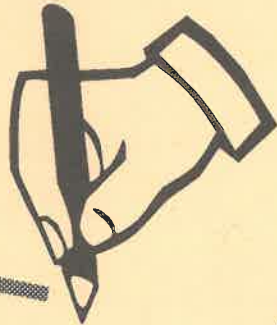


CABE '92



Student Writing Contest



*Bilingual Voices:
The People Around Us*

The Seventeenth Annual Conference of the
California Association for Bilingual Education

San Francisco, California
February 27, 1992

STUDENT WRITING CONTEST

"Bilingual Voices: The People Around Us"

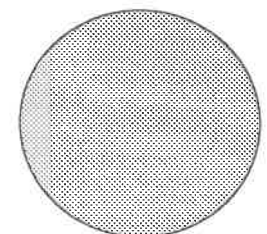
CABE '92 gratefully acknowledges the following sponsors
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FORWARD

Meetpaul Singh, in his award-winning poem, *You English-Me English, Too*, tells us,

There is a bond between us,
of respect and caring
for each other
for each other's language,
and for each other's culture.

In these five lines, this young poet summarizes one of the themes prevalent in the work of this group of young writers. The respect and the caring they have for the people around them illuminate the following pages as they celebrate the cultural and linguistic diversity in their daily lives.

Mrs. Elva Beltran, Mrs. Candelaria, Mr. Yusufoff, Ms. Boss, Mrs. Galvan, Officer Puga, Dung, Lan, Khoi, Thuyet, and Kim are not fictitious people living in an imaginary place. They are the *others*—those admired and emulated. They are as real as the writers themselves who draw sustenance and a sense of purpose from them.

"He was...a man of courage, determination and hard work", writes Lam Huong Nguyen about the subject of her story—a computer programmer who designs bilingual educational software. This *man* has no name, perhaps because he represents *everyman*—reminiscent of Adam being called simply "The Man" in the beginning.) At the end of the story, Lam Huong tells us that "It made him (the man) proud and happy when he saw how his programs helped the bilingual students."

Tom Hua's story celebrates his friend Kim's trilingualism which enables Kim to use this linguistic prowess to charm girls from three different cultures. But this admiration is laced with a generous amount of humor, making not only Kim but also Tom dear to us, as we hear Tom say, "This is when I really realized that speaking many languages well is great because his (Kim's) looks aren't that wonderful. His tongue is like a rope around girls."

It is in this *otherness* that these young authors begin to glimpse the human spirit in all the aspects that make it great. And their world is suddenly transformed. In this *otherness*, also, they sense the possibilities open for the self, as Salvador Vega realizes when he expresses his desire to be like the friendly and helpful bilingual police officer so that he can "help people and children...to tell them the laws in English and Spanish."

Joy, pride, humor, admiration—these are definitely some of the ingredients that are present in good writing. And then, there is also suffering, as in the case of Yasemin Yusufoff who must face up to her painful experiences, and through her writing transcend them. Like an alchemist, she transforms her pain into acceptance and joy. And the experience that could have remained negative becomes but the yeast that makes life rise to her expectations. This is what literary expression in any language is truly about.

On behalf of the CABA '92 Writing Contest Committee members, let me extend our sincere congratulations not only to those young writers whose work you are about to read, but to their teachers as well.

And now, let these authors tell you about the bilingual voices around them in their own words. Happy reading!

Lucha Corpi
Oakland, California

FIRST PLACE

- K-3 Rey Corpuz, Campus Canyon School, Moorpark USD
Teacher: Eileen Richter
- 4-6 Priscila Perez, Olive Street School, Porterville ESD
Teacher: Israel Longoria
- 7-9 Lam Huong Nguyen, Hoover Middle School, San Jose USD
Teacher: Margaret Tomita
- 10-12 Meetpaul Singh, Berkeley High School, Berkeley USD
Teacher: Polly Baldwin

RUNNERS-UP

- K-3 Esther Paramo, Balboa Elementary School, San Diego USD
Teacher: Yolanda Riquelme
- Salvador Vega, Garfield Elementary School, Montebello USD
Teacher: Jazmine Serrano Tucker
- 4-6 Sharon Lorenzo, Lathrop School, Manteca USD
Teacher: Martha A. Maravilla
- Maria Caballero, Olive Street School, Porterville ESD
Teacher: Israel Longoria
- 7-9 Tu Khieu, Wilson Middle School, San Diego USD
Teacher: Tina McCunney
- Leo Navarro, Bartlett Jr. High School, Porterville ESD
Teacher: Mrs. Candelaria
- Yasemin Yusuf, Pershing Jr. High School, San Diego USD
Teacher: Carleen Hemric
- 10-12 Isela Arellano, Arvin High School, Kern HSD
Teacher: Jaime Quinonez
- Elizabeth Baez, ELC/Mt. Eden High School, Hayward USD
Teacher: Judy White
- Tom Hua, Alamo Park High School, San Francisco USD
Teacher: Wendy Coyle



FIRST PLACE, K-3

Rey Corpuz, Grade 3

Two languages are cool,
as cool can be.
We go to school to learn them,
especially in grade three.
Knowing English and Spanish
is one great feat;
when you know them both,
people think you're neat.

