

Subject's Statistics

Name: Jose Garcia

Age: 10 years old

DOA: 3 months

Native Language: Spanish

Problem/issue: Jose's writing is below grade level

Societal Linguistic Background

Our student subject is Jose Garcia and he was born June 5, 1993, making him 10 years of age at the time of our interview. Jose was born in Vera Cruz, Mexico, his ethnic group is Hispanic, and his linguistic group is Spanish.

<http://www.bootsnall.com/namericatravelguides?vercrus/jul00veracruz.shtml> Mexico is predominantly a Spanish-Indian speaking nation and Spanish is spoken predominately in Jose's home. Jose's family dynamics are made up of his mother in her mid forties, employed in the car insurance industry, his father, also in his mid forties, a convenience store owner, and three sisters ages 5, 7, and 13, all attending public school. Jose's grandmother and grandfather, both in there sixties are retired, and his forty year old uncle works in construction, are all residing in a large middle class rural home. Everyone in the home speaks Spanish and it is the primary language due to Jose's father, grandmother, grandfather, and uncle speak no, or extremely limited, English. Jose's mother and sisters are bi-lingual and act as translators when accompanying family members into the community.

<http://www.globalvolunteer.org/1main/mexico/mexicopeople.htm>

Jose's parents are pro America. His mother is more prone to her children assimilating into mainstream Americanization, while his father wants his children to keep their Mexican heritage, intact. His parents are stewards of the family heritage and reinforce his attitude toward family interactions, within the home. Spanish is the primary language used in verbal intercourse within the home and English is allowed during homework or reading assignments. Jose's mother is the primary source for assistance with homework, due to her bi-lingual abilities, and often instructs in Spanish to appease her spouse. Jose's grandparents maintain family observances of Mexican holiday traditions and religious practices.

Native Mexican foods are a staple in the home and cultural art is prominently displayed in common rooms. <http://www.mexicopeopleandcrafts.com/> The family vacations and visits Mexico frequently to foster family connections, as well as poignant reminders of family heritage. Jose's father's store caters primarily to Hispanic stables and his clientele communicate in Spanish. The family actively participates in the Mexican fest ivies, in the community and is active in political functions, promoting Hispanic issues and candidates.

The family resides in a rural area, in an old farmhouse, on several acres of land. There is a computer in the home, books, mostly written in Spanish, and televisions. The entire family is literate in their native language and the children are at different levels of English, in their BICS and CALP applications. The community population is very diverse and bi-lingual ability is a positive attribute for the children, to participate in the community. The family came to the United States via regular immigration and Jose was only three years old. He attended kindergarten and first grade, and then the family returned him to Mexico. Jose returned to the U. S. at the age of 10, approximately three months ago. His English is limited and he is having difficulty in reading, at grade level. He is a very healthy young man, demonstrating no malnutrition, mental or physical afflictions, and exerts a happy demeanor. He is of average height for his age group, with

brown eyes, brown hair, and a dark skin tone. Jose appears well rounded and a bit shy, especially when asked to hear his own voice on the tape recorder.

Linguistic Development

Our student attended formal schooling in Mexico, his country of home origin. Jose attended grades two through five in Mexico and went to kindergarten and first grade in the United States. There is a great disparity in school techniques and structure in both countries. Mexican schools have shorter in class hours, students are arranged in groups and the emphasis is on learning by peer interactive kinesthetic movement. Unlike Mexican schools, U. S. schools monitor pedagogical structure and recreational activities in a conformed time block configuration. Parents in Mexico assume that their child's teacher will make the best choices for their child's education, and it is not the norm for parental intervention in school matters, unless they are asked to do so.

The Mexican school curriculum involves mathematics, social science, geography, art, and places a strong emphasis on Spanish, in the language/arts area. Mexican students are required to participate in patriotic exercises every Monday. These exercises consist of displaying the Mexican flag, singing the national anthem, and listening to lectures on citizenship. There is a lack of teachers in the country and there is usually only one teacher per grade, and teachers are often required to teach more than one grade at a time. All of these factors have lead to Jose's linguist development. The major influence of the Mexican school system and his development of a Spanish linguistic pattern have influenced his ability to revert to English, easily.

What type of literacy education did he/she have?

