EQUITY IN THE EDUCATION OF ENGLISH LEARNERS OF HMONG DESCENT

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
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at

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Doctor of Education degree program in Educational Sustainability

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Doctor of Education

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Abstract

This qualitative case study of a Hmong bilingual El program operating using the dual-language-immersion model in Paradigm 2.0 examined education of English learners of Hmong descent. I observed and interviewed seven educators and one administrator during a summer term at one school using dual-language-immersion in Hmong for students of Hmong descent. Analyses sought to identify how theories of educational equity were instantiated in this bilingual program. Equity was defined in this study as equitable distribution of resources, being culturally relevant and responsive to the needs of students and integrating a curriculum that is inclusive of the whole child. Through analyses of data from interviews and observations, I found two main themes and eighteen sub-themes. I drew five conclusions and made ten recommendations. The administrator and educators in this study faced challenges in adapting their practices under policies in a paradigm that did not foster equity, and that systemic oppression must be tackled at its source in a manner that is cohesive and collaborative.

Dedication

I imagined it to be a sunny day with a small light cloud that hovered over the house of Pao Vang and Yeng Thao. It was on August 18th, 1980 that I chose my parents. The cloud delivered me into the strong and willful arms of Pao and the gentle breezy heart of Yeng. It would be in their dirt floor, one room, straw-roof home that I would come to know love, hard-work, respect, trust, and the will to strive deeper into the soul of what I set out to achieve. This strong foundation was carved and etched into every ounce of strength I found in myself. For the acceptance they gave me and for loving me unconditionally, I dedicate this project to my parents.

In the dark came light. A new chapter was born in April of 2002. A hand was given to me, a light illuminated in the room, a heart accepted me, and my hope for the future was re-stored. Snyu gave me the strength and the stability I needed moving forward. He stood firm, guiding me in a direction that helped me achieve what I lost faith in. Without a doubt, he was sent by powers beyond my control to be the beating heart and the force that eventually lifted me to where I am today. For that I am thankful and dedicate this project to him.

My children, Elizabeth, Yinta, Yinyoe and Jeanlutz! Once upon a time they were tiny babies. They have all grown to be beautiful people. Their souls, pure as can be. Their lives, full of promises. Their dreams, yet to be fulfilled. I can only imagine the doors that will open for them. For the joys, tears, and love they have given me, I dedicate this project to them.

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Thank you, Snyu, for listening to me discuss my studies late into so many nights. Thank you for the ideas and the unconditional support. You are the rock and the foundation that led me down this path. Thank you to Elizabeth, Yinta, Yinyoe, and Jeanlutz. Your smiles and your dreams kept me in check working late into many nights. Your courage and support help me search for equity in a system that we all contribute to and operate in, with hope that one day equity will be achieved for you, your children, and your grandchildren.

To my committee: Drs. O'Neil, Nolet, and Hones. Dr. O'Neil, thank you for the late-night chats and the willingness to teach and guide me. Thank you for allowing me to emerge in this process and for helping me "find" myself. Your patience and guidance led me to understand different forms of oppression experienced by different people. I will remember that one conversation that brought light to what was emerging with my understanding of Critical Pedagogy. Victor, the skype sessions were fun and meaningful. You made me feel comfortable and right at home. Thank you for helping me explore many different venues but, in the end, allowing me to make my own decisions. Your knowledge awes me. Thank you for understanding the beginner in me and for taking me under your wings. You allowed me to ask any questions (even questions I thought I should know but did not). The many sessions you allotted me from your busy schedule will never be forgotten. Dr. Hones, thank you for the courage you gave me before the beginning of this doctoral process. Thank you for encouraging me to take this step forward. And here I am! I'm grateful to have you on this committee, walking this path along with me. Thank you for the trust and belief you had in me from since the day I walked into the Hmong, Language, and Culture course in Clow so many years ago as an undergraduate

student. Who knew that sixteen years later, you would be on my committee in a doctoral program!

Thank you to the first cohort in the Educational Sustainability, Ed.D. program. For all the support you provided, for listening, and for putting up with me, thank you. We have come a long way since that first initial meeting at Schmeeckle Reserve.

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Author's Note

This study was born from my lived life experiences: my experiences as a refugee, a minority as defined by societal norms in the United States, a Hmong women, an El student, and as an educator within the educational system faced with inequities that underlie public education. It seems that at every stage of my life, some form of inequity catches up to me. It has become a routine for me to accept inequity in society. And yet, there stands a voice in my heart instructing me to bring voice to these inequities. There seems to be a never-ending set of inequities and injustices in the world and in various systems. If I leave it be and pretend they don't exist, my silence concedes to these different forms of inequities and I make the statement that I comply. Dr. King once said, "a time comes when silence is betrayal" (Washington, 1986, p. 231). This is true should I be silent. Over so many years, I have contemplated to "break the betrayal of my own silences and to speak from the burnings of my own heart" (p. 232), speaking not only for myself, but also for those that can't. "We must speak with all the humility that is appropriate to our limited vision, but we must speak," said Dr. King (p. 231). These words stand with me today as I continue in this doctoral program.

I begin this process of breaking my silence through this doctoral program, in educational sustainability. Nolet (personal communication, August 16, 2017) stated that to address issues of sustainability, "we have to talk about justice, race, ethnicities, and creating safe and just places for all beings." He added that social justice is a critical piece of sustainability. The doctoral program in Educational Sustainability allows me to address this small piece in the social justice realm as it relates to sustainability education and the creation of equity of education for all, especially for marginalized populations such as English learners of Hmong descent.

I was born in the Ban Vinai Refugee Camp in Thailand at a time when the world was at war, at a time when people from afar did not think Vietnam War was not worth the effort. My memory of my childhood in the camp yielded no instances of personal injustices but filled with the memory of a naïve child, living with fearless dreams, not fully comprehending her surroundings, and not understanding to any extent, the dire situation of living in a refugee camp. Although, I was aware of situations that were viewed as "bad" things that happened, I never really understood how they could affect me. These "bad" things seemed far and distant. I lived life in the refugee camp thinking that it was how life should be, never imagining that one day I would leave.

Not until later in life, as I reflected on my experience as a refugee, did I notice the injustices I and my family faced in Ban Vinai. I realized that as a refugee child, I was positioned in a place full of inequities. The systems of oppression that surrounded me and my family in the camp would, later, in life give me a sense of insecurity, a sense of failure and sense of weakness. Cudds (2005) defined oppression as a form of social injustice, "which is to say that it is perpetrated through social institutions, practices, and norms on social groups by social groups" (p. 21). The systems revealed that I was a number in a long, windy line of individuals waiting for a free pass to the best place on earth: America. Surely, it was a complex arrangement that I was not worthy of.

In the transitional camp of Phanat Nikhom, Thailand, during the intermediate leg of my family's voyage to America, my father would close his eyes forever. It was a time of anguish, hopelessness, and sorrow. The death of my father left my family in limbo at such an uncertain time in our history. Leaving Thailand would mean to leave my father behind. This was seen as an ultimate betrayal to the commitment he unselfishly gave of being the most hard-working

father he could be at a time when so many fathers gave up. However, staying behind would mean to give up on his dreams.

My mother would come to realize that without my father, she would not be able to provide for her five young children. Staying behind would bring longing, hunger, and even death. Moving forward would mean charting through unfamiliar territory, unclear of what America holds. It was a decision compressed with pressure, loyalty, love, sorrow, perseverance, heartache, and affliction. As much as these feelings weighed on her shoulders, my mother was a determined woman, a woman who would bear the consequences of this life-changing decision on her own.

In time, my mother made the decision to leave my father behind in the country that they met, fell in love, married, started a family, and began a nameless life; strange and uncharted, unknown to the outside world. She would blindly take her five children to a foreign place, a place of ambiguity, not sure if there would be a future. She would come to understand and accept the inequities and unfairness of the different systems in the world to a young Hmong widow refugee who had ten pairs of eyes looking to her for guidance.

After my father's death, my family fell into despair. Not only did we lose my father, we also lost the status we once held among our relatives and in the Hmong community. Without the father figure, my mother was seen as an outsider, an outcast, a widow who became dependent on uncles, brothers and other men in the family to take on the provider role my father once held. Not only were we subjected to the oppression of a broken system claiming to make our lives better by allowing us to settle in America, but we were also subjected to the injustices from within the Hmong community, from those who we needed the most support. This was the culture, it was the norm, and it was accepted. This became a constant struggle in our effort

to move forward without my father. It became the biggest betrayal in my journey as I ventured with my mom and my four younger siblings into mainstream America.

My family stepped on American soil in fall of 1988. It was in Billings, Montana that I would endure, yet, another form of oppression. At eight years old, I was put into a kindergarten classroom with my two younger siblings. From the hushed conversations, teachers and administrators thought my competency to be successful in third grade was not likely, given my educational and linguistic backgrounds. At an early age, I felt the injustice in the reasoning behind the school's decision in holding me back to kindergarten standards when I knew I could perform to meet third grade standards. There was an unease in their confidence in my academic performance. I sensed a wrongness in their decision but was powerless in declaring my opposition to it. In the end, I complied and cried in the most silent way. This first educational experience in America ingrained deep within me a constant struggle to move beyond the paralysis of being voiceless to the mobilization of a movement that would push me to the forefront.

In the year 1991, my family would migrate east from Montana to Wisconsin. It was in Wisconsin, that I entered fourth grade. We came to live with my cousin and his wife in an upstairs apartment of two bedrooms, one block behind Main Street. We lived in one of the poorest neighborhoods in the City of Oshkosh. In total, there were more than ten of us living in the cramped, humid and meager apartment.

In my new school, my ESL room was in the corner of two halls, barricaded by bookshelves, empty bookshelves. I remember my ESL teacher and her aide. Their responsibility was to support me for about half an hour, once a week. My time with them was wasted time, not very productive, I remember thinking. My ESL teacher and her aide protested in their brief dialogues surrounding the lack of resources at my school and how that added to the stress of

their accountability of having to work with me. They were disgusted with the need to service me. I was a keen observer. I felt disenfranchised, unwanted, and incapable. As a young fourth grader, unknowingly, I began to recognize a world full of systemic oppression and I was at the center of it all.

I grew up wanting to conquer a piece of this systemic oppression. In an effort to do this, I became an educator working with marginalized populations that resembled me when I was an elementary student. I became an English learner educator. My purpose was to help not only students, but families of English learners navigate through a system that was unknown to them. My hope was to listen to and give them voice through my voice and actions. I vowed to comfort and acknowledge them in ways that my ESL teachers refused me. I pledged to carve a path to what is rightfully belonging to El students; equity to the curriculum.

As I asserted my pledge to families of English learners, I bumped into rocks and boulders, not with my Els and their families but with a broken system that claimed to work in the best interest of all students. In this system, I quickly learned that not only were my students and their families not valued to the worth of mainstream students and families but I, too as an El educator, was not valued as that of other teachers in different content areas and specialties. I swiftly learned that El programs, those who work in it, and those who are served within it were viewed as "second-class citizens" in the public-school system. When I asked for resources for my Els, I was given the run around. When I suggested physical spaces where El classrooms should be located for the best interest of English learners, I was told to wait until other specialties were assigned. When I voiced best practices for my Els, I was ignored. This oppression was not unique to me or to the district I worked in. As I spoke with colleagues from other school districts, I found that they, too, thought the same oppression and experienced

similar struggles. This baffled and frustrated me. This frustration led me to the topic of my study in the understanding of the integration of equity in a program that practices culturally responsive and relevant practices, taking into consideration the wholeness of the El child.

Chapter 1. Introduction

In 2017, the United Nations created a set of sustainable-development goals (SDGs) designed to achieve social, economic, and environmental issues in the world. Education and equity were two goals listed in the SDGs. Surrounding the issue of education, Goal 4 stated that schools and learning environments are to, "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" (United Nations, 2017). Goal 10 focused on the issue of equity with the aim of reducing inequality and being more inclusive, not just in education but also in society.

The World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment Consortium (2018) was created in as a resource for educators and administrators working with English learners in Wisconsin. WIDA's goal was to increase "academic language development and academic achievement for children and youth who are culturally and linguistically diverse through high quality standards assessments" (WIDA, 2018). One of WIDA's core values is that educators and administrators build upon English learners' strengths in implementing best practices in the classroom that is inclusive in the integration of culturally methodologies. In addition, WIDA emphasizes the importance of understanding and recognizing discrimination in relation to language, cultural differences, and racism in the classroom.

Paris and Alim (2017) proposed culturally sustaining pedagogies (CSP). Culturally sustaining pedagogies acknowledge the importance of multiculturalism and multilingualism. It fosters "collaborative, collective, critical, and loving environments" that "support young people's cultural identities, academic investments, and critiques of White middle-class values" (p. 29). CSP seeks to sustain practices of communities of color in educational settings.

Ladson-Billings (1994) proposed that educators need to be culturally relevant, not only in their teaching practices but also in their daily lives. She continued that culturally relevant educators believe in the success of their students and accept their students as they move them towards educational success. Ladson-Billings concluded that education should be comprehensive and inclusive in it that it teaches to the whole child. Very closely connected to Ladson-Billings' belief that educators need to be culturally relevant, is Gay's (2002) stated belief that educators needing to be culturally responsive. Gay argued that culturally responsive practices acknowledge the different heritages and ethnicities of students. Both a student's heritage and ethnicity, according to Gay are, "worthy content to be taught in the formal curriculum" (p. 29). Integrating culturally relevant and responsive practices, according to Ladson-Billings and Gay, build bridges between school and home, a much-needed partnership and collaboration for the success of students.

Beeman and Urow (2013) called for a biliteracy kind of model in the education of English learners. They stated that through a multilingual perspective, educators can be more holistic in their teaching practices and be more inclusive of English learners. Using the different components of each child and viewing it as "complementary" pieces of the whole child, practices in a biliteracy model reflect a more dynamic, more whole process in the teaching of English learners.

The SDGs along with WIDA's mission and core values, Paris and Alim's sustaining pedagogies, Ladson-Billing's (1998) and Gay's (2000) work in culturally relevant and responsive practices in the classroom, and Beeman and Urow's (2013) call for a more holistic form of education will helped determine the road of this study. As these organizations and researchers agree, it is important that educators and administrators understand the need to integrate

equitable practices and resources in the creation of a pathway for Els in reaching the curriculum. Additionally, these organizations and researchers agree with the importance of considering the wholeness of English learners, taking into consideration all the components that encompass a whole learner.

Programs serving English learners (Els) continue to evolve claiming to serve in their best interests. These programs operate with the hope to accelerate English-language growth among English learners, which in turn, theoretically would have an impact on the academic, historical, and cultural growth of English learners. These educational programs continue to place a strong emphasis on growth among Els; however, the achievement gap continues to widen between English-speaking peers and English learners (Gándara, Rumberger, Maxwell-Jolly, & Callahan, 2003) (Gottlieb, 2016) and the cultural identification of Els to their familial roots continue to decline (Tung, 2013).

According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP, 2017), 68% of English learners in fourth grade scored below basic in Reading, compared to 28% percent of English-speaking students who scored below basic. This same report indicated that 30% of non-El fourth graders were proficient in Reading versus only 8% of English learners scoring proficient. NAEP data showed similar results for students in eighth grade. It also showed that 21% of non-El students scored below basic in reading while 68% of Els scored below basic. In this age group, only 5% of Els scored proficient versus 34% of non-Els scoring proficient.

In addition to these alarming statistics, current El programs service students with a "subtractive" approach that assimilate students to "English-only environments." In these environments, students lose their connection to their cultural identity as well as their native lan-

guage (Tung, 2013). As part of creating a sustainable system and world in which English learners can contribute to society in a productive manner, these gaps need to be addressed at the source. If school systems are to create problem solvers of issues of tomorrow (Orr, 2004; Nolet, 2016), they need to not only address the needs within the general educational system but the education of English learners who can contribute a multilingual view into this process.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the education of English learners of Hmong descent in a Hmong bilingual El program. It inquired into equities embedded in the Hmong bilingual El program, particularly in funding, resources, staffing, curriculum, assessment, planning, instruction, and integration of culturally responsive and relevant practices. A sustainability lens in this study inquired how equities contribute to the education of Els of Hmong descent who can become critical thinkers to help create a more just, equitable, and sustainable world. The findings in this study may assist in future program policy and planning specific to Hmong bilingual El programs as well as public and private school systems, generally, in their design of integrating culturally responsive and relevant practices meeting the needs of all learners.

My research questions were as follows:

RQ1: How and in what ways is education of English learners of Hmong decent promoted?

RQ2: Are these ways equitable? Are these ways inclusive? Why or why not?

RQ3: How are bilingual programs integrating culturally responsive and relevant practices meeting the needs of the whole English learner of Hmong descent?

Glossary

A new kind of education - is a new form of practice that prepares students to solve problems and challenges of tomorrow.

Biliteracy education- is education taught in two different languages through a multilingual, more inclusive perspective.

Critical theory - challenges the status quo and norms set by society relating to social issues.

Collaborative, collective, critical, and loving environment – is a learning environment that "not only honor and examine youth heritage practices and community engagements, but also provide them with access to opportunity and power" (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 29).

Culturally relevant teaching - is practice in the classroom proactive to student needs and is comprehensive in reaching the whole child (English learner).

Cultural identity – is the association a person has with his or her identity.

Culturally responsive teaching - is practice in the classroom reactive to student needs including but not limited to: culture, ethnicity, family backgrounds, history, language, academic needs, etc.

Culturally sustaining pedagogy - is the sustaining of practices in the classroom inclusive of the whole child and "recognizes the import of multiculturalism and multilingualism for students, teachers, and other agents of educational change" (Paris & Alim, 2017, p. 28).

English learner- is a student who communicates in more than one language with English being the language of academic instruction.

English learner of Hmong descent - is a student who communicates in Hmong and English with English being the language of academic instruction.

Equity - is the fair and equitable distribution of resources and equitable practices that create leveled plain-fields for English learners in education.

Inclusion - is the integration through resources, practices, and decision making that is inclusive of all students in education.

Inequity - is the inequitable distribution of resources as well as practices that create leveled plain-fields for English learners.

Sustainability education – is education referring to pathways and processes of reaching long term goals of creating a sustainable world through developments that meet the needs of the present without jeopardizing the future.

Whole child - is the consideration of the complete child including but not limited to: culture, ethnicity, family backgrounds, history, language, academic needs, etc.

Conceptual Framework

This study used the lens of critical theory, as follows:

- To be responsive in the understanding of equity in a Hmong bilingual El program that addresses a certain kind of programmatic design that affect the learning of English learners of Hmong descent;
- To be responsive to practices within the Hmong bilingual El program that integrates culturally responsive and relevant practices;
- To be responsive and open to concerns and matters relating to social justice and equitable distribution of resources for English learners of Hmong descent; and
- To reinforce the importance of understanding of English learners of Hmong descent, particularly the child's cultural, historical, and language backgrounds in addition to the child's individual academic needs.

This framework has six sources, as follows:

- United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of 2017;
- Wisconsin's (2018) World-class Instructional Design and Assessment's (WIDA) concepts of teaching and assessment for equity in the assurance that every El child has equitable access to the curriculum;
- Paris and Alim's (2013) work with culturally sustaining pedagogies,
- Gay's (2002) concept of culturally responsive teaching;
- Ladson-Billing's (1994) interpretation of culturally relevant teaching that includes the wholeness of a student; and
- Beeman and Urow's (2013) call for teaching for biliteracy.