All men created equal
should speak bilingual!



FIRST PLACE, 10-12

Meetpaul Singh, Grade 12

“You English-Me English Too”

Here, you are American,
Here, “me Indian from India”.
“You English”
“Me Punjabi-No English”.

“Me no English,
except ‘yes’, ‘no’, ‘thank you’”.
There is something in my heart,
a wound.

I want to talk to you,
I want to express to you
the hardships of my life,
the pain in my life.
I am all alone,
alone like an ant in the desert.

But again,
“You English”, “Me Punjabi”.
There is nothing common.
Yet,
there *is* something common.

There is a bridge between us.
In the core of your heart
I am so close to you,
not just me,
but all others like me too.
You care for people like me,
try your best to help us
to survive and succeed
in this new world.

But how?
A baby cries,
speaks its own language,
beyond the comprehension
of anyone else.
But, its mother understands it all,
the spoken and unspoken language
of the baby.

You too are like a mother,
understanding what I want to say.
There is a bond between us,
of respect and caring
for each other,
for each other’s language,
and for each other’s culture.
Yet, that’s what is common
between two of us.
There *is* something common.

Now,
“You English”,
“Me English too!”
Thank you for all your help.



FIRST PLACE, 4-6

Priscila Perez, Grade 6

The following play is about a family who experiences discrimination because of their language. The setting is in a Mexican-American home in an agricultural community. The family includes Elva, a twelve year old girl, her mother, her father, Amadeo, and others. This is a fictional play but some of the events are true. The characters are real. They have been leaders, working for rights in our community. I dedicate this play to the Beltran family and to the Bill of Rights’ 200th birthday.

SCENE I: At the Beltran home

Elva: Bye, mom and dad, I’m going to school.
Mom: Bye m’hija, que te vaya bien.
Amadeo: Don’t get into trouble.
Elva: Don’t worry, dad, I won’t.
Amadeo: Bye, mi amor, ya me voy al trabajo.
Mom: O.K.....Dios te guarde.

Narrator: When Amadeo got to work, he had trouble.

Boss: Amadeo, you’re fired!!!!
Amadeo: Why????
Boss: Because you were speaking Spanish on the job and we want English only.

Amadeo: Listen, boss, if I had a company, I wouldn’t fire someone just because they speak another language. Two languages can be helpful.

Boss: Well, that’s you!!! I say, get out of here!!!!
Amadeo: I’ll call my lawyer. You’ll regret this!!

SCENE II. It’s the same day, but evening at the Beltran home.

Amadeo: Hi, honey! I’m home!!!
Mom: How was your day?
Amadeo: Terrible!!!!!!!!!!!!
Mom: Qué pasó?????
Amadeo: My boss said I’m fired! Just because I was speaking Spanish on the job.
Mom: You should have told him that two languages can be helpful.
Amadeo: I did, but he refused. We have to fight for our rights!!!! We have to get a lawyer!!

Narrator: Amadeo called a lawyer.

Amadeo: Hi, my name is Amadeo. I wanted to know if you think this is right... (He tells him.)

Lawyer: I don’t have any hope in this case!!!! (He hangs up the phone.)

Narrator: Amadeo called many different lawyers, but none of them had hope in the case he had.

Amadeo: Why doesn’t any lawyer believe in me???????

Elva: I have a great idea. Why don't we just call the Congress Representative???

Mom: Es una buena idea!!!

Amadeo: I'll call the Congress Representative, but what is the phone number?

Mom: Let me call the operator. (She calls the operator.)

Narrator: Amadeo calls the Congressman.

Amadeo: Hi! My name is Amadeo. I wanted to know if this is right????

Congressman: What is it????

Amadeo: (He explains it.) Are they doing right?

Congressman: I think he is doing wrong because he is breaking the first right of the Bill of Rights, freedom of speech!!

Amadeo: O.K. Can you send me a note to prove that you said he is doing wrong?

Congressman: Okay.....What's your address?

