

Learning In/Through Collaborative Poetry Translation: Documenting the Impact of Poetry Inside Out with High School-Aged English Language Learners

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ABSTRACT: Although translation is part of the bilingual experiences of English language learners, literacy teachers and teacher educators know little about how translation can be used with high school-aged English language learners and with what affordances. Based on discourse data collected from a mixed-grade (grades 11 and 12) sheltered English class in an urban high school, this paper reports on the impact of Poetry Inside Out, a literacy program in which students translate world-class poems from their original language (e.g., Spanish, French, Chinese, etc.) into English. Findings suggest that participation in poetry translation and in structured discussions about poetry and translation can foster students' semantic awareness; capacity for evidence-based reasoning; and their willingness to listen to and learn from classmates. The study's findings speak to the potential of Poetry Inside Out as a program which recruits English language learners' emergent bi- and multilingualism as a resource.

Keywords: middle school, struggling readers, reading strategies, literature discussion



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Introduction

In my capacity as a university-based teacher educator, I often hear preservice and in service teachers say that they are committed to providing language-rich experiences for their English language learners, but struggle with how to make the necessary changes to their practice. Many times the challenge is in response to the Common Core English Language Arts and disciplinary literacy standards and is especially difficult for educators who are tasked with supporting language learners who come to the United States at the secondary-school level (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). Current and aspiring teachers wonder: How can we build a classroom culture where students participate in challenging intellectual work, regardless of their current level of proficiency in English? What are some examples of literacy programs that not only build on, but also extend what English learners know about and can do with language?

In this article, I introduce one such literacy program, known as Poetry Inside Out or “PIO.” Developed by the Center for the Art of Translation in 2000, PIO is a poetry- and translation-based literacy curriculum where students translate world-class poems, from their original language (e.g., Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, etc.) into English. Since its inception, the program has trained teachers in San Francisco, New York, San Diego, Boston, and Philadelphia (Center for the Art of Translation, 2015). PIO has been used in elementary and high school classrooms, with monolingual English as well as bi- and multilingual students, and towards different ends (Rutherford, 2012). For example, with monolingual English students, PIO has been shown to create “opportunities [for students] to learn to write poetry via the closest possible contact – translation” (Rutherford, 2009, p. 208). This article, however, focuses on the implementation of PIO with English language learners. Drawing on data collected from a mixed-grade (grades 11 and 12) sheltered English class taught by Lori¹, I illustrate the ways in which

collaborative poetry translation, a central component of PIO, enables English language learners to engage in linguistic, analytical, and social work. Although translation is part of the unique bilingual and multilingual experiences of English language learners (Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian, 2005; Orellana, Dorner, & Pulido, 2003), literacy teachers and teacher educators know little about how literary translation can be used in classrooms with high school-aged English language learners and with what affordances.

Collaborative poetry translation, a central component of PIO, enables English language learners to engage in linguistic, analytical, and social work.

For the past two years I have been collaborating with a university-based colleague and two ESL teachers to understand what happens when English language learners are apprenticed into the practice of collaborative poetry translation. For the

purposes of this paper I focus on data collected and analyzed from the first year of the study, where we found that in collaborative poetry translation, Lori’s students developed their capacities as thinkers, language users, and collaborators. Moreover, Lori herself came to a fuller understanding of her students’ resources and power. In the conclusion of the paper I argue for developing sites for teacher inquiry into language and literacy—sites where teachers of English language learners, with the support of university-based teacher educators, can document their work, question their assumptions about language learners, and inquire into the interplay of literacies and identities within larger activity structures.

Poetry Inside Out: A Literacy Program Based on Poetry Translation

In Poetry Inside Out students translate poems from their original language into English. Although translation and interpretation are often used interchangeably, there is a difference between the two. According to Marty Rutherford (2012), a key designer of Poetry Inside Out, bilingual youth are skilled at impromptu interpreting for themselves and others; they are adept at oral paraphrasing, in real

¹ All names except hers are pseudonyms.

time and on the spot, from one language to another. In fact, deep ethnographic work (see Orellana, 2009; Valdés, 2001; Zentella, 1997) has shown that immigrant children and youth regularly serve as interpreters, speaking for and on behalf of families and friends, so that they may access knowledge, information, and resources. Professional literary translation of written texts, on the other hand, rarely occurs on the spot (Valdés, 2014). Instead, the words and the text are fixed, allowing the translator to take her time in considering her options, use multiple resources such as dictionaries, and make judgments about what the author is trying to communicate. The translator has more time than an interpreter to pay attention and care to word choice, grammar (e.g., verb tense or agreement), syntax (e.g., word order in languages that differ in basic subject/verb/object structure), and even the cultural and political aspects of language.

