

How Do Spanish-Speaking Youngsters Respond to Culturally Relevant Read-Alouds When Paired With Imaging Techniques?

Jackie Crews

Broadleigh Elementary, Columbus City Schools

Key Terms

Insider authors, ESL, mental, verbal, and graphic imagery, culturally relevant

Abstract

The purpose for this study was to create an atmosphere of positive cultural identity by choosing culturally familiar topics in fictional picture books. Additionally, my purpose was to help my second grade Spanish-speaking students learn how to use mental, verbal, and graphic imagery when responding to literature orally and in writing. I read six culturally relevant picture books to my six students, one book each week for six weeks. Professional literature, personal reflections including anecdotal notes, and data collection using rubrics provided insight and showed results. Strategies I used included teaching students to use visual, mental, and graphic imaging, accessing their prior knowledge, relating text to personal experience, and providing explicit writing models. Midway through the study, my specific modeling encouraged the student’s vivid and creative responses. By the end of the study my students had learned to use these three imaging techniques so that their oral and written responses to story texts showed improvement in the rich details they wrote, the descriptive vocabulary that they used orally, and in the creative graphics that they drew in their illustrations.

RATIONALE	2
THE PROBLEM	2
CONTEXT	3
STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC DATA	3
ABBREVIATED LITERATURE REVIEW.....	4
METHODOLOGY.....	5
QUALITATIVE FINDINGS.....	5
WRITING RUBRIC	12
GRAPHICS RUBRIC	13
REFLECTIONS	13
IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS.....	14
REFERENCES:.....	15

Rationale

This study's purpose was to create an atmosphere of positive cultural identity so that the second grade Spanish-speaking children in my class could comfortably learn how to use mental, verbal, and graphic imagery when responding to read-aloud literature orally and in writing. I wanted them to be able to relate text to personal experience while at the same time learning to create images that would be useful for a thorough understanding of aural and written responses. Through exposure to characters of their own ethnicity and culturally relevant story themes and expressions, I wondered if students would be able to make connections from their prior experiences and relate the text to their own lives. I believed that such connections would create positive attitudes toward literacy and give children ownership of literacy.

The Problem

At the beginning of the school year, the Spanish-speaking students in my classroom often struggled to respond orally and in writing to read-alouds. When they wrote responses, they would often ask me for the "answers" rather than use their imaginations. They were willing to respond to writing prompts with study buddies, but they often floundered when asked to work independently. Their writing lacked descriptive and imaginative details. I wondered if the books that I was reading left them at a cultural disadvantage; that perhaps they did not relate well to them. According to Cortes (1994), reading teachers should strive to use material written by "ethnic insiders", meaning those authors with Hispanic ethnicity and background. Cortes also terms some authors as "observing outsiders," or those who strive to write culturally relevant material for children who do not come from Hispanic backgrounds. I was curious to know whether material written from the perspective of people who shared ethnic and cultural similarities with my students would impact the quality of their responses.

I also became interested in how different types of images relate to literacy. The images I am referring to are graphic, mental, and verbal images. Graphic images are student's illustrations of story while mental and verbal images refer to how students orally respond to me; the "pictures" or ideas they "see" in their heads and the words (verbal) they use to describe or respond to text. First of all, I felt that the reflection of and emphasis on prior knowledge of familiar culture would be a means of expanding students' thinking to include other realities besides their own. Secondly, I was attracted to the use of imaging ideas because they could provide a means to express responses in ways that may not always be expected or standard. Lotherington (2005) believes that students can communicate literature in multiple ways that can include a blending of culturally diverse images. I decided to research new ways to access student's imagery in read-alouds and expand their cultural awareness while encouraging students to respond to literature in multiple ways. I was attracted to the relation of images to literacy because of its potential to help students express themselves in writing as well as orally at our reading circle discussions. Since the students' oral responses were awkward and because their independent writing lacked imaginative details, the following questions kept returning to my thinking:

- *How do Spanish-speaking youngsters respond to culturally relevant read-alouds when they are invited to use multiple imaging techniques?*
- *Is there a marked difference in student response with regards to ethnic “insider” vs. non-ethnic “outsider” authors?*

Context

My second grade classroom is in a central Ohio urban district. The reading program we use is the Harcourt basal series. Our two-hour reading block includes a question of the day with a weekly focus concept. It incorporates read-alouds, phonics, robust vocabulary, high frequency words, decodable books, fictional and non-fictional text selections, comprehension, fluency work, weekly assessment and intervention. Students in intervention groups take part in literacy center activities while I work with my “intensive” or lowest performing students in small groups.

Because my school is operating with a Reading First grant, teachers must use the specific basal materials provided; however, I am free to use supplemental reading materials outside of the reading block as additional intervention. This is where my study with read-aloud literature began.

Student Demographic Data

My six Spanish-speaking students are from Mexico. All but one of the students lives with both parents and other siblings. Most of the fathers work and the mothers stay at home. Four out of six fathers speak Basic English. Three of the mothers only speak Spanish and two of those are not literate in Spanish. These issues are complex, and consequently, my students are not receiving regular productive English language reinforcement at home. They have a rich oral language but are not receiving much assistance with reading and writing at home in English or in Spanish.