Amadeo: (He tells him his address.) O.K., so everything is settled.....Thanks once again. (He hangs up the phone.)

Mom: What did he say?????????

Amadeo: He said he is breaking the first right in the Bill of Rights, freedom of speech!!!!

Elva: Way to go, dad!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Mom: Ahora hay que hacer una cita para ir a la corte! (She calls the court.)

Amadeo: O.K.....O.K. We have to calm down!!!

Elva: We also have to go tell dad's boss that we're suing!

Mom: The judge said that we can go to the court this coming week.

Amadeo: I'll go talk to my boss and tell him I'm suing!

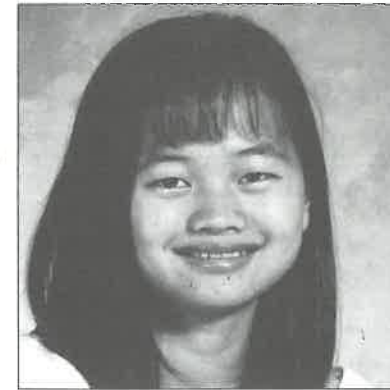
Narrator: The week came and the Beltran

family went to court. Seeing this case the Beltran family won real easily!!!! And Amadeo got his job back. In fact his boss is the one who got fired. Then Amadeo was promoted as the boss for his company.

THE END

Rap

*Beltran family is really cool,
They fight for their rights, they aren't fools,
As a role model they are great
As you know they're never late,
They are the leaders,
They're the big beaters,
To follow them you won't regret
And on that I can bet,
The time they take we appreciate
They help us open our future's gate!!!!!!!!!!!!!!*



FIRST PLACE, 7-9

Lam Huong Nguyen, Grade 8

He was a married man in his mid-forties, a man of courage, determination and hard work. He had safely escaped from his homeland, where he was no longer welcomed. He left behind his life and the people whom he loved. A happy life that took him many years to build.

Now, in the land of opportunities, he started a new life. With the help of friends and family, he got a job at a school district as a program assistant. He learned how to drive and bought an old car. He shared a two-bedroom apartment with his brother-in-law.

Though the man was old, he went back to college. He wanted a career in computer programming, badly. He dreamed of one day when his programs would be popular and used by every school district. He could quit his current job and focus on writing more computer programs.

He went to work during the day and took computer language classes at night. He never missed one day of class, even when it was cold and dark and he was very tired.

He saved his hard earned money. He didn't lavish it on silly things like a stereo or a new VCR. Instead he bought an old computer and he began to write programs with it.

The man was very involved in bilingual education. He learned how to change the English alphabet on his keyboard into the Vietnamese alphabet. And he wrote many Vietnamese programs for first through fourth graders. He also translated fourth and fifth grade English social studies books into Vietnamese for bilingual students to use.

The day finally came when he reunited with his wife and two daughters. He had to quit night school.

His youngest daughter was having difficulties with school. He gave her the books that he had translated. That helped her to do her homework and learn English quicker. In one year and a half she was fluently speaking English.

The man saw how his work had helped his daughter. It inspired him to create more programs to help students like her.

Two years later, his position was changed from a program assistant to a computer specialist. He was doing more things on the computer at his work place than before. He purchased a new and better computer for his work at home. He worked all day at the office and the rest of the night at home on his computer.

He created a program that could recite a Vietnamese poem. He also made math and science programs. All of them were for Vietnamese students in middle and high school who couldn't speak English. The students loved his programs. But it was only used in one school district. And he didn't have the right to sell them to other school districts.

The man was very unhappy with his job. His employer made him teach computer classes at school. His job was to write computer programs, not to teach.

One day his youngest daughter asked him, if he was unhappy with his job why did he keep on working. The man told his daughter that he wasn't unhappy with his job. He just didn't like the way his employer treated him.

He told her that he loved his job very much. It made him proud and happy when he saw how his programs helped the bilingual students. He witnessed the joy that his programs brought to their learning. In his heart he knew that he was making a great contribution to the future of his new country. That kept him going and going on for many more years.

Now, the man is in his late sixties. He retired from his job a year ago. He sold two of his programs to a software company.

One day when he was looking at a software magazine, he saw his programs under the Education section. The man smiled and turned the page. His dream had finally come true.

RUNNERS-UP, K-3

Esther Páramo Grade 2

Conocer varios idiomas me permite conocer como piensa la gente que tiene una cultura distinta a la mía.