Figure 1. Theoretical Model

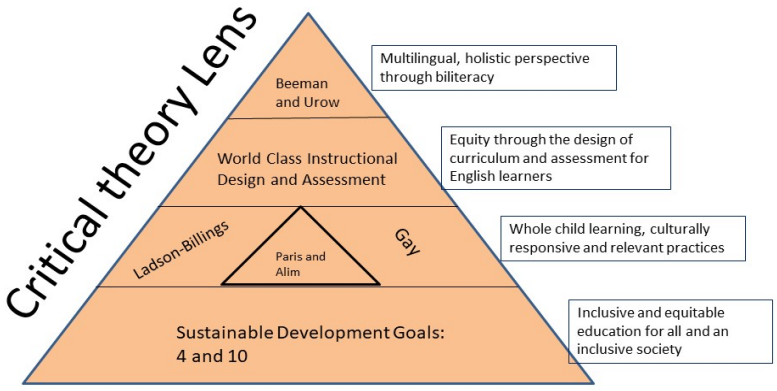


Figure 1 is a visual representation of the theoretical framework of this study. It is represented using a triangle with each bottom layer anchoring the layer on top but having crucial connections to the whole of the triangle. The lens of critical theory is indicated on the model on the left side of the triangle.

Significance of the Study

Currently, programs serving English learners vary and continue to emerge (Honigsfeld and Dove, 2010), but the achievement gap between English learners and their English-speaking peers continue to widen (Gándara, Rumberger, Maxwell-Jolly, & Callahan, 2003, Gottlieb, 2016). The significance of this study contributes to the understanding of equity in the education of English learners of Hmong descent in a Hmong bilingual El program. Through investigating how equity is integrated in this program, this study provided suggestions for how to make education more accessible for all. Leveling the playing field through education is critical to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4, which addresses the insurance of inclusion and equity in education, and Goal 10, addressing the need for an inclusive society

Through an analysis of how equity is integrated in this program, the findings can be used to inform best practices that are inclusive of the whole El child of Hmong descent. This is critical for educators, grant funders, administrators who have an appetite to make education equitable for their English learners of Hmong descent and for those wanting to increase engagement and learning – ultimately, increasing test scores. Additionally, this study can contribute to the design of general El programs for English learners of other ethnicities. Currently, in the US there are 4.3 million El students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018) and even visionary teachers are struggling to meet the needs of this diverse student population. This study provides pragmatic and actionable strategies to foster inclusive learning environments for our growing diversity. Furthermore, this study contributes to pedagogies serving Els of any descent in the expansion of their language and academic growth, in addition to the validation of their identity represented through teaching practices by their teachers.

Summary

This chapter shows that this study's purpose was to examine ways to increase academic and language growth of English learners. I posed three research questions and show how I use critical theory as the lens of this study. This study added to discussions of education policy and practices for English learners of Hmong descent as well as all learners.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

This chapter reviews literature on education English learners (Els) of Hmong descent. It is organized in four sections, as follows:

1) Reviews of studies of Els of Hmong descent;
2) Reviews of education for Els, organized as two paradigms;
3) Reviews of studies of ailments and attributes of education for Els; and
4) Reviews of studies of cultural relevance and responsivity.

English Learners of Hmong Descent

According to the Pew Research Center (2017), in 2015 there were 299,000 persons of Hmong origin in the United States. That was a growth of over 6% from the year 2000. Of the 299,000 persons of Hmong origin, 28% are of school ages 5-17, which approximately totals 84,000 Hmong students attending K-12 public school systems in the United States. According to the Pew Research Center, a majority of the 84,000 students reside, with their families, in the states of California, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. Hmong speaking Els are among the top five most common groups of Els in the United States Southeast Asia Resource Action Center [SEARAC] (2013, p. 1).

Hmong students, today, are descendants of refugees from Laos (Vang, 2005; Her & Buley-Meissner, 2012). Hmong means "free people" (Hones, 1999). Although, there have been lots of research done on bilingual El students, little has been done on El students of Hmong descent (Vang, 2005). According to Vang, because many Els of Hmong descent are identified as having limited English proficiency, they are placed in remedial ESL classes, "even if a school offers academic programs to integrate Hmong students into the mainstream of the

school" (p. 27). Because of this, Vang claimed, El students of Hmong descent are isolated socially and academically.

Although, the fifth most spoken language group among Els in the country, Els of Hmong descent still represent a small portion of the entire population of English learners (SEARAC, 2013; Her and Buley-Meissner, 2012). As a result of this small representation, "a low priority is assigned to addressing their needs; 'equity and access' policies, hiring practices, and curricular designs tend to exclude serious consideration of their presence" (Her and Buley-Meissner, 2012, p. 7). Vang (2005) and Lee (2001) echoed this issue providing the example that Els of Hmong descent lack language and language skills directly connected to academic content, which puts them at a disadvantage. Els of Hmong descent are culturally reserved and may not always ask questions or let teachers know they need extra assistance (Vang, 2005). Vang claimed that as a result of this reservation, many teachers assume that their El students of Hmong descent understand content in the classroom when they may not. This disproportionately continues to marginalize El students of Hmong descent in schools and affects the "quality of education for all students, Hmong and non-Hmong," (Her and Buley-Meissner, 2012, p. 7). Her and Buley-Meissner claimed that "when a minority group is treated as insubstantial, a message goes out to everyone on campus about who belongs and who does not" (p. 7).

Parents of Els of Hmong descent reportedly believe that education is important (Vang, 2005) and in the power of education (Lee and Green, 2008); however, they reportedly accept that only teachers and administrators have the sole authority over the education of their children (Vang, 2005). Because of the lack of formal education "many Hmong parents do not know how to support their children education wise" (Lee and Green, 2008, p. 3). Ly (2005) and Thao

(2000) stated that parents of Els of Hmong descent show their support by stating and hoping their children succeed but they do not know how to show support beyond that.

Communal and Social Connections

The Hmong have always lived within a tight and close-knit linkage that is "characterized by a high degree of social cohesion, moral commitment and continuity over time" (Julian, 2004, p. 8). Beginning their lives in documented history of China and later to Laos, the Hmong continued their closeness of community and social oriented culture (Faderman, 1998). Rather than congregating as individuals, Hmong pledge allegiance to their family, their clans, and the Hmong community as a whole (Faderman, 1998). The Hmong have always worked for the interest of not the individual but of the clan. In their book, *Hmong and American From Refugees to Citizens,* Her and Buley-Meissner (2012) discussed the importance that awareness that Hmong view decisions as affecting not only the individual but that they affect the Hmong community, particularly immediate family and clan. This according, to Her and Buley-Meissner (2012), can lead to an improved understanding of the Hmong's clan structure and the communal and social aspect within a complex design of cultural traditions practiced for many generations.

Hmong Els & Biliteracy

Biliteracy, according to Beeman and Urow (2013) is best practice for English learners as it presents instruction from a multilingual perspective. It's holistic and comprehensive as it connects content to literacy and oracy. Additionally, it provides a smoother pathway to integrate inclusive forms of teaching. Through biliteracy, a bilingual program can be more inclusive in building bridges from school to home through integration of culturally responsive and relevant practices that encompasses the whole English learner of Hmong descent.

Hmong bilingual schools have come about to meet the needs of Els of Hmong descent. Currently, in the St. Paul, MN public school district, there are two Hmong bilingual schools that practice in a dual immersion model where content and literacy are taught in English and Hmong. There are numerous other bilingual charter schools not part of the St. Paul Public School District that aim to meet the same goal: build culturally competent students who are fluent in Hmong and English. At Jackson Elementary School, 57% of students are of Asian descent with a majority of the 57% being students of Hmong descent. Content and literacy are taught both in Hmong and in English with the ultimate goal of fluency in both languages.

Hmong Els in Social-Justice & Sustainability Education

Situated in New York, representatives of governments met at the United Nations Headquarter to discuss and adopt new Sustainable Development Goals moving forward toward Agenda 2030. In this new Declaration created in 2015, representatives of governments vowed "to end poverty and hunger" with a promise to counter inequalities to build more "just and inclusive societies." In addition, this new Declaration announces that as part of its vision, a goal is to provide "equitable and universal access to quality education at all levels," including mutual respect for equality regardless of race, ethnicity, and cultural backgrounds. The goals were developed after a two-year research of interactions with "civil society and other stakeholders around the world."

The creators of this new Declaration (2015) acknowledge that current times and situations around the world present a great challenge to sustainable developments. They state that billions of people continue to live in poverty and don't have the resources to live "a life of dignity." The Declaration acknowledges that inequalities exist at a higher percentage than ever before. In the Declaration, a target in Goal 4 stated the following: "By 2030, ensure that all

girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes." Another Target in Goal 4 refers to the need to "substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers." As we examine the Targets and Goals set forth in this new Declaration in connection to the education of and for English learners, there is still lots of work to be done to ensure that equality and equity is provided in all learning environments. Roberge (2002) stated that English learners not only have to navigate through academics but also through "linguistic, cultural, and racial discrimination" (p. 112).

The national equity assistance centers (EACs) equip schools with assistance to help promote equity. However, Reeves (2004) stated that a child's "access to schooling...does not ensure that educational opportunity has been equalized" (p. 45). In fact, in *Lau v. Nichols* (1974), United States Supreme Court Justice, Douglas stated that the equality treatment of education for English learners doesn't merely mean to provide them with the same facility, books, teachers and curriculum. Rather meaningful education for English learners go beyond all these. Meaningful education must also focus on Els' understanding and usage of the English language.

English learners are the fastest-growing population of students in the United States (Alrubail, 2016; Tung, 2013). Sheng, Sheng and Anderson (2011) predicted that this trend will continue to grow in the next few decades. Most of this population of minorities are non-English speakers. This growth of diverse learners from different backgrounds in languages, cultures, history, and traditions have presented a deeper challenge for educators and administrators in K-12 public school systems (Henn-Reinke and Yang, 2017). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2018), the population of students of diverse backgrounds, including English learners (Els), represented fifty percent of the student population in the United States

in the year 2013. The NCES projected that in 2023, this population will represent more than half of the student population attending public schools in the United States. In 2015, English learners comprised of 4.8 million students in public schools across the United States.

Paradigms

There are different program models integrated by different school systems in the effort to provide equity for English learners. This is direct connection to the inclusivity and equity in education as expected by Sustainable Development Goals 4 and 10 as set forth by UNESCO (2017). Honigsfeld and Dove (2010) identified four different program models used in different school settings to serve English learners. They categorized the four models into the following:

1) English as a Second Language (ESL) programs;

2) Structured English immersion (SEI);

3) Bilingual education (transitional or maintenance); and

4) Dual-language or two-way-enrichment bilingual programs

The first two models are examples of what I call Paradigm 1.0, and the second two models are examples of what I call Paradigm 2.0. Paradigm 2.0 is education, according to Beeman and Urow (2013) as best practice for English learners. Within these four different models are different levels of integration and interpretation of how assessment is to be enforced to provide equity for English learners.

1.0: Detached and Disconnected

Models that implement English as the only language of instruction operate in what I call a Paradigm 1.0. It serves and accommodates a scope of different El students with different: content abilities, English-language proficiency levels, backgrounds, cultures, history, and languages. This paradigm operates mostly on a disconnected methodology of delivering English-

language instruction in a variety of different settings. Generally, instruction in a 1.0 paradigm focuses mainly on building English-language vocabulary in isolation from mainstream classes. There is very little to minimal association to content in the mainstream classroom. Another characteristic of instruction in Paradigm 1.0 focuses on the need to move students as fast as possible in the engagement and learning of English; therefore, native language use is at a minimal, if at all. The delivery can be done separately from mainstream classrooms providing English-language learning in a space designated for El educators and students. This space is mainly outside of the classroom but can be integrated in the corner of the classroom environment or another space as appropriate. Delivery of instruction may also be done as an immersion classroom, still separated from mainstream classrooms, but immersing Els in content through segregation from mainstream.

Collaboration between El educators and classroom educators is minimal, if any at all (Freeman, Freeman, & Mercuri, 2005). The capacity of language accountability rests solely on the shoulders of El educators or the educator of an immerse classroom (Walker, Shafer, & Liam, 2004). It is mainly expected that educators in the mainstream classroom teach content while it is the responsibility of El educators to elevate an El's English-language level through the separated blocks of times they meet with the students or through the immerse setting of quickly moving students in acquiring English. In some El programs in a 1.0 paradigm, El educators serve as a resource or a tutor for El students who need extra assistance with homework help or assignments as assigned by the general classroom teacher.

In Paradigm 1.0, the model of English as a Second Language (ESL is designed for English learners to "receive specially designed language and academic instruction" (Honigsfeld and Dove, 2010, p. 9). Instruction may be done inside a classroom but most likely is done

in a separate classroom or space designated for language learning. Services are offered through an El educator. In ESL programs, the amount of service an English learner receives depends on the English-language proficiency level of the student.

There are different programs of an ESL model. The most common and frequently used by many school districts across the United States are 1) pull out programs, 2) plug in or sometimes referred to as push-in programs, 3) self-contained classrooms (Honigsfeld and Dove, 2010), 4) ESL class period, 5) ESL resource center ("Program Models for Teaching English learners," 1993), and 6) sheltered English or content-based programs (Rennie, 1993). Some of these programs are very similar but have a slight different purpose as well as a difference in structural set up.

In an ESL pull-out program, El services are provided for English learners in a designated area outside of the classroom. Els spend a majority of their day in a regular mainstream class. In this program, Els miss a portion of mainstream classroom instruction as they receive services from the El educator. They are pulled out individually or in small groups to focus on English-language needs. The groups can be a mixed of different language levels. Pull out models are generally used in the elementary grade level. This model "is likely to be used in districts where the language minority population is very diverse and represents many different languages" (Rennie, 1993).

In a plug-in or push-in program, the El educator "provides instruction in the general-education classroom" (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2010, p. 11). This program presents different options for El educators. Depending on the specific language needs of El students, El educators can provide services through these plug in or push models that include: 1) the pulling of El students to a designated area working on a "stand-alone ESL curriculum," which is separated

from academic contents in the mainstream classroom, 2) the pulling of El students to a designated area supporting them in academic work from the general classroom, 3) the integration of El educators into the "general education teacher's lesson through differentiated instructional strategies" (p. 11), and 4) the collaborative efforts of El and classroom educators working together to co-plan and co-teach general academic content with appropriate and scaffolded El supports integrated within universal teaching.

A self-contained El program occurs when there is enough English learners who are new immigrants and are considered as newcomers to be placed in one classroom. Generally, in a self-contained classroom, educators are certified in ESL as well as in the content specialty. The purpose of self-contained classrooms is to help newcomers adjust to a new country and its new culture. It serves as a transitional space prior to entering a mainstream classroom. A self-contained classroom provides intense English instruction through content areas with limited native language support with the hope to integrate culturally responsive and relevant practices.

El class periods and El resource centers are programs that are commonly used as structured programs in middle and high schools. In an El class period, El students receive instruction "during a regular class period and usually receive course credit" ("Program Models for Teaching English learners," 1993). An El resource center is very similar to a pull-out program. This model serves as a resource center for students and serves multiple students from different high school classes.

Sheltered classes or content-based El programs, English learners of different languages, backgrounds, and English-language proficiency levels are banded together. In this model, students are instructed in English. Teaching content is the core goal. Content instruction is provided using El strategies, meant to adapt for all English-language proficiency levels. Although

language is a focus, a deeper concentration is emphasized in content learning. Although, the aim is to provide services for academic success of English learners, different levels of equity is embedded in each program.

Structured English-immersion programs (SEI) emerged in the United States during the early 1980s. Baker (1999) along with his partner Kanter introduced this model after learning the successful results from Canada's French immersion program. Canada used the SEI model as a tool and a structure to teach and immerse the majority population in a minority language. Whereas, Baker and Kanter hoped to do the opposite; immerse the minority students who did not speak the majority language in an SEI program with instruction in the majority language.

Structured English Immersion programs materialized to a different level in the United States as a result of the enforcement in some public-school systems across the United States indicating that English learners need to be taught and immersed in English as quickly as possible. In this model, students are segregated from mainstream students and are engaged in content curriculum through different delivery methods taught in English. According to guidelines from states such as California, Arizona, and Massachusetts, English learners "are placed in self-contained classes where they receive English and content instruction all day long" (Honigsfeld and Dove, 2010, p. 9). Students are immersed in this model for one year with the expectation that they quickly perform in their academics in English at the level of their non-El peers. After this period of "transition," English learners transfer into the mainstream classrooms. If after this "transition" period, Els do not perform at the academic levels of their peers, they may stay for another one to two years before transitioning into mainstream classrooms (Rennie, 1993).

In the SEI model, students may use their native language for clarification; however, instruction and communication are taught and communicated mainly and for a good majority of instruction time through English by the classroom teacher. Educators in the SEI model may have firm receptive skills in the languages of their Els and may have dual licensure in elementary education as well as English as a Second Language. In this model, there is no additional ESL instruction or support.

2.0: Collaborative and Connected

Paradigm 2.0 is a system of integration and inclusion of Els in the process of delivery in instruction, not in isolation of an El space, but in collaboration with content in the classroom. Encompassed in this paradigm, English and another language may be used as languages of instruction. Mainstream and El educators attempt to collaborate to discuss the network of needs in academics that are connected to language. In some models, the classroom teacher is a licensed El educator and uses two languages as languages of instruction. In this paradigm, educators are expected to conform, coordinate, and desegregate content and language.

Models in Paradigm 2.0 are more inclusive in the integration and inclusivity of an English learner's cultural, historical and language backgrounds. In this paradigm, models serving Els accommodate and blend instruction between two different languages. These programs are structured differently, and depending on the goals of the program, may be formatted with slightly different frameworks.

Bilingual education is a program served through transitional or developmental models. Bilingual education integrates instruction in two different languages. It is commonly implemented in school districts that have a high population demographic of one student population

that can be grouped together in their native language. In this paradigm, educators must be proficient, both in the native language as well as in English.

According to Honigsfeld and Dove (2010), there are two types of models of bilingual education. Depending on goals and the needs in a school district, transitional bilingual education programs or developmental programs may be implemented. In a transitional bilingual education program, English learners enter the program with the goal to exit the bilingual program as quickly as possible so they can enter mainstream classrooms where instruction is completed in English. This program operates in an El's native language, primarily for literacy and for clarification. According to Rennie (1993), eventually, instruction in a student's native language is phased out and the student would, then, enter mainstream classrooms with English as the language of instruction.

A developmental bilingual program incorporates the native language of students in the program but the goal of it is different than a transitional bilingual education program. In addition to embodying the native language of Els in instruction and continuing to build upon the content in the native language, developmental bilingual programs simultaneously help "them develop English language proficiency and literacy" (Honigsfeld and Dove, 2010, p. 12). Educators teaching in this program are certified and must be proficient in the native language of the students as well as in English.

Another model in Paradigm 2.0 is two-way immersion program (TWI). Different from the general bilingual programs, TWI programs incorporate an initiative to include native as well as nonnative English speakers. In this program, instruction is inclusive of the minority language as well as the majority language. Native and nonnative speakers of English are immersed in classes that are instructed in both languages. A TWI program incorporates different

structures from within the program that can integrate an instructional pedagogy with the minority language being the prominent language, being used in instruction up to 90% of the time. Another feature that TWI programs offer is a more harmonious balance between the minority language and English with equal amounts of instructional time between the two languages.