Naturally the students have varying levels of English language literacy. One of the girls tested out of the ESL (English as a second language) and another is still attending the primary ESL program. The other students are attending the intermediate ESL classes.

In order to address their language gaps, I have several interventions in place. I communicate to parents in Spanish on grade cards and at conferences when I am able, encourage parents to read to their children at home in Spanish, and send home bilingual activities for practice. I work with the Spanish-speaking students daily at close proximity, differentiate their reading assignments, and place them with peer mentors as I deem appropriate.

Literature Review

My research has involved culturally-themed reading material as well as literature written by native Hispanic authors. I suspected that these types of read-alouds would promote ownership and understanding for my Spanish speaking students. My research also involved searching for information on imaging tools that I could use to help the students respond confidently to literature orally and in writing.

Cortes (1994) discussed the importance of using culturally-relevant literature and Hispanic authors when choosing books for Spanish speaking students. Cortes believes that “insider authors,” who write from the perspective of a person inside the Hispanic culture, can provide an inside view of the thinking and history (which is important for students to feel comfortable with their own culture). According to Cortes, instruction in reading can serve to promote student empowerment. I believed that my students would show improvement with their written and oral responses to literature *if* that literature could tap into their **cultural identity** and allow them to pull their prior knowledge to the forefront.

In a study involving teachers presenting ethnically relevant literature to their students in order to bridge learning gaps in their literacy, Nathenson-Mejía and Escamilla (2003) claim that “as teacher educators, we must continue to demonstrate for all our students, both pre-service and experienced teachers, how to use ethnic literature in effective ways, as the focal point of a lesson, as supplemental resources, and as extensions.” These authors also point out that “personal connections created by culturally familiar literature can be an effective means of engaging students in reading and writing.” This study suggested what I felt to be true; that if I created an ethnically comfortable environment with culturally relevant themes, my students would respond favorably to my literature choices and that they would show improvement orally and in writing.

I also read Kang’s (1993) article, “When Background Knowledge Doesn’t Help: Helping Young Readers Cope.” This research interested me because I knew that I wanted to do a better job of accessing student’s prior knowledge. The article is interesting because it asserts that when children are in the process of language acquisition, they may access prior knowledge, but that their background may not help them understand text because their experiences have been limited or that their notions of the world are not accurate. I wanted to help students access their prior knowledge in a personal and familiar way so that if their prior experiences were not those that were presupposed in text, they would still be successful readers and writers.

The research regarding utilizing teacher modeling to facilitate better student literacy was abundant. Perez (1998) discussed the fact that students create meaning during reading when models are provided. I felt that I needed to do this more explicitly so I began to search for more research in this area. I also wanted to find ways to model ways that students could incorporate mental images or “mind movies.”

After reading Fleckenstein’s (2004) article involving the use of imagery in young children’s responses to literature, I decided to incorporate some of her **imaging ideas**. Fleckenstein (2004) writes that a word is first a visual or an auditory image. What she means is that there are words and mental images that come to mind during reading. Teaching children to tap into such

imagery helps them to describe their realities and impacts their writing as well as their oral responses. In light of this finding, I tried to help each child create mental images by asking them to compare what they saw in illustrations with what they already knew. According to Fleckenstein (2004), an image comes from a constructive act and evolves when it's based on an analogy. I used the mental, verbal, and graphic imagery techniques explored in Fleckenstein's study. In the context of in class read-alouds, I used Fleckenstein's three basic types of images:

1. **mental images**- flexible images that come to mind during a reading: "mind-movies" (can change subject to time and place).
2. **verbal images**- aural responses to the reading: " Verbal imagery functions to describe our reality" Fleckenstein (2004).
3. **graphic images**- illustrations or other drawn images that relate to the reading: not always exact in terms of analogy to the text.

Additionally, I wanted to find other **perspectives of imagery** that might be useful for my thinking to help children visualize multiple aspects of stories. Lotherington's (2005) study was useful, as it involved students re-contextualizing characters from familiar American folktales to characters of their own ethnicities. I wanted students to be able to access mental images similarly, that is, to be able to visualize characters and settings in new ways – to bring the story line into their own reality.

Methodology

I read six culturally relevant picture books to the students (two by "outsider authors" and four by "insider authors"), one book each week for six weeks. Before, during, and after reading I asked students text-related questions in order to connect them with their prior knowledge and to encourage imagery. Since research needs to be systematic in order to be valid, I asked students the same types of questions each time I read during circle time with the whole class and in personal interview in order to collect my data. If I did not receive an oral response from one of the students involved in the research, I interviewed the student during their writing time. I jotted brief notes that I later incorporated into an anecdotal data chart. The chart also included certain details about the graphics they drew with their written responses. Use of these qualitative data enabled me to address students' needs and to use techniques that would make it easier for children to respond both orally and in writing. In addition to this qualitative data, I used two rubrics (utilizing a four point scale) to score each student's writing and graphics for my quantitative data. I conducted a t-test of "insider" versus "outsider" authors for the students' writing and graphics.

