 1987, p. 163).

4. Bilingual Special Education: The use of the home language and home culture along with English in an individually designed program of special instruction for the students. Bilingual special education considers the child's language and culture as foundations upon which an appropriate education may be built (Baca & Cervantes, 1984, p. 18)

5. Learning Disability: Learning disabilities is a generic term that refers to a heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning or mathematical abilities. These disorders are intrinsic to the individual and presumed to be central nervous system dysfunctions. Even though a learning disability may occur concomitantly with other handicapping

> conditions (e.g., sensory impairment, mental retardation, social and emotional disturbance) or environmental incluences (e. g., cultural differences, insufficient/inappropriate instruction, psychogenic factors), it is not the direct result of those conditions or influences. (Hammill et al., 1981, p. 336 in Rhodes & Dudley-Marling, 1988, p. 4)

Theoretical Framework

It is significant to note that many of the educators advocating a change in perspective for appropriate educational practices for bilingual children with special needs are greatly influenced by Vygotsky and his sociohistorical perpective towards education (Cummins, 1984, 1989a, 1989b; Goodman & Goodman, 1990; Flores, Cousins & Diaz, 1991; Rueda, 1987, 1989, 1990). Many educators have based their studies and writing on the Vygotskian perspective.

Vygotsky's writings are very relevant to this study and are reflected in many of the writings included in this study. Moll (1990) states that Vygotsky placed a great emphasis on the social organization of instruction and the "unique form of cooperation between the child and the adult that is the central element of the educational process (p. 2)." As Moll points out, it is Vygotsky's zone of proximal development that is his most influential concept.

> The zone of proximal development is the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers. (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86)

This concept is significant because it relates to the importance of school instruction for the mental development of a child. As Vygotsky states (1986, p. 148), "Development and maturation of the child's higher mental functions are products of this cooperation (the systematic cooperation between the child and the teacher)."

Cummins (1984) presents the significance of this concept for children with oral language disabilities. He points out that the cognitive and affective characteristics that a child brings to school are largely determined by patterns of social interaction prior to school and that there are individual differences in those adult-child interactions. He also states that, "Educational outcomes are a function of the interaction between child input and educational treatment factors; in other words, the same educational treatment can have very different effects on children who enter with different input characteristics (p. 94)." For the person who is dealing with children who enter school and do not have

the same language ability as other students in the same language community, this means that although the student came into school with a different language ability level, the interaction that goes on in the school environment will affect the child's cognitive and personal growth.

Rueda (1990) also presents the significance of Vygotsky's perpective on children's cognitive development. He states the following:

> A key assumption of the sociohistorical approach is that the intellectual skills that children acquire are considered to be directly related to how the interact with adults and peers in specific problem-solving environments. That is, children internalize the kind of assistance they receive from more capable others and eventually come to use the means of guidance initially provided by another to direct their own subsequent problem-solving behaviors (p. 404)."

A Vygotskian approach does much to focus our perspective towards the child who enters school with a delay in their oral language development. This does not deny that children come to school at different ability levels, but supports the idea that the social interaction that takes place in the school environment has a significant effect on that child's intellectual growth. Vygotsky's zone of proximal development requires that we consider how much potential a child demonstrates when guided by more knowledgeable adults

or peers and not what that child demonstrates individually. It is a challenge to provide a social environment that allows meaningful interaction with more knowledgeable adults and peers in order to develop higher levels of language and cognitive ability.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Language minority children who have been identified as having delayed oral language development in their primary language and/or severe reading difficulties which may be related to their delayed oral language are entitled to an educational program that will meet their unique needs. To understand what a successful educational experience entails for these children requires an investigation into many areas of research and academic literature.

First, it is important to examine the literature that deals with children who have oral language disabilities. This will provide a clearer understanding of the child with which this study will be dealing. It is also important to investigate the relationship of the child's oral language disabilities to reading difficulties. Additionally, it is critical to study the literature dealing with language disabilities and reading problems in order to understand the educational system's approach to identifying, assessing and providing interventions for these children.

Since our focus is Spanish-speaking children with significant delayed oral language development and related reading difficulties, the issues that pertain specifically to this population must also be investigated. Studying literature about bilingual special education will provide information about successful educational approaches and pedagogical practices for Spanish-speaking children with special needs due to an oral language disability in their primary language.

Another area that requires investigation is research on the relationship between oral language development and literacy development. This will provide information as to specific practices and strategies that can be implemented in the classroom to provide a more appropriate educational experience for the Spanish-speaking child with delayed oral language development and reading difficulties.

An investigation into all these areas is required in order to clearly understand the nature of the problems of the Spanish speaking child with oral language difficulties. It is necessary in order to assure appropriate identification and assessment of these children. Also, a study of the research and academic literature will provide information about

specific practices and strategies to use in the classroom to help these children have a more successful educational experience.

Learning Disabilities and Oral Language Disorders

The literature dealing with learning disabilities and oral language disorders reveals significant information relevent to this study. This literature provides information on the identification of students with oral language disabilities; information about the complex process of oral language development; and information as to an appropriate approach for developing oral language for children who demonstrate problems in their oral language development.

Lewis and Doorlag (1987) inform us that communication disorders are one of the most common of all handicapping conditions, and that they affect a child's ability to interact with their teachers and other students. Levine (1987) also reports that a language disabilities in children are common and do impede learning and fulfillment during the school years.

Salvia and Ysseldyke (1991) acknowledge that well-developed language abilities are desireable in and of themselves and that these well-developed

language abilities are believed to underlie later development. According to them, identifying and remediating oral language disorder can have a positive effect on personal and academic growth. These experts are pointing out the importance of language development; the difficulties that occur when language is not well-developed; the importance of identifying children who have language development problems; and the importance of assuring improved oral language development.

A great deal of the literature relating to learning disabilities and language disorders deals with the complexity of language. Experts (Levine, 1987; Linares, 1983; Salvia & Ysseldyke, 1991) divide language into a variety of components and label the parts-morphology, semantics, phonology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics, metalinguistics, narration. Yet, as Levine admits, "everyday use of linguistics entails integrated processing and production. These components interact, fortify each other, and take precedence during particular tasks and or stages of acquisition (p. 140)." The importance of this is that, although language can be analyzed and divided into many components, the teaching of language and the remediation of language disorders must be an

intergrated process.

It is necessary to be aware of the components of language and be able to identify possible difficulties in individual areas, but, what is most significant to know regarding children with learning disabilities due to oral language delays relates to pragmatics. Salvia and Yasseldyke (1991) report, "Pragmatics has only recently appeared in oral-language theory and few standarized assessments are available to evaluate this aspect of language. However, it will become increasingly important within assessment, because the ultimate communicative success of oral-language users depends on using language correctly within a shifting social context (p. 265)." In other words, what matters most, when assessing a child's language ability, is whether he/she is using the language appropriately in the given context to communicate ideas.

Another important point with regards to assessment of a child's language ability is "whether the child's language is disordered within his/her language community and what impact such disorders may have on classroom performance and communication skills generally (Salvia & Ysseldyke, p. 299)." According to Linares (1983), "A language disorder exists when

children's comprehension and/or expression does not compare favorably to the language used by their peers. In this case, the language comprehended or expressed departs from linguistic norms to such a degree as to interfere with communication (p. 151)."

When assessing the oral language ability of the language minority child, there are additional considerations. As Salvia and Ysseldyke point out, "Children should be viewed as having a language disorder only if they exhibit disordered production of their own primary language or dialect (p. 159)." They also admit that it is inappropriate to treat multicultural language differences as if they are language disorders.

As has been pointed out earlier, there are few tests to evaluate pragmatics. Also, Linares (1983) informs us about the lack of standardized communication tests for Hispanic American children. So, it is necessary to evaluate language ability of Spanish-speaking children by other means. Linares suggests that interviews with parents or guardians may provide information. Information can also be obtained from other professionals. The goal should be to identify the child who is having problems communicating ideas and having this problem interferes

with functioning in the social and/or academic environment in which he/she is required to participate.

Before going on to identifying specific program practices and activities that will help a child with oral language problems develop language, it is important to examine some other basic assumptions relating to the identification, categorization, and labeling of learning disabled students. This is important because it relates to the basic assumptions underlying the programs practices for learning disabled students.

There is a great deal of discussion in the field of special education dealing with the ineffectiveness, inequality and inconsistencies in providing services for students with learning disabilities. For the child with a learning disability due to oral language development problems this discussion is particularly significant because of the complexity of language development.

Educators (Das, 1987; Goodman, 1986; Kronick, 1988; Levine, 1987; Minick, 1987; Poplin, 1988) are challenging the traditional approach of dealing with children who have learning difficulties in school. These educators question the most commonly used

methods of testing for learning disabilities; they question the discrete-step approach to remediation of learning disabilities; and they are proposing a change in the fundamental perspective that the educational system has taken towards children who deviate from the accepted level of school performance.

Das (1987), in his appeal for an interactional approach to evaluating learning potential, informs us that the "folly of intelligence tests has been written about over and over again (vii)." He explains that, "Intelligence tests are static measures of ability...and do not predict the ability to learn (vii)." He also discusses the importance of children's interacting with adults and other children in order to develop higher forms of cognitive activity. Finally, he acknowledges the existance of social inequalities that cannot be disregarded. Das' purpose in challenging the traditional remediational approach to learning problems is to encourage a change in perspective. He is proposing a need for better individualized intervention and enrichment programs that will help the child develop the areas of processing in which he or she is found to be weak.

Goodman (1986, 1991) also rejects the traditional approach to dealing with children who don't do well in

school. He argues that it is the traditional way of teaching in many schools that is actually hindering the language development of students. For the child who enters school with a language delay, the traditional way of teaching may be compounding the difficulties. Goodman advocates keeping language whole and involving children in using it functionally and purposefully to meet their own needs. He proposes a revaluing program for children who have trouble in reading and writing that emphasizes the following two objectives:

> 1. To support pupils in revaluing themselves as language learners, and to get them to believe they are capable of becoming fully literate.
> 2. To support pupils in revaluing reading and writing as functional, meaningful whole language processes rather than as sequences of sub-skills to be memorized. (Goodman, 1986, p. 56)

Kronick (1988) is even more critical of the whole notion of "learning disabilities". In her discussion she includes the argument that "remediation is to 'fix' LD students so that they will meet the lock-step demands of mainstream education (p. 31)." She acknowledges the inclusion of children into the learning disabled category due to immaturity, minority status, poverty and for convenience. She is also critical of the approach to teaching LD students which

presents segmented aspects of thought through a rote process in a decontextualized manner.

Kronick sees learning disabilities as a "breakdown in dynamic functioning" and recommends a negotiated approach to teaching. She recommends that we involve children with learning disabilities in observing the ways that people and the world function; that we use a guided questioning approach to teaching in order to lead them to a higher level of thinking; and that we encourage creative problem solving in real contexts with real problems. Her approach can be particularly beneficial for children with an oral language delay. The holistic approach, the use of questioning and the proces of helping them develop their problem solving skills can be a better educational approach for these children.

Levine (1987) points out the "confluence of multiple influences" in order to present the complexity of the problem of children who have failed to meet educational expectations (p. 7). He reports that, "there is considerable disagreement about the causes, the treatments, and even the precise nature of the apparent dysfunctions that impede learning (p. 2)."

Levine recommends that in order to understand

these children the investigator, educator, and clinician must describe the numerous influences that together impair resiliency and cause a child to become "disappointing". He feels that the best description leads to the best prescription. This description must included not only the problems and weaknesses of the child, but also the talents and advantages of the child.

Levine's arguments apply well to the situation of the child who comes to school with an oral language delay. Although the child has visible problems and weaknesses, he/she also has strengths and talents. The educator must observe carefully and note these strengths and talents. These can be incorporated in classroom activities to increase the opportunity for successful academic progress.

Minick (1987), too, argues against the traditional perspective towards children who perform poorly in school. He argues for a change to dynamic assessment procedures because of the awareness that, "static approaches to the assessment of learning ability or learning potential have failed to provide the kinds of information that educators need in order to facilitate the psychological development and the educational advancement of these children (p. 116)."

He places great value on Vygotsky's concept of the zone of proximal development and also that "advanced human mental process have their origin in collaborative activity that is mediated by verbal interaction (p. 124)."

His purpose in advocating change is to improve our understanding of why some children have difficulty in school and to facilitate the development of the kinds of remediation that will allow these children to overcome the learning problems they face in school. For the child with an oral language delay it would mean more appropriate language assessments and opportunities for verbal interaction in collaborative classroom activities in order to provide more appropriate educational programs.

Poplin (1988) provides a thorough examination of different models in the field of learning disabilities and argues in favor of a changing view towards children with learning problems. She argues that all past models have taken a "reductionistic" view towards the etiology, diagnosis, assessment, instruction and goals of the program. According to Poplin, "Reductionism is the natural process by which we break ideas into parts in an attempt to understand and deal better with the whole (p. 394)."

Poplin emphasizes that we are wrong in believing the following:

> (a) that learning disabilities can be reduced so as to allow definition of a single verifiable entity (or set of entities), (b) that the teaching/learning process is most effective when most reduced (e.g., controlled, focused, and segmented), and (c) that the reduction of educational services is beneficial (p. 398).

The reductionist process of testing bits and pieces of children's language ability; of teaching language through bits and pieces; and retesting language growth by bits and pieces must change. Children with an oral language delay will need a program unlike those of the past, that have only served to fragment language and make it meaningless.

The literature on learning disabilities and oral language disorders indicates that educators are calling for a change in the traditional approach to providing services to those children who demonstrate problems in their educational progress. There is also agreement that standardized, static measures of ability aimed at identifying a child's "deficits" do not serve to appropriately evaluate a child's potential for cognitive growth. The medical-model, discrete-step, teacher-directed approach to remediating a child's learning problems has not proven successful. It is also apparent that the problems of

these children cannot be easily categorized and dealt with by a narrow, limited-service approach.

The educators and researchers are recommending a dynamic, multi-faceted approach to assessing children with learning difficulties in school. They are recommending an interactional, experientially-rich, context-embedded, real-life program approach for these students. They are also acknowledging the social, political, historical, economic factors relating to the label of "learning disability". The issues surrounding the child with learning disabilities is very complex in nature and requires extensive awareness, sensitivity and knowledge on the part of teachers working with these special children.

Bilingual Education and
Bilingual Special Education

It is significant to note that the changes being advocated by educators in regular special education are similar to those advocated (and presented earlier in this paper) by the educators in bilingual special education. Both recommend a change from the medical-model approach to remediating learning problems; both advocate the need for an interactional approach to teaching; both see the need for an experientially-rich, real-life, meaningful educational program.

There is also much valuable information in the area of bilingual education that is relevent to the study of appropriate programs and practices for the Spanish speaking child with an oral language problem. The California Department of Education (1990) has published the The Bilingual Education Handbook: Designing Instruction for LEP Students which reflects the most modern research on language acquisition and cognitive development. It presents a program design that, "promotes English acquisition and challenges students to develop abilities to think abstractly, generalize, make logical, connections, interpret, organize and judge (p. 7)." These are surely goals that can be aspired to for all children, even those who come to school with delayed oral language development.

One issue that is presented in the handbook is the importance of using the students' primary language for instruction. It clearly advocates the use of students' primary language to expand their general knowledge of the world and develop higher-order thinking skills. It states that, "Limited English proficient students should have access to the same socially enabling body of knowledge, skills, and ways of thinking about the world available from the

academic core as English speaking students receive (p. vi)."

Another issue that is discussed is the importance of a meaning-centered model for language learning. There are a number of research papers that deal with this issue. Wells (1986) states that negotiating meaning is a strong predictor of future academic success. One of the significant factors in the Natural Approach for second language acquisition is the importance of the need to communicate a message (Terrell, 1981).

Another issue to be considered for an effective educational approach for the language minority student is the distinction between two types of language. According to the Handbook there is a difference between functional language and empowering language and this difference has significant implications for providing students with a much more demanding and rewarding control of empowering English. Cummins (1981) argues that academic deficits are often created by teachers who fail to realize the significant difference between cognitive/academic language proficiency (CALP) and basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS). Many times LMS have been provided with watered-down content in English, or have

been transitioned into an English mainstream program because they have demonstrated a functional grasp of English. These practices have often resulted in future academic difficulties for LMS and bilingual students in special education programs.

Another significant issue regarding appropriate educational practices for LMS is the relationship between content-based instruction in the students' primary language to their development of English. Cummins (1981) introduced the concept of the common underlying proficiency (CUP) which states that literacy skills and thinking strategies, once mastered in the primary language, provide a sound basis for rapid acquisition of similar skills in the second language. Hakuta (1990) also stated that considerable research exists to show that transfer between L1 and L2 is commonplace. He conducted a study which clearly showed that students with high levels of development in Spanish also developed high levels of ability in English.

Another important concept that relates to effective educational practices deals with the significance of the student's prior knowledge in their primary language. Researchers found out the importance of presenting meaningful, interesting and

understandable messages at a level just beyond the students' present level of language attainment. Vygotsky (1986) studied the development of children's higher mental functioning and found that development of higher thinking skills was a result of social interaction with a more capable other assisting the child in understanding information that was just beyond their present understanding (zone of proximal development). The Handbook (1990) points out that this is where home language instruction becomes significant. LMS must be allowed to develop their higher thinking skills in their primary language and then this knowledge can be successfully applied to English.