With such a vast and diverse group of English learners, states and schools must embed in the decision making of which models work best by considering the students within their districts in addition to asking the questions of *how, when, and why* (Honigsfeld & Dove, 2010). Each model is different in its purpose, rationale, structure, and audience. They have their own successes and obstacles.

Ailments & Attributes

English learners, culturally diverse, are disproportionately dropping out of schools, failing classes, and placed in low or special education courses (Gándara, Rumberger, Maxwell-Jolly, & Callahan, 2003). This is echoed by Welner and Farley (2010) in their report confronting systemic inequity in education. They agreed that English learners are a part of a marginalized community of students who, because of inequities that exist in education, will "face a greater likelihood of not graduating from high school," have "lower college attendance and completion rates," and have a "decreased economic potential following school" (p. 1).

Gándara et al. (2003) stated that English learners considerably lag behind their English-speaking peers in academic growth. They argued that the achievement gap between English learners and their English-speaking peers is due to different "conditions of inequity" (p. 8). English learners continue to "experience public education in profoundly less positive ways than their more-advantaged peers" (Welner & Farley, 2010, p. 1). Cummins (2000) affirmed that English learners, for many generations, have been discriminated against "in virtually all

areas of education, from segregated schools to biased curriculum and assessment practices" (p. 33).

According to Gándara et al., (2003), there are seven ailments that contribute to inequity for Els in school systems and acknowledge that these ailments are alive and well within educational models. These seven ailments include the following:

1) Unequal access to highly trained educators;
2) Necessary training for educators to address needs of English learners are not appropriately provided to educators;
3) Assessments administered do not adequately measure the achievements of Els; therefore, not holding school systems accountable for the academic learning growth of English learners;
4) Appropriate length of time is not provided for Els to accomplish goals and tasks;
5) Instructional materials and curriculum are not easily accessible to English learners;
6) Acceptable facilities are not accessible to Els; and
7) Segregation in schools and classrooms allow a higher failure rate for English learners.

Access

García, Kleifgen, and Falchi (2008) argued that English learners are marginalized from a very early age. They claim that from as early as Early Childhood education, no more than seventeen percent of Els in the California Public School System performed above the 50th percentile in assessments. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress 2017 report (NAEP), sixty-eight percent of English learners in fourth grade scored below basic in Reading, compared to the twenty-eight percent of English-speaking students who scored below

basic. This same report indicated that thirty percent of non-EL fourth graders were proficient in Reading versus only eight percent of English learners scoring proficient. The data showed similar results for students in eighth grades. Additionally, according to NAEP twenty-one percent of non-ELs scored below basic in Reading while sixty-eight percent of English learners scored below basic. In this age group, only five percent of ELs were proficient versus thirty-four percent of non-ELs scoring proficient. As a result, English learners are more likely to be placed in remedial classes as they progress in the K-12 public school system, where the focus does not lie on rigorous education but drill and remediate.

Paris and Alim (2017) declared what they feel is today's educational systems' clear message to people of color including English learners. Their message stated:

> The purpose of state-sanctioned schooling has been to forward the largely assimilationist and often White imperial project, with students and families being asked to lose or deny their languages, literacies, cultures, and histories in order to achieve in schools (p. 1).

They said that current educational models do a wonderful job of sending this message to its diverse learners. The authors thought this is an assault on children of color and that this aggression has detrimental effects on students including English learners. As quoted in Davis-Wiley (2017), Cummins (1996) states that this is part of today's society of "victim blaming" as their linguistic ability and cultural identity are seen as a direct threat to mainstream society. These inequities contradict directly with the Declaration of 2015, as it commits to providing a learning environment that allows students to explore themselves through methodologies appropriate to their potentials and capabilities within classrooms that are inclusive of who they are as individuals.

Training

Educators and administrators are the most important and effective considerations in the academic growth of English learners (García et al., 2008; Gándara et al., 2003). However, when we take a deeper look at educators' and administrators' understanding of the needs of English learners, many still lack the need to fathom the concept that Els' need to engage in the learning process through language as well as cognitive abilities (García et al., 2008). That is, according to Cummins (2000), a "transformative/intercultural pedagogy" where teachers and students engage in a learning process that cultivates "collaborative relations of power in the classroom" (p. 243-254). However, despite continued research supporting this, English learners are often in classes with educators who have very little understanding of their needs; therefore, providing less than rigorous instruction (Gándara et al., 2003). Too few administrators and educators are well versed in the "how" of reaching and teaching English learners; therefore, not opening doors to equitable access to the curriculum. This is coincided by Stromquist (2012), who stated that only ten percent of US teachers were certified in bilingual or ESL education in the year 2012. He continued to say that less than one in ten El teachers "have more than eight hours of professional development toward the education of English learners" (p. 209).

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) legislation requires that public schools must provide "highly qualified" educators to teach. ESSA legislation defines a "highly qualified" teacher in terms of content knowledge that includes: "English language arts, reading, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography" (One Hundred Fourteenth Congress of the United States of America, 2015). It does not explicitly state that an educator teaching English learners be highly qualified. With the absence

of this language in the legislation, it signals the need to find and hire "highly qualified" teachers to teach Els as secondary importance (Harper, de Jong, and Platt, 2008). With this absence, it denies the El models in educational systems their value and "reinforces the common assumption that teaching" English learners "requires little more than a set of pedagogical modifications applied to other content areas" (p. 271).

Schools where English learners are in attendance are more likely to have educators and administrators who are less experienced and less understanding of the needs of Els (García et al., 2008). In addition, schools that have a high concentration of English learners and other diverse learners are most likely to have the most difficult time finding qualified teachers to fill vacancies (Gándara et al., 2003). Data from a research conducted in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) showed that 14% of educators serving mainstream students in the state of California were not fully credentialed while the percentage of teachers not fully licensed to teach Els was much higher (25%). This data indicates that Els are most likely to be in classes and served by educators who may not be fully certified. As a result, English learners enrolled in these classes had very little or decreased growth in their academics. In the same research, it was found that students in classes that were taught by licensed educators surpassed students who were in classes of educators with emergency licenses.

Guskey (2002) stated that improving education rests partly on providing high-quality professional staff development. He argued that professional staff development is a form of discipline aimed to "bring about change in the classroom practices of teachers, in their attitudes and beliefs, and in the learning outcomes of students" (p. 381). Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1989) agreed that staff development is a process meant to improve skills and attitudes of educators. They continued to state that when staff development is done appropriately and when

educators take on information during staff developments, it can improve the quality of instruction in the classroom.

Educators of English learners are required to teach and create educational environments conducive to learning for students requiring different kinds of methods of instruction in the classroom. They are expected to deliver content as well as expand and increase language levels of Els. And yet with such important roles and responsibilities in the classroom, according to Gándara et al., (2003), educators working with English learners received a minimal amount of professional staff development opportunities that focused on the needs of Els. Educators receive generous amounts of staff development opportunities learning how to teach literacy and other forms of development to English-speaking students; however, the amount of training they receive to teach English learners in literacy is minimal. This statement is supported and agreed upon by Beeman and Urow (2013) as they stated, "The context and support that allow language-majority speakers to become literate in their own language do not exist for language-minority students" (p. 6). This lack of staff development is clearly shown in the achievement gap that continues to widen in the United States (NAEP, 2017).

Reeves (2004) discussed in his study and agreed that most educators have a limited understanding of the needs of English learners. Educators that participated in his study were reluctant to accommodate for the linguistic needs of their Els, thinking that to accommodate means to water down the curriculum. The same educators were also reluctant to change their assessment methods that would allow for Els to be successful in accordance to their linguistic abilities. Gottlieb (2016) stated that educators should accommodate in the classroom to meet the linguistic needs of English learners. This, according to Gottlieb, is a dynamic endeavor that

is crucial in the academic growth of Els as "language is the primary tool for mental representation and cognitive processing" (p. 3), not to mention, it is also used as a powerful tool in communication. Reeves' (2004) study suggested the importance of making sure that educators are equipped to teach English learners and to develop competency regarding how to accommodate for them as needed in connection to their language levels and content areas.

Assessment

Current educational models I call Paradigm 1.0 all lack understanding relating to the complexity of assessing language that is very much connected to culture versus assessing content (García et al., 2008; Gottlieb, 2016; Solano-Fores and Trumbull, 2003). Gándara et al., (2003) agreed that the "current system is of little value for monitoring" (p. 21) the academic growth of English learners. Solano-Flores and Trumball (2003) argue that the current "assessment paradigms overlook the complex nature of language, including its interrelationship with culture" (p. 3). Because of this lack of understanding of the interconnected relationship of these different components, there is concern that current assessment practices do not assess what they are created to assess; therefore, the rise of concerns for validity of these practices (García et al., 2008). As English learners are not proficient in the language of assessment (English), current assessment, according To Gándara et al., (2003), do not "provide accurate data for accountability purposes" (p. 21) and they do not help educators make decisions of how to accommodate or increase learning of English learners.

Inadequate state-mandated tests have contributed greatly to the inequity of programming for English learners and continue to marginalize Els at a greater depth (García et al., 2008; Gottlieb, 2016). Trends continue to demonstrate the detrimental effects of these forms

of assessments administered. As a result of these tests, rather than providing highly effective instruction, educators provide remedial instruction to a watered-down curriculum that does not meet linguistic, cultural, and academic needs of English learners (García et al., 2008).

According to García et al, (2008) standardized tests are related to higher drop-out rates and lower graduation rates. In addition to these detrimental effects, Gándara et al., (2003) found that these forms of assessments can provide inaccurate impression to educators that English learners may have mastered the content when in fact they may have just increased their English-language proficiency. On the other hand, El students who continue to score low on the assessment may lead educators to believe that they cannot master the content when in fact they can in another language but may not have acquired necessary proficiency in English. These tests raise concerns about current practices of assessment for English learners and in educational systems (Gándara et al., 2003).

Time

English learners are under extreme pressure to quickly acquire English and develop academic skills (García et al., 2008). In California, under Proposition 227, Els who enroll in California schools for the first time must attend a structured English immersion program for 30 days (Gándara et al., 2003). Educators in the program confess that they "did not know what to do with students during this interim period and that a great deal of instructional time was lost trying to accommodate students who would not be continuing on in the same classroom" (p. 25).

In many educational systems across the United States, English learners are pulled out of the classroom to receive instruction meant to help students develop their English language. This is a program and instructional model that is generally and mostly practiced in El models.

During the time they are pulled out of the classroom, they miss important and crucial content instruction. There is generally no other time for English learners to access and acquire the missed instruction from the classroom (Gándara et al., 2003); therefore, students "miss out" on important general content instruction.

Materials

Similarly, National and international research summarized the importance of educational materials (Oakes & Saunders, 2002). Amadioha (2009) agreed that appropriate instructional materials are important. He stated that instructional materials "constitute the media of exchange through which a message transaction is facilitated" (p. 61). He continued to say that instructional materials also engage the "source" and the "receiver" in a "process" of communication. Oakes and Saunders (2002) added that instructional materials serve as a powerful and primary medium to knowledge and understanding of content and is one of the tools that stands between what a child may or may not learn.

A study by the United States Department of Education (1999), stated that students who attended a resourceful school filled with appropriate curriculum materials outperformed peers who attended schools with less curriculum materials. These materials were not only used by and provided to students but educators, which, according to this study had a significant impact on growth in the students' learning. Despite this finding and other facts as supported by research, only 25% of educators reported having appropriate instructional materials in their classrooms for their English learners (Cummins, 2008).

In another study, done in California, more than one quarter of teachers stated that they did not have the appropriate reading materials in English to teach their Els (Gándara et al., 2003). Additionally, teachers who had a high percentage of English learners in their classrooms

reported having textbooks and materials of poor quality. Furthermore, these classrooms reported having less access to technology (Gándara et al., 2003).

Facilities

Tung (2013) argued that adequate funding is not provided to El programs to give English learners the appropriate education needed in public educational systems. This, according to García et al, (2008) is a fundamental and most important equity issue affecting the education of English learners. As stated in García et al., (2008), a study conducted by the Council of Great City Schools "found that an average of Title III subsidy of $109 per student" was "insufficient to meet the educational needs of" English learners (p. 42).

To complicate the matter of inadequate funding even further, García et al., (2008) cite Baker, Green & Markham, (2004) and Parish (1994) stating that the cost to educate English learners is more than to educate students who are native English speakers. It has been found that to properly and adequately staff personnel to teach Els, there needs to be a ratio of 20 students per one teacher with an additional instructional aide per teacher (García et al., 2008). As a result of this need, there is an extra margin of cost; an extra margin that often is not compensated and not available.

Likewise, there is agreement to the lack of e physical quality of a teaching and learning environment and it affects educational outcomes for students (Gándara et al., 2003, p. 32). English learner classrooms are often in hallways, in basements, and in spare spaces that are not suitable for learning (Cummins, 2008; Olson 1997). García et al., reports that English learners often attend schools in buildings that are often not clean or safe (2008), including not having clean bathrooms and other aspects of a clean facility (Cummins, 2008).

In 2002, a survey was conducted of California teachers of English learners who, almost fifty percent, disclosed that their schools were filled with unclean bathrooms and filthy learning conditions (Gándara, et al., 2003). In addition, they reported having seen evidence that students learned in an environment shared with mice (Gándara et al., 2003). This, according to Welner and Farley (2010) continues to contribute to huge marginalization of English learners and is a big equity issue that educational systems need to address.

At the same level of importance as the physical condition of a teaching and learning environment, is the rate of teacher turnovers in these environments. Gándara et al., (2003) stated that educators leave as they can because they do not want to teach in unclean physical conditions. They continued to say that this, in turn, affects the overall achievements of English learners. A stable and strong base is needed to bring about reforms and increase academic growth in students. Without this strong base, academic growth is difficult to achieve.

El educators are usually isolated in corners, backrooms, hallways, or basements within a school (Brooks et al., 2010; Ligget, 2010). This physical isolation, according to Brooks et al., (2010) contributes to the continued segregation of El teachers and does not serve in the best interest of English learners. The proximity of El classrooms is important for connections and collaborations between the El teacher and other staff members to discuss the needs of English learners. This collaboration is essential to address "strategies, issues, and progress" they notice of the Els they both serve (p. 3). As critical as this collaboration is, El educators continue to struggle building relationships with their other educators who teach in the class-room (Ligget, 2010).

In response to a shortage of reading intervention specialists, El teachers "have been reassigned and re-formed as reading teachers" (Harper et al., 2008, p. 277). This reassignment

comes at the cost of language development. In addition to this reassignment is responsibility of adjusting English learners into school systems. These issues send a problematic message to the school community (Brookes et al., 2010). First, adjusting English learners to the school community should be a shared responsibility of all educators. The entire school from administrator to educator to paraprofessionals should be responsible for the adjustment of all English learners (Brookes et al., 2010). Second, if the El educator is, herself, marginalized she might have "few opportunities to help her students connect to the school community" (p. 3). Thus, the importance of having the entire school community feel vested in the adjustment and academic growth of English learners should be a priority (Brookes et al., 2010).

Segregation

Social systems, according to Capra and Luisi (2014) have a "dual effect." They not only spawn "rules of behavior" but also "ideas and contexts of meaning" (p. 308). These social systems create an interconnected relationship that is important and essential to understanding the world. They help human beings make meaning in very personal and deep ways.

Many current El programs segregate English learners, limiting their access to social networks that affect their ability to function and interact with their peers (Gándara et al., 2003). This, Gándara et al. argued, reduces opportunities for Els to receive an education that is comparable to their English-speaking peers. Honigsfeld and Dove (2010) stated that segregation adds to social isolation and criticized segregation to a different level stating that segregation contributes to racism in schools. They continued to say that academic gains should never take precedence "at the expense of social isolation" (p. 9).

In a system that segregates, English learners are more likely to attend schools that enroll other Els who may not be as proficient in English as English-speaking peers. This limits the

ability of Els in their growth of learning the language because of the limited interactions with other students who are proficient in English. As Capra and Luisi (2014) stated, social networks are important in the development of ideas. Without the proper modeling from teachers as well as from peers who speak fluent English, English learners are isolated from proficient model speakers that contribute to learning a new language.

Segregation hurts the educational academic growth of English learners. Gándara et al., (2003) reference a study done in the California public school system where classrooms that had high numbers of English learners had lower academic growth success. Rumberger and Arellano (2003) as cited in Gándara et al., (2003), tell us that it was found in a different California study "the higher concentrations of English learners in schools, the lower the rates of reading development in first grade" (p. 34). This concludes that the lack of integration of English learners with fluent English speakers contribute greatly to the academic and social success of Els in the public educational school systems.

Cultural Responsivity

The accountability of teachers to their students of English learners is important. This, according to Sousa (2011) can be challenging for teachers because a "few teachers are professionally prepared to serve" (p. 3) English learners. Teachers, according to Sousa (2011) need to be knowledgeable about how to serve their Els. Without this knowledge, they cannot adequately meet the academic needs of English learners. Honigsfeld and Dove (2010) discussed the importance of all educators in the classroom to think of themselves as language and content educators. This, they stated, will enhance the learning of English learners, not just in the short term, but also in the long term. It will provide equity in the form of opportunities providing a discourse that integrates language and academics together. Paris and Alim (2017), Ladson-

Billings (1994) Gay (2000) added that not only does education need to integrate language and academics together but, rather, it should integrate and sustain every aspect of any child that enters the doors of any school. This includes the integration and inclusion of the whole child in understanding how the general society demeans and devalues their culture. They continued to argue that schools need to revive the cultures and values of these students and sustain them through practices embedded in schools.

Schools currently operate on White middle-class norms (Paris and Alim, 2017). As a result, children of color, including English learners develop *double consciousness* (Du Bois, 1965). *Double consciousness* is the "sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity" (p. 45). Tung (2013), Ladson-Billings (1994), Gay (2000) added that Els lag behind their English-speaking peers in academic growth because educational systems and current programs do not value the bicultural and bilingualism of students as an asset. Rather it's viewed as a deficit. Tung (2013) continued to say that "most states and districts lack a vision for El education that builds on families' cultural and linguistic assets" (p. 2). Jim Cummins (2000) agreed that "many generations, bilingual students had been punished for any use of their L1 in the school context" (p. 33). English learners were put to shame when they used their native language in schools or when they affirmed pride in their native culture.

Reeves (2004) reported that a deficit perspective of accepting the languages and cultures of English learners contribute to the failure of appropriately addressing the needs of Els. This, Reeves argued, contributes to a constant comparison of El students to their English-speaking peers and sends a message stating that "learners from nondominant language and culture groups are viewed as requiring compensation for their faulty backgrounds" (p.46). As

a result, school districts across the nation adopt a "subtractive" approach that immerses and assimilates El students in an "English-only environment" causing them to lose their identity and native language. Garcia et al., (2008) agree to this "subtractive" approach stating that current educational paradigms "lack recognition of these students' evolving bilingualism and the importance of the use of their home language" (p.26).