The kind of literary translation that is supported in PIO is made possible, even in cases where students do not speak the language of the original poem, through a strategically designed “poem page packet” (Figure 1). The first page of the poem page packet contains the poet’s name, birth (and death) date, country of origin, and language the poem is written in. Below that, on the left side of the page, is the poem itself. If written in a non-Roman script, a transliterated version is provided as well so the poem can be read aloud by all who read English. On the right side of the page there is a photo or drawing of the poet and a brief biography that includes information relevant to the meaning of the poem. Beginning on the second page is the key that makes translation possible — the “translator’s glossary” which includes a dictionary-type definition with part of speech information, as well as carefully selected possible synonyms for every single word or linguistic particle that makes up the poem (see Figure 1 for the translator’s glossary of *El Grillo* by Alberto Blanco).

In terms of the choice of poems used in the classroom, teachers are encouraged to use Poetry Inside Out flexibly and purposefully, in ways that complement and amplify the classroom curriculum. Once teachers complete a multiday workshop given by the Center for the Art of Translation, they receive

access to a password-protected folder, on Google Drive, which holds all the poem page packets. Teachers have autonomy to choose the poems that best fit their students’ interests and needs. For example, although Lori began the program with a Spanish poem, she subsequently chose poems written in languages that none of her students knew (e.g., Albanian, Polish, Chinese, and Japanese). Lori’s colleague, however, relied primarily on poems written in Spanish because he taught Spanish-speaking newcomers, many who were at “zero English” (Valdés, 1998).

In terms of its structure, there is a recurring set of activities and participant structures in a typical PIO program. Before students engage in the work of translation, they read aloud and discuss the biography of the poet, written in English, and several students take turns reading the poem in its original language – even in cases where no one in the class speaks the language. If the original language uses an alternate orthography (e.g., Japanese), students rely on a transliterated version to help them read the poem aloud. After reading the biography and poem, students work with the poem page and translator’s glossary — first in pairs, developing a “phrase-by-phrase” translation. This phrase-by-phrase version is an initial attempt to break into the language and meaning of the poem, akin to a rough draft. The lines of the translated poem might sound odd, but it is the best attempt at a beginning translation the partnership can produce. Then, two groups of two come together as a group of four, with their respective phrase-by-phrase translations, in order to create what is called a “make-it-flow” translation – a version that is faithful to and does justice to the original poem. Then each group of four presents a public reading of their “make-it-flow” translations, followed by a whole-class discussion about the translations, the choices each group made, and the meaning of the original poem. Inspired and informed by the translation of several poems from around the world, over a period of weeks, students eventually write their own poems² (see Figure 2).

In the case of PIO, students translate with and in the company of others, making translation a discourse-intensive communal practice. In other words,

² Students create a poem page packet of their own, with a poem, self-portrait (instead of a photograph) and biography. If the poem is in their native language, they create a translator’s glossary. These poems are often collected into a class book, presented publicly in a poetry reading, and even sometimes published.

translation motivates participants to engage in discussions that depend upon, and support ways of using language, of thinking, and of associating with others (Gee, 2001). This paper builds on and extends existing research on Poetry Inside Out (Park, Simpson, Bicknell, & Michaels, 2015; Rutherford, 2009, 2012) by highlighting how a group of high-school aged English language learners participated in translating experiences, and by paying attention to the affordances of collaborative translation on not only students' language and literacy, but also relationships with classmates.

Theoretical Framework

This article draws on data collected by a research group, which includes Jie and Lori. Sociocultural understandings of language and literacy informed the research group's work (Gutierrez & Orellana, 2006; Lam & Warriner, 2012; Valdés, 2014) and highlighted the resources, strategies, and experiences that language learners bring to the work of translation. Instead of viewing language-learning youth as deficient, sociocultural theorists acknowledge that language learners, as emergent bilinguals (García & Kleifgen, 2010), understand how language works, and bring a heightened awareness of the social, cultural, and even ideological aspects of language. Rather than consider what Lori's students lacked, we intentionally shifted our gaze to what they were doing and saying in the context of PIO.

Sociocultural frameworks, built on the work of Vygotsky (1978), center on investigating the social formation of literacy. This tradition has emphasized the patterned interplay of language, knowledge, and technologies (i.e., tools or artifacts) within larger activity structures. In other words, sociocultural frameworks help literacy researchers and educators to "shift away from students' individually accomplished competencies and abilities to focus on the mutually constitutive roles of co-participants [...] in goal-directed activities" (Pacheco, 2015, p. 136). In addition to the interactions between and among co-participants, socioculturalists recognize the ways in which participation in a literacy event is mediated by textual tools and social practices (DeNicolo & Franquiz, 2006). Informed by the thinking of socioculturalists, we approached Poetry Inside Out,

including the poem page and recurring participant structures and activities, as a mediational tool that creates affordances for both teachers and students.