Finally, in considering what is required for successful education of LMS, it is urgent to acknowledge the issues of self-esteem and positive self-concept. Researchers (Krashen, 1986; Cummins, 1981, 1984, 1989a, 1989b) have discussed the relationship between inclusion of the students' home language and the establishing of a positive self-concept which in turn effects second language acquisition. By using primary language development in the school, we offer language minority students acceptance and a healthier sense of self-concept which

will be reflected in a healthier attitude towards learning the majority language.

Snow (1990) points out the importance of incorporating these practices in the educational program of language minority students. She states that native language instruction for the LMS promotes their educational success in a variety of ways including: having an advantage in cognitive functioning including metalinguistic skills; linguistic advantages--transfer skills; development of oral language skills related to academic achievement; better academic achievement; effective metacognitive strategies to support reading and acquired world knowledge.

The practices that have been presented as appropriate for language minority students are most appropriate for Spanish-speaking students with learning disabilities due to problems in their oral language development. Bilingual educators are advocating these same practices for hispanic children with special needs. Figueroa, Fradd and Correa (1989) insist on the importance of providing a program of high context and moving away from interventions that are decontextualized, acultural, and asocial. Malave (1991) presents an instructional program for

culturally and linguistically different handicapped students (italics added to stress the negative conotation of legal designation) that focuses on the following:

> higher order thinking skills; performance on responses with reduced non-dominant language interference; creative tasks that allow the expression of ideas through the native culture and language; students-to-student interaction and meaningful social contact; comprehensible L2 level of instruction; and social contact with native or near native-like speakers of L2 (p. 187).

Baca and Amato (1989) address the importance of preparing teachers to work with bilingual children with special needs. They provide a list of competencies that they have found to be necessary. These are:

> 1) The desire to work with the culturally and linguistically different exceptional child; 2) the ability to work effectively with parents of these students; 3) the ability to develop appropriate individual educational plans (IEP's); 4) knowledge and sensitivity toward the language and the culture of the group to be served; 5) the ability to teach English as a second language to students; 6) the ability to conduct nonbiased assessment with culturally and linguistically different exceptional students; 7) the ability to use appropriate methods and materials when working with these students (p. 169).

As can be seen from these reports by educators involved with bilingual special education, the importance of culture, parent involvement, content-rich and academically challenging programs, and social interaction are all concepts that are found

repeatedly in the literature dealing with appropriate program practices for bilingual children with special needs. In order to provide an appropriate educational program for Spanish speaking children with a learning disability due to delayed oral language development, these many issues must be addressed and resolved. There needs to be an awareness and incorporation of the above mentioned concepts into the program of Spanish speaking children with learning disabilities due to problems in their oral language development in their primary language. There also needs to be a greater understanding of the specific activities and practices that will insure the incorporation of these concepts. An investigation into specific activities and classroom practices follows.

Program Interventions

The information presented from the areas of regular special education, bilingual education and bilingual special education should serve to increase an awareness of the complexity of identifying and providing interventions for Spanish speaking children who demonstrate academic difficulties due to problems in the oral language development of their primary language. As Miller (1984) points out, "the notion 'problem' is a highly subjective area. It is

subjective not because people who have a genuine language disorder no not exist, but because in the field of bilingualism, especially, there is to be found a range of variety in language greater than encountered elsewhere (p. 102)."

It is clear from this investigation into the literature that research relating specifically to successful interventions for Spanish-speaking children with problems in the oral language development of their primary language is scarce. It is not the purpose of this project to delve into standardized, norm-referenced intelligence and achievement tests, basic skills intervention programs or the traditional transmission model approach to remediating the "deficits" of these children. Rather, this paper's final section of the literature review will investigate holistic, meaning-centered activities and interactional, socially-mediated educational practices that can be implemented in the classroom to promote language and literacy development for these children with special needs.

The literature dealing with appropriate program practices that is compatible with development of primary language, inclusion of the child's home language and culture, content-based curriculum,

experientially-rich and interactive practices, social interaction, and advocacy-oriented assessment comes from the field of Whole Language teaching practices. Many of the whole language educators (Goodman, 1986, 1991; Dudley-Marling & Searle, 1991; Edelsky, Altwerger & Flores, 1991; Cousins, Prentice, Aragon, Leonard, Rose, and Weekley, 1991; Stires, 1991a, 1991b) advocate this approach for children with special needs.

As was discussed earlier, Goodman (1986,1991) is very definite in his criticism of the traditional way of handling students who don't do well in reading and writing. He claims that the "pathology of reading failure" perspective with its terms--reading disabilities, dyslexia, diagnosis, clinics, perscription, treatments, remediation--is ignorant of the reading process and reading development. According to him, "If young human beings haven't succeeded in becoming literate in school, something must be wrong with the program: it needs remediation, not they (p. 55)." He does admit that severely labeled students do take time to gain their confidence and lose "the loser mentality". He warns that there will be setbacks, trauma, and struggles as they put back the whole which has been fragmented by

traditional remediational practices.

Cousins et al (1991) criticize the traditional practice of focusing on the deficits of children with special needs. They advise providing these children with more support and additional time to accomplish tasks rather than a remedial skills approach. According to them, "Whole language allows, probably for the first time, a setting where these children can center upon their personal needs and interests. Through reading, writing, and responding to literature, students construct meaning from universal themes (p. 166)."

Stires (1991a) also argues against the labeling and isolation of children. She presents two case studies of children with language development problems who grew as readers and writers because of the learning environment provided by the teacher. They were immersed in meaningful, purposeful language for social and academic reasons throughout the school day. Stires incorporated into her classroom practices seven conditions for making meaning though talk successful. These are: immersion, demonstration, expectation, responsibility, approximation, employment, and feedback (Cambourne & Turbill, 1987). By providing the appropriate conditions, this teacher was able to

guide these children with language problems to grow in their language and literacy skills.

Dudley-Marling & Searle (1991) state that the traditional approaches to working with language problems add to the problems that some children have because these approaches attempt to teach fragmented pieces of language. They argue that all children have skills as language learners, and that those with language problems "may use language to fulfill fewer communicatve intentions in fewer contexts (p. 129)." In other words, the child with language problems have had to use language in few contexts and for fewer purposes. Dudley-Marling and Searle propose that children need to be provided language opportunities that will build onto the language and experiences that they already have. They propose that in providing these opportunities the teacher/educator must consider the fundamental principles for learning language which are: Don't fragment language; provide authentic situations for using language; let students try language out; let students experiment with language; and trust students' ability to learn (pgs. 9-12).

Flores, Cousins and Diaz (1991) advocate disgarding the traditional deficit model and replacing it with a more positive perspective towards children

deemed "at risk". They provide four assumptions based upon the knowledge of how language is learned to guide the restructuring of the teaching and learning of language in mutually constructed social contexts. The assumptions are:

> 1) Children bring many strengths to the classroom--ability to learn, proficient language use, and cultural experiences; 2) The teacher can organize the daily social interactions with a multitude of opportunities for language and literacy use; 3) Teachers know how to monitor the children's development across many settings on a daily basis; and 4) Parents are interested in their children's schooling success (p. 375).

Flores, Cousins & Diaz are proposing that teachers empower themselves with pedagogical knowledge about the learning and teaching of language and literacy in order to provide an environment that will allow educational success for all students, particularly those labeled "at risk".

It is apparent that the whole language approach is an appropriate approach to implement in the classroom to promote language and literacy development for Spanish-speaking children who have demonstrated a significant delay in the oral language development of their primary language. This approach requires providing a rich language learning environment that involves the children in meaningful experiences that will promote interactive language use with more

knowledgeable teachers and peers. Although whole language does not have a prescribed program, there are a number of activities and practices that are in keeping with the whole language perspective and can be implemented in the classroom (e.g., Edelsky, Altwerger & Flores, 1991, p. 42 and Hollingsworth & Reutzel, 1988, p. 481)

CHAPTER 3

DESIGN/METHODOLOGY

A case study approach will be used in this project in order to understand what educational approaches and practices in the classroom will promote literacy development for the Spanish-speaking child who has been identified as having significantly delayed oral language development in their primary language. According to Stires (1991b):

> Case study research helps inform the field and develop theoretical knowledge. It is also one of the most practical approaches to instruction that teachers can take. In conducting a case study, we are getting inside a reader and writer's processes. We learn about that reader and writer, and our evaluation is constantly informing our teaching (p. xv).

By conducting a careful observation and analysis of the educational program, teacher practices, classroom environment, and classroom work of one Spanish-speaking child who has been identified as having a significant delay in the oral language development of his primary language, knowledge will be gained that will provide information about better teaching practices and approaches to be used with this child and other Spanish-speaking children who demonstrate academic problems due to delayed oral

language development in their primary language.

According to Anderson (1990) a case study approach concerns itself with how things happen and why. He states that the emphasis in a case study is on explanation. He also stresses the importance of a wide range of methodologies, and the need for multiple sources of evidence.

Another significant issue stated by Anderson was the need for a "clear vision of what the case is and what unit of analysis the case examines (p. 159)." It is clear to this researcher that there is a need to examine many facets of the educational experience of one particular child in order to gain a clear understanding of how and why this child has been able to develop literacy skills.

As has been stated before, the subject of this study is a Spanish-speaking child who has been identified as having a significant delay in the oral language development of his primary language. This language delay had dramatically effected his academic progress. He was chosen as the subject of this study for two important reasons. First, because of the language delay already described. Second, because of the significant progress he is demonstrating in developing literacy skills through a holistic

approach.

The Special Day Class, where he spends over fifty-one percent of the day, and the regular class in which he is mainstreamed have taken a whole language approach to teaching and learning. By observing both classroom environments during language arts activities and the interactions of this Spanish-speaking child who has been identified has having a significant delay in the oral language development of his primary language this researcher expects to gain the knowledge needed to answer the following research questions:

1. What instructional activities and conditions promote development of language and literacy skills for a Spanish-speaking child with delayed oral language development of the primary language?

2. What social interactions promote language and literacy development for the Spanish-speaking child with delayed oral language development in the primary language?

3. What literacy skills are demonstrated as a result of whole language strategies by the Spanish-speaking child with delayed oral language development in the primary language?

Data Needed

In order to answer the research questions it will

be necessary to observe the child throughout the school day in both the special education classroom and the bilingual mainstream classroom. It will be necessary to gather a variety of data and to use a variety of methods for gathering the data. Througout this process of observation and gathering of data the focus will be on gaining a better understanding of the language experiences and activities that appear to promote literacy development for this child.

There are many significant features of this child's educational program that must be examined for this case study to answer the project questions. One of the significant features that must be examined will be the specific language activities that take place in the classrooms and how the child participates in these activities. Many of these activities are those identified in the whole language literature (Edelsky, Altwerger & Flores, 1991; Hollingsworth & Reutzel, 1988), since the classrooms in which this child participates are guided by the whole language approach to teaching and learning. By examining these activities this reasearcher will come to know which promote literacy development for the child in this case study.

The teachers' interactions with the child and how

these interactions serve to promote literacy development will also be examined. It is apparent that the interaction between teachers and student greatly affect the progress made by the student. It will be important the observe and analyze the interaction of teacher and student in order to better understand how this child has been able to develop literacy skills and how he demonstrates this growth during these interactions.

The child's interaction with the classroom environment and with other students during classroom activites is another important feature to be examined in this study. An analysis of his responses to other students and the surrounding classroom environment will provide important data about his literacy skills, how he has been able to progress in the acquisition of these literacy skills, and what activities have promoted the acquisition of these literacy skills.

It is important to note that, just as Anderson (1990) recommends, the observations and examinations are done in order to understand how and why literacy development is taking place and never to evaluate or judge persons, programs or perspectives. The purpose of this study is to grow in knowledge about how to help Spanish-speaking children who have academic

difficulties such as this child develop their primary language and literacy skills.

Subject

The subject of this study is a seven-year old, Spanish-speaking, second grade student. He is of slight build, very neatly dressed and well-groomed. He is the oldest child in a family of five children. He lives with both his natural parents and four other brothers, ranging in ages from six to two. Mother is expecting her sixth child.

This child fits well into the regular classroom setting. He works very hard at assigned tasks in both the regular classroom and the special education classroom. Throughout the school day he makes numerous classroom changes which require a great deal of flexibility and adaptability. He works well in this daily transitioning from regular classroom to special education classroom with a minumum amount of teacher instruction.

As has been stated, this child was chosen for this case study because of the delay in the oral language development of his primary language. This child had not attended any pre-school programs. Upon entering kindergarten he was enrolled in a bilingual classroom, with a Spanish-speaking teacher providing

primary language instruction in all academic areas. The delay in his oral language development was noted by his kindergarten teacher. It is also significant to note that a BSM score could not be obtained because the child would not respond at all during the testing.

In first grade he continued in a bilingual program with a Spanish-speaking teacher providing primary language instruction in all areas. The delay in oral language development appeared to be effecting progress in academic areas. His academic progress was carefully monitored, and by December of his first grade year it was clear that he would need special attention if he was to have any amount of educational success. The referral process for special placement was begun in December, 1991.

In January, 1992 he was assessed by the bilingual school psychologist. A number of tests were administered which indicated significant weakness in language development, attention, numerical reasoning and academics. Significant strengths were demonstrated in visual motor coordination and perceptual speed. Relative strengths were noted in spatial organization and understanding of parts-to-wholes relationship (Gutierrez, 1992). The areas in which he is weak are those which are required

for demonstrating success in school. His strengths, although worth noting, are not the skills that are required for success in the traditional school setting.

This child is currently enrolled in a special day classroom where he spends over fifty-one percent of the day. The teacher in this classroom is bilingual. Although she does not hold a special education certificate, she does hold a Reading Specialist Credential, was a Miller-Unruh reading teacher for many years, and was also a Chapter One Project teacher for two years. Her experience and expertise qualify her as a knowledgeable instructor for this child. This instructor has instituted a whole language approach in her special day classroom. Since the child spends more than half his day in the special day class, the interaction between the subject and this teacher will be the focus of analysis for this case study.

When the child is not in the special day classroom he is in a bilingual first/second grades combination classroom. This researcher is the teacher in that classroom. The child has been with this same classroom teacher for first and second grades. This classroom is currently in the process of moving

towards a whole language approach to teaching and learning. In this class the subject is expected to participate in whole class discussions, small group activities and completion of individual projects. A variety of language activities in this context will be examined in order to understand how literacy growth is being promoted.

Methodology

A case study approach was chosen as the best approach to answer the research question. As Anderson (1990) states, "Traditional methods of educational research do not lend themselves well to a wide array of educational situations (p. 157)." He further states, "Education is a process and there is need for research methods which themselves are process-oriented, flexible and adaptable to changes in circumstances and an evolving context (ibid)." Since the research question deals with understanding the process in which this particular child was able to progress in the acquisition of literacy skills, a case study approach is clearly the most appropriate method of investigating the problem. Recent research also supports this approach.

Garcia (1991) notes that case studies have provided the best documentation of effective

educational practices to use with linguistically and culturally diverse students was gathered through a case study approach. He states that, "The results of these studies do provide important insights with regard to general instructional organization, literacy development, academic achievement and the perspectives of the student, teachers, administrators and parents (p. 3)." It is the purpose of this project to gather first-hand information and insights about instruction, literacy development and academic achievement of one particular child through this case study approach.

As the case study proceeds it is expected that the necessary information required to answer the projects questions will be gathered. Through the use of documentation, file data, interviews, site visits, direct observations, and physical artifacts, this researcher expects to become more knowledgeable as to how and why this particular Spanish-speaking child with a significant delay in the oral language developement of his primary language was able to progress in the development of his literacy skills.

Through careful observation and a thorough examination of the educational program in which this child participates this researcher will gain more knowledge about how to promote literacy development

for other children who may have academic difficulties due to delayed oral language development.

Data Collection

As was stated earlier, a case study approach requires a wide variety of methodologies and multiple sources of data. Anderson (1990) lists six sources of evidence usually used in conducting a case study: documentation, file data, interviews, site visits, direct observations, and physical artifacts. These will all be included in this case study.

During the course of this study a wide range of documentation and file data will be gathered. With parent permission, this researcher has been allowed to examine the child's school records. In the school records there is information about past and current school progress. The school records also contain information gathered during psychological testing which is important to this case study. There are also periodic I.E.P. (individualized educational program) reports that contain pertinent program information.

Interviews are also a significant part of this case study. Many interviews, formal and informal, will be conducted in order to gain a wide range of information about the child, his developmental history, and his on-going program. The mother of the

child will be interviewed to gather information about the child's early language development and his current language use. The school psychologist will also be interviewed to gain insights about the child's interaction during testing and to gain insight into appropriate program practices. The special day teacher also will be interviewed throughout the study to clarify and expand on the information gathered through video taping. Interviews will also provide helpful insights into how and why this child develops literacy skills in holistically organized classrooms.

The most important information for this study will be gained by observing the activities of the child in his special day class and his regular bilingual classroom. A record of his activities in the special education classroom will be gathered by regular video taping done by the special education teacher over a period of three months. A record of his activities in the bilingual classroom will be gathered through anecdotal notes kept by this researcher over a period of three months. The opportunity to observe, record and examine closely the daily activities, interaction and participation of this subject is what will provide this researcher with the most information about how and why this subject

with academic difficulties due to delayed oral language development in his primary language has been able to progress in acquiring literacy skills.