Although research recognizes and supports the relevance of bilingualism, many educational programs ignore this fact and devalue the use of another language other than English (García et al., 2008). Although, the number of English learners has gradually increased, the use of an El's home language at school has decreased considerably. In their study, Thomas and Collier (1997) and agreed by Stromquist (2012), concluded that 52% of English learners are serviced through the English as a Second Language Pull Out program in which the language of instruction is conducted in English only, with no support in a child's home language. This occurs, argued Stromquist (2012), as a result of the United States' view on bilingualism, seen as a liability rather a rich addition.

Another aspect contributing to cultural identity loss is what Maffi & Woodley (2010) identified as biocultural diversity loss. As cited in Maffi & Woodley (2010), Maffi (2007) stated that "biocultural diversity comprises the diversity of life in all of its manifestations – biological, cultural, and linguistic – which are interrelated (and likely co-evolved) within a complex socio-ecological adaptive system" (p. 5). Maffi & Woodley concluded that biocultural diversity is interrelated to the regional and global stages. He argued that language retention contributes to a healthy world. Maffi & Woodley (2010) cited Meya (2006) stating that "language loss threatens a fundamental human right – that of expression of the life and life

ways of a people" (p. 10). Additionally, "languages today are the next frontier in setting the country into moral and environmental symmetry" (p. 10).

Community

Building an authentic sense of community in a school is important. A piece of this authentic sense of community is the need to engage parents of English learners in a culturally responsive and relevant way that allows these parents a pathway into the education of their students. This pathway is more than sending home translated materials as this falls short of creating authentic communities of trust and value of the family of English learners. Research shows the benefits of parent involvement in school as a direct correlation to "better attendance, higher achievement, improved attitudes about learning and higher graduation rates (García et al., 2008, p. 43). Hill and Taylor (2004) found that "there are two major mechanisms by which parental school involvement promotes achievement" (p. 162). The first "mechanism" they described is the idea of "increasing social capital." They stated that when educators increase social capital through parental involvement, it "increases parents' skills and information" and that it "makes them better equipped to assist their children in their school-related activities" (p. 162).

The second "mechanism" as described by Hill and Taylor (2004) is "social control." They described social control as occurring through collaboration between families and schools to build "appropriate behavior that can be effectively communicated to children at both home and school" (McNeal, 1999 as cited in Hill and Taylor, 2004). This, according to the authors, will help curtail behavior issues as students receive "similar messages about appropriate behavior across settings" (p. 162).

As important as parent engagement is in education, many parents of English learners do not participate (Arias & Morillo-Campbell, 2008). This lack of engagement, argued Arias and Morillo-Campbell, does not constitute that El parents do not care about their children's education. This notion is agreed by García et al., (2008) that it is not the parents of English learners who are insignificant but, rather it is because educational school systems have not trained educators to the level of competency of how to reach out to parents of Els. In fact, many educators feel that cultural and linguistic practices by families of English learners do not help Els advance in their academic growth in school (García et al., 2008).

Sosa (1996) and Arias and Morillo-Campbell (2008) suggested that the lack of parent involvement and the stigma created by educational school systems is largely because of differences in beliefs and expectations between El families and the educational school systems. Logistical barriers, attitudinal barriers, and expectations barriers keep parents of English learners away from being fully engaged in their children's education (Sosa, 1996). Sosa stated that the stigma generated in educational school systems can be eliminated when schools take the time to understand El families by "carefully observing how roles are fulfilled cooperatively" (p. 349). This, Sosa explained further creates a "nonjudgmental stance toward the family" and "is especially important because of the tremendous odds (including economic distress, prejudice, culture shock, language barriers, and institutional racism) confronting" (p. 349) families of English learners.

Because of the limited definition in the ESSA legislation, education for English learners is seen as an "optional pedagogy rather than a prioritized area of curriculum and teacher preparation" (Capps, Fix, Murray, Ost, & Passel, 2005, p. 278). This policy leads to the marginalizing rather than the elevating of El educators (Tung, 2013). Brooks, K., Adams, S., &

Morita-Mullaney, T. (2010) believe that educational public systems marginalize educators by excluding them from important and critical decisions that affect English learners. El educators have reported being "increasingly devalued and their professional roles as language teachers marginalized" (Harper et al., 2008, p. 278).

Equity

Equity, according to Grant and Sleeter (2007), has to do with the distribution of resources. Equity also "refers to judgements about what is most desirable and just" and as a result diverts attention to distribute resources or opportunities to groups who "start with unequal advantages" so they, too, can succeed (p. 55). Grant and Sleeter contrasted equity and equality stating that there is a difference between the two. Equality means the same amount of distribution for all universally with no differentiation within the distribution. Equity does not distribute resources equally; instead it differentiates between the needs of different groups and provides what they need to be successful.

Reeves (2004) stated that educational equity does not define one lone road meant to fit all students, rather it's an assortment of accessible entrances that allow for students to be successful in reaching the curriculum. He stated that in a multicultural world, educational systems cannot continue to operate from a paradigm of one size fits all from a universal monolingual neutral form of teaching. He continued that for equity in educational systems to be realized, academic learning must be authentic and participatory and provide "access to opportunities that are real" (p. 62).

Paris and Alim (2017) added to the definition of equity and proclaimed that for schools to be truly inclusive in its teachings and disciplines, it needs to accept, learn and change its theories and practices in accepting the connection to culturally sustaining pedagogy. For schools, educators, and administrators to continue to strive in meeting the needs of English learners, they need to recognize, value, and sustain diverse practices in schools (Paris and Alim, 2017). Paris and Alim defined culturally sustaining pedagogy as accepting students as a whole, critically identifying their needs holistically fostering and sustaining "linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of schooling for positive social transformation" (p. 1). Educators must be willing to celebrate El students' heritage and, in the process, encourage them to embrace who they are (Davis-Wiley, 2017). Gottlieb (2016) stated that this is a new reality that teachers must embrace to "harness the potential of every student" (p. 3). Wong Fillmore and Snow (2000) were cited in Gándara et al., (2003) stating that an El's cultural background is significant to the way he learns. In acknowledging different cultural backgrounds of English learners, Wong Fillmore and Snow argued that when educators embrace these differences in their El students, they will be more immersive states of mind taking into account more culturally responsive and relevant practices in their planning and delivery of content. Cummins (2000) agreed calling for a "transformative/intercultural pedagogy" where English learners have the opportunity to integrate language, culture, history and identity as part of the curriculum.

García et al., (2008) argued that as part of being culturally responsive to the needs of English learners, assessment for English learners "who are still learning the language of the test is not valid unless language is disentangled from content" (p. 34). As cited in Gándara et al., 2003, Wong Fillmore and Snow (2000) connected their research to the competency that

educators should acquire in relation to an English learner's academic growth. They stated that an educator must understand the backgrounds of the different languages their Els speak at home. In this understanding the authors argued that educators need to dissect the complexity of these languages and apply them to how their Els learn in the classroom. Wong Fillmore and Snow stated that only after that can a teacher deeply encourage English learners "in their acquisition of English" (p. 16). Beeman and Urow (2013) agreed in this integration of a student's home language into academics as they continue to advocate for biliteracy; content taught in two different languages.

In addition to understanding the entanglement complexity of Els' different languages spoken at home, educational systems should understand the connection from language to culture (Paris and Alim, 2017, Ladson-Billings, 1994, Gay, 2000). This is important not only in the planning and delivery stages of integrating culturally responsive and relevant practices but also in the assessment stage. Solano-Flores and Trumbull (2003) argued that "culture-free tests cannot be constructed because tests are inevitably cultural devices" (p. 9). They stressed the importance of designing assessment that fits the "whole" English learner child that encompasses not only academic growth but takes into consideration an El's linguistic, cultural and socioeconomic contributions.

Equity, according to Gándara et al., (2003) has a root source of "problems of resources." They stated that disadvantaged students, such as English learners need more resources to help them achieve and close the achievement gap. They also concluded that educational systems need to provide the following: qualified teachers and counselors, adequate cul-

turally appropriate materials, acceptable schooling conditions, equitable and purposeful assessment, rigorous coursework, more instructional time, increase in staff developments for more in depth understanding of the needs of English learners, and desegregation within El programs.

In general, most people favor equity (Grant and Sleeter, 2007). Many disagree on how equity is achieved. This is prevalent as practiced in the political world. Conservative political climates support quality and competition. In contrast, the Liberal movement focuses more on excellence and equity. However, as cited in Grant and Sleeter (2007), Fantini (1986) stated that educational systems and all systems should not choose one over the other. Rather all these components are part of a pathway that creates success for all students. Fantini stated "Quality in the public schools is achieved when *all learners succeed*, not only those considered most able" (p. 56).

The pathway to equity in education for English learners requires for educators and administrators to actively collaborate together (Honigsfeld and Dove, 2010). It requires for open-mindedness and the willingness to accept responsibility in decisions, actions, and thoughts that affect Els in their academic and language growth, as well as in their identity growth. Sterling (2001) explained how important it is to understand the connectedness from one system to the next. The academic, language, and identity growth or lack thereof of English learners affect other systems in society. If education is seen as a solution to societal problems and if society is to practice sustainability in forms of creating a healthy and sustainable place for all its citizens, then equity in the education of English learners need to be addressed. Nolet (2016) agreed as he stated,

> All learners, regardless of background, gender, economic status, race, culture, language, or ability must have opportunities to learn about the nature of various sustainability challenges and to develop knowledge and skills that will enable them to work individually and collectively to promote the well-being of all forever (p. 11).

In current educational systems, full of standards, standardized tests, and other forms of universal expectations, along with the lack of training for educators and inaccessibility to fully licensed teachers among heaps of other inequities, the experiences of English learners do not present scenarios in comparison to the experiences of their English-speaking peers (Gándara et al., 2003; Garcia et al., 2008). Nolet (2016) offered a description of a critical perspective into the injustices of current educational paradigms. Through the critical lens perspective, he stated that understanding "past injustices" can help prevent "future oppression." Moving forward and learning from "past injustices" require that a more crucial form of education be made available with more opportunities for English learners, so they engage in and develop "new ways of thinking, collaborating, and solving problems" not just in their academic growth but in their growth of how to solve complex issues in society (p. 8).

Orr (2004) stated that education needs a shift in thinking to prepare and equip students for the difficulties of tomorrow. Without a new kind of education, Orr declared that educational school systems would fail students leaving them to "deal with the consequences of what we are leaving behind" (p. xiii). Nolet (2016) connected learning as education for sustainability and described this new form of education as learning that "seeks to equip learners to deal with the kinds of challenges that arise from the interconnectedness of environment, culture, society and economy that seem to typify life in the 21st century" (p.7). He added that the new kind of educational systems should be "interdisciplinary and holistic" where learners are engaged "in

a variety of real-world contexts" (p. 8). John Miller (2010) agreed with this notion in his study of whole child education stating that students "need to be able to think critically and creatively" so that they are ready to solve problems of everyday life (p. 8). Ladson-Billings (1994) and Gay (2000) also discussed the need to include the wholeness of a child, being comprehensive throughout the entire learning process from the planning stage all the way through to the assessment stage: that this process is inclusive of the whole child.

Beeman and Urow (2013) identified a new form of education that is inclusive of English learners. Biliteracy "is a comprehensive approach to literacy instruction" that "integrates content, literacy, and language instruction and connects reading with oral language and writing" (p. 2). Biliteracy takes on a multilingual perspective where English learners are labeled as "bilingual learners." The biliteracy model mirrors a bilingual model where both languages (English and a minority language) are viewed as complementary of each other, rather than viewing the minority language as a deficit.

A new kind of education fitting for English learners would evaluate current program practices and critically assess the need to not only integrate academic standards of white middle-class norms but also that of English learners and their families. Meeting the needs of English learners should focus on the aspects of what Miller (2007, 2010), Ladson-Billings (1994), Paris and Alim (2017), Gay (2000) defined as meeting the needs of the whole child. In this whole child concept includes different aspects of an English learner's including culture, language, and history. Miller (2007, 2010) stated that since the Industrial Revolution, there have been so many forms of fragmentation and that these forms of fragmentation have carried over into education. To correct these fragmentations, Miller (2007) discussed the need to connect the relationship "between the part and the whole where both are acknowledged and nourished"

(p. 9). He held that, in whole child education, educational programs not only focus on the part of the child at school but the connectedness between "linear thinking and intuition, the relationship between mind and body, the relationships among various domains of knowledge, the relationship between the individual and community, the relationship to the earth, and our relationship to our souls" (p. 13).

Extending on the need to teach and serve the whole El child, Honigsfeld and Dove (2010) stated that another piece in the quest of providing equity for English learners should also address the need for collaborative practices between educators. With various programs vying and claiming to best meet the needs of English learners, they argue that the best form of serving and reaching for equity for Els is to provide services for English learners in the classroom through a collaborative framework between classroom and El teachers. Honigsfeld and Dove expressed that co-teaching is the best form of education for English learners that provides a more inclusive environment. If done through a correct framework, co-teaching serves in the best interest of the whole English learner. Through this collaborative effort, Honigsfeld and Dove asserted that more differentiated instruction is provided because of the collective planning between the classroom and the El educators that would have already occurred. This shared responsibility also leads to "varied instructional materials and resources," more authentic assessment crafted for English learners that not only assesses content but language growth, and more "instructional adaptations" fitting for the varied skill sets of English learners (p. 43).

Co-teaching, argued Honigsfeld and Dove (2010), leads to less interruptions and pull-outs for English learners. This framework, they said, will alleviate emotional stress because English learners remain in the classroom and do not have to miss classroom materials. Els are

also in the classroom with their English-speaking peers who "act" as model speakers, which, according to Honigsfeld and Dove is important in language acquisition.

Ladson-Billings (1994) stated that education should include the cultures of its different students into the curriculum. Ladson-Billings (1994) believed in culturally relevant teaching. She stated that for a teacher to truly reach a child through academics and for that child to be successful, the teacher needs to be culturally relevant not only during when she's teaching but to be culturally relevant in every aspect of her life. Ladson-Billings claimed that culturally relevant teachers strive for excellence by helping their students make connections to the world. They also question the status quo of how to teach their students and never accept less than excellence for their students.

Ladson-Billings (1995) defined and coined culturally relevant pedagogy as teaching that is "committed to collective, not merely individual, empowerment" (p. 160). Culturally relevant pedagogy rests on three criteria: 1) academic success, 2) cultural competence, and 3) critical consciousness or as Ladson-Billings termed in later years as socio-political consciousness. It aims for excellence for all students in their learning! The goal for culturally relevant pedagogy is for students to master content rather than teach a mass quantity of content. It "transforms shifting responsibility into sharing responsibility" (Ladson-Billings, 1994, p. 23) and provides teachers the responsibility of being "conductors or "coaches."

Culturally relevant pedagogy understands that learning is different across different cultures. Culture is a huge piece of learning and can never be separated from the learning process (Irvine, 2020). According to culturally relevant pedagogy, learning is a social process in which cultural roots must be taken into consideration (Irvine, 2010 & Ladson-Billings, 1994, 1995, 1995, 2014). In fact, the secret to culturally relevant is the capacity to connect contents of

learning with “deep understanding of (and appreciation for) culture” (Ladson-Billings, 2014, p. 77). Culturally relevant pedagogy, according to Ladson-Billings serves as a pathway into the creation of equity for students. It builds into the teaching process, a set of criteria that is inclusive of the whole child. The criteria of culturally relevant pedagogy serve as the mechanism in which a program can align itself in the effort to assess how inclusive it is.

Gay (2000) discussed the importance and critical implications of making sure cultural diversity is integrated within every aspect of teaching. She alleged that “cultural diversity is a strength--a persistent, vitalizing force in our personal and civic lives” (p. 14). Being culturally responsive, Gay argued, means to include culture in teaching whether it’s in “curriculum, instruction, administration, or performance assessment” (p. 8). “Culture,” Gay continued, “is at the heart of all we do” (p. 8). Ladson-Billings conveyed in her book what she feels is the ideal type of education. She states, “In a better world I would want to see schools integrated across racial, cultural, linguistic, and all other lines” (p. 3).

Culture, according to Gay (2000) is a complex issue. It is a multi-layered but vital aspect of a person. Culture is fluid and is always changing. It is embodied in behaviors of a person and is inspired by many considerations including: “time, setting, age, economics, and social circumstances” (p. 10). According to Gay, at the foundation of “expressive behaviors” are ethnicity and culture. How certain intense behaviors are exhibited by an individual is impacted by the “mitigating variables” which is influenced by ethnicity and culture. These three categories (ethnicity and culture, expressive behaviors, mitigating variables) communicate and collaborate with each other in dynamic and complex ways and are all connected to each other.

Paris and Alim (2017) explained that to be culturally relevant in the classroom, educators must be “collaborative, collective, and critical” (p. 29). They continued that educators need

to create a "loving environment" that supports "young people's cultural identities, academic investments, and critiques of White middle-class values" (p. 29). Paris and Alim introduced a set of new methodologies as a guide for educators to use within educational paradigms and provide equity to not only English learners but students of color. The authors named this new set of methodologies as "Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies" (CSP). The authors define "Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies" as recognizing the importance of "multiculturalism and multilingualism for students, teachers, and other agents of educational change" (p. 28)In addition, CSP fosters and hopes to sustain "linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism" (p. 28). "Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy" helps teachers understand the critical need to hold students to high standards and expectations while at the same time teaches students the need to understand social inequities and why addressing these inequities matter in today's society.

Beeman and Urow (2013) identified English learners in the United States as sequential or simultaneous bilingual learners. They state that 30 to 40 years ago, most English learners were sequential bilingual leaners. This means that English learners at that time have had well-developed and rounded exposure to their first language before learning English. Currently, statistics show that most English learners in the United States are students who have been exposed to both their native language and English at the same time (Capps et al., 2005). This, according to Beeman and Urow, is referred to as simultaneous bilingual learners.

Simultaneous bilingual learners learn differently than sequential bilingual learners and to add another complication to the equation, both sets of bilingual learners learn differently from mainstream students. Beeman and Urow (2013) argued that for equity to be reached for Els, it's important to understand the distinction of how to teach simultaneous as well as sequential bilingual learners. Knowing the differences between how these two sets of bilingual

leaners learn in comparison to each other and students from mainstream classrooms, will help develop the teaching and delivery of instruction in classrooms. This knowledge, according to Beeman and Urow, is the first step in the identification process of which programs best meet the needs of each English learner.

Tung (2013) stated that a pathway forward in providing equity to English learners is for educational paradigms to make a shift and "increase opportunities and choices for students and families that support the acquisition of academic English" but still honor and develop English learners' native languages (p. 3). Being bilingual, according to Tung, is crucial. "The fact that our kids don't grow up bilingual puts them at a competitive disadvantage" (Maxwell, 2013 as cited in Tung, 2013, p. 3). Tung noted that students from other countries speak more than one language which puts them at an advantage over students in the United States. Paris and Alim (2017) agree with Tung that language is important. They stated that the language repertoires of students need to be fostered and sustain in the curriculum, in the methods of delivery, and in assessment. Language, they argued, is "a crucial form of sustenance in its own rights" (p. 44) and is a huge piece of the identities of English learners. Without the focus on language, equity can only be achieved at a certain degree but not to the full extent of what could be achieved.