Lastly, a sociocultural framing helped research group members to pay attention to the hybridity and movement of language. Rather than a separation of languages, sociocultural theorists are interested in studying the movement of languages and identities across contexts as well as exploring how a practice like translation is part of a "larger ecology of a student's life (or literacy repertoire)" (Gutierrez & Orellana, 2006, p. 504).

Context and Participants

Lori teaches ESL (English as a Second Language) and sheltered English in a Grade 7-12 school in an urban district in the US Northeast. For 72 percent of the 497 students in the school, English is not their first language. Eighty-nine percent receive free and reduced-priced lunch. Lori and a colleague are responsible for educating adolescent language learners with varying degrees of English proficiency. Because of state policies on bilingual instruction, English language learners at Lori's school receive language support through ESL and sheltered content-area courses – although at the time of the study, only the Biology and English classes were sheltered. The students were assigned to Lori's sheltered English class based on English proficiency levels, determined by the ACCESS for ELLs (Assessing Comprehension and Communication State to State for English language learners), which is an annual assessment developed by the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment Consortium (WIDA).

Knowing my interest in working with adolescent language learners and their classroom teachers, the school principal introduced me to Lori in October 2013. I began as an observer, but shifted to the role of participant observer as I developed relationships of trust with Lori and her students. In January 2014, I invited Lori and her colleague to attend a two-day workshop on PIO, given by Marty Rutherford from the Center of the Art of Translation. Shortly thereafter, Lori began to implement PIO in her sheltered English class, which consisted of twelve

students, ages 16 to 18, whose home languages include Spanish, Arabic, Vietnamese, French, and Twi. Some, like Maryam, had been in the country for less than a year, while others had been in the country for three years. According to levels set forth by WIDA standards (WIDA, 2012), Lori's students mostly had levels of "developing" (Level 3) or "expanding" (Level 4). When Lori and her colleague began to implement PIO, I asked them to join a four-person research group – of teacher researchers and university-based researchers – to document Poetry Inside Out and its impact on English learners. For this paper, I decided to focus on Lori's sheltered English class because it was the class where I spent the most time as a participant observer. This meant that I had in-depth knowledge of the youth and could gather robust data.

Data Collection and Analysis

Critical to the design of the research is the collaboration between university-based researchers and teacher researchers. This collaboration provided the opportunity to collect a wide range of data sources and perspectives, providing a more complete picture of student learning. After several weeks of documenting PIO, the research team noticed that the talk involved in PIO stood in contrast to what typically happens in class discussions (often referred to as IRE or Initiation-Response-Evaluation), where the teacher asks a question, students attempt to get the answer, and the teacher evaluates the student's contribution as right or wrong (Mehan, 1979). Having noticed this, the research team decided to investigate the capacities developed in and from the talk that happens when students participate in collaborative poetry translation.

In an attempt to track her own talk moves and those of her students, Lori audio-recorded herself and her students as they engaged in PIO. She, often used more than one tape recorder around the class to

record not only the small group discussions as students worked on the "phrase-by-phrase" and "make-it-flow" translations, but also the public sharing of translations and subsequent whole-class discussion. Lori also documented, through a teacher journal, her experience of designing, orchestrating, and sustaining discussions about poetry and translation. I also documented the work of Lori's students, taking field notes and audio-recording small-group work and whole-class discussions. I was a participant observer in Lori's classroom, visiting

the class for three or four consecutive days, every two weeks, while students engaged with Poetry Inside Out. Between January and June 2014, Lori implemented PIO once every two weeks.

Informed by the thinking of socioculturalists, we approached Poetry Inside Out, including the poem page and recurring participant structures and activities, as a mediational tool that creates affordances for both teachers and students

I transcribed audiotapes from small-group discussions of poetry translation and whole-class discussion. In analyzing transcripts of discussions—"phrase-by-phrase," "make-it-flow," and the whole-class discussion after the public sharing of translations—the research team, including Lori, relied on a descriptive review

protocol (Carini, 2000). Using the descriptive review protocol, we first described what we noticed in the transcript in terms of students' discursive maneuvers and reasoning practices. For example, we noticed that students repeatedly said, "It's almost the same thing." Then, from the descriptions, we generated claims about what the students were working to understand or accomplish. If we take the example of "It's almost the same thing," we inferred that students were working through the subtle differences in word meaning, and exercising their semantic awareness. The last round of the descriptive review process focused on identifying pedagogical implications from the data. For example, during a descriptive review of a transcript from a whole-class discussion of a Chinese poem, we noticed students exploring the rules of translation (i.e., Can translators add words?). Based on this descriptive review, Lori structured future whole-class

discussions so that students were discussing not only the meaning of the translated poems, but also their decisions as translators.