Finally, an examination of the student's daily work, class assignments, and independent projects will also provide useful information for this study. By gathering and analyzing the work done and the process involved in a variety of assignments, this researcher will be better able to answer the questions being asked in this project.

As is required by case study research, this project will examine a wide range of data in order to answer the research question: How do we structure the classroom in order to provide the most effective learning situation for the language and literacy development of a Spanish-speaking child with academic problems due to a significant delay in the oral language development of his/her primary language?

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

As has been indicated, a case study approach is being used in order to more clearly understand how the classroom structure can provide effective learning situations for the language and literacy development of a Spanish-speaking student. This student has academic problems due to a significant delay in the oral language development of his primary language. A wide range of data will be analyzed and the results discussed in order to answer these research questions:

1. What instructional activities and conditions promote development of language and literacy skills for a Spanish-speaking child with delayed oral language development in the primary language?

2. What social interactions promote language and literacy development for the Spanish-speaking child with delayed oral language development in the primary language?

3. What literacy skills are demonstrated as a result of whole language strategies by the Spanish-speaking child with delayed oral language development in the primary language?

In order to interpret the great amount of data that was gathered it has been necessary to organize the data into four areas. A discussion of information gathered in interviews will be presented because it provides insight into the subject's social/cultural /family situation. This information broadens the awareness of how and why the child may interact differently in various situations. Second, the activities in both the special education day class and the mainstream bilingual education class will be presented in order to better understand which are effective in promoting language and literacy development for this child. Third, the anecdotal records and detailed observations that were gathered during various classroom interactions with teachers and peers during language and literacy activities will be presented. This will help us to better understand how the various social configurations and social interactions help develop language and literacy skills. Finally, an analysis of the child's school work and tests results will provide information about the language and literacy skills demonstrated by this Spanish-speaking child with significant delay in the oral language development of his primary language.

Social/Cultural/Family Information

In order to institute an effective educational program for this child it was important to make contact with the parents/guardians as early as possible to gain information about the child's family background, language use, and past experiences. The most important source of this information has been the mother of this child.

As soon as the academic difficulties were noted, this instructor contacted the parent and requested a conference. Since this child has been with the same teacher for first and second grades, there has been a great deal of contact with the mother. Over these last two years there have been numerous meeting and discussions. Most of these centered around the child's progress and ways of helping him at home. There has been no contact with the father. He has never come to school, even during such activities as Back to School Night, Parent Conferences, evening Christmas programs, and grade-level music/dance programs.

During these early, informal encounters, the mother and this teacher spoke a great deal about the importance of reading and sharing books with the child. She indicated that she was visiting the school

library more often; that she does sit with her sons altogether to read storybooks; and she noticed that her older sons had begun to sit with the younger ones to talk about the storybooks.

In December, 1991, however, it became apparent that this child would require special help in order to progress in his academic program. At that time formal meetings were held to gather information dealing with the child's history, development and language use. This teacher, as the classroom teacher and a Student Study Team (SST) member, was required to fill out the preliminary referral form. This provided an opportunity to gain information from the mother about the student's early language use, her impressions about his developmental history, and his current language use in the home.

According to the mother, this child did begin to speak later than her other children, speaking his first words at the age of two. She did notice this when comparing him to other small children, but attributed it to a trauma experienced by the boy when he was eighteen months. At that age his parents lost him at a theater. He was accidently locked in a closet overnight, alone at the theatre. Although she had noted her son's late use of language, she was not

overly concerned. He is her first child and so she did not have anyone close with whom she could compare him. Also, once he did begin to speak, he had no problem communicating his needs to her.

Regarding his developmental history, she reported to the school nurse that her pregnancy was normal. She also reported that the child had had no extraordinary illness that would indicate cause for concern or problems. He also was reported to have normal physical development, although it was slower than her other children. He sat alone at five months; crawled at eight months; walked at ten months; but did not say his first words until he was two years old; and he said his first sentence when he was four years old (from Developmental and Health History record, December, 1991).

The mother also provided information about the child's current language use at home. Spanish is the only language spoken in the home and the dominant language spoken by the families who live in the trailer park where this family lives. The child is very talkative at home with her, his brothers and his friends. He does not appear to have any problems communicating at the basic/interpersonal level with family, friends and peers. The mother also reported

that he does use English when he is out playing with his friends.

Conversations with the mother have provided other insights about this child's language interactions in the home. The mother's speech is very slow, she stammers, and she may have a speech impediment. We do not have any problems communicating, but her son does have some of the same speech patterns as the mother. During our conversations she also has discussed the children's interactions with their father at home. She reports that he works seven days a week, earning only enough for the essentials. When he is at home she must keep the children quiet or she sends them out to play. Father's interactions with the children are mainly discipline related. There are few opportunities for the family to go on outings, because of their economic situation and the number of hours that the father works. There are few friends and relatives close by and this also limits the number and types of family outings.

Over the last two years, because the school psychologist and this teacher have worked together at SST meeting, there have been numerous discussions about this child and his delayed oral language development. This educator's primary interest was to

provide the most effective educational program for the child while he was being mainstreamed into the regular bilingual classroom situation. The school psychologist's observations of the child have provided information that is useful for the planning of an effective school program for him.

The early discussions between the psychologist (Gutierrez, 1992) and this teacher were intended to gather information about effective structuring of the regular bilingual classroom for this child. Rather than recommend specific programs and texts to be used, though, the psychologist's observations and recommendations dealt with effective social interactions and practices to be used in the classroom. He stressed the importance of a language-rich environment, use of story reading, and the need for an uncompetitive environment. He highly commended the work being done in the special education classroom, because of the progress he saw in the subject's language development.

This teacher was also interested in the psychologist's impressions about the possible cause of the delayed oral language development. When questioned about the possibily of the theater event having a long-term effect on the child's language

development, the psychologist did not feel that the language delay was due to a one-time trauma. He felt that the delayed oral language development was due more to lack of stimulation in the home. His impression was that the language use in the home is a means to getting basic needs met, and there is probably a minimum of interaction beyond that.

The psychologist (Gutierrez, 1993) also provided information relating to the standardized testing situation with this child. He reported having difficulty gaining this child's confidence, especially when he and the child were alone. This made the psychological testing extremely difficult. The psychologist indicated that there were times during the testing that he was sure the child knew the answer but would not respond. From this discussion with the psychologist, it would appear that the standarized tests being given to this child did not accurately reflect the child's true learning capabilities.

At the end of this school year (June, 1993), after conducting tests, the school psychologist reported finding that this child had not shown a consistant pattern of growth in the standardized tests that were administered. He also reported that the student had even shown a decrease in cognitive growth

according to one of the standardized tests that was readministered.

In January, 1992, the subject was given the Expressive One-Word Picture Vocabulary Test (EOWPVT). He received a standard score below 55 with an age equivalence of three years/four months. When given the same test in June, 1993, he received an age equivalence of five years/two months. The subject had demonstrated gains in vocabulary development, but was still two years behind for his age.

The psychologist also readministered parts of the Weschler Intelligence Scale for Children-III (WISC-III). It was here that he reported being disappointed because the subject had shown a decrease in cognitive growth. His Verbal Scale Score had not increased sufficiently in proportion to the time passed, which indicated an actual decrease in cognitive growth.

Unfortunately, not all the same tests were readministered, and so this prevents getting a accurate report of growth, or lack of growth, through use of standarized test scores. (It is not within this researcher's ability to administer these standardized tests. The school psychologist's impressions and discussions had to fulfill that area

of information.)

The validity of these tests must be questioned because of the psychologist's concern over the child's reponses during the testing situation, and the inability to get a accurate measure of this child's true language and cognitive abilities. It does seem clear that the appropriateness of using standardized test scores for measuring this student's academic ability and/or academic progress is very questionable.

The child's family situation, past history, language use and the psychologist's impressions are valuable resources for organizing classroom activites and situations for this child. Standardized test scores were required for qualifying for placement in the special education programs, but the tests have not provided any other pertinent information useful in planning an effective educational program for this student.

Interviews, conferences and formal meeting have provided the following important information: It is apparent that the child needs time before he feels confident enough to communicate with an unfamiliar adult. He is comfortable, though, sharing with his siblings and peers, and discussing events surrounding them. Much more language goes on when he is

interacting with those his own age. He is very uncomfortable when interacting with an adult in a one-to-one situation, particularly if it is to be tested or evaluated. It appears that the child has had limited opportunities to use language in a variety of different contexts.

Activities and Conditions in the Classrooms

The activities in both the special education day class and the mainstream bilingual education class will be presented and discussed in order to better understand which are more effective in promoting language and literacy development for this Spanish-speaking child with delayed oral language development. As has been stated before, the activities in the special education day classroom were videotaped by the bilingual special education teacher. A record of the activities in the mainstream bilingual classroom was kept in a anecdotal log by this researcher.

The first step in this analysis was for the researcher to view all the video tapes made by the bilingual special education teacher over a three-month period. The special education teacher had been given a minimum of instruction as to what was to be videotaped. She was asked to, "just turn it (the video recorder on a tripod) on when it is convenient

or when you think there is something significant going on." The wide variety of activities chosen for taping by the special education teacher provide extensive information about the academic program in which this child participated.

During the viewing of the video tapes, this researcher complied a list of the activites that occurred in the special day classroom. Many of these same activities also took place in the regular bilingual classroom. The following is a brief description of the whole-language activities as they occurred in both classrooms:

Daily Diary was done in the regular bilingual classroom at the end of each day. The student was usually present for this activity. At the beginning of the year the whole class sat together to do the diary. Three children contributed to a chart story about what they had done or learned during the school day. The class read it together and reread it the following morning. The three children would then illustrate the page and it would be posted on the wall in the classroom. Diaries were bound into a book at the end of each month.

By February the children of the class were ready to write a daily diary in their own small journal.

They would then go around and read it to other members of the class.

D.E.A.R Time stands for Drop Everything And Read. It was a daily activity done right before lunch in the regular bilingual classroom. The student was usually back to class in time for this activity. Children took out any book in their desk that they had chosen from the classroom library, school library or from home, and they read.

Interactive Journals is also a daily activity done in the regular and the special education classroom. The subject was not always in the regular bilingual classroom when his group rotated around to the teacher for this activity, but he did participate in it daily in the special day class. Each child has a journal. They draw a picture then write something about the picture. They come individually to read their entry and the teacher responds in an authentic manner to what the child has written.

Environmental Print consisted of commercially-created poems, Super Kid stories, daily diaries, chart stories and monthly writing samples. Children were encouraged to read these whenever there was free time. In the special day class, the teacher reviewed these regularly with the student.

Library Group Time was one of the rotation activities that the subject usually did not get to participate in while in the regular classroom. It was a fifteen minute period when children looked at and talked about books in the classroom library.

Super Kid was a weekly activity that the subject eagerly participated in. Each week, in the regular class, and once a month in the special day class, a different child is chosen to be the super kid. The class interviews him/her; a chart story is written and posted; then children draw a picture of the student and write something from the chart story or something they have created themselves. Children read their paper to the super kid; their page gets posted next to the chart story. At the end of the week a book is made of all the children's papers so that the super kid can take it home.

Paired Reading was done once a week in the regular classroom and twice a week in the special day class. Third grade bilingual children came to the classroom to read a story to their first grade partner. Together they would draw a picture and write a sentence about something the first-grader had liked in the story. Children kept the same partner throughout the year.

Collaborative Stories were started in the regular class in February of the school year. Groups of students, together with the teacher, created a story, illustrated it and bound it into a book. Then the same story was provided so that students could make and illustrate a small book of their own to take home. The subject did participate in the creation of a number of these collaborative stories.

In the special day class the instructor wrote many collaborative chart stories with the student. The chart stories were about familiar topics and contained the child's own language.

Thematic Studies were done in the special day classroom. The study involved a variety of activities centered around one theme or topic.

Songs and Poems were learned in both classrooms. The poems were usually posted on charts so that the children could read and track the words of the poems they had memorized. The words to songs also were written on charts for the students to track and read.

Patterned Books were created in the special day class so that the child could read and reread familiar text. The books contained simple text about familiar topics and pictures to clue the child as to the written text.

Dramatic Play involved the acting out of and/or the movement to a familiar story, song or poem. It did not occur very often in the regular classroom, and only periodically in the special day class.

Many of the same activities occurred in both the classrooms of this child. At the beginning of the school year the special education teacher and this teacher together worked out a schedule that would allow the student to participate successfully in a number of activities. Those activities in the regular education classroom which might create confusion or frustration for this child were done when he was not in class (Mathematics was a subject that the child could not do in the regular classroom.) It was also interesting to see the number of times that the child carried over knowledge gained in one class to the other class (This will be discussed in more detail further on in the paper.)

Table 1 presents a list of the language arts activities that occurred in the two classrooms of this child. It also lists the number of times each activity was scheduled to occur. Table 1 indicates that there are many whole-language activities occuring in the mainstream bilingual classroom and the special education day classroom. It also shows that the

TABLE 1

Activities/Strategies in the Classrooms

Mainstream Bilingual Class		Special Day Bilingual Class	
Daily Diary	4/5	Interactive Journal	4/5
D.E.A.R. Time	4/5	Vocabulary/Letter Drill	4/5
Opening/Calendar	4/5	Thematic Studies	4/5
Free Time	4/5	Songs and Poems	4/5
Storytime	4/5	Environmental Print	4/5
Interactive Journals	2/3	Language Experience Charts	2/3
Environmental Print	2/3	Basal Reader	2/3
Writing Assignments	2/3	Workbook/Worksheets	2/3
Computer Time	1/w	Patterned Books	2/3
Library Group Time	1/w	Paired Reading	2/3
Super Kid	1/w	Collaborative Story Charts	1/w
Phonics Worksheets	1/w	Super Kid	1/m
Paired Reading	1/w	Dramatic Play	1/m
Collaborative Stories	1/m		

Note:
4/5=four or five days a week
2/3=two or three days a week
1/w=one day a week
1/m=one done per month

whole-language activities predominate over the skills-based activities.

Table 1 also shows, however, that there are still skills-based activities occuring in both classrooms. At this time both teachers are in the process of changing to a whole-language perspective and still use traditional methods in their classrooms. The special education teacher is also required, by I.E.P.s and the traditional approach to remediation advocated in this district to teach and test basic skills. In order to accomplish this she uses drills, workbooks and worksheets in the classroom.

The number of basic-skills activities still being used in the classrooms can also be attributed to the fact that the whole language approach is still a new approach for these two teachers. According to Dr. Barbara Flores (1992), teachers instituting the whole language perspective normally do go through a period of turmoil. It is typical for teachers to continue to use some skill-based activities until they become familiar with the many strategies available in the holistic perspective for language and literacy development.

The classroom teachers working with the subject of this study have only recently (during the 1992-1993

school year) had formal staff development in the area of whole language. Although both have had some exposure to the concept of holistic teaching practices, there had not yet been a structured program of inservices to institute the whole language program throughout the school. The results have been that there is a cross-over of holistic teaching approaches into skills-based activities, particularly in the special education day class. There also continues to be some skills-based focus in the whole-language activities of the classrooms, particularly in the mainstream bilingual classroom.

Following are two examples of how this occurred in each of the classrooms:

The special education teacher brought out many of the child's prior knowledge and experiences in the use of the basal reader which is a basic-skills activity. She encouraged a lot of discussion about the pictures and discussed children's own experiences thereby developing more vocabulary dealing with the basal story. She did a lengthy lesson so that the children got "into, through, and beyond" what was in the text.

The regular bilingual teacher found that during the interactive journal activities, which is a whole-language strategy, she would focus on the

teaching of basic skills and the conventional forms of writing. Many times during the mediation of the journal writing the child would "sound out" words with the teacher, or the teaher would direct the child on proper spacing and punctuation.

It occurred to this instructor that by focusing on proper form and "sounding-out" words, opportunities for developing language were being missed. During interactive journal time it would have been better to coax more language out of the child about his drawing; ask questions that would require the child to give more details about the picture; and share personal experiences similar to those being discussed in order to build upon what is familiar to the child.

Although the activities and strategies that were observed in the two classrooms are usually categorized as either whole-language strategies or skills-based strategies, each teacher does bring her own philosophy and beliefs about teaching into the situation. It appears that, although the strategies may usually be considered holistic or skills-based, it is the teacher who defines the approach by her philosophy and beliefs about teaching.

In order to analyze the data gathered and relate it to effective structuring of the classroom for the

Spanish-speaking child with delayed oral language development, this researcher has chosen to use the twelve conditions presented in the OLE (Optimal Learning Environments) curriculum guide. The twelve conditions are the following:

1) Student choice
2) Student centered
3) Wholeness; whole-part-whole
4) Active participation/peer engagement
5) Meaning centered
6) Authentic purpose
7) Approximation
8) Immersion
9) Demonstration
10) Response
11) Community
12) Expectation

(Garcia, Ruiz & Figueroa, 1993).

These twelve conditions have been found to "optimize language, learning and literacy for Latino children in general and special education (p. 9)."

This researcher will use the twelve conditions to examine the program in which the subject of this study participated during the course of this study. The description of these twelve optimal conditions that follows is a synthesis of the descriptions and reflections contained in the OLE curriculum guide (Garcia, Ruiz & Figueroa, pgs. 12-21).

1. Student Choice is a condition that helps build enthusiasm and interest in the classroom. Teachers provide their students with information that

will help them make informed decisions. Then students choose what they are interested in learning, what they might be taught, the topics they want to read and write about, and how this new learning can be shared with the classroom community.