Qualitative Findings

The first selection I chose to use for my research was *Too Many Tamales*, by Gary Soto, an “insider author.” Initially, I asked students to tell me what they already knew. We discussed how tamales were made, who might make them, and who might eat them. One girl’s immediate response was, “They smell good. I can smell the beef cooking.” One of the boys raised his voice and exclaimed, “*My mother makes the best tamales in the world!*” This was a great start because these students were imagining how aspects of the story would be for them. I initially modeled and explained that I wanted students to make “mind movies” for students since Kang (1993) advocates initially introducing and modeling strategies so that students could imagine the action in their heads while I read *and* so that they could write how the main character must have felt. After I read, the students responded aurally. One child commented, “It is warm in the house. I know because it is snowing outside.” Another said that it was winter because there was a Christmas tree in the window. I noticed that two students began their writing with the conflict (figure 1). These responses were not remarkable, but were details that promoted understanding. I asked students to picture story images before they wrote responses. One of the girls drew a picture (figure 2) of a girl, her mother, and a bowl. Even though these basic images were actual and not imaginative, it showed that she recognized important story elements. Another student sequenced the story instead of explaining what it would be like to imagine him as a story character. Their writing responses did not hold the same imaginative details as their oral responses. Students orally expressed a measure of detail that I did not see in their writing at this point. None of the students really put themselves into the storyline the way I had hoped, which made me realize that I needed to model more imaging techniques. The following books involved my being more explicit about my own images that were conjured by the stories.

Figure 1: The conflict as a starting point.

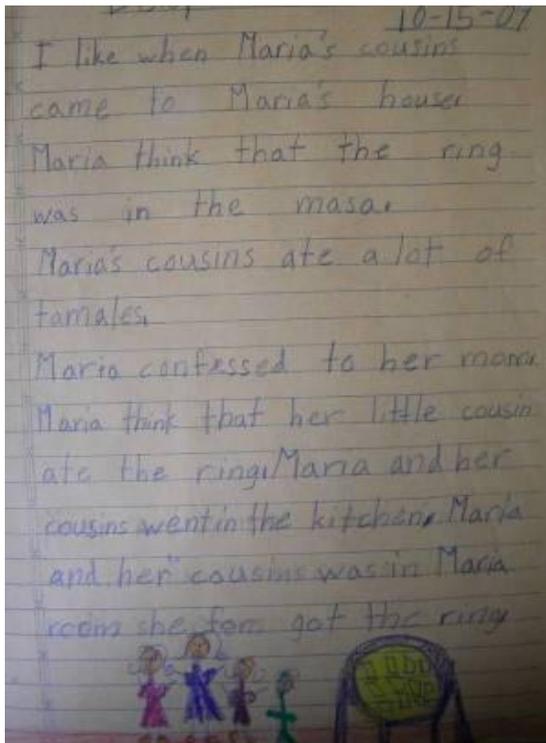
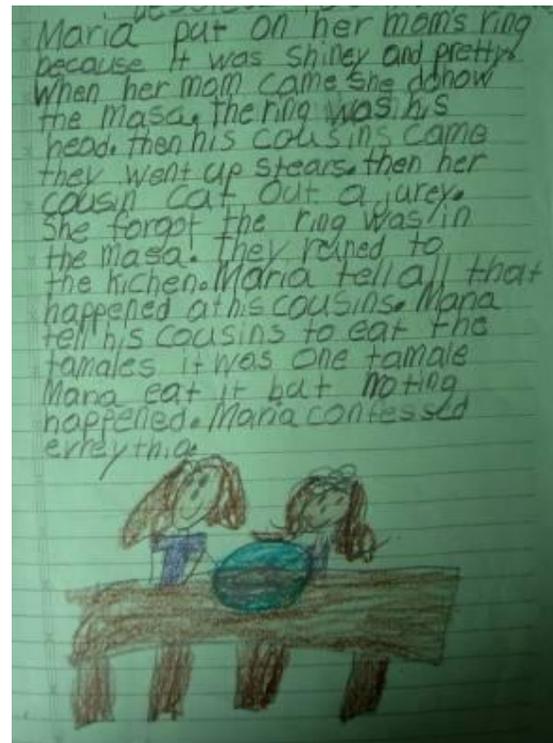


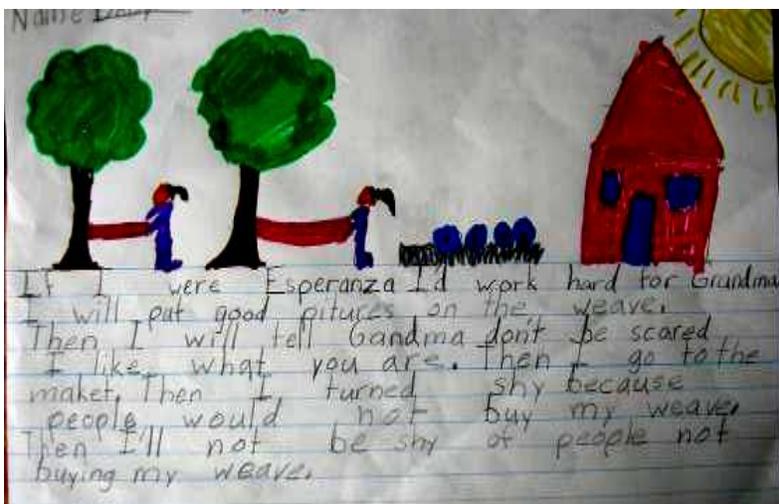
Figure 2: A girl, her mother, and a bowl.