Jose's English literacy education began in kindergarten and continued through grade one, then was disrupted when he returned to Mexico. His English literacy came to a halt during his attendance from grade two through grade five, in the Spanish speaking only school system. He recently returned to the U. S. and was placed in the fifth grade, eighth month of the school year.

What is the priority given literacy/literacy development in the home?

Literacy development in maintained in Spanish in the home environment, primarily mandated by Jose's father, an overt influence of his grandparents. His siblings and mother speak English and Spanish fluently, while his father, grandmother, grandfather, and uncle speak only Spanish. There are books and magazines in the home, most are in Spanish. Textbooks and homework assignments are in English and conversing in English is permitted during this period.

Linguistic development of the 1st language of the child prior to coming to the United States.

Spanish influenced Jose before he came to the U. S. for the first time at age three. His linguistic development in English began at age five and continued to age six, while in U. S. public school. His linguistic development in Spanish was resumed upon his return to Mexico at age 7.

English language competence of the child just prior or at the time of arrival in the United States.

Jose had no English language competence. He was only three years old upon arrival in the U. S. and his level of home language would be described as at the BICS level. The following chart is based on his first arrival to the United States.

	DOA	3 moths	1 year	2 years	3 years
Vocabulary expansion	nil receptive words	100 receptive words	400 receptive words	800 receptive words	5000 receptive words
Morphemes	none	very minute	minimal use of past tense endings	limited ability of past/future tenses	better use of morpheme awareness
Syntax	none	reverse use of verbs	reverse use of verbs	more correct verb placement	better use of verb usage and placement
Phonology	none	basic sounds	basic sounds	minimal proficiency of blends & consonants	better use of consonants, blends and diphthongs
Cultural pragmatic appropriateness	none	none	none	code switching developing in school setting	social setting provides better success in language awareness

BICS & CALP	none	greetings, basic instructions	greetings, basic instructions	simple conversation w/moderate code switching	CALP development identified in ability with simple questioning in the class room setting
Prescriptive aspects of English: grammar, punctuation	none	minute knowledge	minute knowledge	interacts with positive and negative responses	interacts with more proficiency but not as a native
Writing ability in class	none	none	none	write simple words	write simple sentences
Reading ability in class	none	none	none	reads simple words and numbers	reads simple sentences and phrases

Writing Sample

CURIOUS GEORGE
at the fire station

This book is about a monkey who went to the fire station with the men with the yellow hat the chief men say hello to George and ask him if he wants to put on the Big hat then George went to the second floor to see the poppies

Case study oral interview

- Teacher “You had an awards assembly today and how did you feel about that?”
Jose “ Really like excited because I was passing to sixth grade.”
Teacher “ what school are you going to?”
Jose “Middle school”
Teacher “ What award did you get?”
Jose “ The award from the like the permission slip to go the sixth grade at the middle school.”
Teacher “ Do you have friends already at that school?”
Jose “No, I don’t have any friends at that school.”
Teacher “ What do you think will be different at the middle school?”
Jose “ That I have to work harder umm have more classes like explose and something
Teacher “ You said you have a field trip tomorrow. Where are you going?”
Jose “ We going to Lakeland to see a play *The Beauty and the Beast.* ”
Teacher “How will you get there?”
Jose “ We going on a bus.

Jose will read *What Happens when you Eat*
Jose will read *Curious George*

Second Conversation

- Teacher “ How do you feel about writing?”
Jose “ I think writing is a little bit boring, because you always have to be like moving your hand and it hurts when you write allot.”
Teacher “ Why do you feel it is important to learn to write?”
Jose “ Its important because you can you need to know how to write because it will and if You work it like being a secretary you have to write and almost in every work you have to write and if you don’t know how to write I think you don’t know how to work sometimes.

The Problem:

Jose is having difficulty with writing. He is going into the sixth grade and his writing level is at the third grade. His background in writing in his native language is very rudimentary and his comprehension of sentence structure is extremely poor. Jose's reading skills in English are below grade level and he has shown success in that area for the short time that he has been back in the United States. This is attributed to his prior knowledge of reading in his native language. The writing deficits that Jose is demonstrating is of grave concern to his teacher and she has requested a meeting of all principle parties involved with Jose's success. There has already been a decision concerning Jose's promotion to the sixth grade. The meeting is extremely pertinent to Jose's future academic success and his writing insufficiency needs to be addressed to ensure his successful progression up the academic ladder.