Cuando uno entiende lo que dice la gente en su idioma, uno puede comprender mejor las ideas de las personas de otras culturas, y las personas de otras culturas me pueden comprender a mí también. Puede uno reír con sus chistes y emocionarse cuando ellas se emocionan. También puede uno comprender sus sueños y sentirse feliz cuando estos sueños llegan a realizarse.

El mundo es más bonito cuando la gente se entiende. La gente se entiende mejor cuando puede comunicarse en más de un idioma. A mí me gusta mucho echuchar todos los idiomas que se hablan en San Diego, aunque no entienda lo que dicen.

Yo nunca voy a olvidar el español porque si lo olvido, yo no podré comprender nunca más a la gente de mi propia cultura.

Translation:

Knowing several languages allows me to know the way people from a different culture think.

When one understands what people say in their language, one can understand better the ideas of people from another culture. People from another culture can understand me better, too. Besides that, one can smile with their jokes and feel emotion when they feel emotion. One can also understand their dreams, and can be happy when their dreams come true.

The world is more beautiful when people understand each other. People understand each other when they can communicate in more than one language. I like very much to hear all the languages spoken in San Diego even when I don't understand what they are saying.

I will never forget Spanish because, if I do so, I will not be able to understand the people of my own culture.

Nosotros somos bilingües

Salvador Vega Grade 2

Yo estoy feliz y orgulloso porque soy bilingüe. Yo sé hablar dos idiomas, inglés y español. Yo sé leer en inglés y español. Yo leo mi trabajo en inglés y español con mi mamá en la casa.

Mi maestra es bilingüe. Mi maestra me enseña experimentos de los polímeros y los imanes. En E.S.L. nosotros aprendimos cuando hay un ensayo de incendio a formarnos calladitos y no gritar. Ella explica lecciones en matemáticas, lectura, ciencia y escribir las historias bien y interesantes. Yo también me aprendí mis poemas en inglés y español. Durante mi cumpleaños yo recité "The Owl and the Pussycat", "The Seed", "El gato confite" y "Las olas del mar". Mi mamá estaba contenta.

La señora Galván es bilingüe. Ella es una maestra buena también. Ella nos enseña canciones en inglés y español. Yo estoy aprendiendo una canción que se llama "Las posadas". Yo puedo cantar en inglés y español la canción "El mundo es muy pequeño". A mí me gusta porque es muy bonita. La he oído en Disneylandia.

El policía Puga ha venido a nuestra escuela a decir a los niños que no tomemos drogas ni que agarremos dulces a alguien que no conocemos porque puede tener veneno. El dijo que no juguemos con el número 911 porque van a creer que es una emergencia. El oficial Puga es bilingüe. El es muy, muy popular en nuestra escuela.

Mi doctor es bilingüe. Mi doctor ayuda a los niños que están enfermos. El habla con los pacientes que se cuiden bien. El les dice que coman vegetales cada día para que se hagan inteligentes y fuertes. El dice que tomemos leche para que los dientes estén fuertes y blancos y el pelo crezca. También que hagamos ejercicios cada día para que tengamos músculos.

Yo soy inteligente. Cuando sea grande, voy a ser policía para ayudar a la gente y los niños. Les voy a decir las reglas en inglés y español. Yo voy a visitar las escuelas a decirles a los niños en inglés y español que vayan al colegio y que no tomen drogas.

¡Nosotros tenemos buena suerte porque somos bilingües!

Translation

I am happy and proud because I am bilingual. I know how to speak two languages, English and Spanish. I know how to read in English and Spanish. I read my work in English and Spanish with my mother at home.

My teacher is bilingual. My teacher teaches me experiments with polymers and magnets. In E.S.L. we learn that when there is a fire drill we must line up quietly and not shouting. I also learn my poems in English and Spanish. On my birthday I recited "The Owl and the Pussycat", "The Seed", "El gato confite" and "Las olas del mar". My mother was happy.

Mrs. Galvan is bilingual. She is a good teacher, too. She teaches songs in English and Spanish. I am learning a song called "Las posadas". I can sing "It's a Small World" in English and Spanish. I like the song because it is nice. I heard it at Disneyland.

Officer Puga has come to our school to tell the children not to take drugs and not to take candy from people we don't know because it might have poison. He told us not to play with the 911 number because they might think it is an emergency. Officer Puga is bilingual. He is very popular at our school.

My doctor is bilingual. My doctor helps children when they are sick. He speaks with the patients and tells them to take care of themselves. He tells them to eat vegetables every day so they can become intelligent and strong. He tells us to drink milk so that our teeth will be strong and white and our hair will grow. He also tells us to exercise every day so we can have muscles.