gave students additional visual models for the next story, *Abuela's Weave*, by Omar S. Casteneda, whose main character wove blankets to sell. I also gave students more descriptive words for their word wall, and reviewed the types of images that I wanted them to incorporate in their oral and written responses. According to Perez (1998), “modeling will facilitate meaning making during reading and writing.” In the story, the grandmother’s birthmark caused people to distrust her so she was hesitant to go to market. After reading, several students said that the grandmother should not be ashamed of the birthmark; that they would tell her not to be scared and to sell the weaving. These reactions were different than in the first story, because now they were relating themselves to story rather than simply recalling events. It was a turning point because I realized that to put oneself into the plot was the best way that students could use the imaging techniques. One girl wrote empathetically, “*If I was Esperanza I would help my Grandma and tell her don't be scared. I like who you are,*” (figure 3). One of the boys’ responses was that he would help his grandma weave and that he would be proud if he had to sell the weaving all by himself with his grandma watching him. I thought this was an alternative perspective of what the book presented, even though his writing was brief.



Figure 3: “I will tell my Granmo to not be scard” (above). “I like what you are.” (below).



The Night of Las Posadas, by Tomie DaPaola, the most metaphorical of the stories, had a surprise ending that implied the carved holy family statues “came to life.” All the students told me that they celebrated the Christmas holiday by showing reverence in some way to the Holy Family so I knew they could relate to this story. Most of the students showed sympathetic aural responses to the main character, Sister Angie, who was sick with a cold and unable to attend the festivities. A couple of the students said they would take care of Sister Angie rather than participate in the procession. One girl in particular drew a beautiful drawing of the procession complete with stars in a night sky (figure 4). She said that if she was in the story, she would take care of Sister Angie “because she can’t be alone with a cold.” Another student said that if she was in the story, she “will be scarde,” if the statue moved (figure 4). The students used basic description but not as much as I would have liked. They were, however, getting the feel for putting themselves into the story in a “rough” sort of way. I was much more pleased with the progress students were making at this point. The fact that DaPaola was an “outsider-author” did not seem to be a factor with this story. I needed the students to be able to expand upon this type of response for the next selections, so I knew that would require more modeling.

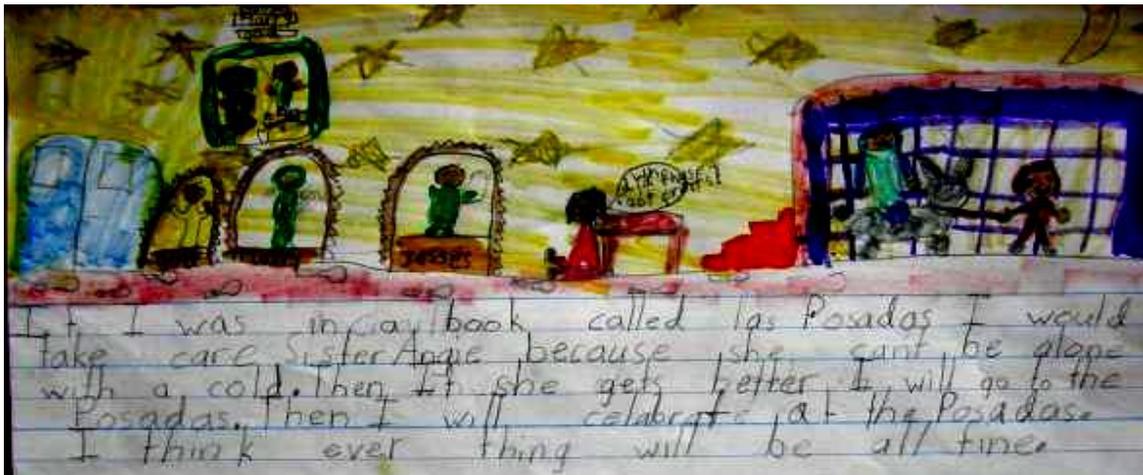
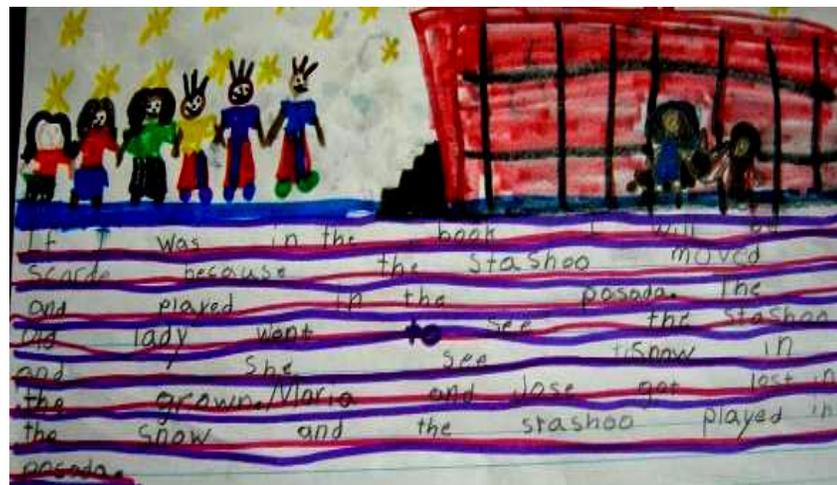