The meeting:

Guidance Counselor: I have worked with Jose on several accounts and it is apparent that he is motivated to learn. Both his classroom teacher and ESOL teacher have shown evidence of progress within the last three months. I recommend Jose to be promoted to the sixth grade; on the other hand, it would be of Jose's best interest to attend summer school for both reading and writing.

Principal: After reviewing Jose's records and speaking to personal in contact with your son, I have decided to promote Jose to the sixth grade. Jose's academic achievement is our concern. Both his classroom teacher and ESOL specialist have outlined an academic plan for Jose.

- Summer School (reading and writing)
- ESOL class is highly recommended for the previous school year
- Peer tutoring set up in advance for the previous school year
- Interactive environment both during the summer and next school year

Parent: Jose is an intelligent boy and I believe his education has been hindered because of us. We want what is best for our son. Please advise us on what we could do for him.

The classroom teacher: Jose is a very bright boy and demonstrates the desire to learn. He has been in my class for a little over three months and his reading has improved from a third grade level to a forth grade level. The instruction in writing procedures in Jose's prior school in Mexico was very minimal and apparently reading emphasis in Spanish took precedence over the written word. I am in agreement that Jose should be promoted to the sixth grade due to his success in the other subjects, but I highly recommend that he receive specialized teaching in the area of writing. This area needs improvement and mastery for Jose to continue the success he has been showing and to promote his self-esteem.

The ESOL teacher: I have seen a good success rate in Jose's reading and use of English and I attribute this to Jose's prior educational atmosphere in the primary grades. It is going to take a dedicated program and ESOL instructor to ensure that Jose masters his writing level. I was not in agreement to Jose's promotion to the sixth grade because of his writing deficiency. It is apparent that Jose has demonstrated grade-level work in the other subject areas and to hold him back for his writing deficit would be more detrimental to Jose at this juncture in his academic career.

The special needs teacher: There is no necessity to have the special needs teacher involved in this situation. Jose meets no special needs criteria and is a well-adjusted young man.

Problem scenario solution:

Jose's difficulty with writing will be addressed in extra class period writing instruction. Local college students seeking internship or observational credit hours will provide tutorial aid. This aid will begin when school starts in the fall. Jose's mother plans to send Jose to summer school and see about a reading/writing camp is available during the summer break. She also is going to work with him and plans to work with the school counselor on contacting local tutoring services. Jose's teacher has offered to provide reading materials and a few hours a week over the summer to help with tutoring Jose. The help that Jose gets over the summer period from grade five to grade six will be a good start to building a foundation on writing. The administration of the elementary and middle school are prepared to work with and offer the needed time to foster writing awareness and mastery of the subject. Jose's father is not fully behind the plans that the stakeholders have devised, but is willing to try the team's plan of action after much persuasion from his spouse and the administrative staff. The plans for Jose's success hinge on Jose wanting to succeed and working with the offered help to achieve a grade-level ability to write. These suggestions are only a recommendation to Jose's parents and the burden of fulfilling his tutorial aid falls on their shoulders.

The following academic plan is to be taken only as a suggested list for Jose and its implementation during the summer and into the next school year, in our estimation would be an asset, to his academic success. Recommended strategies by various shareholders are as follows to enhance both Jose's reading and writing.

- Interactive environment (peers, tutors, paras)
- Group discussions and collaboration
- LEP student is part of a literate community (e.g., writing letters, dialogue, keeping journals and diaries).
- Reading books to obtain information
- Teacher's modeling both writing and reading
- Feedback for LEP student

Reflective questions:

How much influence does Jose's mother have over her husband and his family on the benefit of Jose learning to write?

Will there be follow-up progress meetings and reports to evaluate Jose's writing and academic successes in the subject area of writing?

Would Jose's level of writing be on grade-level for the fifth and sixth grade if he had remained in the United States?

Bloom's Taxonomy:

Knowledge: Where is Jose from?

Comprehension: How does Jose's father and his family view Jose's education in the United States?

Application: Why did the school administration fail to provide extracurricular writing activities for this student?

Analysis: Can Jose distinguish between morphemes and phonemes?

Synthesis: How different would Jose be academically if he had studied in the U. S. public school system instead of the Mexican public school system?

Evaluation: Do you feel that it is fair that Jose is getting special attention to his problem just because his past academic system failed him?