In keeping with sociocultural theories' focus on language and communication, we also used dialogic, deliberative, and participatory talk in classrooms to guide our data analysis (Michaels, O'Connor, & Resnick, 2008). Reading the transcripts, we identified instances of highly dialogic discourse between students—based on evidence of students carefully listening to each other; explicating their ideas and questioning others; engaging in evidence-based reasoning; and valuing themselves and each other as thinkers and language-users.

At the end of the school year, I interviewed ten out of the twelve students about their experiences with PIO. I was unable to interview two students, Maria and Lorenzo, because Maria moved out of state, and Lorenzo was absent during the week of the interviews. Interview data were analyzed inductively for themes related to the process of collaborative translation; strategies used to translate a poem; and perceived challenges and benefits to collaborative translation. Although much of the interview data confirmed what we learned from analyzing transcripts of the translation process, I took seriously any discrepant data, including data from a small number of students who said that they did not feel invested in translating an adult-poet's work. A student shared in an interview, "The poems that we've read [...] it's either about animals or mystical things or you know. So I don't see anything that connects to me." Their comments shed light on the challenges of implementing Poetry Inside Out, which are described in detail in the discussion section.

Findings: Developing Capacities and Knowledge through Collaborative Translation

As stated before, the research group sought to investigate the capacities and understandings that adolescent English language learners developed in and through collaborative poetry translation. Based on analysis of data from sociocultural perspectives, we learned what Lori's students were developing as a result of engaging with the mediational tools, activities, and practices of Poetry Inside Out. Specifically, we learned that Lori's students were

developing their semantic-awareness; capacity for evidence-based reasoning; and stance of collaboration. The study's findings feature the voices of all twelve participants in three divided sections: Semantic Awareness, Capacity for Evidence-Based Reasoning, and Stance of Collaboration. Table 1 (see Appendix) provides, participant names, year of arrival to the US, home country, and primary language(s).

Semantic Awareness

When Lori first introduced PIO and announced that they were going to translate a Spanish poem, the students were skeptical. Oliver, a native Spanish speaker from the Dominican Republic, predicted that translation would be difficult "because there are some expressions in Spanish that you can't translate into English." Manuel questioned whether he could translate into English since, although he knew many words in Spanish, he did not know the same words in English. Others focused on the fact that they were translating poetry. Maryam, who had attended school in Jordan, expressed a fear of poetry. She said, "I never stand up and say, 'That's what I feel about the poem. That's the meaning for it.' I've never done that before." William insisted that "nobody, nobody likes poetry." Unfazed by the students' comments, Lori explained that they would rely on the translator's glossary and each other to translate the poem, *El Grillo* by Alberto Blanco. She reminded students that they had the "gold of knowing two or even three languages," and shared that she had translated the Spanish poem herself—a fact that impressed students and even elicited a few giggles.

Lori began by asking volunteers to read *El Grillo* aloud. During the time that three students read the poem, I noted students encouraging each other to read ("take your time" or "do the best you can") and clapping after each reading. Maryam affirmed Aaron, the second reader who did not speak Spanish, for being "good with languages."

When students began translating *El Grillo*, I observed how they acknowledged and wrestled with subtle nuances of meaning in words. In most phrase-by-phrase work, students questioned word choice, worked to define words, questioned whether and

how a word's meaning differs from its definition, and came to understand the concept of synonyms—all of which build semantic awareness (Kaiser, 1987; Wright, 2010). In other words, semantic awareness refers to an awareness of the meaning of words and phrases, as well as the relationship between words (e.g., synonyms, antonyms, homonyms, etc.). It also refers to an awareness of how we make sense of and respond to language. In debating which words to use, Lori's students were exploring what words mean, how the possible synonyms differ, and which possible synonym to use in the translation and to what effect. For example, in the discussion below, Jo, Manuel, and Maryam were working on the "phrase-by-phrase" translation, and discussing the meaning of the word, *hierba*. According to the translator's glossary, the possible synonyms for *hierba* are grass, lawn, or weed. Jo asked Manuel what *hierba* means.

Jo: What does it mean, this word?

Manuel: What? That's like grass. Like, you know what grass means?

Jo: Yeah. Among the grass of the. It's making it more. Grass of the sky. It's weird.

Manuel: Yeah. Between the grass of the sky. Something like that.

Maryam: Grass or lawn. It's almost the same thing but with different feelings.

Jo: Grass is a good word because we're talking about the country sky, like, empty. Like grass better. With like, something that is the grass. Yeah, I think we should choose grass. It's more natural. Natural. Is it among or between? I chose among.

Maryam: Not between?

Jo: I chose among.

Maryam: You choose among? But what that word means? (January, 2014, Make-It-Flow Translation)

In this exchange Jo, Manuel, and Maryam not only made decisions about what word to use and why, but also considered the larger meaning of the poem, perhaps even drawing on the biography of the poet which mentions that nature is a frequent theme in Blanco's poems. The students positioned Manuel, a native speaker of Spanish, as an expert. However, Jo, a student from Vietnam, also brought her own insights. Defending "grass" over "lawn," she insisted, "The author try to put the readers in the feeling of nature. Silence night and music of the cricket."