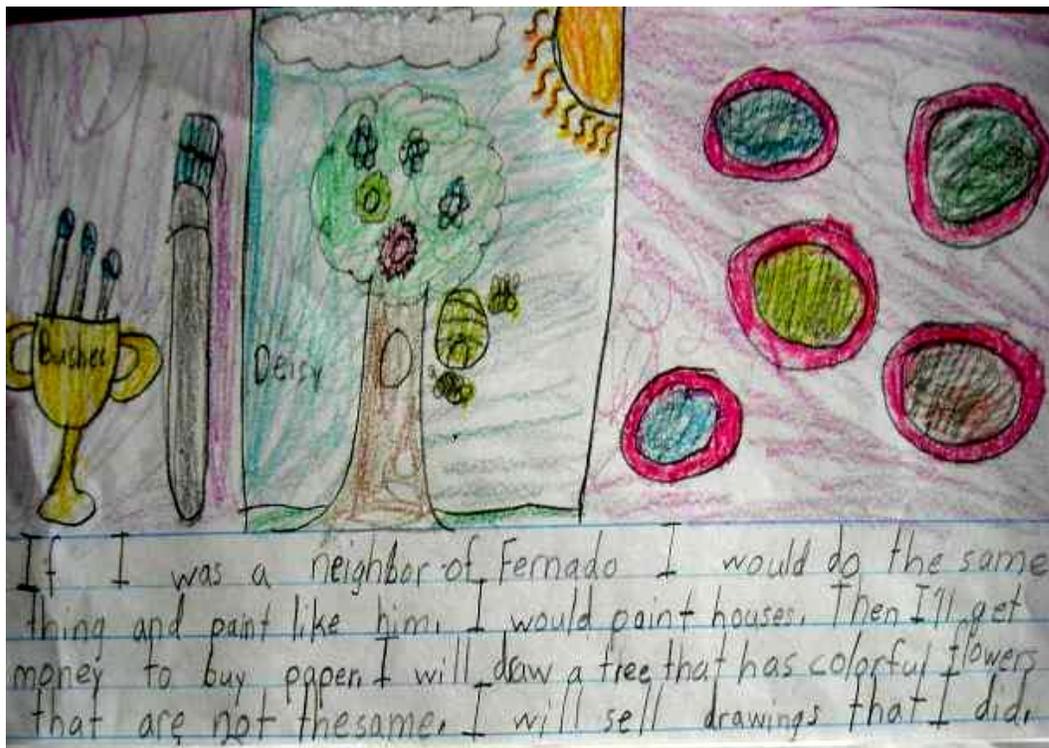
Figure 4: Procession drawing: Sister Angie “can’t be alone with a cold” (above). “I will be scarde” (below).



I decided to use Fleckenstein's three types of images to create a story model to provide further support with the for students from the familiar "tamale" read-aloud and provide an alternate viewpoint complete with illustrations and rich details. I planned to totally re-teach all imaging concepts; to show students how I would imagine myself in the story so that they would be able to imagine themselves as characters in the next stories. I asked them what they would have said, done, or thought if they had been characters in the stories. This was worth the extra effort, because they responded with much more detail for the next book.

The Little Painter of Sabana Grande, by Patricia Maloney Markun, involved Fernando, a boy who loved to paint, but had no paper. Fernando asked his parents if he could paint the outside of his house. He ended up painting flowers and animals on the outside of his adobe house and all the homes in his village. I asked students how they would have painted if they had been Fernando. One girl said, "I would do the same thing and paint like him" (figure 5). One boy quickly said that Fernando should have painted on the big rocks near the water. Another student said that Fernando should paint inside his house since all the inside walls were plain. Still another student said, "If I was Fernando, I would paint the house with birds, flower, and a tree." Each child had a different idea, which signaled that they were starting to use their own imaginations rather than "feeding off" the ideas of their classmates. The interesting thing with this story is that students chose this as one of their favorites and it is written by an "outsider" author, or one who does not have Hispanic background. Apparently in this case, whether or not the author was an "insider" made no difference. The children's drawings were colorful and quite charming.

Figure 5: "I would do the same thing and paint like him."