2. Student Centered condition allows children to insert their own experiences which reflect their personal and community culture. It is a condition which reflects that children have ownership of their learning.

3. Wholeness is a condition that is relected in theme work and literature conversations. It is also reflected in the study of whole text, and whole poems. By studying the whole, a child can construct meaning because of the multiple cues that only authentic children's text can provide, such as pictures, complete story grammars and natural language patterns.

4. Active Participation is a condition that allows children to actively participate in social organizations that promote specific types of engagement. Children use all five language systems, listening, speaking, writing, reading, and viewing during cooperative structures, thematic cycles and other activities that produce a lot of talk, to construct knowledge.

5. Meaning Centered is a condition that comes from the understanding that children construct meaning prior to attending to correct form. The children produce work that is meant to inform, persuade, reflect and share, but may not be in the conventional form. The children share their work knowing that what they have to say is meaningful to others. Teachers know that teaching correct form is important, but that it comes after meaning.

6. Authentic Purpose requires that there be a real purpose for the child's efforts in the classroom. The skills that children are acquiring in the classroom must go beyond that classroom and beyond the skills for that grade level. Children write for an audience and for a functional purpose; they read for information, enjoyment, and reflection.

7. Approximation is a condition that allows children to take risks in all areas of literacy development. Teachers do not expect only one correct answer but accept approximations as reflections of a child's coming to know and understand. It also helps to inform the teacher's instruction in order to plan for optimal learning.

8. Immersion requires that the teacher surround the students in a wide variety of functional print.

It also requires that they be immersed in a lot of meaningful oral language. This supports the children's reading and writing development and reflects the collections of their knowledge.

9. Demonstration by the teacher informs children as to how to do it, the reading, writing, speaking and listening. By thinking out loud continually and in a variety of contexts, the teacher demonstrates to the students about content and correct form. In the demonstrations by students, the teacher gains knowledge about how the student does it, the reading, writing, speaking and listen. This provides the teacher information about how to improve instruction to meet the needs of the children in the classroom.

10. Response is a condition that helps children to understand their work better through the reflections of others. The teacher's responses to the students come from an understanding of the literacy skills the students should be able to engage in. The students' responses to other students come from demonstrations that the teacher has made and reflect the content knowledge and the literacy skills that they are acquiring.

11. Community is a condition in the classroom where teachers and students work together as

co-learners with common interests and a commitment to valuing each other as learners. This community allows diverse social organizations where community members work, play talk, write and read together.

12. Expectations is a condition where the teacher expects that all children can become literate. The high expectations of the teacher require trust in the learners and also the need to create conditions for optimal learning in every classroom.

This researcher has chosen to analyze the data collected in the video taping and the anecdotal records in relation to which conditions were apparent in the activities in which the student of this study participated. A list was complied with all the literacy and language activities of both classrooms (see Table 2). Table 2 also includes an analysis of which of the twelve optimal conditions were apparent in each of the activities.

As Garcia, et al indicate, "In many cases, more then one condition is embedded in a strategy. Some strategies reflect conditions more clearly than others and yet none reflect only one condition (p. 13)." Table 2 indicates that the activites and strategies in which the subject participated incorporated a number of the conditions but to varying degrees.

TABLE 2

Analysis of Strategies and Conditions

Strategies in the Classrooms	12 Optimal Learning Conditions											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
*Super Kid(12)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
*Environmental Print(11)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X
*Interactive Jrnls(10)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	-	X
*Patterned Books(10)	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X
*Cross-age/ Paired Reading(10)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	-	X	X
*Daily Diary(10)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	-	X	X
*Thematic Studies(9)	-	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X
Writing Assignments(8)	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	-	-	X
*D.E.A.R. Time(7)	X	X	X	-	-	-	X	-	X	X	-	X
Free Time(7)	X	X	-	X	-	-	-	X	X	-	X	X
Lang. Exp. Charts(7)	-	-	X	-	X	X	X	-	X	-	X	X
*Class Library Time(6)	X	X	-	X	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	X
Computer Time(3)	X	-	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-
Storytime((3)	-	-	-	-	X	X	-	X	-	-	-	-
Vocab./Ltr. Drill(2)	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-
Opening/Calendar(2)	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	X
Workbook/Worksheets(2)	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Basal Reader(1)	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-

Note: Numbers in parentheses indicate the number of conditions observed in that activity.
* indicates whole language strategies.

At times, during the process of analyzing the data for evidence of the conditions in the activities and strategies of the two classrooms, it was difficult to determine if a given condition was visible or not. For example: A task does not necessarily include complete student choice or complete teacher selection. In collaborative story writing the teacher may choose the topic for the story, but students choose the content and direction of the story. This indicates that it is the teacher who dictates to what extent the twelve optimal conditions are incorporated into the activities of the classroom. The importance of this finding is that the teacher has the power to promote more effective language and literacy development by how she structures the classroom.

The analysis of the incorporation of the twelve optimal learning conditions into the classroom structure will be valuable to this teacher, and other teachers who may be working with students who have similar problems, when planning future educational programs. It is the goal of this instructor to consider how to incorporate more of the optimal conditions into the activities of the classroom; how to continually evaluate to what degree those conditions are being incorporated; how to expand the

possiblities of their effect in the classroom; and how to consider these conditions and their degree of incorporation when adding new approaches and strategies to the educational program of the classroom.

This analysis of the incorporation of the twelve optimal conditions in the classroom activities and strategies has also been important because from Table 2 it is readily evident which activities incorporated more of the twelve conditions. As might be expected, the whole language strategies incorporated more of the conditions then the skills-based strategies.

During the analysis of the video tapes and the collection of anecdotal records, it also became apparent that the activities that incorporated more of the optimal conditions were the same activities in which the subject of the study was more actively involved. Evidence of this will be shown as the child's interactions in a variety of social contexts in the classroom are discussed.

Social Interactions in a Variety of Contexts

During the course of this study this researcher was able to compile a great amount of data relating to the child's interactions in the classroom. As was mentioned above, during the analysis of this data it

became apparent that the activities and strategies that incorporated more of the twelve optimal conditions were also the activities and strategies in which the child in this study appeared to participate more. Following is a description of the child's interaction with the teacher, fellow classmates and the environment during the four of the social context in the classroom. His interactions during **Super Kid**, **Interactive Journals**, and the making of **Patterned Books** will be examined. There will also be a discussion of his interaction with and use of **Environmental Print**.

Super Kid was an activity that the child participated in weekly in the regular classroom and monthly in the special day classroom. The activity began with an interview of the super kid by other students in the classroom. During the interviewing process the subject of this study would raise his hand as if to ask a question, but he did have difficulties phrasing a whole question. At these times the teacher, or other students around him would suggest questions that he might want to ask. Usually he would nod to indicate that those suggestions were acceptable, but he did not repeat them outloud.

Once the chart story was done the students

returned to their desks to copy a sentence from the chart story (or create their own sentence, which the subject never did). Then the children would illustrate the page to match the text that they had written. The subject worked very hard during this part of the activity, many times verifying with the teacher the content of the sentence that he was copying. He was able to then illustrate his page to match the text. Many times he would come to the teacher to show his artwork and explain what he had drawn. (Drawing and other art activities are a strength for this child.)

The final part of this activity required the students to read their page to the super kid, who would then put a star for each time the page was read to him/her. Many students returned a number of times to read their page to the super kid, or to the teacher. The subject also read to the super kid, but was not as enthusiastic about this part of the activity. When the teacher requested that he read the page to her, many times he was not cooperative. When he did read it, he could not read it word for word, but was able to recall the basic content of what he had written.

It is interesting to note that, if he did not

finish the task before having to leave for his special day class, he would make every effort to complete it when he returned.

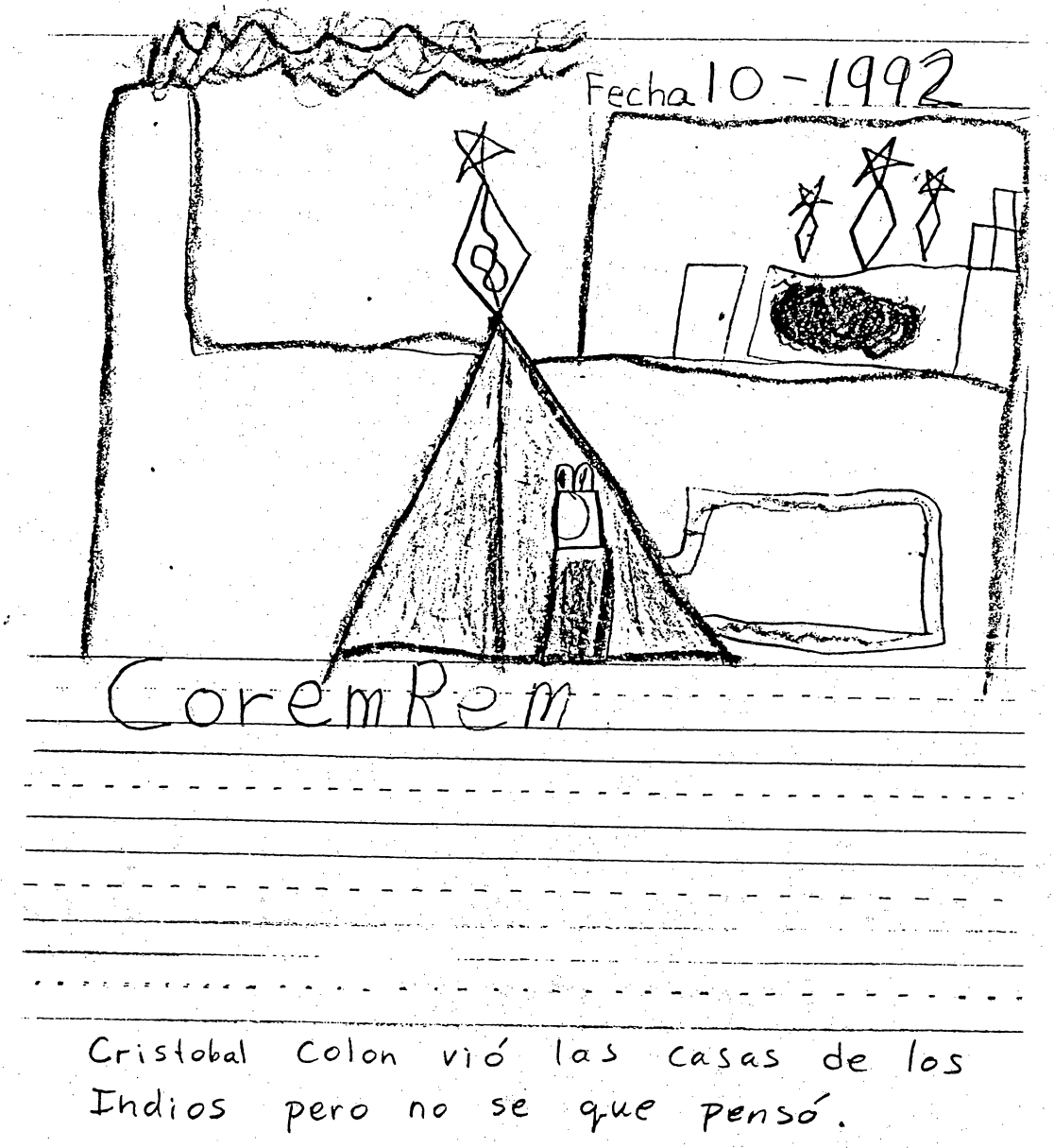
Interactive Journals were done almost daily in both the regular bilingual class and the special day class. At times, in the regular classroom, the subject did not get to participate in this activity. In the special day classroom, though, he was required to complete it and meet with the special day teacher.

An analysis of the interactive journal pages reveals a great deal of information about this child's interactions in the classroom. By examining a journal sample for each month, one can see the interactions between child and teacher, the growth in language and literacy skills, and the intergration of many of the whole language components in the classroom.

In October (See Figure 1) much of the classroom discussions, stories, and story charts dealt with Christopher Columbus, particularly since it was the 500th year of his landing.

In the October sample the child drew an Indian tepee. When asked to tell about his picture he answered with a one word answer, "Casa (House)." He was then questioned further by the teacher: "¿De quién es la casa (Whose house is it)?" "De los indios

Figure 1. October interactive journal sample.



(of the Indians)", is the response.

In October the child was not very verbal. He does have a lot of detail in his picture, but is still not talking much with the teacher. His writing is very neat, but it is just random letters.

The journal sample for November (Figure 2) does not have as much detail. When asked about the picture, "¿Qué dibujaste aquí (What did you draw here)?", the child responded with a one word answer, "Oro (Gold)." The teacher attempted to get the child to expand more by asking, "Qué comprarías tu con oro (What would you buy with the gold)?" The child would not respond.

In December the class was discussing the weather because it was an unusually rainy month. Besides the discussions about the rain there were chart stories and daily classroom diaries written about the rainy weather. These were posted in the room. The journal sample for December (Figure 3) shows a rainy picture with lightening and clouds. It also shows the child has copied words from a chart posted in the room.

The teacher asked, "¿Qué dibujaste aquí (What did you draw here)?" The child responded, "Va a llover (It is going to rain)." The teacher then tried to tie in what the child had written to her response, because

Figure 2. November interactive journal sample.

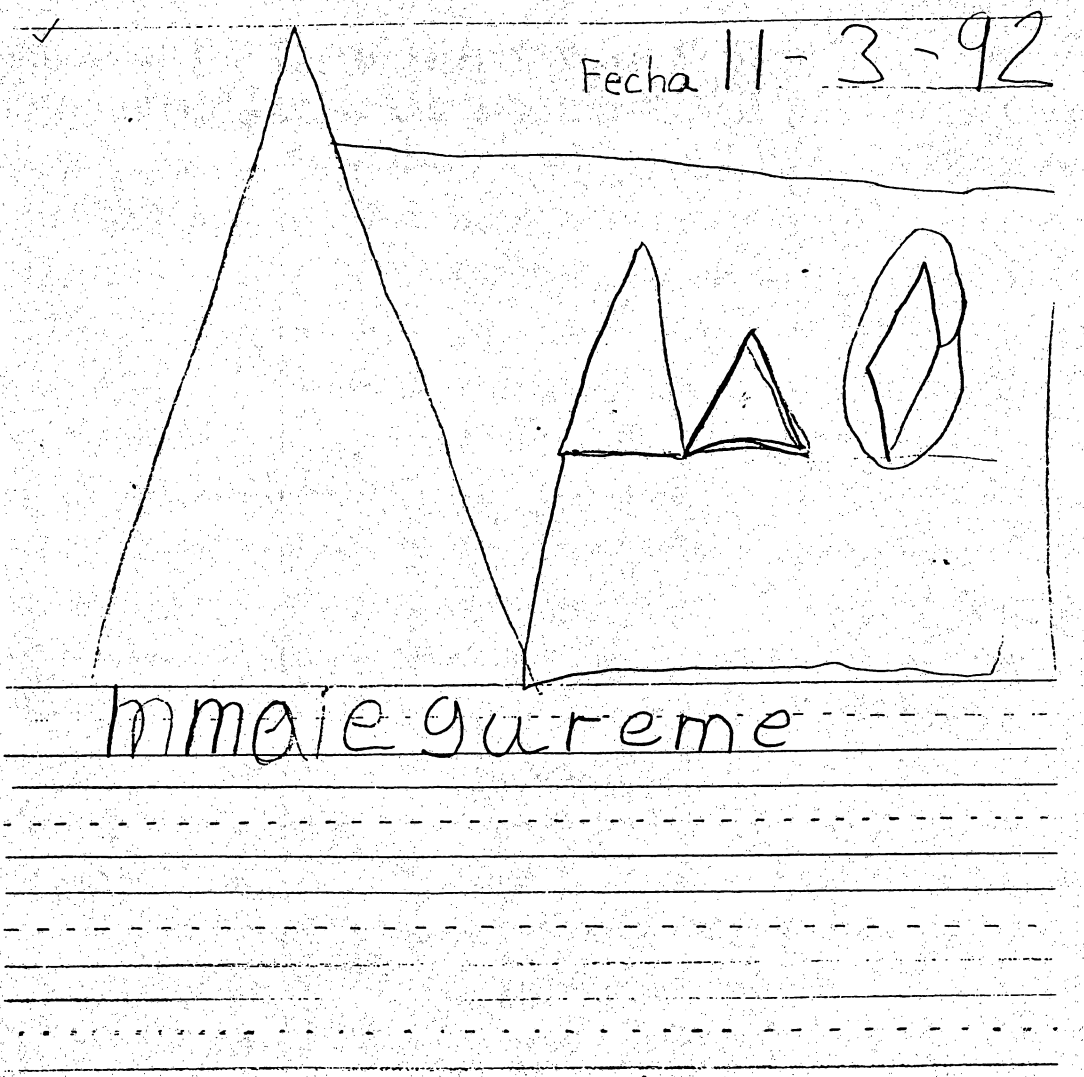
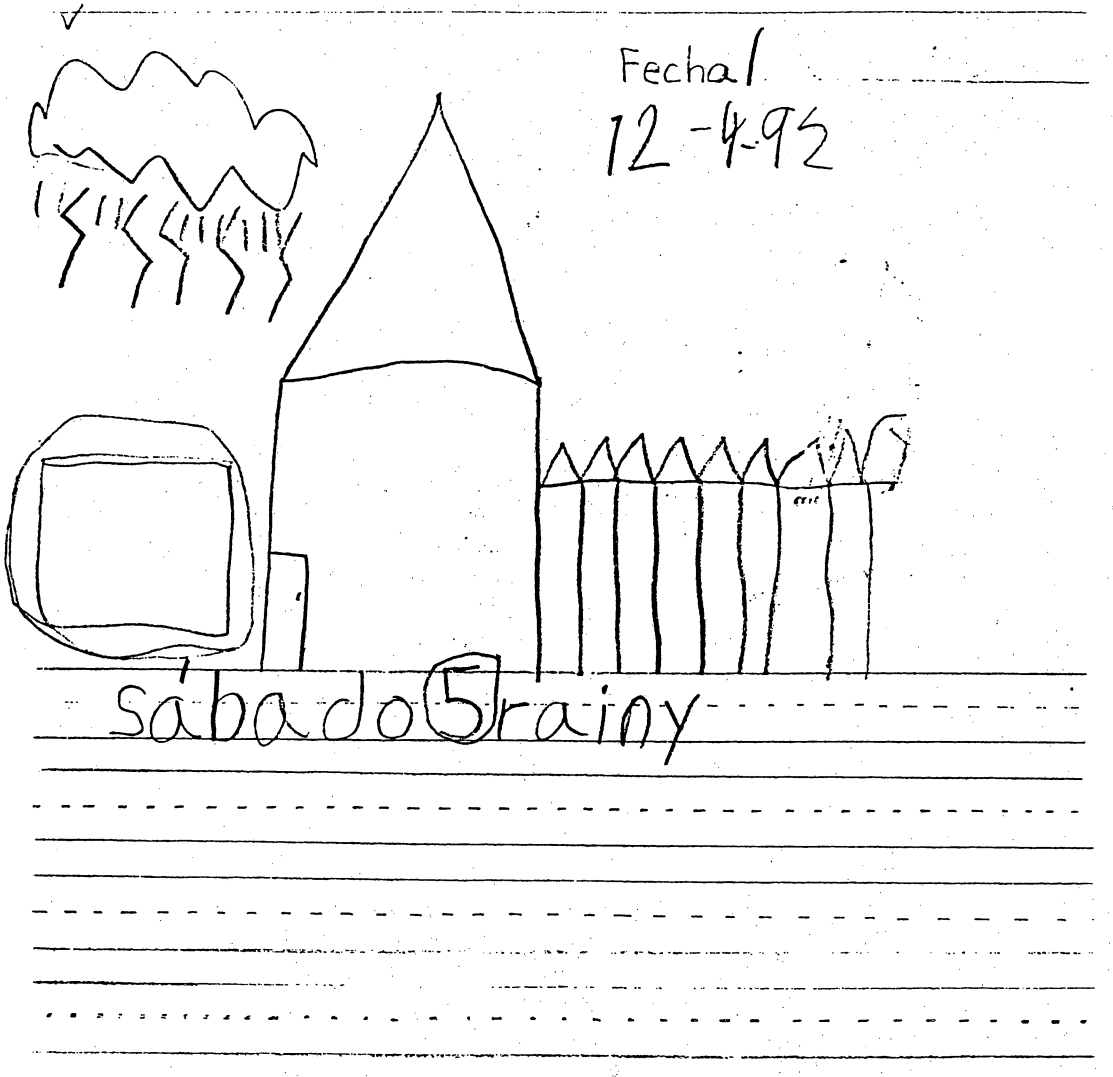