Maryam acknowledged that grass and lawn convey different feelings to the reader. Neither Manuel nor Jo knew the meaning of "among," prompting Maryam to reach for an English-Arabic dictionary on the table. Even after consulting the dictionary, Maryam was unsure whether to use "among" or "between." Manuel convinced Jo and Maryam that they should use "between" since "among" was too "fancy" and "people in the nature don't talk like that."

As Maryam, Manuel, and Jo decided on "between the grass", a different pair decided to use "weed," offering up evidence that weeds are taller than grass or lawn. In the pair-work, I also heard students say to each other, "What did you get for this part?" and "Let's talk about it." If a pair included two Spanish speakers, I heard them ask each other, "Que tu piensas?" (What do you think?) and "Que significa?" (What does it mean?). In a research meeting, Lori commented on the ways in which her students were listening to each other, asking for clarification, building on as well as questioning the thinking of classmates, and arriving at consensus—all without relying on the teacher.

After translating El Grillo, Maryam described translation as simultaneously easy and difficult: "In the beginning I thought that translating poems is something hard, but after this poem, it makes me feel like it's not a hard thing. And it's not an easy thing to do too because you have to understand the meaning." In order to produce a translation with fidelity, students have to choose words that "fit" the meaning of the poem. In the interview, William explained, "You have to find the right words. You have to find the right words to fit the poem in order to, you know, make it connect to the author's purpose." Students took seriously each word that made up the poem, exploring subtle differences between possible synonyms and inquiring what makes one synonym better than another, given the intended tone, message of the poem, and even setting of the piece. Cyrus, a young man from the Central African Republic, shared that selecting a word involves that they "sense the tones of the communication." In translation, students not only developed the ability to make viable meaning out of words and phrases (Weingartner, 1969), but also

gained awareness of how they use available resources (e.g., dictionaries, poet biographies, personal connections to the poem) to assign meaning to words when translating poetry.

Capacity for Evidence-Based Reasoning

The students understood poetry translation as a meaning-making act in which translators have to make sense of the original text and consider the poet's purpose. To construct meaning from the poem and infer the poet's intent, students drew on the biography of the poet. They began to take seriously who created the text, what was important to him or her, and what motivated the poet. Thus, as translators, students also became more perceptive and careful literary readers, understanding that texts are created by human beings from the contexts of their lived experience. Students inferred the intentions and message of the poet by examining the evidence in the form of the poet's biography. In addition, they were able to consider the validity of their own and classmates' translations. Literature on deliberative discourse (see Cazden, 2001; Michaels, O'Connor, & Resnick, 2008) suggests that powerful learning happens when students draw reasoned connections and conclusions, which are then used by others for the purpose of further deliberation, critique, and elaboration. In the exchange between Carlos and Aaron, they drew on the biography of Huang Xiang to make sense of the poem *Du Chang*³. Lori's students translated *Du Chang* during the third week of April, three months into the PIO program.

Carlos: He was in the prison alone [...] He put his country, his people first, then himself. That's what it's about. Like, he was a poet that had been in prison because he believed in the right of democracy.

Aaron: Communist.

Carlos: Mm hmm. This one, I don't get it, this line.

Aaron: The poem kinda relates to his life?

Carlos: Yeah.

Aaron: His biography? Kinda relates to it so.

Carlos: When he was in prison. (April, 2014, Phrase-by-Phrase Translation)

In the interview, Carlos shared at length how the poet's biography became a frame of reference from which to construct the poem's meaning. He explained, "In the biography he talk about his life that he was in jail and all that stuff. And in the poem he was saying almost the same thing. Like, he were in jail. And we could understand it." Carlos understood that readers cannot separate the poem from the poet, in this case the poet's feelings, beliefs, and political and historical positions in communist China. Students started to pay more attention to the creator of the original text—who the poet was or is and what happened to him or her. The fact that so many students continually referred to the biography of Huang Xiang suggests that English learners were not only paying more attention to the creator of texts, but also personalizing and humanizing poetry.

Students developed in their ability and willingness to not only share their reasoning with others, but also listen to, understand, and question each other's reasoning. For example, Carlos, Aaron, and Pablo worked on creating a "make it flow" translation of the Chinese poem, *Du Chang*. Agreeing that the poem was about the poet's time in solitary confinement, the three boys discussed possible translations for the title, which included "Singing Alone," "I Sing Alone," or "Alone Croon." The boys eventually decided on "Alone Croon" after the following discussion:

Aaron: I don't know. We chose "croon" and to me

Carlos: Croon (overlapping talk). I don't like croon.