I am intelligent. When I grow up I am going to be a policeman in order to help people and children. I will tell them the laws in English and Spanish. I will visit schools to tell the children in English and Spanish to go to college and not to take drugs.

We are lucky because we are bilingual!

RUNNERS-UP, 4-6

Voices, Keys to the Heart

Sharon Lorenzo Grade 6

Bilingualism is a key
That I can use to unlock many doors.

As I walk through the hall,

I open the first door.

I see a faithful friend tell a little boy

How he can return to his mom.

I see another person tell him

To believe that he is safe and to calm down.

I see a student learn to speak and write other languages.

I see a teacher tell her students,
"If you don't work hard, your dream will never come true."

I see a nurse speak to a girl about recovering from cancer,

"There is hope", she says.

I open the last door.

I see the most important of all,

I see young faces light up with happiness.

The hall of doors opened the hearts of people.

Language helped open the hearts of people of all races.

Voices helped open the hearts of all people.

Maria Caballero Grade 6

Dear Mr. Longoria:

Hi! How are you? I hope just great! Well, I just wanted to stop by and tell you about someone I love and admire. She is Elva Beltran, my 4-H leader. I think she is exceptional and extraordinary.

Elva Beltran is 35 years old, bilingual and a mother of four boys. She is a faithful, loyal and responsible person. Her bilingualism helps all of us a lot. In our 4-H club when the parents go to the meetings, Elva speaks to them in either English or Spanish. Sometimes she has meetings in Spanish only, to make sure the parents understand everything that's going on. It helps us because our parents know about what we're doing and what's going on.

In our elementary school she is the chairperson of the School Site Council. She helps kids and parents because she is able to hold the meetings in Spanish and English. The whole school district can be proud of her because she has helped to prevent accidents and maybe even deaths. One time a girl got run over in front of the school. Elva was so angry that she marched right into the school board meeting red-faced like a tomato and asked in a loud voice, "How many children are going to get run over before you put some crossing guards at the school?" Soon all seven elementary schools had crossing guards.

To me she is an outstanding role model. Whenever anybody has a problem, she is there to help. She also has so much courage that if she had to go all the way to the White House to talk to George Bush, she would. To me she is more than just a 4-H leader or friend. She is everything. SHE REALLY HAS GUTS AND GOOD ONES, TOO!!!!!!!

Eva Beltran has a good heart. She is warm, caring, and feels for others. Elva is happy for others when something good happens to them, but also hurts when others hurt. She has a lot of love for people. She calls us "m'hija" or m'hijo", and hugs us to show she cares for us. She makes us feel good. It feels like she is a mother to us. We all love her.

Well, Mr. Longoria, here is a haiku and a limerick dedicated to Elva Beltran.

Elva has courage
Tough, but also loveable
A very good friend.

There once was a sweet Chicana
Who came all the way from Tijuana
She fought for her rights
And never lost fights,
Elva the sharp Mexicana!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Sincerely,
Maria

RUNNERS-UP, 7-9

The Vietnamese Club

Tu Khieu Grade 7

It is Saturday, April 9, 1991. It is 5:00 p.m. at the Vietnamese Club of Wilson Middle School in San Diego. There are four people now in the club. Their names are Dung, Lan, Khoi and Thuyet. They are talking about how to improve the Vietnamese Club.

Dung: Welcome and thanks to all of you for coming to this room for a meeting today. I am sorry for asking you to come here on a Saturday. I really appreciate that.
Thuyet: You're welcome!
(All four people are laughing. They look very happy today.)

Khoi: Now, we must do something in our club to help us keep our culture. The culture of Vietnam is old and great. We can't waste it.

Lan: Well, I think the first thing we have to do is to speak our language very well. But my parents never are talking with me in Vietnamese. Do your parents talk and teach you in Vietnamese?

Khoi: They don't, but I can understand a little bit now because my older brother teaches me some words.

Lan: I'll ask my parents to teach us. Then we could help all Vietnamese students who don't understand Vietnamese.

Khoi: (in a happy voice) We could help them speak Vietnamese. Then all over the school we could hear the voice of our language. Ha! Ha! Ha!...

Dung: That's the first thing. The second thing our club can do is about food. We must ask to have Asian food in the school cafeteria once a week. We could tell them about cha gio (egg rolls). That's the food from Asia the people of America like best. Everyone would like some kind of fruit, like Vietnam's plump chôm chôm (rambutan) or trái ôi (guava).

Thuyet: Well, I think these ideas will help the culture of Vietnam become strong in America. I hope!

Dung: We'll end right here for today. Thanks, all of you guys. See you on Monday. Bye.