Cultural Relativism

Cultural relativism, according to Howson (2009), has two features. One, cultural relativism asserts "that one thing (e.g. moral values, knowledge, meaning) is relative to a particular framework (e.g. the individual subject, a culture, an era, or a language" (p. 2). Second, it holds the belief that no culture or framework is more privileged than others. Cultural relativism provides the explanation that when people are born, they were taught with certain beliefs and

behaviors. These beliefs and behaviors become the norms. These norms are, then, perceived as the correct norms. Cultural relativism provides researchers and others the opportunity to assess a different culture based on the context of that culture and not compare it to a culture they grew up in.

Summary

Chapter 2 compiled a literature review of education for English learners of Hmong descent. It was organized into four sections which detailed a quick summary of different topics relevant to the education of English learners of Hmong descent. The four sections were as follows: the statistics of Els of Hmong descent, discussed the current paradigms of education serving English learners in the K-12 public school system today, reviewed the ailments and attributes of education for Els, and explained the importance of culturally responsive and relevance in the education of English learners.

Chapter 3. Design & Method

This study was designed to understand, through the perspectives of teachers and the administrator in a Hmong bilingual El program, of how and in what ways the education of English learners of Hmong descent were promoted and if they were equitable and inclusive of the whole child. Additionally, connected of this understanding was the grasping of how this Hmong bilingual El program was integrating culturally responsive and relevant practices. This study delved into the need to consider and understand the whole English learner of Hmong descent. The dynamic and complex cultural and traditional pieces of English learners of Hmong descent were explored. In addition, the linguistic abilities, historical backgrounds, and family structures that affect the students were examined. Additionally, this study identified equities within the program connecting to equitable distribution of resources and equitable access to the curriculum such as: funding, resources, staffing, curriculum, assessment, the planning process, and delivery methods of content.

Setting

The setting of this study was at one of two urban Hmong bilingual schools operated by an urban district in the mid-western US. Among charter Hmong bilingual schools not part of the district, the Hmong bilingual El program at Jackson Elementary School implemented a dual language immersion model with instruction taught in both Hmong and English. It was a Title I school. Students at the Hmong bilingual El program learned to speak, read, and write in English and in Hmong. The student body at Jackson is diverse. At the time of this study, it enrolled 382 students, of whom 57% identified as Asian, 31% identified as African American, 6% identified as Caucasian, 5% identified as Hispanics, and 1% identified as American Indians. Eighty-five percent of the student body was on free and reduced lunch. Fifty-seven percent

were identified as English learners. I observed classrooms and interviewed teachers and the administrator during their summer program.

Positionality

I am Hmong, although many make the mistake of identifying me as being Chinese, Korean, Japanese, or Vietnamese. I was born in the refugee camp of Ban Vinai, Thailand. My mother and father, with their own families, left Laos in the 1970s to escape persecution during the aftermath of the Vietnam War. They met, fell in love, and married in Ban Vinai. They had five children, with me as the oldest child.

I came to know Ban Vinai Refugee Camp as my home. I had no concept of life outside the camp, nevertheless, Laos or the United States. I only knew life and the Hmong "way" through my narrow perspective, cooped in the refugee camp. My days were mostly happy days: carefree, shoeless, running in the rice-paddies kinds of days. My memories of growing up consisted of daily living in a dirt-floor one room home during the day and nightly sleeping in a separate sleeping quarter a short walk away from the main road and the main living quarter. I did not know what I did not know. Although, most days, I would go bare feet on the hot clay dirt, my life was full of richness. Not a single day went by did I wish I had more or to be someone else. I was content.

As soon as I was able to attend school, my father enrolled me. At the first crow from the rooster, my father woke me. We walked to our dirt-floor home where he cooked me breakfast. Before the first crack of dawn, I would begin my long walk to school where Thai teachers taught me how to read, write, and compute basic math problems.

My days in Ban Vinai Refugee Camp were shielded from as much trauma as possible by my father. But as much as he shielded me, I still could not escape the harsh realities of what

happened when Thai soldiers, Ossos were what we called them, take someone away or if someone was caught staying passed their curfew. I knew! I knew what happened when the Ossos "steal" a Hmong girl and forced her to stay overnight. I knew what happened when the Ossos, for the fun of it, searched you. And I knew what happened to families who did not get called for a meeting with the United Nations. All this I knew. As much as my days with my family were filled with love and joy, I knew the dangers that lurked and haunted the Hmong in Ban Vinai Refugee Camp but, as a child, I never equated them to as inequities (although this feeling changed as I became an adult and summoned back memories of my childhood). Even though there were dangers, my father made sure my childhood was full of happiness and tried his best to create opportunities for me and my siblings.

The trick was not to trust anyone outside of my immediate family. I was to follow direct rules to the smallest amount of energy. I was to never stray away from the main path, at least not when I'm alone. I was to always travel with someone. And I was to never question Thai authorities. Everything they said and did were to be acknowledged as appropriate. These were directives from my father to help minimize my chances of encountering a "bad thing."

My parents showered me with love and happiness but the love and happiness they showed me did not blind me from what I saw and heard from the outside community. From a young age I realized there were lots of things "wrong" with what was happening in Ban Vinai Refugee Camp. I have, since, come to know these "wrong" things as inequities within the system of living in Ban Vinai Refugee Camp. I thought it wrong for Ossos to search a person without a good reason. It was wrong for Ossos to force a Hmong girl to spend an evening with them. It was wrong for Ossos to treat the Hmong in ways I didn't think was right for a human to treat another human.

Phanat Nikhom, Thailand was a transitional camp for many Hmong refugees. It was a camp where families who interviewed with United Nations transitioned to for a few months to learn the new ways of life in the new country they would immigrate to. It was in Phanat Nikhom that I lost my father. It was here, particularly after the loss of my father, that I felt a deeper "wrongness" from the different systems that surrounded me. I analyzed and put into understanding the harsh realities of the inequities that stood in front of me. In the Hmong culture, without a father in "charge" of the household, the family is considered a class below everyone else. After the death of my father, I noticed people treating my family differently. Friends became distant and relatives stopped coming by. At that small moment in time, I lost all trust in people. Not only did I feel the ill treatment of a bigger system surrounding Phanat Nikhom by the bureaucratic norms full of unfair practices, structures, and regulations but I also felt a deep, saturated, and rooted cultural form of inequity that separated me from the fairness I once saw and experienced when my father lived. This rooted cultural form of inequity entrenched me with a deep sense of insecurity, loss, and sadness. For a long time, I lost trust in Hmong traditions, cultural practices, and ways of life.

When my family first arrived in the United States, landing in Billings, Montana, we lived with my grandmother and two uncles in a three-bedroom home. Shortly after, my mother moved us into the basement of an older couple's home. We all shared one bedroom. It was living in Billings, Montana that I noticed I was different from my white friends. In my eyes, my friends lived the most perfect life. Both their parents were present, alive and well, and they didn't worry about what they would have for dinner. They had enough clothes to last the whole week and they had beautiful homes, a bedroom to themselves. I felt deprived of what life really had in store for me, that the path I was walking on was not intended for me.

Going to school in the United States presented many challenges and numerous forms of inequities. I was placed in a kindergarten classroom at a time when I was supposed to be in third grade. My ESL teacher thought it was a burden to serve me. My ESL classroom was outside in the hall in the corner. There were, literally, no books or resources for my ESL teacher to use with me. I grew up in the public-school system fighting to be with my age-appropriate peers. When I reached seventh grade, I progressed enough to skip to eighth grade and made my way into high school. In high school, I fought hard, taking additional summer courses to finish in three years. My entire public-school path was based on a system that failed to address the inequities I faced on a regular basis. I fought the system at every turn without knowing I was fighting it and without knowing why I was doing it.

The road to recovery of regaining trust in my Hmong identity and in the systems that surrounded me was tough. Over the years and through education, I realized that I needed to do something to change a system that was broken, a system that is deeply rooted in the Hmong culture dating back thousands of years and a system that had failed to acknowledge inequities serving English learners, such as myself. After experiencing the public-school system as an English learner along with the compounding inequities I faced in the Hmong community and the community at large, I decided to do something to bring awareness to some injustices I experienced. I had to start somewhere.

Writing about my positionality and beliefs about society hasn't been as easy as I had hoped. In preparation for this moment, I have had to dig deep, really thinking, analyzing, and reflecting conscientiously about my beliefs and position in society and of society. I am convinced that people come into the world not knowing between right and wrong but that their culture of social, political, and economic environment support in shaping who they become

and in their belief of the distinction between right and wrong. I believe a person is allowed the freedom to make their own choices but within the borders and parameters of influences from their environment. The progressive philosophy would tell us that "humans are born neither good nor bad," that they are flexible and can conform to their environment and new learning (Walter, 2007, p. 5). Similar to this thinking is the radical view from within Paulo Freire's (1970-2005) work of critical pedagogy that humans create their own history and culture based on their situation as it pertains to their social, political, and economic environments. These different components of culture created by social, political, and economic aspects have an enormous impact on how one views the world.

To answer the question of trust, I travel back to my childhood in the refugee camp of Ban Vinai, Thailand. As a child growing up in Ban Vinai, innocently, I believed in the good within people, although I knew that my life was full of unfairness and inequalities. My father shielded me from the situations that lurked behind, ahead, and beside me. Although, I knew about the dangers in the refugee camp, I considered them as distant dangers; dangers that I could take precautions to avoid. These precautions became a normal part of my life. They were the norm. I was not to question the norm but abide by it.

I believe society has generated norms based on the dominating view of normalcy. In his assessment of critical theory, Brookfield (2010) describes it as assuming "that inequity is a permanent structural reality and is accepted without complaint because dominant ideology has convinced the majority that inequity is normal and predictable" (p. 74). I agree with Brookfield that society has created inequities and as a result these injustices have become a normal part of our community culture and have been accepted as the norm. To address and alter the norms accepted by society as it relates to inequity, deep transformation has to occur. According to

Sterling (2010/2011), participating our worldview "rather than with our worldview" (p.23) allows us access to "draw upon other views and possibilities" (p. 23). Sterling continued to say that when we practice within the old paradigm, we cannot change the paradigm. It is when we recognize the flaws within the paradigm in which we function in, that we can begin to reassemble, establishing transformative change. Unless we transform the way society thinks in creating norms of inequity, marginalized populations continue to experience oppression and because of that society cannot move forward.

Another perspective that emerged for me is my realization that oppression occurs in different forms. Not only does oppression occur within marginalized groups but also within those who emerge as being privileged. An example of this includes how society creates the norm of not paving a path for these privileged individuals to open their thinking to the inequities facing other marginalized groups. Society oppresses them of the knowledge and the possibility of what can be done to end the oppression of other marginalized groups. This new learning guided and shaped me in my thinking as I continue to understand oppression in society and as I continue to think about the restorative piece that can be learned from oppression.

Design

This study explored issues of equity in the education of Hmong students who were identified as English learners (Els). It was a qualitative a case study as outlined by Yin (2009), who defined case-study research as having "how" or "why" questions that address "a contemporary set of events." In addition, he "how" or "why" questions are asked "over which the investigator has little or no control" (p. 13). This was a single-case study. to capture what Yin called "the circumstances and conditions of an everyday or commonplace situation" (p. 48).

I explored in this study through the lens of critical theory, what Cranton (2016) called a "transformative worldview" that addresses social issues such as "inequality, oppression, domination, suppression, and alienation" (p. 9). Through this lens, this study gave voice to and raised a restorative piece in the education of English learners of Hmong descent in a Hmong bilingual El program.

This study collected data from interviews of educators and administrators as well as classroom observations. To address the integration of culturally relevant and responsive practices in classrooms addressing English learners of Hmong descent, I adapted protocols from Ladson-Billings (1994). Protocols were adapted so that the words *Hmong American* were used instead of *African American*. Some were adapted for administrators. I generated items asking how equity was integrated, specifically regarding funding, resources, staffing, curriculum, assessment, delivery methods, planning processes, and the integration of culturally responsive and relevant practices. Some items were adapted from Creswell and Creswell (2018).

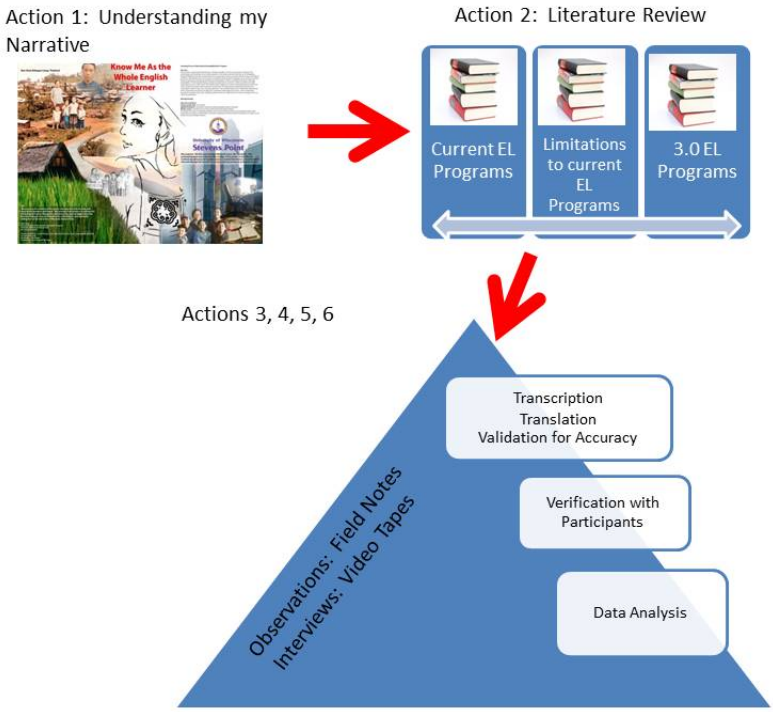
Participants

In the selection of teachers to interview, I spoke with the administrator at Jackson Elementary School. One administrator and seven teachers participated in this study. All teachers and the administrator were of Hmong descent. The focus of the interviews and the observations were on the teachers and the administrator. It did not focus on the actions and answers of students; however, general observations of student responses were noted to better understand the outcome of actions and language used by teachers. There was no direct contact with students.

Research Design

My research questions were mapped to my literature review and protocols (Appendix A) before I designed this study. I followed a sequence of actions shown in Appendix B and in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Research Design



Critical theory was the lens of this study. Action 1 displays the understanding of my personal narrative and my experiences as an El student and educator. These experiences led me to this research. Action 2 shows alignment of my research questions with literature reviews focusing on equity for English learners of Hmong descent through culturally relevant and responsive practices and equity in a Hmong bilingual El program that encompasses equity in funding, resources, staffing, curriculum, assessment, the planning process, and delivery methods of content.

Observations of the classrooms, interviews of teachers and the administrator, taking field notes, and performing video recordings of the interviews were part of Action 3. Action 4, consisted of transcribing the video recordings, translating it, and validating the translations with another scholar that was fluent in Hmong and English. In Action 5, the transcriptions were verified by the participants. And finally, in Action 6, data was analyzed. Actions 3 through 6 are described in the next section.

Data Collection

Data were collected through classroom observations with field notes and video-recorded interviews. Observations provided an intimate view of teachers putting their practices in action. It gave me a "firsthand hand experience with" each participant (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 188). I took field notes of "behavior and activities of individuals at the research site" (p. 186-187). The observations in this study were recorded in a "semi-structure way" (p. 186) using field notes. I recorded data as it happened in classrooms, even at times when teaching was given in Hmong. Observations were useful as they gave me opportunities to notice "unusual aspects" of classrooms that I would otherwise not have. I did not actively engage with those in this study.

Another form of data collection in this study was through qualitative semi-structured interviews. Protocols are shown in Appendix C. Interviews were conducted face-to-face. Interviews of teachers were conducted in a lunch/dinner group session at a place mutually agreed upon by the participants and me. The administrator interview was also conducted face-to-face at a mutually agreed facility. All interviews were videotaped. Dinner interviews provided what Longhurst, Johnston, and Ho (2009) called " a 'visceral approach' as a means of 'thinking through the body' to enlist 'the sensations, moods and ways of being that emerge from our

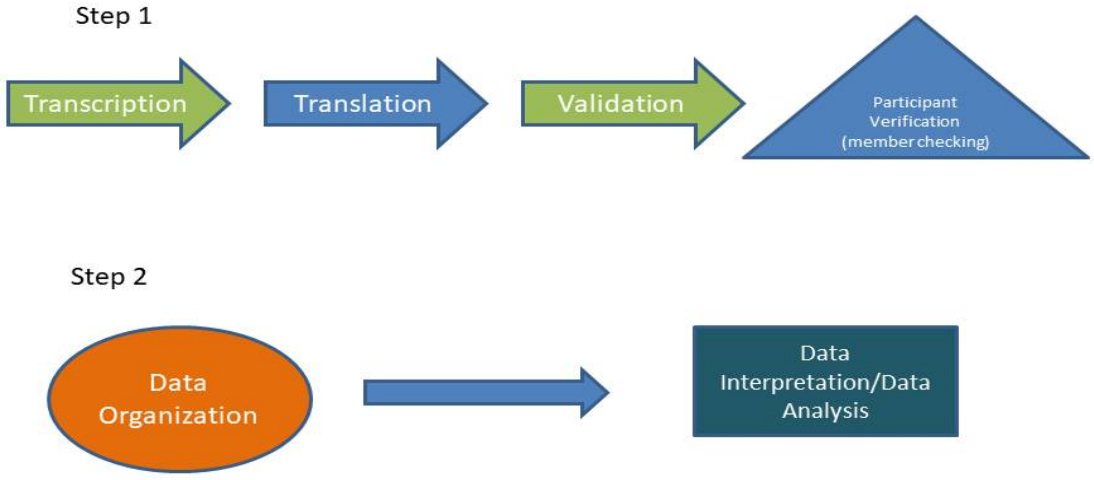
sensory engagement with the material and discursive environments in which we live,' " (cited in Brady, 2011, p. 323). Dinner interviews were responsive to participants; needs because Hmong cultural norms dictate a more social feel in any situation including a research data collection situation. Additionally, dinner interviews incorporated whole-person learning into this study.

Qualitative interviews gave me what Creswell and Creswell (2018) called "control over the line of questioning" (p. 188). Control was useful in maintaining reliability. Video recordings of interviews were transcribed, translated as needed, and verified for accuracy by a Hmong scholar fluent in Hmong and English. Transcriptions were member-checked by participants prior to any data analysis.

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed steps as outlined in Creswell and Creswell (2018), as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Data Analysis



Note: Adapted from Creswell, J. W. & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods approaches*. SAGE, p. 194

Following Creswell and Creswell's (2018) steps of data analysis shown in Figure 3, the data were first collected and transcribed, translated and typed by myself, validated for accuracy by another Hmong scholar, and verified by all participants for accuracy. Next, I offered my personal thinking into the findings of the data. Through the lens of critical theory, I formed my personal analysis of the data that may call for action agendas for reform and change.

Once Step 1 was completed, I looked over the data for general ideas and themes from participant answers. In Step 2, I reflected and wrote notes to start "recording general thoughts about the data" (p. 193), connecting them to the theoretical framework in this study.

In Step 3, data were coded into different categories aligned with my model and my three research questions. In addition to coding the data to align with my research questions and literature, I also coded it for themes that emerged. Themes helped me understand and recognize possible similarities as well as contrasting views from the those in this study.