Aaron: I don't understand 'croon' but I think, but I want the meaning of that word. What "croon" is?

Pablo: Could it be the spirit or soul?

Carlos: Oh. So like with your voice. You hear (to Aaron)?

Aaron: Umm hum.

Carlos: Using your voice, like he likes to make music with his voice, his spirit.

Aaron: See the "croon"? I'm not sure about the "croon" (looking in dictionary). It's to sing in gentle or murmuring voice. You know like when he was in prison, you know,

³ Huang Xiang's biography on the poem page: Huang Xiang was born in Hunan Province in China in 1941 and has been writing poems since 1950. In 1978, he started an underground writers' society and a literary magazine, both named Enlightenment. Ten years later he was arrested for his pro-Democracy activities and sentenced to three years of labor. He ultimately served twelve years in prison where he spent much time in solitary confinement. Huang Xiang and his wife lived in exile in the United States since 1997. He and his family now live in New York. To this day, Huang Xiang's works remains banned in China.

sing like quiet, he would. So like, "alone croon."

Carlos: Alone croon?

Aaron: Yes. (April, 2014, Make-It-Flow Translation).

I was surprised by Carlos' statement—"I don't like croon"—since Carlos and Aaron, as a pair, had already decided to use croon. However, I realized that in saying "I don't like croon," Carlos understood translation as an ongoing attempt to construct meaning. Second, I noticed Aaron's commitment to understanding the word croon. He stated, "I want the meaning of that word [croon]" Aaron's use of want signals a strong desire to understand the meaning of a word. Third, although Pablo did not participate as much as Aaron and Carlos, he made an important contribution, suggesting that "croon" could be related to the spirit or soul. Carlos extended Pablo's contribution by adding "So like with your voice..." Together, Pablo and Carlos constructed the idea that one's voice can be an expression of the spirit or soul, and not just the sounds uttered through one's mouth. I noticed Carlos' talk move ("You hear?"), directed at Aaron, and intended to ensure that Aaron heard Pablo. Through this talk move, Carlos signaled the importance of Pablo's idea. Lastly, Aaron did not accept "croon" until he consulted the dictionary. He read the definition of "croon" to the group—"To sing in gentle or murmuring voice." Referencing the poet's biography, Aaron reasoned that the poet must have sung "quiet" because he was in prison. Going through this deliberative process, Pablo, Carlos, and Aaron agreed on "Alone Croon" for the title. This process motivated the boys to articulate, with evidence, their translation choices to themselves and others.

Although students knew that there is not a single "right" answer in Poetry Inside Out, they debated what makes a good translation. Below is part of a whole-class discussion, following the public reading of the translations for Du Chang. The excerpt below captures a particularly rich exchange between five students. It began with Maryam's uncharacteristically bold pronouncement.

Maryam: My poem is better.

William: No. You want to go bring judges? Bring judges? My poem has a more, like, you know, a generalized idea of what the author

was, like, you know the background of the author. His life and everything.

Lorenzo: I have a question. I have a question [to William]. Why does your poem say, "Poem, poem" twice?

William: Because it's a repetition in poem.

Aaron: Yeah, (snapping his fingers) I was going to talk about it.

Lorenzo: There's only one, once, it says poem in there. Only once. Not twice.

Aaron: That's what I'm saying.

Lorenzo: Then you wrote poem, poem twice.

Maria: Because we can add words to make more sense. (April, 2014, Public Sharing and Whole-Class Discussion)

Lorenzo questioned William because William's group, in translating the poem, decided to use "poem" twice. William responded that poems often contain repetition. Not entirely satisfied with William's response, Lorenzo cited the original poem, which only says "poem" once. Lori and I were struck by not only students' careful attention to and respect for the original text, but also the relative absence of Lori's voice in this discussion, which continued for another twelve minutes, and focused on whether, and what words can be added by a translator.

Stance of Collaboration

Coming up with a "good" translation of a word, line, or entire poem is a complex feat. Different from most traditional translation activities performed by a single translator, Poetry Inside Out requires students to translate with others (Rutherford, 2009). In the company of others, students-as-translators consider, learn to articulate, and revise what they believe and where they stand on word choice and the meaning of the poem. Interviewing students, I heard comments like the one below:

William: So if I say, I want this word, and my group member want that word, he has to give me reasons why this word best fits that word he wants to choose, you know. So you have to come into an agreement upon one word, but you have to back up your reasoning why you want that word to be chosen.

Manuel: When we choose a word, like, 'cause we were in group, and we have to

discuss and if another, if one of my group thinks that that's not a good word and I think that's a good word, we have to discuss. Maryam: We need to discuss about it. Speak a lot. And why do you choose that. I'm telling you that mine is right. Why do you choose that one? We always say, yeah, I want to know why.