Leo Navarro Grade 8

La señora Candelaria es una maestra de la escuela Bartlett Junior High. Ella nació el 7 de marzo de 1945 en la ciudad de Fresno, California. Cuando ella era una niña, no sabía inglés y sus maestros no sabían español. Como la señora Candelaria sentía muy feo cuando no se podía comunicar con sus maestros, desde niña quiso ser maestra bilingüe para ayudar a los niños que no supieran inglés. Pero ahora se pone más emocionada porque cuando ella era muchacha, no había clases bilingües.

Ella es bilingüe porque su papá que fue locutor en español de una radiodifusora en Hanford, California, le enseñó a leer en español, y siempre que terminaba una lección le decía: "¡Muy bien! Vamos progresando, mi princesa." Ella sabía que le decía así porque recordaba a Rubén Darío:

La princesa está triste,
¿qué tendrá la princesa?
Un suspiro se escapa
de su boca de fresa.

Cuando ella era muchacha, le gustaba participar en los deportes, especialmente vólibol, béisbol y tenis. Esos eran algunos de los deportes que a ella le gustaba jugar más. Pero también jugaba otros deportes durante el año escolar. Después que se graduó de Hanford High School, la señora Candelaria hizo sus estudios en la Universidad de Fresno. Sus clases favoritas eran español e historia.

Como ahora ya es maestra de historia y lenguaje, ya usa diariamente su bilingüismo, ayudándoles a los estudiantes y haciendo conferencias con los padres de los estudiantes.

La señora Candelaria no tiene mucho tiempo libre porque es esposa y madre. Pero en los fines de semana le gusta ir al cine...cuando tiene tiempo. Además, le gusta leer novelas románticas. También le gusta hacer tiempo para participar en organizaciones que trabajan en favor de las personas latinas y la educación bilingüe, como la California Association for Bilingual Education and Association of Mexican American Educators. Como es maestra de niños de varias culturas e idiomas, ella siempre lucha por los derechos de todos los niños.

La señora Candelaria es mi maestra de lenguaje e historia. Cuando ella nos enseña, siempre habla el idioma que necesitan sus alumnos, español o inglés. Pero, como también tiene alumnos asiáticos (Laosianos y Hmongs), entonces ella hace arreglos especiales para comunicarse y enseñarles a ellos.

Este es mi segundo año con ella y me ha ayudado mucho porque me está preparando para las clases de "solo inglés". Este enero que viene me van a cambiar a solo inglés. Ya casi cumpla cinco años de estar aquí en los Estados Unidos. Mi familia se vino de Nayarit, México. Yo me siento orgulloso de que ya sé el inglés. La señora Candelaria nos dice, "Apúrense a estudiar para que les den la GOLD CARD y CJSF" (organización de honor). Ya van muchos de su clase que han obtenido honores.

Yo hablé con otra maestra respecto a la señora Candelaria y me dijo que si no fuera por la señora Candelaria, no hubiera ningún programa bilingüe en este distrito. La maestra Candelaria luchó muchísimo hace quince años para que pusieran programas para servir a los niños que no hablan el inglés. Fue muy difícil para ella, pero por su lucha ahora muchos niños tienen derechos civiles, porque ahora están enseñando

en su idioma, y los padres de familia están más al corriente de lo que sus hijos están aprendiendo.

Muchas veces la maestra Candelaria tiene juntas en la noche para entrenar a los padres de familia para que ellos sepan sus derechos. También les ayuda para que sepan que hacer cuando ya van a la "high school". Ella ha ayudado a muchos alumnos en los años que tiene de maestra; no únicamente ayuda a los alumnos y a sus padres, sino que también anima a los otros maestros a luchar por los derechos de los alumnos.

Para muchos maestros bilingües la maestra Candelaria es considerada un gran líder, porque cuando se tienen que defender los derechos de los alumnos, ella no se acobarda.

Estas son las razones por las que yo admiro a la maestra Candelaria.

Translation

Mrs. Candelaria is a teacher at Bartlett Jr. High School. She was born on March 7, 1945, in Fresno, California. When she was a young girl, she didn't know English and her teachers didn't know Spanish. Because Mrs. Candelaria felt badly when she couldn't communicate with her teachers, she wanted to become a bilingual teacher since she was a child so that she could help children who don't speak English. But she gets more enthusiastic now because there were no bilingual classes when she was young.

She is bilingual because her father, who was a Spanish language announcer at Hanford, California, taught her how to read in Spanish. And when she finished a lesson, he would say, "Very good. We're progressing, my princess." She knew he said that because he remembered Rubén Darío:

The princess is sad,
What could be wrong with the princess?
A sigh escaped
From her strawberry mouth.