Yin (2009) suggested four general strategies in analyzing case study evidence. The most preferred strategy being "relying on theoretical propositions*"* (p. 130). In this strategy, Yin suggested that a researcher "follow the theoretical propositions that led to" their study (p. 130). The theoretical framework through the lens of critical theory guided the case study in this study; therefore, it made sense for me to analyze the data using this framework. Using the theoretical framework that guided this study helped me "focus attention on certain data and to ignore other data" (p. 130).

I began data interpretation by giving a brief summary of what was derived from the data. Then I compared the data to the literature. Comparing data to the literature allowed me

to “confirm past information or diverge from it” (Creswell and Creswell, 2018, p. 199). Additionally, this comparison provided new insights or themes that I had not foreseen earlier in the study.

Ethical Issues

In this study, I was an outside observer in the school. I did not interact with students as I observed in classrooms; however, I took field notes on student-teacher interactions. At no point in this study was a student identified.

This study had low risks to participants. I had no conflicts of interest. Participation was voluntary and no one was paid; however, they were provided a lunch or dinner during interview sessions. They were given options to stop participating at any given time during the study. The IRB committee approval was given for this study to commence (Appendix D). All communications were encrypted. Data are kept in a secure server for five years.

I explained to the participants that I was going to observe in their classrooms and interview them. Two protocols were used for interviews with teachers and the administrator (Appendix C). I explained to all that field notes were taken during the. Translations were made and validated by another Hmong scholar and then verified by those in this study. Additionally, I informed them that I will video record the interviews. I transcribed, translated, had it validated, and verified by the participants prior to data analysis. Lastly, I informed them that my field notes of what I observed in their classrooms along with their interview responses were to be used in my research as data and that it may be used in presentations in the future. Participants gave written consent (Appendix D).

Controls for Bias

To control for bias in this study, I had a scholar who was fluent in Hmong validate my translations for accuracy and reliability. Transcriptions of my field notes were then given to all those in this study for verification of validity prior to any data analysis. This procedure, according to Burke and Soffa (2018), is member checking. The data analysis stage occurred after all participants confirmed for validity and accuracy of all transcriptions.

Delimitations

This study aimed to learn about equity in the education for English learners of Hmong descent and the integration of culturally responsive and relevant practices. It was a case study of one Hmong bilingual El program. It included eight participants. Students, parents, and community perspectives were excluded. Other limitations were limited scale and term.

Summary

This case study is of a bilingual dual-language immersion summer program at Jackson Elementary School. All students in this particular part of the program spoke Hmong and English. The students were identified as English learners with various levels of limited proficiencies in English. Data collection came from observations during the summer program and face-to-face interviews. Data were analyzed according to generally accepted methods for qualitative case-study research.

Chapter 4. Analysis & Findings

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate how equity is integrated in a Hmong bilingual English learners program at Jackson Elementary School. Through a sustainability lens, this study inquired about equity in the education of English learners of Hmong descent particularly in the areas of funding, resources, staffing, curriculum, assessment, the planning process, delivery methods of content, and the integration of culturally responsive and relevant practices. A sustainability lens granted this study to organize and construct a medium that focused on how equity is integrated in practices of this program allowing English learners of Hmong descent to become sustainable problem solvers of tomorrow. This qualitative case study was approached through a restorative justice lens that may aid school systems to create equity for English learners of Hmong descent contributing to a more just and equitable pathway to the curriculum.

This chapter presents the data analysis and results from translated transcriptions of interviews and translated observational field notes. Nvivo12, a qualitative analysis software, was used to manage data that was collected. Pre-determined themes were arranged as focus points during observations and interview sessions; however, another theme and other sub-themes emerged as data were analyzed. The following three research questions guided this qualitative case study:

- How and in what ways is education of English learners of Hmong decent promoted?
- Are these ways equitable? Are these ways inclusive? Why or why not?
- How are bilingual programs integrating culturally responsive and relevant practices meeting the needs of the whole English learner of Hmong descent?

From these research questions, came a protocol with thirteen items that were asked during interviews with seven Hmong bilingual El teachers and one Hmong administrator. All seven teachers worked at the Hmong bilingual El program. Additionally, these research questions guided the data collection through observations in the classroom and through semi-structured lunch/dinner interview sessions.

The research revealed a discovery of what was currently integrated at Jackson Elementary School summer Hmong bilingual El program, reaching for educational equity in the education of English learners of Hmong descent. Translated observational field notes and transcriptions of the interviews provided data information that led to the conclusion and data analysis resulting themes and sub-themes that emerged.

Emergent Thematic Analysis

The three research questions that governed this study and data collection were organized into the predetermined themes as well as other emerged themes. A protocol of thirteen items were sorted into and categorized under each of the three research questions. Each theme contained a set of reference nodes kept in the data management software of Nvivo12. A node is a reference to data connected to a theme.

This study initially proposed eight pre-determined themes derived from the research questions. As data were analyzed, all eight pre-determined themes were organized as sub-themes under one main theme, culturally relevant and responsive practices. A second main theme emerged, *challenges*, with eight sub-themes. This theme emerged as data from those in this study who expressed their discontent with what they framed as a form of systemic oppression that showed up in decisions made at the higher administrative levels. Additionally, observational field notes showed that there were very little resources created in Hmong and as a

result teachers and teacher aides spent time creating the resources needed. Table 1 lists the two main themes and the eighteen sub-themes.

Table 1. Summary of Themes

Theme 1:Culturally Relevant & Responsive Practices	
Sub-Theme	
1	The Intimacy of Communal and Social
2	The Cultivation of Experiences
3	Acceptance and Integration of Culture and Language
4	Consideration of Social Well-Being
5	Acknowledgement of Hmongness: Accepting Students
6	Cultural Relativism and Advocacy
7	Planning with Purpose: Whole Child
8	Exhausting Curriculum as a Pathway to Equity
9	Delivering with Intentionality
10	Being Productive with Resources
Theme 2: Challenges	
Sub-Theme	
1	Inequitable Distribution of Funds
2	Lack of High Expectations
3	Identity Loss
4	Language Loss
5	Parent Challenges
6	Shortage of Resources
7	Shortage of Staffing
8	Systemic Oppression

The following sections show data under each main theme and sub-themes. The sub-themes described below are organized in random order.

Culturally Relevant & Responsive Practices

The first main theme, culturally relevant and responsive practices, pertained to practices integrated in classroom pedagogies. This theme yielded ten sub-themes as follows:

- Intimacy of the communal and social aspect of the Hmong culture;

- Cultivation of experiences integrated within the pedagogies of the program;
- Acceptance and integration of culture and language within the communal, social, and academic of program;
- Consideration of the whole child and being deliberate in the discussion of the social well-being of students in every aspect of how teachers plan and deliver content to English learners of Hmong descent;
- Acknowledgement of whom each student is, accepting their identity and connecting that identity to modern society through content material;
- Cultural relativism and advocacy for students;
- Planning with the whole child in mind thinking about students' social well-being, their history, language and culture and the importance of integrating these different aspects into content areas, connecting it to State Standards;
- Implementation of a well-rounded curriculum that included the Hmong language, culture, and history;
- Being intentional with delivery;
- Creativity and resourcefulness of the educators who were productive with the resources they had.

In this study, one-hundred sixty-nine references were collected relating to the main theme of culturally relevant and responsive practices. The following sections show data for each subtheme.

Intimacy of Communal and Social

Through observation field notes, a communal and social aspect was immediately sensed in the environment in the school. Upon entering the school, were signs posted in

Hmong, welcoming individual to the community of the school. Signs in Hmong and in English were hung on the walls. Cultural artifacts were displayed. Teachers and students communicated not only in English but also in Hmong. A sense of wholeness was perceived in the acceptance of being Hmong-American, observed by the atmosphere exhibited with Hmong cultural items and an overall sense of cultural pride. A few of this observational data are illustrated in Figures 4 and 5.

Figure 4. Office Signs

Figure 5. Hall Sign

These two figures display a communal field exhibiting signs, posters, and bulletin boards in the Hmong language.

The practices of a communal understanding and cultural pride was observed to have occurred within the framework and composition of the communal and social aspects integrated within the Hmong bilingual El program. According to observational and interview data, communal and social aspects are important cultural norms that comprise of many different features including cultural learning of traditional Hmong way of life, a sense of belonging in a close-knit community, the passing of the old to the new, communication, respect, identity, pride, language use, traditional games, Hmong poetry and songs, among others.

Classroom opportunities were created by teachers to build a sense of community. Community circles were formed and students were reminded by the teachers that being communal and social is part of the Hmong culture. For example, in the first-grade classroom, a community circle was formed. Students were reminded of their role to their classroom family. The teacher also connected this content to the general traditional role each of them "play" within their own

personal familial structure. Another example was shown in the kindergarten classroom. The teacher consoled with two students, a boy and a girl, as they struggled to share a toy. She reminded these two students their obligations to each other as "brothers and sisters" and that sharing within a community is part of their job.

Cultural relativism was a strong point of the Hmong bilingual El program at Jackson Elementary School. Through observational data, there was a strong presence of Hmong educators, administrator, office workers, and teacher assistants in the building. All teachers and administrator were of Hmong descent. The teacher and the administrator in this study thought it important that students know their teachers and administrators are Hmong. The administrator stated, "my presence speaks a lot. I remember a lot of my students being proud to see someone who looks like them." Having teachers and administrators that look like them help to build relationships and trust and increase academic performance. One teacher participant revealed, "my presence is building relationships with students and that is key, a very important key." Another teacher stated,

> To be in a class with students that look like them and have teachers that look like them, it allows them to tell their story differently that they may not share in other classrooms that don't have a teacher or other students that look like them.

The days began with a schoolwide social event that encompassed the use of both the English and Hmong languages. Songs were chosen intentionally that depicted a Hmong cultural aspect and was sung at the schoolwide social event. The curriculum provided opportunities for students to interact with each other and members of the community taking into consideration the communal and social aspect of Hmong culture. Students were given the freedom to

speak in their most comfortable language with the exception of during academic hours when they were expected to speak either in Hmong or in English (as a dual language model allows).

Cultivation of Experiences

Both observational field notes and interview data indicated a strong sense of an integration of experiences outside of the classroom environment coupled with traditional learning in the classroom. In the third-grade classroom, it was observed that the teacher integrated the experience of painting rocks for a traditional Hmong game "ua txwv." This activity included a more modernized art process with the traditional artwork of playing the rock game of "ua txwv." Another example was shown in the fourth grade classroom, where students integrated the experience of gardening with the content of math and art. Students grew their own garden and used the vegetables from their garden to create a meal. Prior to growing their own garden, students visualized how their garden would look like, drew it, and harmonized their drawing with math dimensions.

In the second grade classroom, students' experiences with traditional Hmong dances were integrated into the learning. This experience began with researching the history of the different dances of the Hmong and how geographical locations along with cultures in those different locations influence Hmong dance moves. Students wrote about their learning prior to practicing and performing the different kinds of dances within the Hmong culture.

The afternoons of the Hmong bilingual El program were reserved for more enrichment opportunities where the students visited the Hmong elderly in the communities and organizations, having the chance to listen to their (elderly) stories of when they were younger back in the country they left behind, Laos. This, according to the administrator, is a way to expose El students of Hmong descent to their own rich history through oral retelling. She stated,

> We can meet state standards in a different way. We can help our students trace back their history and provide the opportunity for them to talk to their parents and grandparents, or other elderly people about their own cultural roots and find out who they really are.

It was observed that these enrichment opportunities were offered and implemented, not only because the teachers and administrator thought it would add to the equity in the education of the students they serve, but also because the teachers and administrator, themselves, were not given the opportunity to learn about their own culture and they wanted to change the process of learning for the Hmong students they serve. As one teacher stated, "We give them (students) opportunities that my teachers never gave me." During these opportunities, students were exposed to social and communal aspects of Hmong culture when the young Hmong listened to the elderly speak of life in the past. One of the teachers stated,

> The young also meet the old. We have children go and help the old Hmong people at an adult day care where they have a chicken coop. They are very happy that our children speak Hmong. The children are happy too, because they get to speak with grandmas and grandpas.

Students were taught to address the elderly in a respectful way. During the visits to elderly facilities, students addressed the elderly in a traditional way using their title as expected in the Hmong culture. This, according to the participants, is a "win-win" situation. "Our elderly are happy because they can communicate with our children. And the children get to interact with their elders the same way children did back in Laos. This not only benefits our children but also the elderly."

Through the enrichment opportunities, students also learned about other cultural aspects of the Hmong. They learned about the different types of Hmong herbs and vegetables in the garden planted by the elderly. The teachers took advantage of this moment and integrated this into a content-related project in the classroom, having students create their own make-believe gardens. Incorporated within this project were math, writing, art, and reading. Teachers also created a space for students to make connections from the garden to modern American society. They also established a space for students to compare modern American and Hmong foods.

> I integrated that with our math and the students had to use math to make their make-believe garden. Students had to research some of the herbs and weeds that we have been talking about and learned from the elders. From this, we found some simple herbs, like green onions. Some students didn't know the uses of green onions, something so simple. The same with tomatoes. So, we made connections to American cultural foods like pizza. The kids didn't know pizza sauce was made from tomatoes and that tomatoes come from a garden. We also compared and contrast between the different uses of vegetables in American and Hmong foods.

Incorporated within the curriculum, also addressing culturally relevant and responsive practices, are Hmong cultural games and Hmong cultural ways of life integrated in all content areas. The two teacher coordinators of the program "wanted to bring back all the traditional Hmong games so that our students know how to play it." Cultural ways of life such as using a "kas xus" (a hunting weapon made of pieces of wood and a big rubber band) for hunting were used by students to hit an actual target. One participant stated, "We wanted to make sure students know that they are Hmong and are connected to the Hmong." These games provided a

"hands-on" activity that allowed students to be fully engaged. Additionally, as one teacher stated, "students don't have to worry about thinking about what they are learning because through these hands-on activities, they can remember well and can write down what they learned."

In addition to hands-on activities, teachers presented connections from classroom learning to activities in the Hmong community. Through the connection from history learning about bartering, one teacher connected that to bartering at Hmong Village, a Hmong shopping center. One teacher stated, "The students can really grasp it if we connect it to their home life and their personal well-being. So being able to tie it to their family and their experiences, this really helps them cement that understanding."

Acceptance & Integration of Culture and Language

Through observational field notes and interview sessions, it was evident that there was an acceptance and an integration of Hmong culture and language. Observational notes indicated a strong sense that Hmong and English were both used. They (English and Hmong) were used in content settings as well as in social settings. Ample opportunities were given to students to speak both languages. During content areas, academic language use was expected; however, teachers provided supports and gave students the language as needed to be successful. During social times, students were given opportunities to use their language of choice. The teachers spoke both in Hmong and English interchangeably. The students seemed to have understood teachers as they were code-switching between both languages. In the kindergarten classroom during a social event, the teacher provided language supports by providing sentence frames, both in Hmong and in English. Students chose their language of choice and used the sentence frames in the language of their choice to give an answer.

Similar to what is done with the English language in a literacy or a language arts lesson, the same idea and concept were done with the Hmong language at the Hmong bilingual El program. Deep dives into the Hmong language were completed. The deep dives were integrated through poetry and Hmong proverbs in fourth grade in connection to the central message from English books. One teacher summarized,

> I always want to pass to the Hmong children the proverbs and the deeper language. This summer, I decided to choose several of the proverbs that the Hmong have always used and connected that to books that we read in class. Because of this connection, I didn't have to spend a whole week teaching them proverbs but introduced and wrote them on the board. Every time we finished a book, we connected back to the proverbs. Every book had a lesson that can be connected to a proverb in Hmong.

The teachers and the administrator encouraged students to participate in the safe place of school using academic language. This was seen as important and vital for the successes of students in future academics and social settings. One participant stated,

> Some of the things we are working on is to encourage and engage our students to increase in their academic language. How do we do that? We give them the opportunity. When the students are doing the talking they are doing the learning. It's shifting that kind of mindset. To really give our students the opportunity to speak more, to ask more questions to be critical thinkers. We need to probe them and give them opportunities to share their expertise and knowledge about what they are learning. Most importantly giving them the opportunity to speak. Our Hmong students are afraid to ask questions. We need to teach them how to ask and understand the importance of asking questions.

Students were encouraged to participate as they were given the space they needed to feel safe enough to engage. One example occurred in the third and fourth classrooms where students were given the choice to participate in whole group, small partner share, or individually. Students were divided up into different groups according to their choice. Some students individually participated by taking an IPAD into the hall and practiced recording their Hmong poetry. Others shared with a partner, while others discussed in a whole group. During this time, students were expected to use Hmong, as they practiced poems written in Hmong.

Consideration of Social Well-Being

Another sub-theme that falls under culturally relevant and responsive practices included the teachers' and the administrator's attention to the social well-being of the students they serve. They thought it was critical to always take social well-being into their teaching and making it a forefront issue that connected to every stage of the planning and teaching process. Because of this consideration, teachers and administrators reportedly believed in creating a non-traditional atmosphere that provided an environment relevant and responsive to the needs of the students they serve. One example of this was evident through observational field notes in the kindergarten classroom. The teacher gave students an opportunity to discuss their emotions and what they hoped to accomplish during the day. She reminded students that everyone has "good days and bad days" but "in the end, it will all be okay." Knowing how to serve the social well-being of students also means for teachers to know who they (teachers and administrator) are. In her interview session, the administrator stated,

> I inquire and ask questions for teachers to think a little bit more about knowing themselves and also understand the students. That sometimes when we look at the emotional and social learning of our students, some come to school not for academic pieces

but for the social piece. School is a safe place for them to showcase who they are. But when they come to school, they're expected to be in this traditional school setting where you come and sit and do work; where you (teachers) are not allowing students a place and time to be authentic and be who they are.

Acknowledgement of Hmongness: Accepting Students

The integration of Hmong history, language, and culture into the curriculum, according the teachers and administrators helped build the identity of their students. With the overall theme bridging the two cultures (Hmong and American) of *I am Hmong American,* bringing purpose and relevance to their everyday life living in modern America as an El student of Hmong descent. As one teacher purely alleged, "We have to teach our students their roots and their history but also connect to where they are today; that they are not just Hmong or American, but they are Hmong Americans." Another teacher stated,

> Our students know who they are, Hmong Americans. They pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States. They also know their rights and responsibilities as citizens of this country. Living here, they must know how to balance their two cultures.

Cultural Relativism & Advocacy

Staffing was a pre-determined theme in this study. Together, there was a total of twenty-three references. All the participant teachers and administrators had similar backgrounds to the students they teach. Many attended public schools in the St. Paul Public School District or have similar history as that of the students and families they interact with. Two of the teachers were born in Laos and began their education there. Their education was interrupted by the Vietnam War before their immigration to the United States where they continued their education and eventually received their teaching degrees. Three teachers were born in Thailand

and experienced the refugee experience prior to arriving in the United States and moved on to pursue higher education degrees. Other teachers were born in the United States but have always had interactions with the Hmong community and have come to an understanding the importance of education leading the path to their eventual degrees in education. The administrator was born and raised in St. Paul and attended public schools there.