I-R-E and skills-based instruction offer limited opportunities for problem solving and engagement in substantive discussions (Petrosky, McConachie, & Mihalakis, 2010). Contrary to skills-based instruction, PIO facilitated a process by which students used collaborative inquiry to produce meaning. William, Manuel, and Maryam described how being part of a group involved coming to an agreement and sharing thought processes.

Collaboration (Bruffee, 1993; Wells, 2001) in which participants work together to problem solve and construct meaning is not without tensions, however. Even among Lori's students, some believed that certain voices are more valid and privileged than others are. Denis described his group's interactions during PIO:

Denis: I do whatever they want me to do. They said its cricket. I tried, but they said, this is good, this is good. And when I was with William 'cause he know a lot, he said, "Nah, nah, nah. This is good." So we said that, the thing he said. Maybe Maria was agreed with me, Oliver, maybe, because they, like me, they don't know a lot of English. And William said, "Oh, this is good."

Denis suggested that English language proficiency is a form of power that shapes who gets to speak in the group. In settings where some students are perceived (or see themselves) as having more English than others have, collaboration can become a site of contestation and silencing.

The majority of transcript and interview data, however, pointed to the benefits of engaging in a collaborative, deliberative process whereby participants must reach consensus and generate a group translation. In that process, Lori's students came to not only listen and tolerate, but also value others' ideas and reasoning. Going beyond what their peers think or believe, they worked to understand

why their peers believe or think in certain ways. For example, Jo said that she tends to bring a "realist perspective" to translating poems while Maryam thinks in "metaphor." Lori's students came to see how they translated using their own "funds of knowledge" (Moll & Gonzalez, 2001), whether it is knowledge of the language of the poem, life experiences that might resemble the poet's, or a particular perspective or interpretive lens (e.g., scientific, metaphorical, etc.). They asked each other for their reasoning ("I want to know why"). William summarized the learning that happens in and through collaboration:

William: I feel like working alone isn't learning. Cause learning's getting a new idea from someone or something, and improving your own idea with the same idea that you're getting. And then exploring the idea with other people. Then you'll learn from them too.

They learned to work through a complex text and task—a "puzzle," according to one student. They also learned to take in different and new ideas from others, and use those ideas to expand, reflect on, and improve their own thinking.

Discussion

Translation is an under-utilized practice in middle and secondary schools (Martínez, 2010; Orellana & Reynolds, 2008). However, as we can see from Lori and her students, collaborative translation of poetry can become a site for cultural, linguistic, and intellectual accomplishment, for English learners and teachers of English learners alike. Drawing on the mediational tool of the poem page packet, and working with co-participants in the shared activity of poetry translation, students developed semantic awareness; engaged in evidence-based reasoning; and cultivated a stance of collaboration. In this section, I review and discuss the key points from the study's findings.

Most of the "phrase-by-phrase" deliberations focused on word choice. Students' discussions focused on finding the best possible synonym to advance the meaning and tone of the poem. In the process of deliberating about word meaning and synonyms, students developed semantic awareness, which, as a

form of metalinguistic knowledge, can help students to see “language as an object, subject to manipulation” (Lee, 1993, p. 94). There was, however, less evidence of students discussing issues of syntax and grammar – although they did, at times, discuss rules for subject-verb agreement; difference between the articles “a/an” and “the”; and the idea that in some languages, like Spanish, the adjective might follow the noun, and not the other way around.

In choosing the words, Lori’s students understood that translation involves first figuring out the idea(s) or meaning(s) of the poem, not just substituting words from one language into another language. That is, their perception of the poem’s meaning informed their word choice. In constructing the meaning of the poem, students focused on the biography of the poet, using information about the poet to infer the poet’s background, worldviews, and even artistic commitments. At times students also drew upon their lived experiences as evidence. For example, to help others understand why the poet, Huang Xiang, was imprisoned for pro-democratic activities, Jo explained that in her country’s history:

Communists, they just only want for the government. The leader, they always say good about the people, that everything the leader give for the people, but, but the truth, they just eat for themselves, they just make for themselves, and the people have to work hard every year, and they didn’t get anything.

In justifying their understanding of the poem, students marked, for themselves and others, where their evidence came from, and how the evidence supported their position. Students assumed a critical orientation towards the translations created by their classmates, questioning how their classmates arrived at their translations and with what evidence. Two expressions we heard a lot from students were “Prove it” and “I want to know why.” Students were engaged in reasoning in the company of classmates.