When she was a young girl, she liked to participate in sports, especially volleyball, baseball and tennis. Those were some of the sports she enjoyed playing the most. But she also played other sports during the school year.

After she graduated from Hanford High School, Mrs. Candelaria studied at Fresno State College. Her favorite classes were Spanish and History.

Now that she is a Language Arts and History teacher, she uses her bilingualism every day, helping students and having parent conferences. She also uses her bilingualism to interview students.

Mrs. Candelaria doesn't have a lot of free time because she's a mother and a wife. But on the weekends she likes to go to the movie theatre...when she has time. She also enjoys reading romance novels. She also enjoys taking time to participate in organizations that work in favor of Latino people and bilingual education, such as California Association for Bilingual Education and the Association of Mexican American Educators. Because she is a teacher of children from different cultures and languages, she always fights for the rights of all children.

Mrs. Candelaria is my Language Arts and History teacher. When she teaches us, she always speaks the language her students need, either Spanish or English. Because she also has Asian children in her class (Laotian and Hmong), she makes special preparations to communicate with them and teach them.

This is my second year with her and she has helped me a lot because she is preparing me for "all English" classes. This coming January, they're going to put me in all English. I have been living here in the United States almost five years. My family came from Nayarit, Mexico. I am proud that I now know English. Mrs. Candelaria tells us, "Hurry and study so that you can earn the GOLD CARD and join in CJSP" (Honors program). Many of the students from Mrs. Candelaria's class have earned those honors.

I spoke with another teacher about Mrs. Candelaria and she told me that if it hadn't been for Mrs. Candelaria, there wouldn't be any bilingual programs in this district. About 15 years ago, Mrs. Candelaria struggled so that bilingual programs would be available for students who don't know English. It was very difficult for her, but because of her struggle, now many children have civil rights. Now they're being taught in their language and the parents are more aware of what their children are learning.

Many times Mrs. Candelaria has evening meetings to teach the parents to know their rights. She also helps them so that they will know what to do when their children go to high school. She has helped many students during the years that she has been a teacher. Not only does she help the students and their parents, but she also encourages other teachers to fight for the rights of the children.

For many bilingual teachers Mrs. Candelaria is considered a great leader because when the rights of students must be defended, she doesn't back off.

These are the reasons I admire Mrs. Candelaria.

Yasemin Yusufoff Grade 8

I was born on the 28th of August, 1978. I was born in the city of Varna, Bulgaria, but I am actually Turkish. My family was born in Bulgaria, but my grandparents and great-grandparents were from Turkey.

When I was learning how to speak, I lived in the city where I spoke Bulgarian. But whenever I went to mom's or dad's village, there the people spoke mostly Turkish, and I had to learn that, too. For a period of time I combined the two languages, but as I grew older I got used to speaking both of them.

I have a brother who is four years older than I. My mother worked as a waitress in the biggest pastry shop in Varna. My father was a chef and he was working in the biggest and most popular hotel in Varna, Cherno More, which means "The Black Sea".

In Bulgaria all students from 3rd to 12th grade *have* to learn talking Russian. I was pretty good at it, but of course I didn't know it as well as I knew Bulgarian and Turkish, because after all I haven't even been there; but I even had pen pals from Russia to whom I had to write in Russian (because they were too lazy to learn Bulgarian). We lived in an apartment with a living room and a kitchen (no bedrooms).

One day when I was 9 years old, my dad went working in the ships. He was going to many different countries and brought my brother and me very neat things. One day he called from his work (after the Bulgarians had changed all the Turkish names into Bulgarian because this is Bulgaria and there are only Bulgarians here, they said), and told me and my mom and brother that he was going to go to Turkey. That seemed like something natural because he'd gone to Turkey several times before.

After a few days his ship came back, and when I called to ask for Mr. Yusufoff, they said that he wasn't there right now. I tried a few more times, but that's what they said over and over again. Later that night my brother tried and they told him that Mr. Yusufoff was in Turkey. They lost him!

My brother started crying but I was very confused about this whole thing. All I did was just stare into space. Then my mother told us that our father probably had stayed there on purpose because the Bulgarian government had done lots of bad stuff like change the Turkish people's names (in between ourselves and our friends we were called by our Turkish names, though), not let them celebrate their religious holidays, not let them listen to Turkish music or watch Turkish movies, not to mention to speak *that* language. My mother also told us that we'll be together again (but her eyes were tearful, too), but it would take a little while before dad did all the needed stuff.