According to the teachers and administrator, the relativism of being Hmong educators and administrator working in the public school system where many of them attended and currently live, to English learners of Hmong descent is an important aspect that described part of the reason why the participants became educators and administrator of a Hmong bilingual El program. Some of the teachers and the administrator described their decisions to become an educator because of their own experiences in the community and in the public school system. One participant stated, "I started my education in St. Paul Public schools and throughout my experience being a student I kind of thought and saw myself as an invisible student." Another one stated, "I didn't like myself. I wanted to be someone who was white because of what I saw as a student in second grade. I saw more of my white peers acknowledged and praised more. In comparison, I wasn't as special." These experiences provided a motivation for some of the participants to get involved in the public school educational system to make a difference in the lives of English learners of Hmong descent.

The individuals in this study have a strong connection to the Hmong root. They are proud of their heritage and feel the need to pass on what they know about Hmong culture and traditions. One participant lived in Detroit, Michigan for some time and taught Hmong language classes after school, volunteering her time to be with Hmong students. When she moved to the St. Paul, Minnesota area, she "found the dual language program." She stated, "It's always

been something in my heart." She always tried to "steal" a little bit of time in her teaching prior to "finding" the Hmong dual language program at Jackson Elementary School, to inject some teaching of the Hmong language, culture, and history. "This is something great that I really enjoy," she continued.

All participants reported it important that students see teachers that look like them and are of the same ethnic descent. One of the teachers stated, "To be in a class with students that look like them and have teachers that look like them, it allows them to tell their story differently that they may not share in other classrooms that don't have a teacher or other students that look like them." After having a discussion with her middle school students, one participant came to a realization that her students wanted not only teachers that look like them but administrators, too. She revealed that "I didn't know how to respond to that, so I inquired more questions. One of the things that stuck in my mind was they (students) wanted someone that looks like them." Having someone that looks like them, according to the participants, helps bridge the first connection of trust. One participant added that,

> It's that connection and that level of trust that gets built. When that's built, the academics come after that. When they know that you really want them to succeed and want them to work hard because of that background connection.

The teachers and the administrator deemed it their responsibility to advocate on behalf of their English learners of Hmong descent. They deemed it a strong ethical commitment to continue a legacy of passing on what they know and have experienced to their students. One participant noted,

> What I do think is that all students can learn and that knowledge is prevalent in anyone's life and it's my responsibility to pass on the knowledge that I have and be an

> inspiration to those who are around me especially students, students of color. I have my own experience and being who I am today, it's all the individuals that I have seen that have impacted me, whether it's face to face or via distance. I admire them for who they are. So, I try to discover myself and see how I can be like that person or be better and how I can give back to be an impact to my community.

The excitement of equitable access gave the educators and administrator another reason to continue their advocacy for the students they serve. They reportedly believed in equitable access for all students in education. One participant stated, "It is about making sure our community, when we look at the global economy that we all have access." But that belief, the participants realized, is not shared by all in the community as one stated, "When we look back at our history, we still see our community impoverished."

Planning with Purpose for the Whole Child

Planning was a pre-determined theme in this study. This study hoped to find how the individuals in this study in this study plan for their English learners of Hmong descent and how equity is integrated within the process. The data indicated a total of fifteen references for this theme.

In the Hmong bilingual El program at Jackson Elementary, teachers were given a portion of the day to plan while teacher assistants provided some enrichment activities. During this time, teachers collaborated with each other planning events and lessons that matched standards and incorporating activities that were relevant and responsive to the needs of the students and as fitting to the program goals.

Much of the planning at the Hmong bilingual El program did not begin with state standards. In fact, it began with the consideration of the social needs of the students. Through the

social needs of students came the integration of Hmong language, culture, and history. These pieces were, then, connected back to content areas (math, writing, reading, science, social studies). At the same time, content areas were connected to state standards. The teachers and administrator perceived it to be more important to first focus on the social aspects of the students they serve. This clearly was defined by the administrator as she stated,

> What's most important is having real and authentic hard conversations with teachers and administrators about how our Hmong students show up. It's not about academics. It's about how they feel when they walk into our schools and classrooms. Academics will come, but it will come after the social well-being.

Through this different "backwards approach" the educators took upon themselves to plan all content surrounding the differentiated and specific analyzed social needs of the students they served. This was described by the administrator as follows:

> [a] particular important issue of equity. We look at their [students'] social well-being, connecting that to their culture and teaching them how to balance their new learning through content areas. In doing this, the plus side is, we also meet state standards.

Planning with the whole child in mind was at the heart of what teachers thought they needed to focus on. They kept stressing repeatedly how critical it was to take into consideration the social well-being of students as they plan. As a cohesive and collaborative team, teachers began the planning stages with the social emotional well-being of their students at the top of their list. With a "backwards approach," the educators differentiated their teaching based on social needs while using the integration of history, language, and culture into content areas, meeting state standard guidelines. Figure 6 provides a visual of this planning process as the participants prepare content for their English learners.

Figure 6. Planning Process

This figure explains the planning process that teachers put in place. Using social well-being as the foundation, teachers integrated all other pieces of the planning process including the integration of Hmong history, language, and culture. Next, they infused these components into the contents of reading, writing, math, social studies, and science. All this leading and connecting to the State Standards. This planning process was meant to be inclusive of the whole child with the social well-being of the child as the anchor leading up to state standards integration at the top. Planning begins with the consideration of the social well-being of the child as it moves up to inclusion of a child's history, language and culture. Next is the integration of content areas and state standards.

Exhausting Curriculum as a Pathway to Equity

Curriculum was a pre-determined theme in this study. A total of sixteen references pertaining to this theme. Much of the curriculum and themes of teachings in the Hmong bilingual El program at Jackson Elementary were written by the two teacher coordinators of the program. These themes were pre-planned prior to the beginning of the summer program. The teachers had to plan thematic units connecting topics to content and standards.

Integrated in the curriculum was Hmong history, culture, and language. Different aspects of Hmong culture were part of the curriculum. Hmong games, dance, poetry, proverbs, songs, traditional ways of life, importance of animals, and the connection from Hmong culture to modern society were thematic units. Each grade level was assigned to a theme and was charged with the responsibility of connecting each theme to content areas and state standards. Kindergarten was tasked with the theme of the connection of being a Hmong person and thinking about what that means when it comes to connecting that to what the students want to be when they grow up. First grade's theme was learning about traditional Hmong ways of life and the importance of animals in the Hmong ways of life. The theme in second grade included the history of traditional Hmong dance. Third grade was trusted with the content of traditional Hmong games and the history behind the games. Finally, fourth grade was given the theme of Hmong proverbs and poetry.

The integration of culture was important to the program but what's more important, according to one of the educators, is the connection of these themes back to living in modern America. She stated, "Each grade level gets a different theme. But the overarching theme is I am Hmong American*."* This, according to her, is the real challenge.

> We can learn about all these cultural aspects of the Hmong: their culture, language, and history. But if we do not make that connection to where we are living, then it doesn't really matter. We have to teach that to our students. They have to understand the connection and be able to balance who they are ethnically but how that is connected to society. That is when we know we've made a real difference.

In addition to the integration of culture, was the integration of the Hmong language in the curriculum. It was prevalent, walking into the physical environment of the facility that the

Hmong language was widely used in the program. Hmong and English were both used as languages of instruction as well as during social events. Teachers spoke interchangeably in both Hmong and English. Teachers accepted the preferred spoken language from students. Both Hmong and English-language supports were given as needed to students.

Finally, the curriculum integrated experiences, allowing students opportunities to engage with the community. Fieldtrips were allotted for students to visit facilities and organizations that support the mission and goals of the program. Places of fieldtrips were chosen intentionally with relevance to everyday living of students. Table 2 lists thematic units and connections focused on in each grade level.

Table 2. Thematic Units

I am Hmong American	
Kindergarten	Connectedness of Future and Present: What do I want to be when I grow up?
First Grade	Traditional Ways of Life of the Hmong
Second Grade	The History of Hmong Dance
Third Grade	Traditional Hmong Games and The History Behind Them
Fourth Grade	Language Through Hmong Proverbs, Poetry, and Folk Songs

Delivering with Intentionality

Another theme that was a pre-determined theme was delivering of content. The data for this theme comes from observations of the five different classrooms. A total of thirty-eight references were made for this theme. Delivering of content was done through both the Hmong and English languages. Through the dual language immersion model, high expectations were set, objectives were clear and delivery was done through hands-on projects that mingled with experiences that created relevance in students' lives. One of the educators stated that it was

about igniting students' interest and that how teachers deliver content will level the playing field. She affirmed that,

> It goes back to pedagogy, styles, methods how to reach students. Starting a lesson to interest is important. It's about leveling the playing field for the students. It's about giving them real world experiences. Giving them hands-on materials and knowing who the students are, are all important aspects of delivering content.

Figure 7 shows evidence of supports I observed in classrooms.

Figure 7. Supports

Figure 7 displays supports teachers posted as accommodations for students who need them. These supports were posted in the Hmong language and were used: as sentence starters in oral speaking, as a rubric checklist for writing a sentence, and as guide to writing poetry in writing.

I observed during many sessions and in different classrooms, teachers code-switched back and forth between both languages. According to the educators, comprehension was most important. When students had questions or did not understand a particular topic, teachers spoke

in Hmong first and then checked for comprehension in English. Students were given the opportunity to choose their language of preference to answer the teacher.

Setting high expectations was another normed observation and discussion that participants agreed upon. Objectives were clear and delivery was comingled with, at many times, hands-on projects that were interactive. Student interest was high and involvement occurred in most lessons I observed.

Being Productive with Resources

Another pre-determined theme was *resources*. This data for this theme was recorded from observations as well as during interview sessions. The observational data field notes indicated that resources in English were translated into Hmong. For example, books in English were translated into a Hmong version. Posters, signs, and bulletin boards posted were both in English and in Hmong.

All teachers followed a district protocol, translating books, documents, posters, among other materials into Hmong. Teachers take on different roles in the creation of resources for the Hmong bilingual El program. In addition to being teachers, they become "translators and curriculum creators," among other roles.

Having little resources in the Hmong language was a barrier for the educators; however, they continued performing their responsibilities as educators by translating documents, books, posters, signs, etc. to meet the needs of their English learners. Using a district protocol in translation and keeping in mind copyright laws, teachers and teacher aides operated instruction in their class using the little resources they have with positivity of hoping to make a difference in the lives of the students they served. Figure 8 shows examples of translated resources developed by educators.

Figure 8. Translated Resources

Figure 8 shows resources that teachers translated for their classrooms. These translated resources included reading books, posters, signs, poems, and writing books.

Challenges

From data collected at lunch and dinner interviews a main theme emerged about challenges faced by the Hmong bilingual El program. Under this theme, I found the following eight sub-themes:

- Lack of Equitable Distribution of Funding,
- Lack of High Expectations,
- Identity Loss,

- Language Loss,
- Parent Challenges,
- Shortage of Resources,
- Shortage of Staffing, and
- Systemic Oppression.

A total of thirty-three references yield these emerged themes. All participants agreed the root causes of challenges come from systemic oppression. These sub-themes are organized in no particular order.

Lack of Equitable Distribution of Funding

Lack of funding due to systemic oppression came up as a sub-theme. This theme had three references, although, one of the thirteen questions addressed it directly. All three references indicated that there is funding but that equitable distribution of funding is currently not employed. One participant noted that, "In my opinion and observations, resources are not allocated equitably." Another participant added, "No, it [funding] is not distributed equitably. We are treated as equals but not but not in an equitable manner. We [Hmong bilingual El program] lack resources because we can't just go to the library and grab Hmong materials. We need more funding."

Lack of High Expectations

Participants reportedly thought that the lack of high expectations by a broken system put their program and students at a disadvantage. They stated that the lack of high expectations stem from the lack of parent involvement in their program. Participants reported that the system took advantage of this lack of involvement by not helping to create a more equitable place of learning for the students. One participant stated, "we have less parent involvement therefore

there is less of that higher expectation for our students." It was also believed by the all in this study that a systematic failure of high expectations caused everyone within it to shame and blame each other. "It comes down to a blaming and shaming of the students and parents," stated one participant.

Identity Loss

Identity loss by the students is a sub-theme that emerged as voiced by the all in this study. They stated that identity loss stemmed from a culture of a system that doesn't believe in what the Hmong bilingual El program was working hard to achieve. The culture within a larger system has worked hard to derail students and their families from keeping their Hmong identity, as believed by the participants. This culture, according to them, does not value the Hmong identity and placed a higher emphasis and importance on the identity of other ethnicities such as Chinese or Taiwanese. Participants said that this emphasis influenced the thinking of parents and students about the importance of being Hmong. From this influence, participants agreed that parents of students who attended the program do not believe in the mission and the goals of the program. As an end result, they concluded that students will continue to lose their Hmong identity.

Language Loss

This sub-theme of *language loss* is very closely connected to the *identity loss* sub-theme. Participants feel there is an overarching system that created a culture that does not value the identity of being Hmong. This overarching system was created in society and has infiltrated itself into the systemic structure of the school beginning with central administration and found its way to influence parents. This influence, according to the teachers and administrator, had a direct affect with how parents feel about the program. One participant stated that

because of this influence, "our parents don't really care about the language and culture." As a result of this influence, participants thought parents did not place much of an emphasis on maintaining identity and language.

Parent Challenges

Parent advocacy for the program was a big challenge for this program. The participants considered the parents as essential figures who did not always understand the extent of what advocacy can do to a program. They thought that parents' views of "involvement" were very different from what they (teachers) view of what constitutes as parent involvement. Parents came to large social events but when asked to advocate for the program, parents thought it was not their position. One participant noted, "some parents have said 'well you are already doing the advocating. You are already doing the work. Why do we need to show up? As long as I'm sending my children to school that's enough.' "

Shortage of Resources

Shortage of resources was a sub-theme that garnered many references. Participants, overwhelmingly stated that there was a shortage of resources available for them to teach content in Hmong. These resources included translated versions of books, content materials, posters, anchor charts, signs, media, technology, and cultural items. As a result, educators created their own resources. The participants operated as many roles. They were "teachers, translators, and curriculum creators" among other titles. One participant stated,

> We do all the translation and have a protocol. Everything we have, it's all done by the teachers. We are not paid as translators. We are paid at a curriculum rate. It's a lot of work. We do it because we need more resources for us and the kids to create some equity for them even though it's black and white. It's better than nothing.

The shortage of media and technological resources resulted in educators having to be creative. One participant stated, "There are no resources in this field that are in Hmong. We have to do it on our own. We have to video tape or show videos in English. It's hard."

Shortage of Staffing

Staffing is a sub-theme viewed as a challenge in the Hmong bilingual El program. The participants reported that there were a lot of Hmong teachers but not enough qualified Hmong teachers that can speak, read, and write in Hmong. One participant reported that

> For the Hmong immersion, we don't have enough teachers. We are short of staff. A lot of our Hmong teachers don't know how to read and write in Hmong. The language is one of the problem. They grew up in this country and they don't know how to speak in Hmong. It is slowly fading."

Systemic Oppression

Systemic oppression is a sub-theme that is connected to many of the sub-themes underneath the main theme of *challenges*. As noted above, many of the sub-themes occurred, as reported by all in this study, because of a systemic system that generated influences. It was expressed by the participants, overwhelmingly, that systemic oppression existed at two different levels and it affected the effectiveness and equity within the Hmong bilingual El program.

All in this study expressed that systemic oppression affected them as follows:

- How parents view the Hmong bilingual El program;
- What parents feel about identity, culture, and language;
- Parent advocacy;
- Distribution of funds and resources; and
- Equitable student access to the curriculum.

One participant stated,

> When we look at the schools with a community who has parents that have higher incomes, a majority of them being white, they (students) tend to have more resources. Their schools and facilities are brand new and they are first to get dibs on renovations compared to the East side. We're seen as the schools where, "Oh they're not going to have parents who will voice so we're not going to worry. They're last on our list."

Another participant stated,

> My community, we have been fighting for more funds but we're not seeing any of that. So we're constantly always fighting for it. The Chinese schools, they already have their second school because the students and parents are predominantly white whereas the Hmong immersion schools are Hmong and Southeast Asians.

When asked if there was a shortage of funds, it was reported that there was no shortage of funds. In fact, they thought the opposite. They reported that funds were available but that the distribution of the funds was not equitable, as one participant revealed, "Yes, there are funds. It is how funds appropriated that makes the difference. Is it equitable? I don't think so. I've seen it from my own experience."

Summary

This chapter describes findings from this study. In interview data from seven teachers and one administrator, all of whom are of Hmong descent, I found that two main themes and eighteen sub-themes emerged from this study. The two emerged main themes were *culturally relevant and responsive practices* and *challenges*. Ten sub-themes emerged under the main theme of *culturally relevant and responsive practices* while eight sub-themes emerged under *challenges*. These eighteen sub-themes included are as follows, in random order:

- *Intimacy of communal and social;*
- *Cultivation of experiences;*
- *Acceptance and integration of culture and language;*
- *Consideration of social well-being;*
- *Acknowledgement of student identity;*
- *Cultural relativism and advocacy;*
- *Planning with purpose;*
- *Exhausting Curriculum as a pathway to equity;*
- *Delivering with intentionality;*
- *Being productive with resources;*
- *Lack of high expectations;*
- *Identity loss;*
- *Language loss;*
- *Parent challenges;*
- *Shortage of resources;*
- *Shortage of staffing:* and
- *Systemic oppression.*

Chapter 5. Key Findings, Contributions, Implications & Recommendations

This chapter presents key findings, contributions, implications, and recommendations of this qualitative case study.

The research questions in that guided this study were as follows:

- How and in what ways is education of English learners of Hmong decent promoted?
- Are these ways equitable? Are these ways inclusive? Why or why not?
- How are bilingual programs integrating culturally responsive and relevant practices meeting the needs of the whole English learner of Hmong descent?

I examined how educational equity is integrated in the bilingual program at Jackson Elementary School in the St. Paul Public School District in St. Paul, Minnesota. My methods included observations in classrooms led by seven participating teachers. They and one administrator shared in interviews their perspectives and experiences of the practices they integrated within their teaching pedagogies for their English learners of Hmong descent.

In the key findings, I found the following two main themes: first, *culturally relevant and responsive practices (CRRP),* a pre-determined theme developed from my model and literature review. Then the theme, *challenges*, emerged from my analyses. I also found eighteen sub-themes under these main themes. The following sections present a discussion of these themes and sub-themes in relation to my model and literature review.

Key Findings

CRRP #1: Teaching the Whole Child

This study was done through the lens of critical theory. Critical theory, according to Brookfield (2005), outlines tasks for society. These tasks question the status quo and challenge current ideology planted in the language we use, the cultural expectations of society, and social

norms (Cranton, 2016). Nolet (2016) discussed the importance of having a critical perspective against what might be classified as "racist and sexist" with inequitable distribution of resources. The bilingual El program at Jackson Elementary School does just this; questions societal norms of what school should look like, feel like, and sound like for English learners of Hmong descent.

Within the sustainable-development goals of the United Nations are two goals that closely connect to this study: Goal 4: Quality Education, and Goal 10: Reduced Inequality (United Nations, 2017). These goals aim to ensure that students receive equitable and inclusive education with the objective of reducing inequality and creating problem solvers in society. The participants of this study noted a drastic difference between their program and the "mainstream" programs that serve English learners of Hmong descent. With a dual language immersion model, the bilingual El program aimed to meet the needs of the whole child, encompassing different components meant to be equitable and inclusive.