Despite data suggesting that the more English proficient peers dismissed the less proficient English speakers, the majority of students took seriously not only what their peers think, but also how and why they think in certain ways. In interviews, most students commented on gaining a new view of

collaboration as a result of Poetry Inside Out. They developed the willingness and stamina for collaboration, as well as “talk moves” (e.g., “I want to understand” or “I agree with you, but...”) which supported them in learning about and from their classmates’ ideas. In an interview, Jo shared,

History, like, we usually have team work, and I always say, “Just let me do it. You can, um, I will give you something.” Sometime he gave his own idea. And now really I accept it. Before I didn’t. I don’t use to accept it. I put it in the project. And I told him, explain him about my idea and his idea, and put it in one. And in art one, we, uh, we have to do like some project. And um, I explain how why I draw like this, like that, and they sometime, they gave really great idea for me.

According to interview data, the stance of collaboration was what students carried with, and applied to contexts beyond the Sheltered English class. Students like Jo shifted their approach to collaboration. Instead of offering to do the work (i.e., “Just let me do it”) or assigning smaller tasks to individuals (i.e., “I will give you something”), Jo engaged in an exchange of ideas. In an exchange, participants not only “go public” with their own thinking and recognize the thinking of their classmates, but also come to hold multiple perspectives about a single text or line of text.

The study’s findings speak to the potential of PIO as a program, which “treats multilingualism as normative, not deviant” (Bailey & Orellana, 2005, p. 67). However, I acknowledge that PIO and collaborative translation can be difficult to implement under certain circumstances. For example, in Lori’s classroom, we noted how some students relied on their more English-capable peers to make decisions for the pair or group, while others felt silenced by their more English-capable peers. However, we also know from working with Lori and other teachers in the district that in order for the PIO curriculum to be effective with diverse students, including newcomers, it should be modified (see Park et al., 2015). In one example, Lori’s colleague adapted the poem pages so that Spanish-speaking newcomers translated from one language (e.g., English, Japanese) into Spanish—the students’ dominant language. This was after he observed his

newcomers mostly substituting English words for the poet's words. He discovered that students were translating from one foreign language (e.g., Chinese) to another language still new to them – in this case, English. In another example, Lori asked the Center for the Art of Translation to draw upon more poems that address issues and themes, including homesickness, immigration, racism, to which her English language learners can connect.

Concluding Note: Fostering Teacher Learning and Inquiry

Throughout the spring of 2014, Lori explored questions related to implementing PIO with the support of a weekly teacher-research seminar with other teachers at her school and a neighboring elementary school. Facilitated by a colleague and myself, teachers brought aspects of their own classroom practice to the table in the form of transcripts and audio recordings. Lori ended the school year excited to continue PIO in the 2014-2015 academic year. Not only did she have specific questions she wanted to pursue, she had also developed a commitment to documenting her own work as well as that of her students' participation and learning. At the end of the 2014 school year, Lori shared the following reflection:

Conducting teacher research around PIO has provided me with the opportunity to reflect on my student's learning and how I can better address their learning needs. During the research process, I recorded and transcribed classroom discussions that students were having. With each encounter, I was able to better see how students were making connections to the poet, his [poet's] life and how their respective lives could have

affected the meaning of the poem. They engaged in discussions that included religion, other works of literature and their own personal experiences. There are many times that I am unable to give students individualized attention during the class. By recording and listening later, I was able to pick up on things that I had originally missed. Working with another school teacher and professors provided another opportunity for patterns to be seen. By analyzing and discussing the transcripts that were generated, I was provided with yet another chance to reflect on what my students were saying. (June, 2014, Research Meeting)

She has plans for several conference presentations in the coming year. PIO has positioned both her students and her as makers of meaning and new knowledge.

In closing, I want to echo the necessity of supporting teachers of English-language learners (Genesee et al., 2005). Teachers of emergent bilinguals need new kinds of professional learning opportunities to meet the challenges of standards-based reforms and accountability mandates. They need support with respect to instructional practices that recruit the linguistic and cultural strengths of their students, but also with structures that promote a classroom culture of public reasoning. Teachers also need time and space to work with colleagues to reflect on and document their work, improve their practice, and contribute to the development of new knowledge in the field of language and literacy education.

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Table 1*Students in Lori's sheltered English class*

	Country of Origin	Age*	Primary Language(s)	Gender	Year of Arrival to the US
Aaron	Ghana	15	Twi, English	M	2012
Carlos	Puerto Rico	17	Spanish	M	2011
Cyrus	Central African Republic	18	Kari, Sango, French	M	2011
Denis	El Salvador	18	Spanish	M	2011
Jo	Vietnam	16	Vietnamese	F	2013
Lorenzo	Guatemala	18	Spanish	M	2009
Maria	Puerto Rico	16	Spanish	F	2011
Maryam	Iraq/Jordan	17	Arabic	F	2014
Manuel	Puerto Rico	18	Spanish	M	2011
Oliver	Dominican Republic	16	Spanish	M	2013
Pablo	Peru	17	Spanish	M	2013
William	Ghana	17	Twi, English	M	2010

*Age as of 2014