More charming student creativity was also evident with the book, *Pablo's Tree*, by Pat Mora. In this story, Pablo, the main character, was adopted, so his grandpa planted a tree which he decorated each year for Pablo's birthday. One girl told me, "I would put cars on the tree if I was 'Abuelito' because it would be for a boy." She said for his birthday she would give him "big, big, big pingnatas" (piñatas). She also told me when interviewed that she would use Pablo's baby pictures on the tree to show how he grew each year. One of the boys was concerned that if he was Pablo that he should not hug his grandpa too hard because that might hurt his grandpa's back. Another student wrote that she would make cookie men to decorate Pablo's birthday tree. She said, "The cookie men would have icing as suits, jelly beans as buttons, blue icing as shoes, brown icing as hair, green icing as a nose, and purple icing as eyes" (figure 6). Another girl said that she would plant a "big garden", instead of a tree (figure 7). The responses from this story were the best yet because the students thought independently and beyond the story line. I was pleased that they used descriptive words and gave specific reasons for their thoughts.

Figure 6: "The cookie men would have icing as suit, jelly beans as buttons"

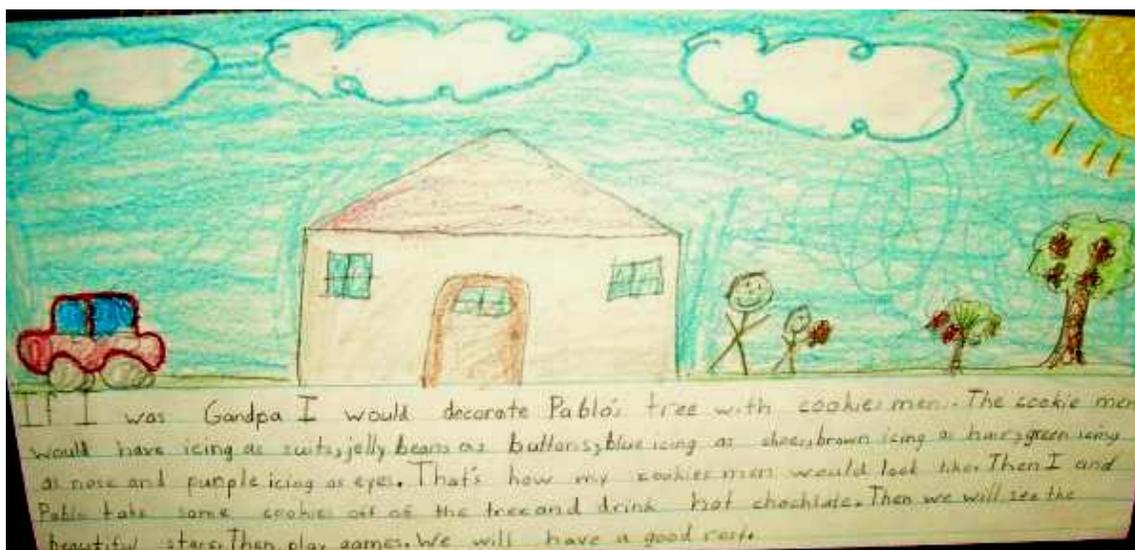


Figure 7: A "big garden"

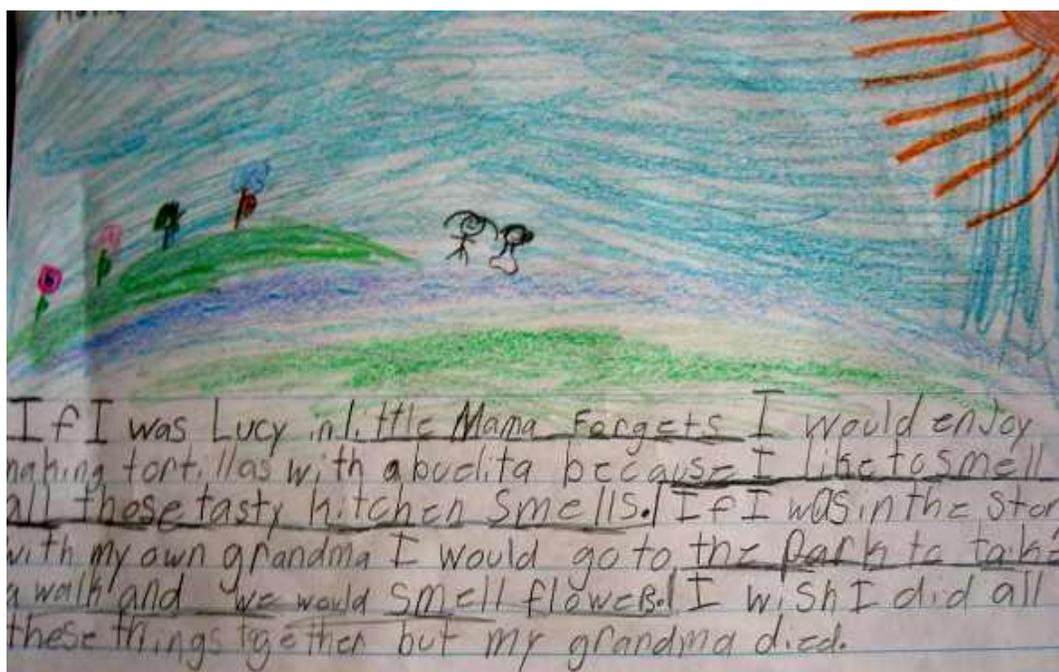


The last story we read was *Little Mama Forgets* by Robin Cruise, which is about a grandma who forgets things in her old age, but still has time to spend with her grandchild. One boy wrote, “I would enjoy to make all kinds of delicious food help cook good foods because I like to eat it”. He said he would like to make “*choclet cip* (chocolate chip) cookies” (figure 8) and go to the store to buy Doritos. One of the girls said she would like to take a walk in the park to smell flowers with her grandma, “*but I can’t because she died*” (figure 9). Another girl said, “*I can play with her like lucy did.*” Another said that she would like to go to the park to play tag because she “*liked to chase*” her grandma. The students now seemed to understand how to mentally put themselves into the text of stories and were improving their graphics by using rich color and illustrations that matched their responses.