Figure 3. December interactive journal sample.



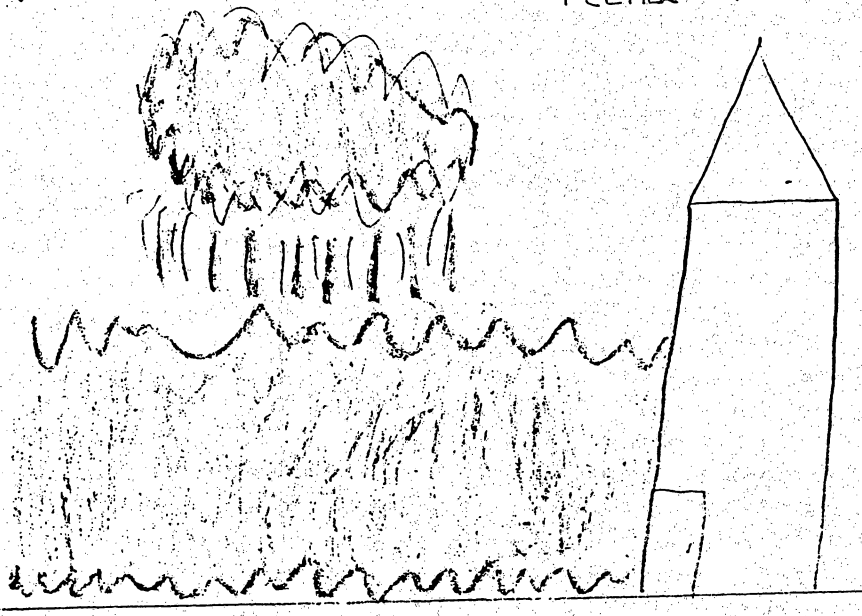
he had used the word "sabado" (Saturday) in his writing. She also extended the discussion by asking, "¿Qué juegas cuando llueve (What do you play when it rains)?" The student said, "en la bicicleta (on the bicycle)." Even though this did not agree with what the teacher expected, she accepted the response and helped the child sound out that phrase. During the mediation of the sounding out process other students around the table offered letter names. The alphabet chart was also referred to during the process. The student did write these letter himself as help was offered.

In January the topic was still the rainy, stormy weather. The journal page for January (Figure 4) shows a cloud and rain falling. The teacher asked, "Dime lo que dibujaste aquí (Tell me what you drew here.)." "Nubes con aqua (Clouds with water)," was the response. The teacher wrote her response then asked a question that required a response from the students. The objective was to help the child sound out and write the response together.

It appears that the child does know many of the sound/symbol relationships. During the mediation of the word "chamarra", though, the teacher refers to children's names in the class to help the child

Figure 4. January interactive journal sample.

V Fecha 1-13-93



one merims

¿ Esta lleno el cielo de nubes y las nubes tienen agua. Por eso llovió.

¿Qué necesitas cuando llueve?

chamara

remember the relationship. For example: When sounding out chamarra (jacket) the students needed to refer to the alphabet chart in the room because there are no students who begin with the "ch" sound. The "a" and "m" sounds he knew. When he got to the "r" sound the teacher needed to refer to the name "Ricardo" to help him remember which letter it was.

In the February journal page (Figure 5) the students drew a picture with a mother, children and balloons. He also wrote words that spelled out something that related to his picture. This text was copied from a Super Kid story posted in the room. When asked to read what he had written he said, "Es Pizza Hut (It's Pizza Hut.)." This does not match his written text exactly, but it is a close approximation to what was written and what he had drawn.

The teacher then asked that he to tell more about his picture. In her response she asked, "¿Por qué crees que pusieron bombas (Why do you think they put balloons)?" The child responded, "Es su 'party' (It's his party)." He was answering more questions and providing more information about his pictures.

In February the class had discussed friends and there were still story charts up in the classroom about friends and favorite games to play with friends.

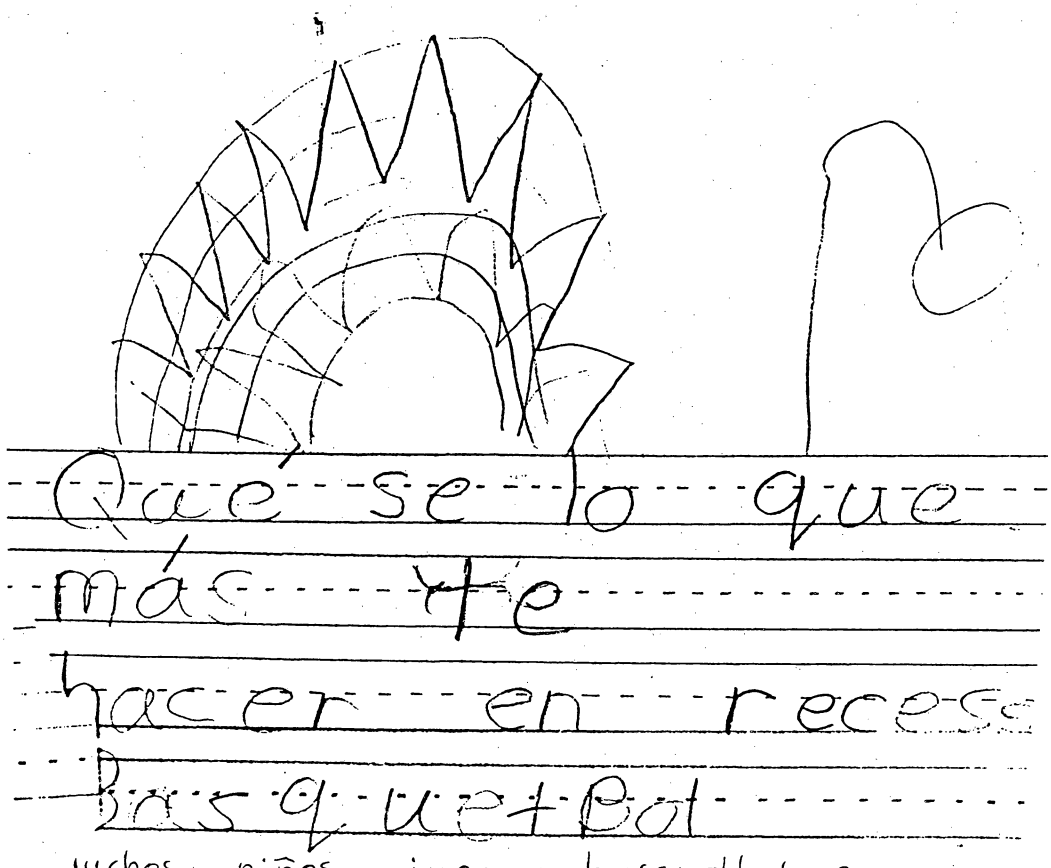
Figure 5. February interactive journal sample.

In the March journal page (Figure 6) the student copied a sentence from one of the chart stories. His picture matches the text he has written. The teacher attempted to get the child to write a response on his own, without mediation. The child attemped to write, con mis hermanos (with my brothers), but was not successful.

In the April sample (Figure 7) the child did not copy any written text from the classroom walls. He drew a picture of a child and a house. When asked by the teacher, "¿Qué dibujaste aquí (What did you draw here)?" the child responded, "Esta jugando a la escondidas (He is playing hide-and-go-seek)." The teacher then asked, "¿Con qulén estás jugando (With whom are you playing)?" "Con mi hermano (with my brother)," said the child. The teacher then asked and wrote the question, "¿En dónde está escondido tu hermanito (Where is your brother hiding)?" Her intention was to get a written response from the student. The teacher and the child sounded out and wrote the answer together. During this process it was noted that the child knew the sound/symbol relationship for all the letters he wrote.

Figure 6. March interactive journal sample.

Fecha 3-4-15

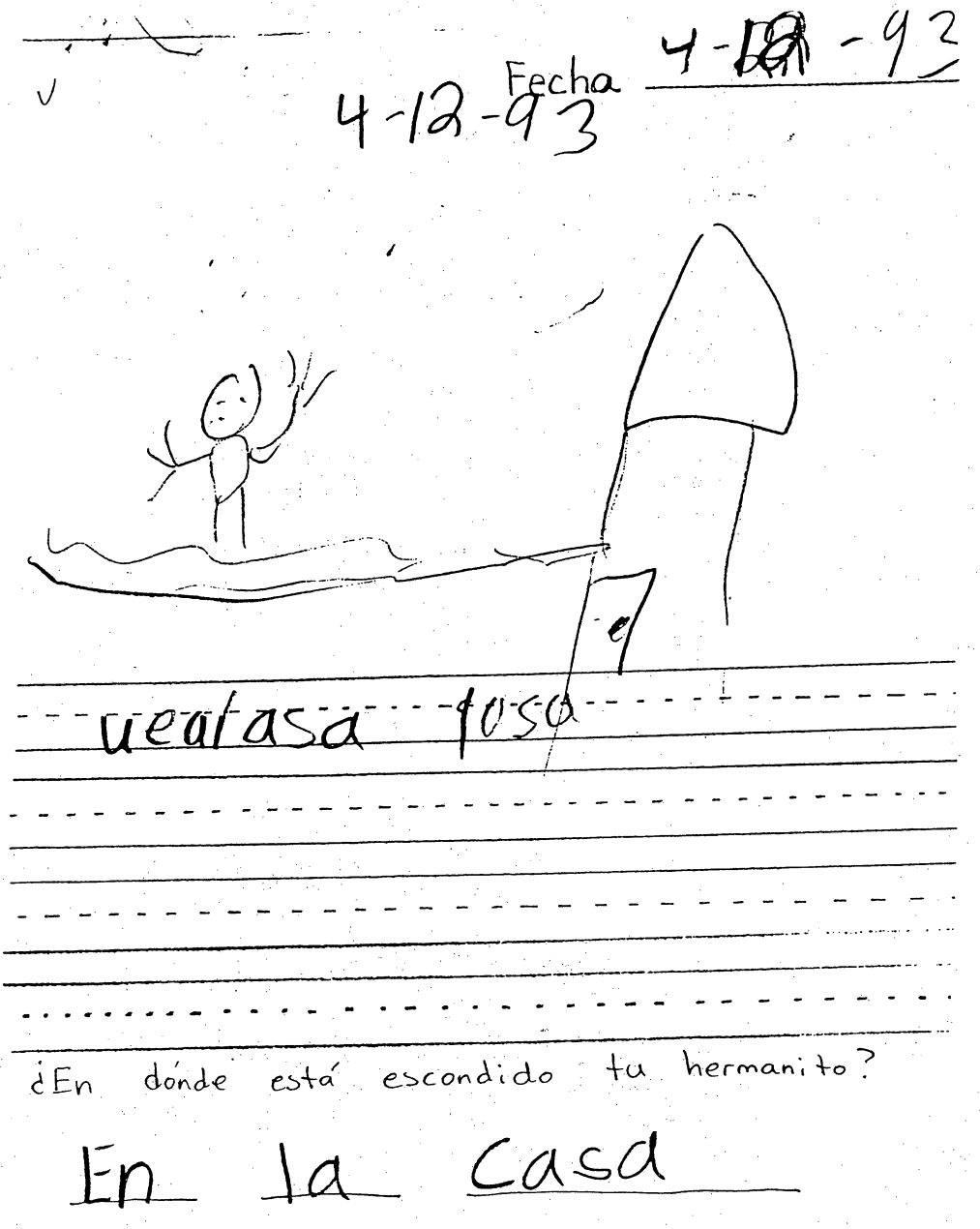


Muchos niños juegan basquetbol en recess.

Con quién juegas tu?

Yeomierrorsarnda

Figure 7. April interactive journal sample.



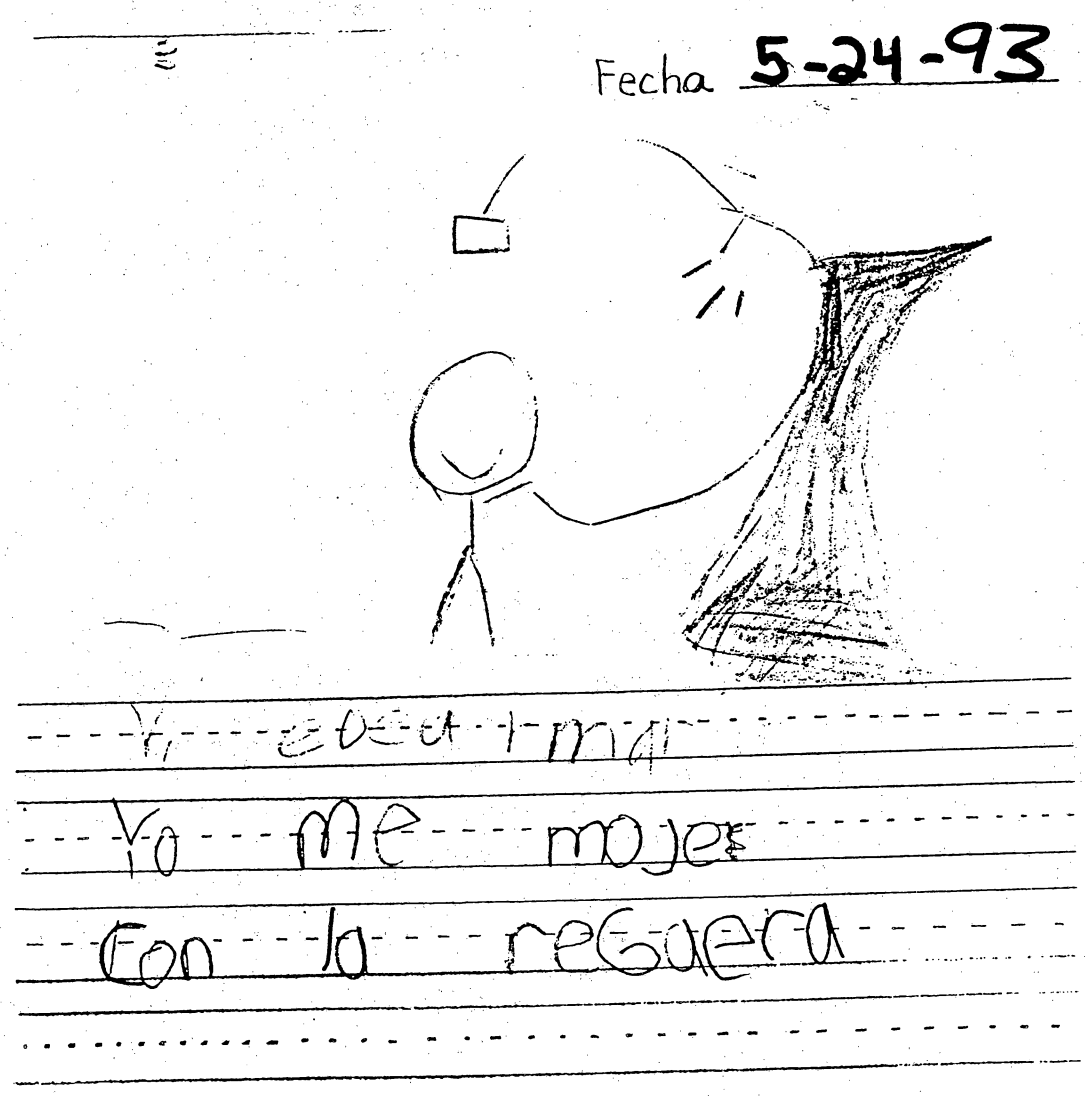
The May journal sample (Figure 8) shows how far the child has progressed during the school year. When asked to tell about his picture he said, " Yo me moje con la manguera (I wet myself with the hose.)." This shows a lot of growth in language use compared to the one-word reponses he started with at the beginning of the year.