Then after a year separated from his family, my father went to Italy. There he stayed about three months, and finally I saw my dad again when we went to Italy, too. There I learned Italian from the little Arabian friends I had. I didn't go to school there so I can't write Italian nor read it, but I can only speak it with a few mistakes. There I didn't have any Italian friends my age, so I didn't get made fun of. I started forgetting Russian—I could only understand it because I learned Italian and it got confusing; but I think if I review it a little, I'll know how to speak it again.

After staying there nine months, my family and I moved to America. To America I came knowing

only the greeting, and at first I was with ESL (English as a Second Language) students; and there weren't any problems when I made some mistakes because everybody was like me. But when I transferred to another school and the kids there knew a lot more English than I, I went through a lot of embarrassing moments, and lots of people made fun of me. But I just tried and I still try to ignore them, but it's not easy to just forget it.

Sometimes I feel like crying when I make a mistake reading or speaking and the whole class laughs at me, but if I hadn't ignored them, I wouldn't have survived in this country. Also, I love to read and that helps a lot to learn speaking English. Now there aren't many words I don't understand when I read. Once again I forgot speaking Russian, and also sometimes now I forget some Bulgarian and Turkish words because now I'm also taking French, and all these languages get very confusing. And believe it or not, now I *think* in English.

Now we live in San Diego, California, and I get letters even from relatives I don't know. I went to school at Pershing Jr. High a year, and this is my second year there. My only hope is to stay there one more year until I have to go to a high school, because I just hate moving—being always the new kid is not one of my favorites.

RUNNERS-UP, 10-12

Let's Get Close: Bilingual Voices

Isela Arellano
Grade 12

We are the people that come to the United States with a thousand dreams to make. But when we finally get here, we realize that it is not easy to make them real. That's why I say that we bilingual voices should unify...and together we can make our dreams come true. If we all fight to make our voices heard, our situation will be good.

Let's get close
Let's join our force
Making just one soul
Let's make this our goal

Let's work for this
Forget about failing
I dare all of you to
Stand up with pride
Of our bilingual voices
See into your dreams
Fight to make them true
And let me help you
Let's join forces
I'm waiting for you
To help me like I help you
Let's get together and
Make this come true.

Bilingual Voices: Ms. Boss

Elizabeth Baez
Grade 10

When I first met her, I thought that she was a witch. Her face was red. Her hair was poufed. She was sweating and her breathing was coming faster. She started to scream. I tried to be normal. I tried to control myself because I was afraid. I felt like running back home and never returning to school. One of my friends turned and said in Spanish, "Oh, my God. I don't want to be with this crazy teacher!" To my surprise, the teacher turned and said in Spanish, "Hey girls, I am not crazy. I am trying to demonstrate how a witch acts." The teacher was bilingual.

Ms. Boss learned Spanish in a small town in Rhode Island. Now she is an ESL teacher at the English Language Center in Hayward, California. Every day she gives me confidence to talk to others both in Spanish and in English. Before I came to her class, I was a very shy person. She also teaches me how to be patient when I explain something in one of my two languages. If I have a personal problem, she somehow seems to know about it just by looking at my face, and takes time to help me with it.

Thinking back to that first day, I was so impressed to have met someone who was bilingual. It was a totally new experience in my life. I learned in her class not to feel bad if anyone laughs when you try to speak. She showed me that no one can stop you from learning a new language except yourself. When you speak two languages or more, you should feel proud of yourself. You can help people who need it, people who speak only one language. It's a satisfaction when you see their faces because they are happy to have some-

one who can help. Because of Ms. Boss, I am very proud to be a bilingual person. I like being able to help others when my heart tells me to help. Even though I thought that Ms. Boss was a witch at first, it's because of her that I decided to become a bilingual person.

□ **His Tongue is a Rope**

Tom Hua
Grade 10

I know this friend who lives one block away from my house. He is around 18 years old. His father is half Chinese and half Vietnamese and so is his mother. Therefore, he can speak two languages, including English so that makes three.

His name is Kim, but I call him B.S. and so do most of our friends. The reason is that he can talk really smooth in all three languages. When he runs out of things to say in one language, he would refer to another language. This is mostly between us friends, who range from Chinese to Vietnamese to American. We all like to listen to him talk because the way he uses languages all back and forth is very entertaining.

B.S. also uses his trilingual skills to melt the hearts of girls of all races. I remember one time when he went out with one girl at 9:00 am, another at 3:00 pm and another at 8:00 pm. They all spoke a different language! This is when I really realized that speaking many languages well is great because his looks aren't that wonderful. His tongue is like a rope around girls.

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