Figure 8: “Choclet cip cookies”



Figure 9: “I can’t because she died”



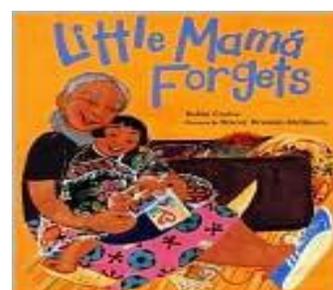
Writing Rubric

<p>4-exceeds expectations; imaginative imagery (e.g., adjectives); puts self in story and goes beyond the story with alternative perspectives or unique plotlines.</p>	<p>3-meets expectations; use imagery; puts self in story stays within the storyline and does not use an alternate perspective.</p>	<p>2-uneven performance; inconsistently developed imagery and details of self story.</p>	<p>1-shows minimal understanding; underdeveloped details; does not put self in story.</p>	<p>0- shows no understanding of task.</p>
--	--	--	---	---

I used a writing rubric as part of my methodology to score student writing. A writing score of four indicates that the student put themselves into the story and went beyond the storyline with alternate perspectives; a score of three means that the student met expectations, but did not go beyond the storyline. The following student sample was scored a four since the student gave an alternate perspective of what she would do if she was Lucy in *Little Mama Forgets* (figure 10).

Figure 10: “I wish I did all these things together but my grandma died.”

If I was Lucy in *Little Mama Forgets* I would enjoy making tortillas with a abuelita because I like to smell all these tasty kitchen smells. If I was in the story with my own grandma I would go to the park to take a walk and we would smell flowers. I wish I did all these things together but my grandma died.



The example of writing below shows excellent detail but does not go beyond the story so it was scored a three.

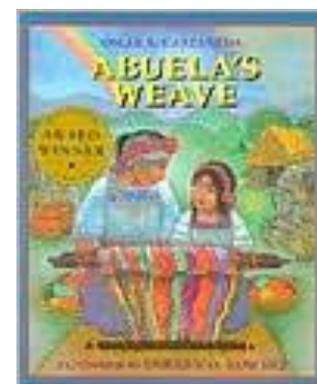
If I was Gandpa I would decorate Pablo's tree with cookies men. The cookie men would have icing as suits, jelly beans as buttons, blue icing as shoes, brown icing as hair, green icing as nose and purple icing as eyes. That's how my cookies men would look like. Then I and Pablo take some cookies off of the tree and drink hot chocolate. Then we will see the beautiful stars. Then play games. We will have a good rest.

Graphics Rubric

<p>4- neatly drawn; uses colorful and imaginative imagery; fills the page; compliments child's text; some graphics may be drawn outside the story line.</p>	<p>3- neatly drawn; uses colorful imagery; fills the page; compliments child's text; stays within the story line.</p>	<p>2- lacks neatness; incomplete graphics and/or partial page is filled; inconsistent with child's text</p>	<p>1-underdeveloped graphics and/or graphics do not match text.</p>	<p>0-no graphics</p>
---	---	---	---	----------------------

Another part of my methodology was to incorporate a graphics rubric in order to measure artwork separately from the writing since I noticed that at times the quality of the writing or the artwork did not always simultaneously portray the depth of story comprehension. The following example of student artwork (figure 11) received a score of two. The drawing shows some inconsistency because the picture shows the grandmother and granddaughter creating weavings at a happy time and the writing describes how sad she would be if she was Esperanza in *Abuela's Weave*, by Omar S. Castaneda and people would not buy the weaving at the market.

Figure 11: Student graphic does not consistently match text.



Reflections

As I tried to make sense of my data I reviewed my initial questions for this study. First, did my Spanish speaking students respond to culturally relevant read-alouds when they were invited to use imaging techniques? As I reviewed the students' brightly colored images and detailed writings I could say unequivocally, yes, especially the pieces from the last few selections. By the end of the study students were able to visualize. How did this happen?

I taught the imaging strategies and concepts, gave basic examples of "think alouds" to show students what I imagined in the stories. We discussed the imaging concepts. Most students claimed that they had previously heard of the idea of "mind-movies" so I

thought they would have little trouble incorporating mental images into their writing. I also allowed students to tell partners what they thought before they wrote responses. As students wrote, I circulated around the room and provided support as appropriate. I felt that I had done everything at first to help them to be successful but I still got mixed results.