The teacher then clarified some of the sense of his story. She asked, "¿Puedes mojarte con la manguera en tu casa (Can you wet yourself with a hose inside the house)? Esto se llama regadera (This is called a shower)." The child was accepting of this correction. At the beginning of the year this correction might have caused the child to withdraw and not continue in the activity.

An analysis of the child's writing shows that he had written many of the sounds and letters of what he had intended to write. The teacher repeated the sentence and then the students and the teacher sounded out all the letters together. This was done to show the student that he would need to say the words more slowly and try to write all the letter sounds he heard as he wrote what he wanted to say in his journal.

The use of interactive journal writing has been one of the most successful activities for promoting

Figure 8. May interactive journal sample.



language and literacy growth for this child. The daily individual attention allows the child to use language to express what is of interest to him. The teacher can then build and expand the language use of the child by a questioning process that still deals with a topic of interest to the child. It is also apparent that the classroom discussions are being incorporated in this child's language use for his journal writing.

In the interactive journal conferences the teacher also builds literacy skills through modeling of correct form; mediation and sounding out for phonics development; discussions about matching picture and text; and clarification of the student's written ideas that are not clear or do not make sense to the reader. This is all done in the context of material that is familiar and meaningful to the child. The language being used is about topics from home or topics that have been discussed in the classroom.

Another important point that must be noted is the great use of environmental print in the journal pages. This child used familiar classroom stories and charts until he felt confident enough to risk writing his own creations in his journal. The importance of interactive journal writing as a means of language and

literacy development has been made apparent through the analysis of this child's monthly journal samples.

Patterned Books were made in the special day classroom. The teacher and the students collaboratively created the text for these books. The subject was a familiar topic, sometimes dealing with material that the student would be required to know according to the goals listed on his I.E.P.

The child did share one of these books with this reseacher after he had completed it. The book dealt with colors. Following is the text of that book:

Front cover: Mis globos Hecho por:
Translation: My balloons Done by:

Page 1: Estos son mis globos.
These are my balloons.

Page 2: Este es mi globo negro.
This is my black balloon.

Page 3: Este es mi globo cafe.
This is my brown balloon.

Page 4: Este es mi globo anaranjado.
This is my orange balloon.

Page 5: Este es mi globo morado.
This is my purple balloon.

Page 6: Este es mi globo azul.
This is my blue balloon.

Page 7: Este es mi globo verde.
This is my green balloon.

Page 8: Este es mi globo amarillo.
This is my yellow balloon.

Page 9: Este es mi globo rojo.
This is my red balloon.

The book consisted of pages of text that had been printed on a computer. The front cover had painted circles of all the colors. The inside pages each had one painted ballon of each of the basic colors. The text had been cut and pasted onto the pages so that the text matched the painted picture.

When the student showed the book, this teacher asked that he read the book to her. At first he was a bit reluctant, but finally, after a bit of coaxing, he began. First he prefaced the reading by indicating that he did not have the cover page well memorized yet. He said, "Todavia no se esto bien (I do not know this well yet.)." He also did not read the first page exactly as printed. He read, "Son mis globos," instead of, "Estos son mis globos." After that he did read pages two through nine quickly, accurately, and with great confidence.

Patterned books appear to be a very successful way of promoting literacy development for this child. The pattern books have familiar language which the child remembers, reads, and rereads easily. The pictures in the book help the child recall the text. The artwork is done by the child which gives him an added incentive for keeping and sharing this book with

others. Patterned books are another whole language activity that this child participated in actively and successfully.

Environmental Print proved to be a tool that was greatly used by this child to accomplish many of the assigned tasks in the classroom. As indicated earlier, the child used environmental print often in his interactive journal. He also used brainstorming ideas done on the board by the whole class to complete his daily diary and his monthly writing samples. For example: Each month the class would brainstorm the events and happenings of the past month and write these on a chart. Then children could chose to write something from the chart on their monthly writing sample or create something of their own. Since the chart remained posted, this child used the chart for his monthly writing sample and also for his daily diary.

There was other environmental print that he used to help accomplish his writing tasks. He often used the alphabet chart or the initials of students names that were posted in the classroom when sounding out words during journal conferencing time. He also took words and phrases from the super kid stories to use in writing tasks.

This child had acquired some compensating techniques to make up for his lack of reading ability. He was able to accomplish most of the writing tasks that were assigned by finding environmental print that matched what was being asked for in the assignment. In fact, he worked hard at completing any written task that was assigned, even when it meant giving up free choice activity time. He has excellent penmanship and seemed to need to prove that he could successfully complete some of the tasks that were being done by the other children in the classroom. This seems to be indicated by the great number of times that he came to the teacher for approval and/or recognition of the completion of assigned writing tasks.

An examination of this child's social interaction in different classroom contexts has served to verify his ability to progress in the acquisition of language and literacy skills when provided an appropriate classroom structure. It also has served to build a keener awareness by this teacher as to how her interactions with the students could better promote language and literacy development.

Configurations in the Classroom

Another area to be examined was the child's interaction in the different configurations that can

be implemented in the classroom. Table 3 indicates the variety of configurations and social contexts that were implemented in the two classrooms of this student. During the analysis of the data it was evident to this researcher that the child interacted very differently in the different configurations. It will be useful to examine the interactions in the following situations:

A. Whole-class/Large group activities

B. One-to-one interactions with teachers

C. One-to-one interactions with peers

D. Small group (8 or less) interactions with teachers

E. Small group (8 or less) interactions with peers

F. Alone

Table 3 indicates during which of the classroom activities these configurations were observed. It is evident from the table that the child was exposed to a variety of configurations throughout his school day.

TABLE 3

Social Configurations in the Classroom

Strategies in the Classrooms	Configurations					
	A	B	C	D	E	F
Super Kid	SD/RB		RB			SD/RB
Environmental Print	SD/RB	SD	RB		RB	SD/RB
Interactive Jrnls		SD/RB	RB			SD/RB
Patterned Books	SD/RB	SD	SD/RB	RB		
Cross-age/ Paired Reading			SD/RB			
Daily Diary	SD/RB		RB			RB
Thematic Studies	SD			SD		
Writing Assignments	RB	SD			RB	SD/RB
D.E.A.R. Time	SD/RB					SD/RB
Free Time					RB	
Lang. Exp. Charts		SD		SD		
Class Library Time			RB		RB	RB
Computer Time			RB			
Storytime	SD/RB					
Vocab./Ltr. Drill		SD		SD		
Opening/Calendar	SD/RB					
Workbook/Worksheets		SD		SD	RB	
Basal Reader		SD		SD		

Note: SD=during special day class
RB=during regular bilingual class
*A=Whole-class/large group activities
*B=One-to-one interactions with teachers
*C=One-to-one interactions with peers
*D=Small group interactions with teachers
*E=Small group interactions with peers
*F=Alone

The following examines how effective structuring of the classroom promoted language and literacy development for this child.

During whole class activities the subject participated in different ways depending on the task. During morning activities he sat in the back and mouthed along when responses were requested from the class such as answers to: "What is the day today?" "Let's count the days on the calendar." and "Let's read our daily dairy for yesterday."

The subject would participate enthusiastically during certain other whole group activities. Almost daily he would read along, out-loud, the class list of names that was posted on the board, as I was taking roll call. He was often heard to say, "I already knew that," (in Spanish--Yo ya lo sabía) as we entered the date on the board--a practice that was done daily. During story time and collaborative story writing he would shout out a word (that sometimes would not make sense) to answer a question or complete a sentence. It seemed that when the material was familiar or the topic was of great interest to him then the subject was willing to take a great risk by publically contributing a response.

It appears, from observation of the tapes, and

this teachers own observations of this child's behavior in the classroom, that the subject also wanted to give the appearance of participation, even though he might not be certain of the correct response. The child seemed to be very self-conscious during the whole-class rug activities. He sat very attentively yet seemed to always be looking to see what the other children were doing.

During one-to-one interactions the student also showed different responses depending on the task and with whom he was working. When he was alone working with the teacher, such as interactive journal conferences it was difficult to get a quick response, especially at the beginning of the year. Both in the special education classroom and the mainstream bilingual classroom, teachers had to wait for him to share what he had written. He was a bit more cooperative when there was mediating by the teacher going on. He was actively involved when a word was being sounded out with the teacher or an idea was being expanded upon.

At report card time, when individual evaluations were attempted, the child would not respond. In the regular mainstream class he would not cooperate during the testing of individual letter names and sounds or

number recognition. In the special day class the teacher was required to have information about the child's progress, and so she would sit for great lengths of time waiting for a response from the child.

When he was working one-to-one with a peer he was more at ease and willing to read, write or draw along with his partner. He was very willing to read his own personal daily diary to his friend in the classroom. He worked well on a one-to-one basis when illustrating collaborative story pages. He would volunteer to copy sentences from the chart story for our classroom books.

From the observations of video tapes and first-hand observation by this teacher it appeared that this child was very cautious in situations where he was being judged, evaluated or singled out. He was very willing, though, to read with someone who was accepting of his limitations; his peers had great patience in paired reading situations. He also was very willing to use his personal talents--good drawing and handwriting--for the benefit of the class.

In a small group the differences in interactions were not as notable. During small group activities the student was often more willing to participate whether the teacher was present or not. It was during

small group activities that this researcher noticed the most interaction between the student and others.

In the regular mainstream classroom, during free choice activity time, library time and phonics worksheet activities, the student interacted easily with his peers. During these times he was observed using a lot of language to persuade others to do as he wanted; clarify the task that had been assigned; explain how a task was to be done; verify his correctness with the teacher; and express his own ideas to others.

When playing with blocks or other building activities he was heard to say, "Vamos a poner eso alla (Let's put that over there)," convincing others to do as he suggested. He also was able to help his group in the completion of phonics worksheets. Because he had done the task in the special day class, he was able to provide answers and words for the successful completion of the task. For example: The group was doing a phonics worksheet using the words mama, mano and mesa. He remembered the correct spelling of the words and shared the information with the other children in his group.

During classroom library time he invited members of his group to join him in reading poems from charts

posted around the room by saying, "Vente a leer esto (Come and read this)." Three others joined him in reading a poem that they all knew because it was read often in the class.

This child also enjoyed describing his drawing and painting that he did for classroom projects and books. He came often to this teacher to describe what he had done, or would share with others in the class. "Mira, yo hice la nieve (Look, I did snow)," he said after completing the January page of our classroom book. Observations of this child in small group activities show that he has no problems communicating with those around him for a variety of purposes.

Many times during small group activities there was also more naturalness to his manner and his interactions. In the small group activities, where the children work independently, the condition of choice is more apparent. Children were allowed to paint, read, build, draw, write, do puzzles, just as they wanted. It is here that the caution and distance that he exhibited in large group and one-to-one situations was not visible.

Working alone was one situation that was almost overlooked. It was easy to overlook its significance until one observed that during those times when the

child was at his seat, working alone, he would occasionally reach out for social contact. Reassurance from the teacher, a comment or look to a neighboring student, these are examples of the need of every child for some amount of social interaction. For the child with delayed oral language the need may not be as pronounced or obvious as it is for our more talkative, social students, but the need is still there. It is this need that must be utilized and promoted even more for these special children. Opportunities for social interaction must be actively encouraged, even manipulated, by the teacher so that these children can grow through interaction with more knowledgeable peers.

From the observations made during the different sitations, it appears that the quality and amount of interactions depends on the familiarity and interest the child has about the topic. It is also apparent that the least threatening situation for this child is during small group interactions. This information is important to know when planning a program that fits the needs of a child with delayed oral language development.

What is evident from the analysis of Table 3 and a close inspection of the child's interaction in

various social contexts and configurations is that teachers, again, have the power to manipulate and structure the environment in order to provide opportunities for language and literacy development for children like the one being studied in this project.

Demonstrated Literacy and Language Skills

In the special education classroom the teacher is required to do extensive testing of skills for completion of special education reports and I.E.P. evaluations. Samples of the end-of-the-year evaluations are included in the study (See Figures 9 and 10). These test show a students who has limited reading skills.

Figure 9 is a list of one-hundred common Spanish words at the beginning-reading level. It is a random list, with no surrounding context or picture clues. At the end of the school year (June, 1993) this child was able to read only 24 of the words.

Figure 10 contains another test of random words. In this test the child was not able to read any of the words. (Note the color words are included in this list.) Figure 10 also contains a test of the letter names and sounds. It shows that the child was able to name twenty-two of the thirty letter names and sounds.

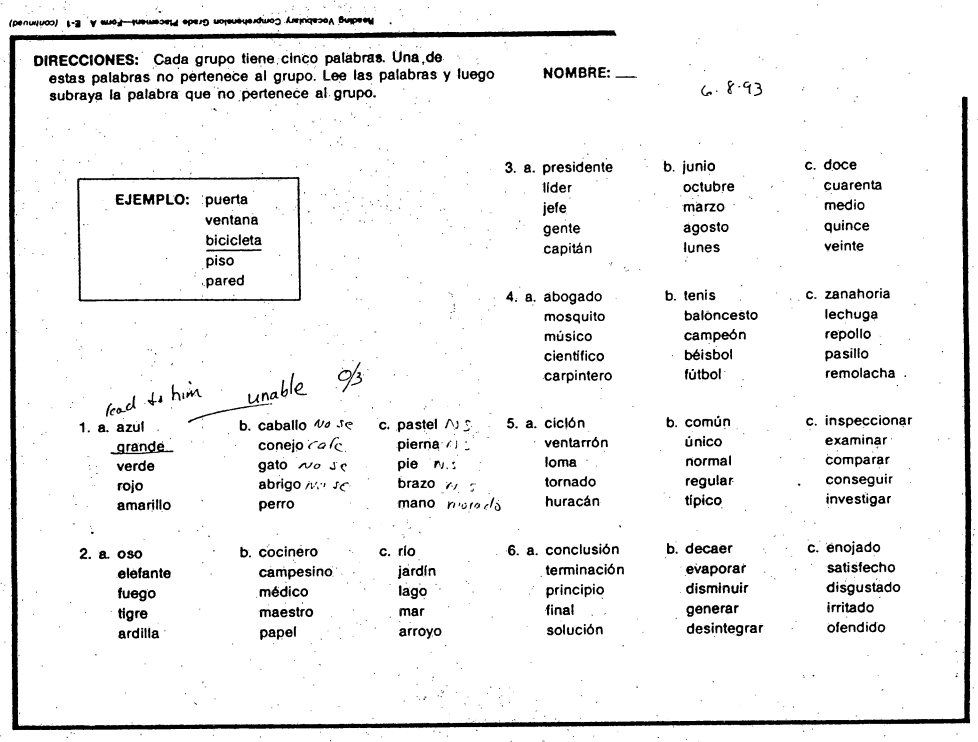
Figure 9. Spanish word list.

A WORDS — SPANISH WORD LIST — Name [redacted] 6-9-93

24/100

A1 está +	la +	un	cuento	esta +	se	
vamos +	donde	gallina	amor	mañana	come	
los +	busca	animal	lee	A8 si +	dijo	
acá —	A3 me	leche	yo	dos	aire	
sí +	corre	toma	del	quiero	flor	
papá +	bajo	da	aquí	en	A10 puede	
bola +	el +	A5 ahí	perro +	asi	jardín	
y +	cómo	hijo	quién	tú	tres	
jugar +	cantar	sol	bonito	baila	cielo	
de +	mamá +	clase	A7 dice	es	estaba	
A2 ve +	casa +	este	muy	caballo	luna	
no +	con	para	son	te	ojos	
a +	fiesta	señor	ella	A9 o +	su	
soy —	A4 viene	ahora	día	dormir	blanco	
mira +	gato	escuela	gusta	bueno	fruta	
feliz +	color	mi	qué +	pollo		
voy —	muñeca	A6 va +	al	corazón		

Figure 10. Spanish basic skills tests.



Reading Vocabulary Comprehension Grade Placement—Form A E-1 (continued)

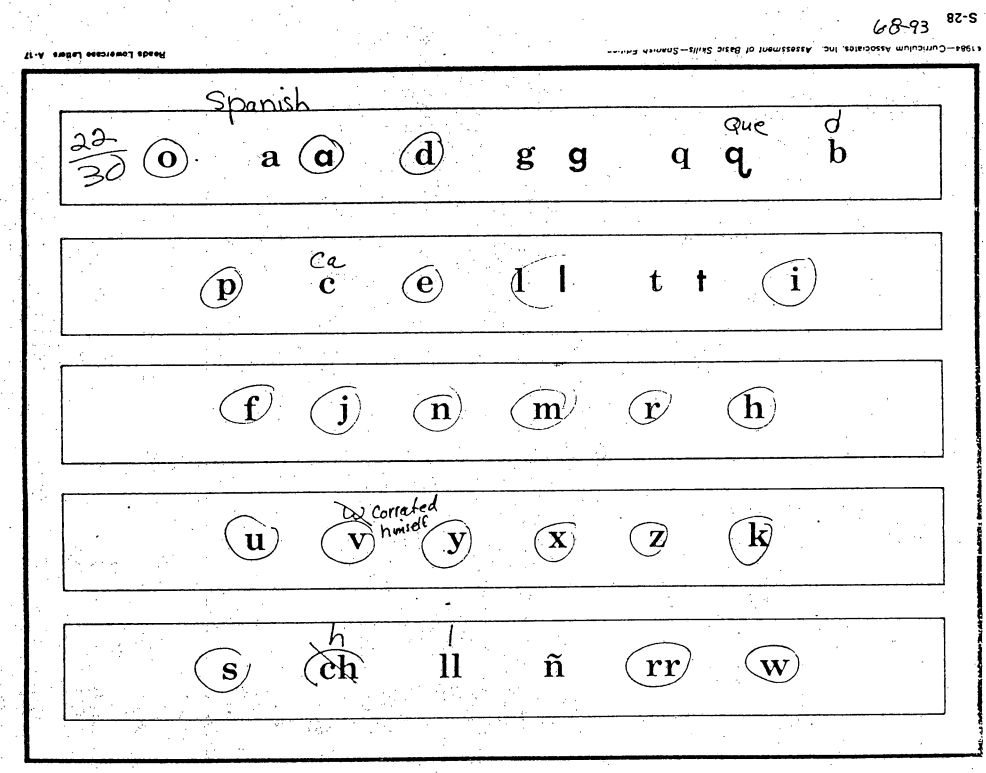
DIRECCIONES: Cada grupo tiene cinco palabras. Una de estas palabras no pertenece al grupo. Lee las palabras y luego subraya la palabra que no pertenece al grupo.

NOMBRE: ___

6.8.93

EJEMPLO: puerta, ventana, bicicleta, piso, pared

1. a. azul, grande, verde, rojo, amarillo
   b. caballo, conejo, gato, abrigo, perro
   c. pastel, pierna, pie, brazo, mano
2. a. oso, elefante, fuego, tigre, ardilla
   b. cocinero, campesino, médico, maestro, papel
   c. río, jardín, lago, mar, arroyo
3. a. presidente, líder, jefe, gente, capitán
   b. junio, octubre, marzo, agosto, lunes
   c. doce, cuarenta, medio, quince, veinte
4. a. abogado, mosquito, músico, científico, carpintero
   b. tenis, baloncesto, campeón, béisbol, fútbol
   c. zanahoria, lechuga, repollo, pasillo, remolacha
5. a. ciclón, ventarrón, loma, tornado, huracán
   b. común, único, normal, regular, típico
   c. inspeccionar, examinar, comparar, conseguir, investigar
6. a. conclusión, terminación, principio, final, solución
   b. decaer, evaporar, disminuir, generar, desintegrar
   c. enojado, satisfecho, disgustado, irritado, ofendido



S-28

©1984—Curriculum Associates, Inc. Assessment of Basic Skills—Spanish Edition Reads Lowercase Letters A-17

Spanish

o a a d g g q q b

p c e l l t t i

f j n m r h

u v y x z k

s ch ll ñ rr w

In the traditional classroom, this would not be considered passing for an end-of-the-year second grade student. These tests show a child who has limited reading skills. They show a child who is failing to acquire the necessary basic reading skills.

Yet, this child has demonstrated that he can perform sucessfully in the mainstream bilingual classroom where a holistic approach has been implemented. As indicated in the discussion of his interactions in a variety of social contexts and configurations in the classrooms, this child is able to participate successfully in reading, writing, speaking and listening tasks that are required of him.

It is by using authentic assessment techniques that this instructor gained a more positive evaluation of this child's progress and abilities. The anecdotal records of his interactions with teachers and peers during a variety of activities indicates that his language ability is adequate for the contexts in which he is involved. He can communicate his meaning and he uses language appropriately in a variety of contexts to meet his needs.

The area where he is weakest is in vocabulary. He has a limited vocabulary because of his limited experiences. The Expressive One-Word Picture

Vocabulary Test which was administered shows that he has gained two years since entering the special day program. This shows that given opportunities for vocabulary development, this child is able to learn. He also has been able to participate and gain knowledge from the classroom discussion about different topics and themes. He then was able to take this new information and use it in completing assigned tasks in the classroom.

Teacher observation and anecdotal records also indicate the reading skills this child has acquired. He can easily read the list of his classmates names. He can read the pattern books he has made in class. Although he may not read the text in the basals word-for-word, he approximates the text in a meaningful way, matching text to pictures and correctly reading whole phrases. He also reads and tracks familiar charts and poems posted in the classroom. He also has extensive sound-symbol relationship knowledge. When given enough time, he successfully sounds out simple sentences as indicated in the examination of his journal samples.

The interactive journal writing assessment forms also present a more authentic evaluation of this child's reading and writing ability (See Figure 11).

Figure 11. Interactive writing journal assessments.

FIRST GRADE

Name________________

	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May
1. Level of Development		PS	PS	A	PS	A	A	S	S/A
2. Takes Risks		B	B	D	D	D	D	D	D
3. Reads Entry		NE	NE	B	NE	B	B	B	B
4. L1 and/or L2		L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1
5. Spacing		NE	NE	NE	NE	NE	B	B	B
6. Letter Formation		D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D
7. Capitalization		NE	NE	NE	NE	NE	B	NE	B
8. Punctuation		NE	NE	NE	NE	NE	NE	NE	NE
9. Spelling: Estimated		-	-	0	0	1	—	4	6
Conventional		-	-	3	1	4	10	3	6
10.									

ANEDOCTAL

KEY
B beginning
S ... syllabic
SA estimated spelling
A estimated>conventional

INTERACTIVE WRITING JOURNAL ASSESSMENT

GRADES 2 - 6

	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June.
1. L1 and/or L2 *			L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1	L1
2. Conceptual Interpretations **			PS	PS	A	PS	A	A	S	S/SA	/
3. Reads own entry			NE	NE	B	NE	B	B	B	B	
4. Reads teacher's entry			NE	NE	NE	NE	NE	NE	NE	NE	
5. Meaning is mostly conveyed through print rather than picture				NOT							
6. Elaborates on thoughts											
7. Personal reflections				EVIDENT							
8. Uses descriptive words											
9. Leaves spaces between words											
10. Writes sentences											
11. Writes paragraphs											
12. Uses appropriate punctuation											
13. Uses appropriate capitalization											
14. Correctly spelled words / total words =% of correctly spelled words	o	r	X	X	o	r	X	X	X	X	

Comments:

√ if evident

* Indicate in the boxes provided if the student is using L1 and/or L2.

** Conceptual Interpretations (Invented spelling)
PS = Pre Syllabic (draws, writes symbols)
S = Syllabic (a letter per syllable)
SA = Syllabic Alphabetic (Combination of syllables and conventional)
A = Alphabetic (estimated>conventional)

Two different forms were included, although they represent only the second grade year of work. Both forms were included to show the progression of literacy skills development of this child. The forms demonstrate the great amount of growth this child has been able to accomplish because of the holistic approach of his two classrooms.

The first grade form indicates that the child demonstrates many of the skills designated for that grade level. He has a developing command of the mechanics expected at this grade level, such as spacing, letter formation, capitalization and punctuation. He also is willing to take risks; he willing reads his entries; and he is beginning to show more conventional spelling with assistance.

The second through sixth grade form also provides much useful information about the student, but mostly it has served this teacher in providing a guide for future teaching needs of this child. This form indicates a higher level of reading, writing and expression that will need to be mediated for this child to advance in language and literacy skills. Greater emphasis will need to be placed on elaboration of thoughts; using descriptive words, reading his own, and the teacher's entries. The interactive writing

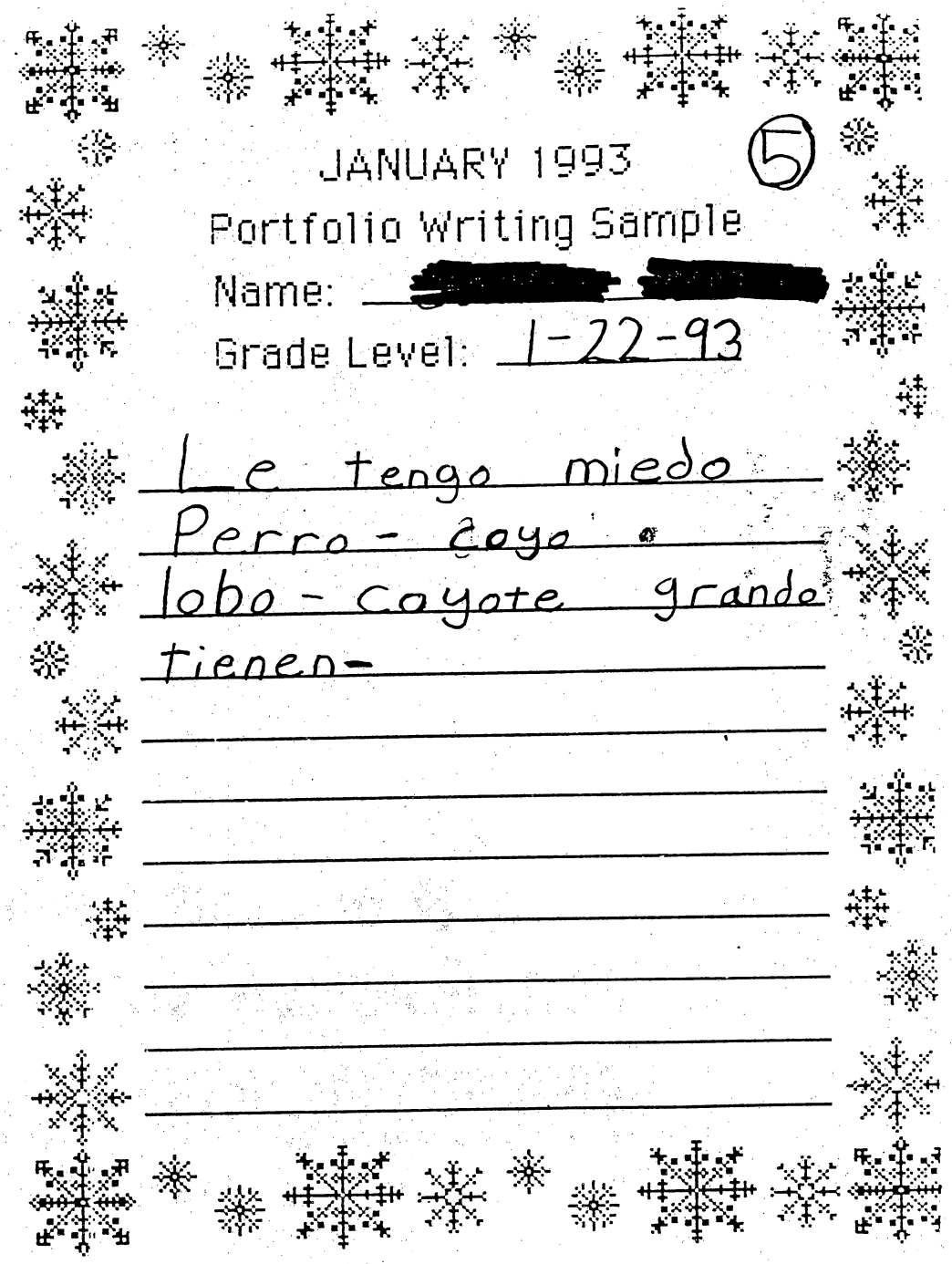
journals assessments provide an authentic assessment of the child's language and literacy abilities. They also provide a guide for future literacy needs.

Writing samples collected during the school year (See Figure 12-14) also provide an authentic assessment of the child's literacy skills. Three samples have been included to show the growth that occurred over a five month period. Much of the language was composed by the teacher and the student working together to create meaning. However, an analysis of the samples shows an evolution of this task over five months.

In the January sample (Figure 12) the story is about a dog, a wolf and a coyote. Parts of the story make sense, but parts appears to be words copied with no understanding of the meaning to be conveyed.

The February sample (Figure 13) has been included to show how the student's activities in one classroom served to reinforce and support the activities of the other classroom. As has been discussed, in February the regular classroom had many stories written about friends and games they play together. As the February writing sample indicates, the student also used this topic in his story in the special day class. It is almost certain that this sample contained material

Figure 12. January Portolio Writing Sample.



JANUARY 1993 (5)

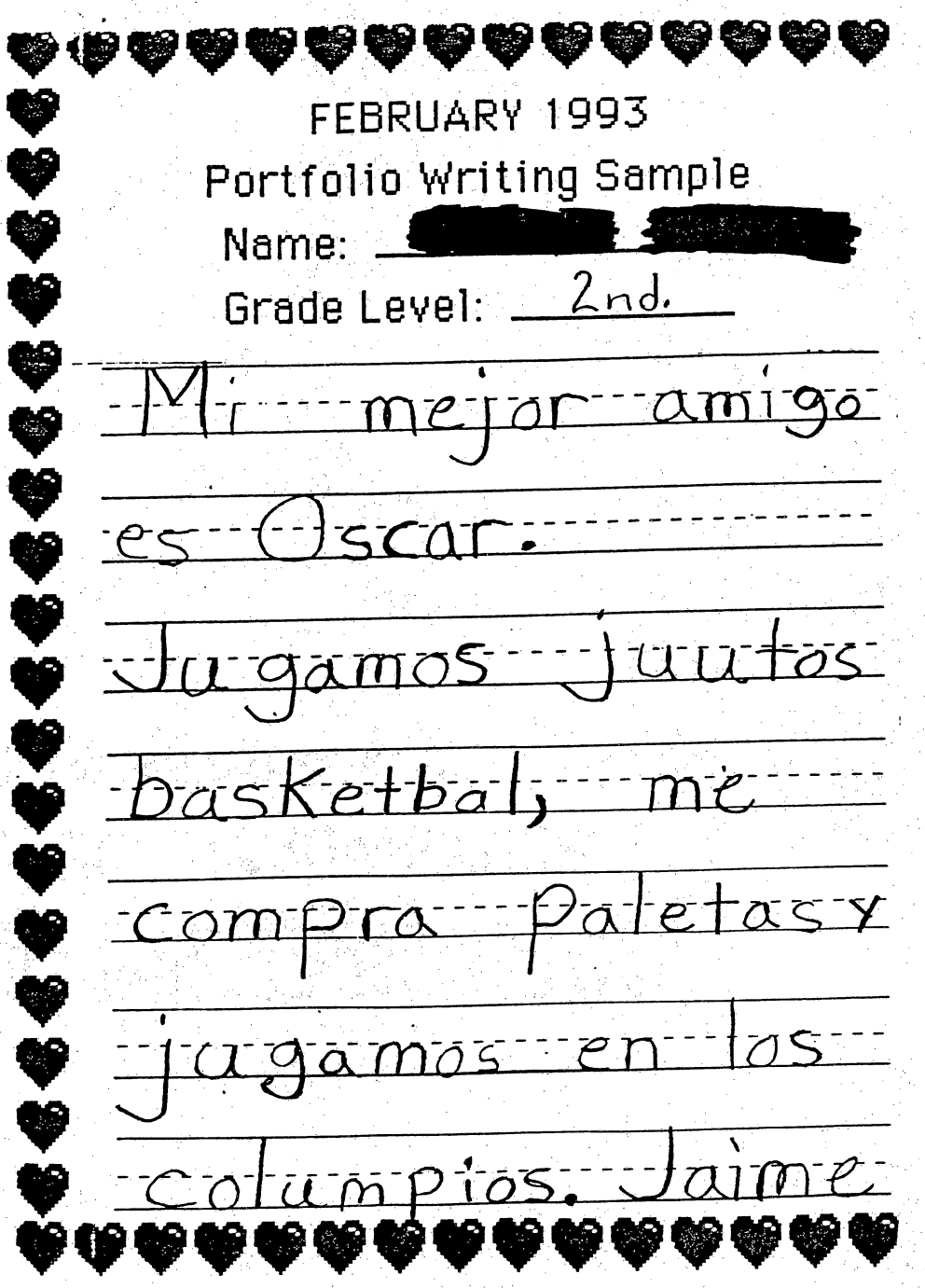
Portfolio Writing Sample

Name: [redacted]

Grade Level: 1-22-93

Le tengo miedo
Perro - coyo
lobo - coyote grande
tienen-

Figure 13. February portfolio writing sample.