After the first story I began to provide complete models of exactly what I was asking the students to do including artwork in full color. I again reviewed the imaging techniques with each new story and I also incorporated the concepts throughout the school day in other subjects if I could. I used “think alouds” and modeled what that would sound like in order to respond to story themes. Students still were encouraged to discuss ideas with partners before they wrote responses. I posted detailed examples on chart paper of imaginative responses to text. I believe that the colorful and descriptive results that the students produced were, at least in part, due to my modeling the imaging techniques. Before I used complete models rather than basic examples, students were reluctant writers. After they saw that they could really let go and imagine anything, they became much braver.

By the end of the study I was providing multiple teacher-written models that incorporated rich descriptive vocabulary along with a multi-modal approach of tracking verbal, mental, and graphic images. This effort enabled my students to make “mind-images” as well as actual drawn images to compare text with what they already knew. This process also helped the students create successful aural responses, and this sequence of thinking through and imaging story text seemed to make a difference in the quality of their responses.

My second question pertained to whether there was a difference between the children’s responses between “insider” versus “outsider” authors. I conducted a t-test of “insider” versus “outsider” authors for the students’ writing and graphics. My findings for this question showed that there was no significant difference.

Interestingly, the students seemed to have had three favorite selections from my books, which may have affected the outcome of their responses. The favorites were *Pablo’s Tree* by Pat Mora, *Little Mama Forgets* by Robin Cruise, and *The Little Painter of Sabana Grande* by Patricia Maloney Markun. The first story, *Too Many Tamales*, had very beautiful and appealing illustrations which immediately focused the students. Their oral responses to me from that selection were, I believe, very animated because of the realism, even though their written responses for that one were not exactly what I had hoped. I discovered that certain themes, illustrations, and story lines can have surprising and unpredictable effects.

Implications and Limitations

I feel that this project was successful and popular with my students and I will definitely use the same three types of imaging techniques with students in my classroom in the future. The mental, verbal, and graphic imaging became accessible to my students because I created a chart that listed these images with their definitions and as a class we reviewed them each time we did a new read-aloud story. My students learned that the mental images I asked them to create

could be used to write or respond orally using these pictured images. They also learned that verbal images were their oral use of descriptive words either to me or with their study buddies. They understood that graphics were all the illustrative ideas and drawings that they would use. Once students knew exactly what I wanted them to do by showing them specific models and by providing explicit instruction, they produced writing that was rich in detail and created graphics that mostly matched and expressed their thoughts.

This research has made an impact upon my practice and it seems to have impacted the efforts of my students, as well. I am using more explicit writing models and as a result of these instructive strategies, I am seeing these six students writing for other assignments with varied perspectives rather than just “spitting back” information they think I want to hear. They have begun to think with “new eyes.”

The aspect of using Hispanic-themed selections was successful, I believe, because it created a familiar starting point for these students and perhaps led to more depth of comprehension. The notion of using “insider-authors” was an interesting one; however, the Hispanic-authored picture books did not make a discernable difference in the students’ final products. It should be noted that the picture books I selected were for the purpose of creating a culturally familiar reading and writing classroom environment. My explicit modeling of the imaging techniques did appear to help their writing. While students may produce rich writing and oral responses to *any* picture book after explicit modeling, I believe that my students found the cultural relevant books more engaging and comfortable, thus leading to richer work.

Empirical References:

Au, K.H. (1994). Portfolio assessment: Experiences at the Kamehameha Elementary Program. In S.W. Valencia, E.H. Hiebert, & P.P. Afflerbach (Eds.), *Authentic reading assessment: Practices and possibilities* (pp.103-126). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Fleckenstein, K. (2004). Words Made Flesh: Fusing imagery and language in a polymorphic literacy. *College English*, 66, (6), 612-631.

Kang, H-W., & Gillotte, H. (1993). When background knowledge doesn’t help: Helping young readers cope. (Saint Xavier University and IRI/Skylight Master’s Action Research Project No. 1993-04-15). Abstract retrieved on April 5, 2008, from the ERIC database.

Lotherton, H. (2005). Writing Postmodern Fairy Tales at Main Street School: Digital narratives and evolving transliteracies. *McGill Journal of Education*, 40 (1), 109-119.

Nathenson-Mejía, S., & Escamilla, K. (2003). Connecting with Latino Children: Bridging Cultural Gaps with Children’s Literature. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 27 (1).

Perez, B. (1998). Creating a classroom community for literacy. In B. Perez (Ed.), *Sociocultural contexts of language and literacy* (p. 327). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum

Roth, R. (2006). *The story road to literacy*. Westport, CT: Teacher Ideas Press.

Spangenberg-Urbschat, K., & Pritchard, R. (1994). In Cortes, C. (Ed.) *Multiculturalism: An educational model for a culturally and linguistically diverse society*. In *Kids come in all languages* (1st ed., pp. 22-35). International Reading Association.

Non-Empirical Sources:

Casteneda, O. S. (1995). *Abuela's weave*. New York: Lee & Low Books, Inc.

Cruise, R. (2006). *Little mama forgets*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.

DaPaola, T. (2001). *The Night of las posadas*. New York: Penquin Young Readers Group.

Mora, P. (1994). *Pablo's tree*. New York: Simon and Schuster Children's Publishing.

Soto, G. (1996). *Too many tamales*. New York: Penquin Young Readers Group.