FEBRUARY 1993

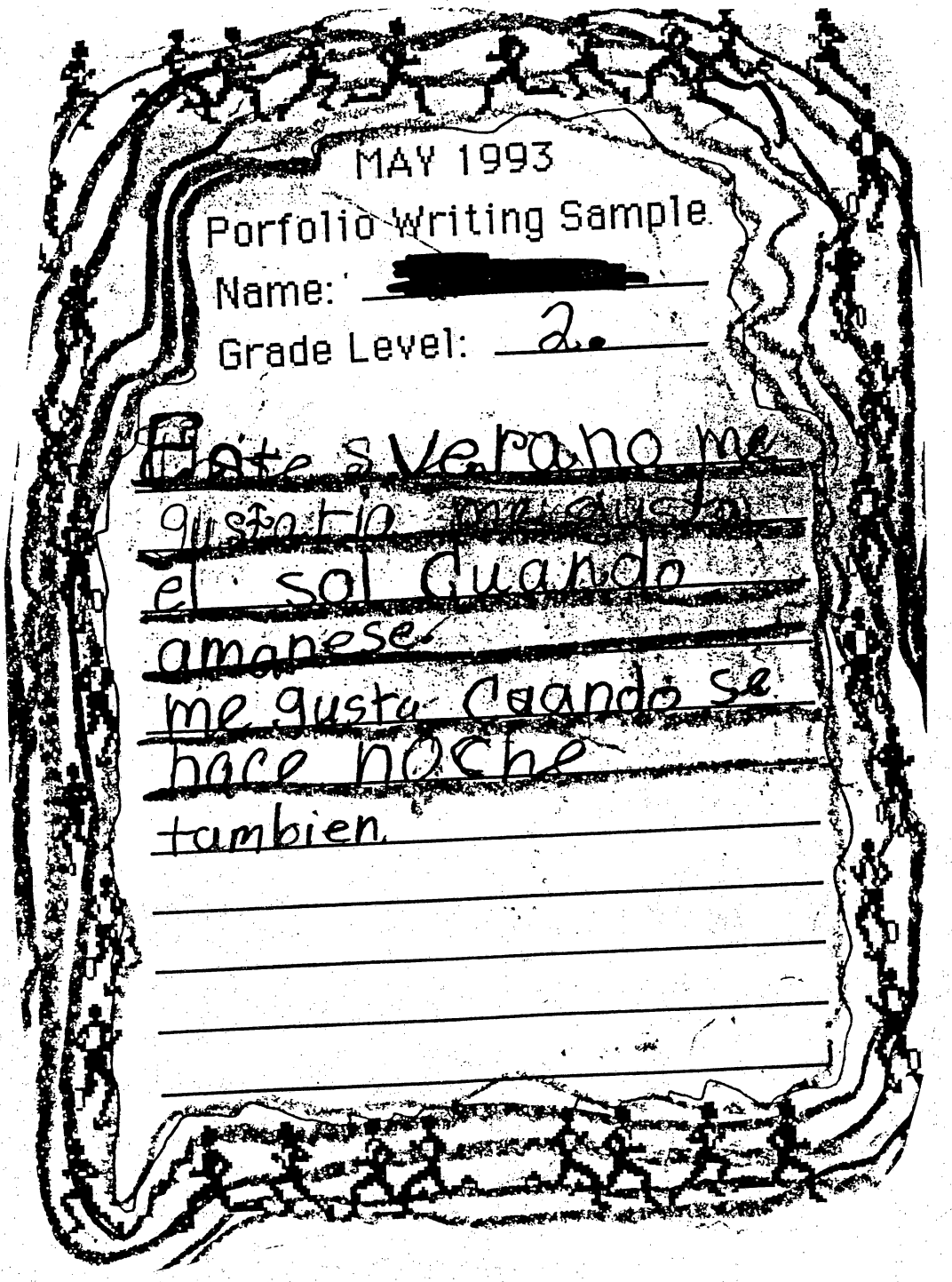
Portfolio Writing Sample

Name: [redacted]

Grade Level: 2nd.

Mi mejor amigo es Oscar. Jugamos juntos basketbal, me compra paletas y jugamos en los columpios. Jaime

Figure 14. May portfolio writing sample.


MAY 1993

Porfolio Writing Sample

Name: [redacted]

Grade Level: 2.

Este verano me gusta el sol cuando amanese. me gusta cuando se hace noche tambien

that was meaningful to the child. Also, there continues to be a great awareness of proper the form and conventions of writing in this sample.

The May writing sample (Figure 14) shows a great deal of growth and expression of individuality. The language in this story was also worked out together by the teacher and the student. It is a story about summer and the sun. This sample, when read, makes sense. It is not just a list of words copied with no meaning attached. It appears that the child has taken ownership of the text. He knew the meaning of the information he was copying. He also demonstrated skill in the conventional forms of writing, using capitals, periods, and correct spacing. The monthly writing samples are a record of the progress this child is making in acquiring literacy skills; it also allows the student another opportunity to express himself in his own unique way. It is interesting to note that the fancy writing that is used in the May sample was a style being used by a few of the other boys in the regular mainstream classroom.

The standardized skills-based tests provide a very different picture of this student compared to the more authentic assessments provided by teacher observation, anecdotal records, the interactive

journal writing assessment forms, and the monthly writing samples. The former show a students who appears to be failing in his academic progress. Yet the authentic assessments demonstrate that this child has acquired many literacy skills and continues to grow and progress in his academic learning.

Results

This case study has provided this researcher with a significant amount of information as to how to structure the classroom in order to provide an effective learning environment for the language and literacy development of a Spanish-speaking child with academic problems due to a significant delay in the oral language develop of his primary language. The analysis of the wide range of data that was collected provided the information for answering the research questions.

An analysis of the data clearly indicates that the whole language strategies allow incorporation of more of the twelve optimal conditions that promote the development of literacy skills for the child in this study. This child requires extensive opportunities to interact with others and use rich, meaningful language in a variety of contexts. The data shows that the best social context for this to occur is with a small

group of more knowledgeable peers, discussing projects and material that is of interest to them or fulfills a need they may have. The authentic assessment techniques that were used to collect data informed this researcher of the great number of literacy skills the child had already acquired and his ability to continue progressing in the acquisition of literacy skills, given the appropriate program. Through a case study approach this researcher was able to gain very valuable information about effective structuring of the classroom in order to promote acquisition of language and literacy skills.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The results of this case study match what the current research and literature has recommended for effective structuring of the classroom for acquisition of language and literacy skills for the Spanish-speaking child who demonstrates a significant delay in the development of his/her oral language in the primary language. The literature dealing with bilingual education, bilingual special education, and whole-language programs provides a strong foundation upon which to build that appropriate program. This case study also has provided specific information regarding effective structuring of the classroom for promoting language and literacy development for these special children. Information about providing effective learning contexts is available for teachers who wish to meet the particular needs of the Spanish-speaking children who are having academic problems due to the delay in the oral language of their primary language.

Conclusions

Upon starting this investigation, this researcher

was looking for a program, system or approach to help children with "learning disabilities" due to the delayed oral language development of their primary language. Instead of finding one particular program, a whole new perspective, a whole new approach, was uncovered. The problem no longer is seen as how to help a child whose language problem is interfering with his academic progress. Now the focus is how to structure the classroom in order to provide an environment in which this child is involved in experientially-rich, interactive, meaningful activities that provide innumerable opportunities for authentic, meaningful language use in a variety of social context so that the child is creating new knowledge by social interaction with more knowledgeable adults and peers. As Goodman (1978) states:

> The role of the school can never be to teach language since children learn language naturally through their interaction with others. The role of the school must be to provide an environment in which children will expand their use of language in a variety of settings and situations and for a variety of purposes. In a supportive, rich environment where language is encouraged and there are plenty of opportunities to read, write, speak, and listen, children will make discoveries about language (p. 115).

This perspective is one which all children can benefit from having applied to the teaching/learning

situations in school.

Implications

It is clear from the research, literature and this case study, that the knowledge of how to provide an effective educational program for all our children, including those with special needs, is available. But, it is also clear that we are still tied to the traditional, fragmented, skilla-based techniques for teaching language and literacy. In order for teachers to grow and apply the knowledge that is available, it is necessary for them also to have opportunities to interact with others and discuss this new approach to teaching and learning. Teachers also need the support of school administrators and the community when making this change to more appropriate, yet different approach to teaching and learning. As Tharp and Gallimore (1991) state:

> Schools must be organized to provide time and resources to assist teacher performance so that teachers acquire the skills and knowledge needed to truly teach. Teachers must have sufficient autonomy, authority, and warrant from the school system to organize activity settings that will allow them to assist the performance of one another...It means the school must provide resources of equipment, space, and encouragement, and--most important--must treat this undertaking as something of vital importance (p. 6).

The changes that need to be made so that all children can have maximum learning opportunities

cannot all be made in the classroom but that is where the change in perspective must begin.

REFERENCE LIST

Anderson, G. 1990. Fundamentals of educational research. Philadelphia, PA: Falmer Press.

Baca, L., & Amato, C. 1989. Bilingual special education: Training issues. Exceptional Children 56(2):168-173.

Baca, L., & Cervantes, H. 1984. The bilingual special education interface. St. Louis, MO: Times Mirror/Mosby.

Burt, M. K., Dulay, H. C., & Hernandez-Chavez, E. 1976. The bilingual syntax technical handbook. New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace and Jovanovich.

California Department of Education. 1990. Bilingual education handbook: Designing instruction for LEP students. Sacramento, CA: Office of State Printing.

Cambourne, B. & Turbill, J. 1987. Coping with chaos. Portsmouth, NH. Heinemann.

Cheng, L. L. 1987. English communicative competence of language minority children: Assessment and treatment of language 'impaired' preschoolers. In Henry T. Trueba (Ed.), Success or failure? Learning and the Language Minority Student. New York, NY: Newbury House Publishers.

Clay, M. M. 1991. Becoming literate: The construction of inner control. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Cousins, P. T., Prentice, L., Aragon, E., Leonard, C., Rose, L. A., & Weekley, T. 1991. Redefining our role as special educators: Understandings gained from whole language. In Susan Stires (Ed.) With promise: Redefining reading and writing for "special" students: A theoretical framework. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Cummins, J. 1981. The role of primary language development in promoting educational success for language minority students. Schooling and language minority students: A theoretical framework, 3-49. Los Angeles, CA: Evaluation, Dissemination and Assessment Center, California State University, Los Angeles.

_____. 1984. Bilingualism and special education: Issues in assessment and pedagogy. San Diego, CA: College-Hill Press.

_____. 1989a. Empowering minority students. Sacramento, CA: California Association for Bilingual Education.

_____. 1989b. A theoretical framework for bilingual special education. Exceptional Children 56(2):160-167.

Das, J. P. 1987. Foreword in Lidz C. S. (Ed.), Dynamic assessment: An interactional approach to evaluating learning potential. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Dudley-Marling, C. & Searle, D. 1991. When students have time to talk: Creating contexts for learning language. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Duran, R. P. 1989. Assessment and instruction of at-risk hispanic students. Exceptional Children 56(2):154-158.

Edelsky, C., Altwerger, B. & Flores, B. 1991. Whole language: What's the difference? Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Figueroa, R. A., Fradd, S. H. & Correa, V. I. 1989. Bilingual special education and this special issue. Exceptional Children 56(2):174-178.

Flores, B. 1992, June. Whole Language. Presentation at the Whole Language Institute for the Coachella Valley Unified School District, Thermal, CA.

Flores, B., Cousin, P. T. & Diaz, E. 1991. Transforming deficit myths about learning, language, and culture. Language Arts 68: 369-379.

Garcia, E. E. 1991. The education of linguistically and culturally diverse students: Effective instructional practices. Santa Cruz, CA: National Center for Research on the Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning, University of California, Santa Cruz.

Garcia, E., Ruiz, N. T., Figueroa, R. A. 1993. The OLE curriculum guide: Creating optimal learning environments for bilingual students in general and special education classrooms. Univeristy of California at Davis, Division of Education, The OLE Project.

Goodman, K. 1986. What's whole in whole language? Ontario, Canada: Scholastic.

_____. 1991. Revaluing readers and reading. In S. Stires, (Ed.), With promise: Redefining reading and writing for "special" students. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Goodman, Y. M. 1978. Kid watching: An alternative to testing. In G. Manning & M. Manning (Eds.), Whole language: Beliefs and practices, K-8, (p. 115-123), Washington, D.C.: National Education Association of the United States. (Reprinted from National Elementary Principal, June, 1978, 7, 41-45)

Goodman, Y. M. and Goodman, K. S. 1990. Vygotsky in a whole-language perspective. In L. C. Moll (Ed.), Vygotsky and education: Instructional implications and applications of sociohistorical psychology. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Gutierrez, A. 1992. Interview by author, January, Coachella, CA.

Gutierrez, A. 1993. Interview by author, June, Thermal, CA.

Hakuta, K. 1990. Language and cognition in bilingual children. In Padilla, Fairchild & Valadez (Eds.), Bilingual education: Issues and strategies. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.

Hammill, D. D., et al. 1981. A new definition of learning disabilities. Learning Disability Quarterly 4:336-342.

Hollingsworth, P. M., & Reutzel, D. R. 1988. Whole Language with LD children. Academic Therapy 23(5):477-488.

Krashen, S. D. 1986. Inquiries & insights: Second language teaching immersion & bilingual education literacy. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Alemany Press.

Kronick, D. 1988. New approaches to learning disabilities: Cognitive, metacognitive, and holistic. Phililelphia: Harcourt, Brace & Jovanovich.

Langdon, H. W. 1989. Language disorder or difference? Assessing the language skills of hispanic students. Exceptional Children 56(2):160-167.

Levine, M. D. 1987. Developmental variation and learning disorders. Cambridge: Educators Publishing Service, Inc.

Lewis, R. B., & Doorlag, D. H. 1987. Teaching special students in the mainstream. Columbus, OH: Merrill Publishing.

Linares, N. 1983. Management of communicatively handicapped hispanic American children. In Omark, D. R., & Erickson, J. G. (Eds.). The bilingual exceptional child. San Diego, CA: College Hill Press.

Lipson, A. B. 1986. Can illiteracy be prevented? Academic Therapy May 21(5): 591-597.

Malave, L. M. 1991. Conceptual framework to design a programme intervention for culturally and linguistically different handicapped students. In Malave L. M., & Duquette G. (Eds.). Language, culture & cognition. Adelaide, England: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

Miller, N. 1984. Language problems and bilingual children. In Miller, N. (Ed.), Bilingualism and language disability: Assessment & Remediation. San Diego, CA: College-Hill Press.

Minick, N. 1987. Implications of Vygotsky's theories for dynamic assessment. In Lidz, C. S. (Ed), Dynamic assessment: An interactional approach to evaluating learning potential. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.

Moll, L. C. 1990. Vygotsky and education: Instructional implications and applications of sociohistorical psychology. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Norris, J. & Bruning, R. H. 1988. Cohesion in the narratives of good and poor readers. Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders 53:416-424

Poplin, M.S. 1988. The reductionistic fallacy in learning disabilities: Replicating the past by reducing the present. Journal of Learning Disabilities 21:389-400.

Rueda, R. 1987. Social and communicative aspects of language proficiency in low-achieving language minority students. In Trueba, H. T. (Ed.), Success or failure? Learning and the language minority student. New York: Newbury House Publishers.

Rueda, R. 1989. Defining Mild Disabilities with Language Minority Students. Exceptional Children 56(2):121-128.

Rueda, R. 1990. Assisted performance in writing instruction with learning-disabled students. In Moll, L. C. (Ed.). Vygotsky and education: Instructional implications and applications of sociohistorical psychology. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Salvia, J., & Ysseldyke, J. E. 1991. Assessment. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Snow, Catherine. 1990. Rationales for native language instruction: Evidence in research. In Padilla, Fairchild & Valadez (Eds.), Bilingual education: Issues and strategies. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.

Stires, S. 1991a. First things first: Conditions and connections to literacy. In Susan Stires (Ed.), With promise: Redefining reading and writing for "special" students. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

_____. 1991b. With promise: Redefining reading and writing for "special" students. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Terrell, T. D. 1981. The natural approach in bilingual education. In California State Department of Education (Ed.). Schooling and language minority students: A theoretical framework. Los Angeles, CA: Evaluation, Dissemination and Assessment Center California State University, Los Angeles.

Thonis, E. W. 1981. Reading instruction for language minority students. In California State Department of Education (Ed.). Schooling and language minority students: A theoretical framework. Los Angeles, CA: Evaluation, Dissemination and Assessment Center California State University, Los Angeles.

Vygotsky, L. S. 1978. Mind in society. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Vygotsky, L. S. 1962. Thought and language. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Webb, L. D., Metha, A., & Jordan, K. F. 1991. Foundations of American education. New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Company.

Wells, G. 1986. The meaning makers: Children learning language and using language to learn. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Williams, J. D., & Snipper, G. C. 1990. Literacy and bilingualim. White Plains, NY: Longman.

Yaden, D. 1984. Inner speech, oral language, and reading: Huey and Vygotsky revisited. Reading Psychology 762(1):155-166.

Zirkelbach, T. & Blakesley, K. 1985. The language deficient child in the classroom. Academic Therapy 20(5): 605-612.