Noted through class observations and interview sessions, the dynamic atmosphere of the program outlined a cry out to society questioning the norms of how public schools currently and mostly educate English learners of Hmong descent. Indicated in the programming, the; curriculum, languages used, planning process, delivery methods, cultural relativism of teachers to students, teacher advocacy, and integration of the Hmong language, culture and history in content areas, the Hmong bilingual El program at Jackson Elementary School was designed to be relevant and responsive to the needs of their students. The program aimed to connect learning in the classroom to modern society bridging student identity and cultural self-awareness to the needs of society as indicated by participants in this study who deemed it important to keep

cultural roots of their English learners of Hmong descent but to ingrain an understanding of how to acculturate to a changing society.

Ladson-Billings (1994) stated that often times, (educational systems and teachers) employ a pre-conceived societal view of students and categorize them into these "developed societal categories." The students attending the Hmong bilingual El program at Jackson Elementary were classified into a societal normed category as English learners, those who are not yet fluent in the English language and put on leveled spectrum that defined their language levels, from 1-6, in Hmong and in English. The grouping of students into this normed language leveled group is needed. It was not meant to segregate but to have a deeper and true understanding of where each child was in his or her language proficiency in English and Hmong. This was needed for a more effective kind of instruction that differentiated not only the academic piece but the language piece as well. Differentiating based on academic and language needs helped build a more inclusive learning environment for English learners of Hmong descent. These levels of proficiency were used as a piece of the whole English learner child to better plan and deliver instruction to meet his or her needs. This piece of the whole child, according to the World-class Instructional Design and Assessment or WIDA (2018), was important in the consideration of equitable teaching practices.

Ladson-Billings (1994) and Gay (2000) argued the importance of creating a learning environment that is relevant and responsive to the needs of the students. Similar to Ladson-Billings (1994) and Gay (2000), Paris & Alim (2017) argued the need to sustain pedagogies that are culturally relevant and responsive and break the cycle of only accepting white middle class norms in school systems. According to Ladson-Billings (1994), educational systems and teachers engage in "assimilationist teaching behaviors" when they do not consider the cultural

aspects of a student as an important piece in the teaching and learning processes. In Ladson-Billing's work, she emphasized the consequences of designing learning that is well connected to a student's cultural identity, taking into consideration in the teaching and learning processes the child whole. Gay (2000) argued the importance of being responsive to the needs of the students and considering the different aspects and learning styles of each student to reach success in learning. It was important to take the cultural aspects of the students into consideration, at the Hmong bilingual El program, as they continued to strive towards making learning relevant and responsive to the needs of their students. They emphasized over and over again the gravity of seriousness of connecting learning to cultural backgrounds of their students. It was important, that this be brought to life through everything that was implemented in the program, beginning with the planning stages of what to incorporate in the curriculum to delivery of content and assessment of student learning. This relevance and responsiveness to student learning was evident, not only in the supports given to students during academic content teaching time, but also through the social and communal pieces throughout the day. This was evident in the displays of cultural artifacts, drawings, hangings, posters, bulletin boards, phrases, and signs throughout the physical school environment in addition to the attitudes of staff in the building and the events that took place.

The World Class Instructional Design and Assessment's (WIDA) (2008) focus is to create equity for English learners through the design of curriculum and assessment for English learners. WIDA's design focuses on the whole child taking into account the language levels of each child in the different languages the child speaks or is exposed to. Similar to this view, is Beeman and Urow's (2013) argument for the integration of content taught in two different

languages through what they framed as "biliteracy," creating a multilingual holistic perspective of the needs of English learners of Hmong descent.

This study's findings were determined using the concept of the whole child with the integration of Hmong culture, language, and history in the curriculum, building a more culturally relevant and responsive learning atmosphere. Consideration of the whole child included attention to the different language levels throughout the planning, teaching, and assessment processes with integrated culture, history, and language. This attention served as a contributor to the understanding of creating a culturally relevant and responsive atmosphere and was used to determine the findings. Attention to a student's language level was used as confirmation of the teachers' abilities to understand the complex process of language learning prior to reaching the goals of each curriculum content.

CRRP #2: Intimacy of Communal & Social

The Hmong community is a very social community surrounding a close and tight-knit traditional clan system (Julian, 2004; Faderman, 1998; Her & Buley-Meissner, 2012) The feel of an authentic social community enveloped the atmosphere at the bilingual El program at Jackson Elementary School. The curriculum embodied many aspects that were connected to communal and social ingredients. The communal and social aspects of life are holistic of the Hmong traditions and cultural ways of life; therefore, it was adopted into the Hmong bilingual El program.

Fusing a model resembling Hmong clan structure and social well-being and integrating the importance of respecting the elders and for those with a professional title, teaches students life-long skills, not only to be practiced in the Hmong bilingual El program, but in society. These skills were developed as a first stage into the process of teaching and learning at the

Hmong bilingual El program. When mutual respect, roles, and obligations are understood, students and teachers display these understandings with reciprocity which makes the teaching and learning processes more meaningful. It set the stage for more in-depth learning that encompassed culturally relevant and responsive practices.

A communal society feel and social respect practiced amongst the staff formed cohesive partnerships that developed into a model for students to follow. This silent model set the tone and understanding of mutual respect not only for adults but students, as well. This model carried over to the daily community school-wide meeting. The everyday community events garnered much of a societal and communal feel. This component followed a model resembling Hmong clan structure and social well-being. Students, teacher aids, lunch personnel, teachers, and the administrator came together during this time to practice universal agreements within the school. This showed unity, displayed respect for each other, and recognized the traditional ways of life of the Hmong. This unity demonstrated the core of Hmong traditional beliefs, illustrating obligations and responsibilities towards each other in a respectful manner. Additionally, this unity served as a reminder that everyone in the community was connected and the well-being of others affected the well-being of self.

CRRP #3: Cultivation of Experiences

A multilingual perspective of the world creates a more holistic view of how education should be taught to multilingual learners such as that of Els of Hmong descent (Beeman & Urow, 2015). Multilingual education, according to Beeman and Urow (2015) should be taught through biliteracy where content is taught in two languages but should also include meaningful experiences that expose students to content in context. The bilingual El program at Jackson Elementary School cultivated an environment that allowed students to experience academic as

well as cultural and social content of the Hmong culture in context, connected to academic standards and expectations. The program provided opportunities for students to take fieldtrips to community events and sites that connected to the curriculum.

The experience opportunities provided outside of the school created a space meant to fill a missing piece in traditional schools serving English learners of Hmong descent. These experiences created the following four purposes:

- Helped solidify student connection to self-identity;
- Created a bridge between students and the community;
- Strengthened the acquaintance between students and the elderly; and
- Affiliated students to their deep hmong cultural roots and traditions in diverse settings.

These various experiences brought to light a deeper understanding of the connectedness of daily and complex issues and events in society to contents taught in the classroom. The exploration of different herbs planted in the garden, the stories told by the elderly, the respectful manner shown by students to the elderly, the bartering at the flea-markets provided a more comprehensive form of learning that inputs information through experiential forms.

This enhanced the education provided to English learners of Hmong descent and served as another form of differentiating inclusive instruction to meet their (Els of Hmong descent) needs. I agree with Reeves (2004), Tung (2013) and Cummins (2000) when they stated that experiences which contribute to a rich cultural type of learning add to a more progressive approach that builds on "families' cultural and linguistic assets" (Tung, 2013, p. 2). This approach walks away from a "subtractive" model which seeks to assimilate English learners into

all English classrooms as fast as possible (Garcia et al., 2008). It operates in a "moving forward" approach that respects English learners of Hmong descent as a whole.

CRRP #4: Acceptance & Integration of Culture & Language

I agree with Ladson-Billings (2015), Gay (2000), and Paris and Alim (2017) when they discussed the need to be culturally relevant, culturally responsive, and culturally sustaining and defined these as crucial in the academic and social successes of students. The same is true with language success. The WIDA Consortium was created as part of a passage to help build language equity for English learners through an equitable created curriculum. With a combination of these components (culturally relevant, culturally responsive, culturally sustaining, and language success), culture, language, and history were integrated into the curriculum at the Hmong bilingual El program. This integration provided students the opportunity to learn, respect, and accept themselves as Hmong. Combining these different components into the curriculum sent a strong message to students the need to identify with who they were as individuals and how they can use their heritage to help them navigate through society. It also taught the students the importance of connecting and staying grounded to their roots and that their roots matter in society. The connection made between their Hmong identity and American identity was important to the navigation students will have to maneuver in their lives in modern society. This connection revealed to the students that identifying themselves with their cultural roots was important but that in current America, for them to successful academically and socially, they will need to learn to operate in a world where it isn't only Hmong or American, but both.

The physical signs, posters, bulletin boards, and Hmong artifacts created an authentic feel of cultural shock from the expectations of what society has labeled the physical environment of most traditional schools to have. The atmosphere constituted for a new kind of "fresh air" from societal norms that have dictated what traditional schools should have on their walls and what should be taught. The love and belief that teaching English learners of Hmong descent using their cultural root, identity, history, and language as the means to academic and social successes was evident in this atmosphere.

CRRP #5: Acknowledgement of Hmongness & Accepting Students

The curriculum integration of culture and language helps to build student identity. This was what Ladson-Billings (1994), Paris and Alim (2017) and Gay (2000) have argued, needs to happen to create a more inclusive classroom that encompasses the wholeness of a child. Building an inclusive classroom allows students to connect from their identity to societal situations. Understanding that their identity can help them journey through these societal situations can help them become successful academically and socially.

The acceptance of a student's identity is accepting the student's language, culture, and history. Accepting a student's language, culture, and history is accepting that students are unique in their own learning processes. Welcoming this understanding provides educators a more holistic perspective into the learning needs of English learners of Hmong descent. This understanding allowed teachers at the Hmong bilingual El program to plan, deliver, and assess students, holistically, while creating a more inclusive learning environment that infused the students' language, culture, and history in all aspects of the learning process. As a result, the learning curve became a strength shown through the dialogues between students in small group

interactions. This strength was also shown in the work displayed and performed by the students with strong and deep language attributing to their (students') acceptance of their own identity as Hmong.

CRRP #6: Cultural Relativism & Advocacy

Cultural relativism provides researchers the opportunity to assess a different culture based on the context of that culture and not compare it to a culture they (researchers) grew up in (Howson, 2009). At the Hmong bilingual El program, the use of cultural relativism to assess and understand students as they were, culturally, created an biased, more comprehensive perspective of who the students were. Cultural relativism helps educators create a more inclusive environment exhausting all parts of the English learner in the process of teaching and learning. This whole child learning is what Ladson-Billings (1994), Gay (2000) and Paris and Alim (2017) suggested schools adopt.

The lived life experiences of the teachers and administrator helped them create a sense of empathy for the students they served. The injustice, unfairness, and hard bearings experienced contribute to the critical role they (educators and administrators) have in the learning process of English learners of Hmong descent. These experiences resulted in an urgent need to create a strong advocacy for the Hmong bilingual El program. This advocacy became a personal "fight" and ingrained a deep passion to question the status quo of what education currently looks like for many English learners of Hmong descent.

CRRP # 7: Planning with Purpose for the Whole Child & Consideration of Social Well-Being

Ladson-Billings (1994) and Gay (2000) challenged the educational system to make learning relevant and responsive to the needs of all students. Without relevance and responsiveness from student identity to student learning, they argued, students will lose sight of the connectedness of their learning to the work of the world. Meeting the needs of the whole child for the Hmong bilingual El program at Jackson Elementary School began with the planning process. The whole child should be at the central of planning. At the center of each child is the social well-being. This social well-being is considered as the first step to creating equitable access for the students.

The process used to plan at the Hmong bilingual El program for the students was very different from other processes used by educators. The consideration of social well-being of students at the forefront of the planning process is whole child examination that considers the emotional needs prior to the academic needs. This planning stage outlined a passage that was connected to other pieces of the teaching and learning processes that honored the child as he was culturally, linguistically, and historically. This, argued by Ladson-Billings (1994), Gay (2000) and Paris and Alim (2017), is whole child learning, creating culturally relevant and responsive practices that are inclusive of all pieces of students.

CRRP #8: Exhausting Curriculum as a Pathway to Equity

The contents within a curriculum can create equity for students when it is connected to the students' culture (Ladson-Billings, 1994), (Gay, 200), and (Paris & Alim, 2017). The contents within the classroom need to reflect that of society in making education more accessible. This practice results in "educating for sustainability," which is needed in society to help solve issues of tomorrow (Nolet, 2016). The creators of the Hmong bilingual El program integrated Hmong history, culture, and language into the curriculum. Different thematic ingredients were

blended into the curriculum, making for a diverse path to student success. Academic and social instructions were done through both the Hmong and English languages with the goal of being fluent, academically and socially, in both.

The themes within the curriculum bridged to the overall theme of *I am Hmong American.* This was the core of the program. The curriculum was created as an itinerary in the navigation between their (students) identity of being Hmong American. Each grade level had their own sub-theme, creating a ladder of learning that directly was connected to the next grade's sub-theme. This was intentional planning of using the processes of teaching and learning within a set curriculum to connect to the bigger "picture" of what education is for. The content taught in the classroom connected students to societal situations and provided opportunities for students to make the necessary bridge between content and social learning and societal issues. Balance, adaptation and navigation between the two cultures are what can help lead students to social and academic successes.

The curriculum comingled experiences into the academic pieces of content. This fundamental piece was added to provide real-world, hands on experiences that helped bridge classroom learning to society. These experiences brought a deeper level of equity in making the learning process of English learners of Hmong descent more leveled to the learning of mainstream students. They (experiences) helped level the playing field, clearing a reachable pathway to the curriculum for English learners of Hmong descent.

WIDA (2018) specified the need to infuse equity through the use of curriculum, taking into consideration the different language levels of each English learner. As Gay (2000), Ladson-Billings (1994), and Paris and Alim (2017) stated, language is part of teaching the whole child. This is an integral piece of the child and to ignore it means to ignore the child as a

whole. Teaching content through two languages provides a more multilingual holistic perspective (Beeman and Urow, 2013). A multilingual holistic perspective provides teachers the resources and the mentality needed to plan, teach, and assess students with a more comprehensive view. This is critical in the processes of teaching and learning for English learners of Hmong descent.

CRRP #9: Delivering with Intentionality

Intentionality in delivery is a meaningful component in being culturally relevant, responsive, and sustaining to engage students in the learning process. Using the dual language immersion model, content was delivered through the use of both the English and Hmong languages at the Hmong bilingual El program. Using the students' native language and the English language, provided an equitable practice that leveled the playing field for English learners of Hmong descent. Beeman and Urow (2013) stated that biliteracy (teaching content through two languages) provides best practices for English learners. This is a crucial component, as educators take into consideration the whole child in the teaching and learning processes of Els of Hmong descent.

Visual, kinesthetic, and language supports enhanced the intentionality of content delivery. These differentiated supports were tools used as cornerstones for the various language and content abilities of each English learner in the Hmong bilingual El program. Making these supports available at all times created a more inclusive learning structure that taught students to understand the importance of knowing that it was okay to use supports to help in their learning. Using a variety of supports, intentionally geared to meet the different language and content abilities of the students, created a deeper learning with a bigger impact of comprehensible input.

CRRP #10: Being Productive with Resources

Resources, according to Amadioha (2009), serve as an instruction material that "constitute the media of exchange through which a message transaction is facilitated" (p. 61). I agree with Amadioha. Resources engage the "receiver" and the "source." The resources act as the mode of communication in which new information is received.

The Hmong bilingual El program at Jackson Elementary was one of the first Hmong bilingual programs in the United States. As a result, many of the needed resources have not yet been created and made available to purchase. Resources in the Hmong bilingual El program was scarce. There was an overwhelmingly shortage of resources in the Hmong language. These resources included books, posters, and curriculum content materials among other resources. Regardless of this mass shortage of resources in Hmong, teachers and aides worked as a collaborative team putting their creativity to work. Books were hand-translated from English to Hmong without losing the authenticity and message of the book. Translating the books did not take away from the aesthetic beauty of the visuals in the book.

Challenges

This study inquired about equities embedded in the Hmong bilingual El program at Jackson Elementary School; however, some challenges and obstacles emerged that cannot be ignored. Tung (2013) and Cummins (2000) both argued that most El programs operate on a deficit model, functioning in subtractive approaches that dismiss the asset the student brings to classrooms as bilingual and bicultural learners. I agree that many English learners were put to shame when they used their native language in schools, contributing to an identity crisis and the navigation between a native identity and the modern American identity.

There was a systemic type of oppression occurring within the larger context of the district. This affected the ability of educators and administrators to perform their responsibilities fully to serve their English learners of Hmong descent. Participants and the program were marginalized by district administrators who may not view the Hmong bilingual program as critical or as important as other bilingual programs in the district. Because of this influence from central administration many obstacles stood in the way of the Hmong bilingual El program at Jackson Elementary School including: inequitable distribution of funds; shortage of highly trained bilingual teachers; lack of high expectations; lack of identity acceptance; and challenges with parent understanding, support, and advocacy.

The Hmong bilingual El program was not a high priority for central administration. Because administration did not view the Hmong bilingual El program as a priority, lower expectations were imposed on English learners of Hmong descent. Students were expected not to succeed in academics as much as those of other bilingual programs in the school district. It was reported that this influence carried to how parents viewed the Hmong bilingual El program.

The educators and administrator addressed their concerns about parent support. It was reported that parents were passive aggressive and were reactive to issues that affected the Hmong bilingual El program. The administrator and educators understood the hurdles parents go through but reported that the lack of parents voicing their concerns to administration had a direct impact of the allocation of funds to the Hmong bilingual El program. This affected the amount of staffing and resources. The educators reported frustrations because of this shortage of resources. If these funds were allocated equitably, it could be used to hire individuals to create resources for the program or to hire more Hmong bilingual staff members and teachers.

Educators reportedly were challenged when parents did not value what they do as teachers and when they (parents) devalue the process of the Hmong bilingual El program. These challenges reportedly contributed to non-acceptance of their [students'] Hmong identity, thus making the responsibilities of teaching much more difficult.

It is concluded that with systemic oppression occurring within the district and funds not being distributed equitably to the Hmong bilingual El program, that teachers looked to put blame on a vulnerable group of individuals rather than looking at the larger issue and cause of systemic oppression. The teachers and administrator in this study wanted to bring about change and advocacy. They sensed the urgency to do so; however, communication pleading for assistance from parents about this urgent need to advocate hasn't really evolved to the level of success they (teachers) had hoped. It was reported that parents wanted to continue to bring their children to the Hmong bilingual El program but refused to advocate mainly because they (parents) did not think it was their responsibility.

Participants reported that there was enough funding to meet all the demands within the Hmong bilingual El program; however, the allocation of funds was inequitable. They said that other bilingual programs have moved passed the Hmong bilingual El program even though these other programs began after the Hmong bilingual El program. These other bilingual programs reportedly had students classified by society as higher class attending with parents who made more noises, therefore, received more funding.

Contributions

There were five contributions from this study of equities embedded in a Hmong bilingual El program through the sustainable lens of critical theory. Table 3 summarizes the five contributions from this study. The columns on the left list each contribution with the columns on the right detailing a description of each conclusion. Following this table, I explained each of the contributions in more detail.

Table 3. Contributions

Integration Pedagogies	Bilingual program through a biliteracy model integrates a multilingual, holistic perspective.
Contribution to Literature	This study contributes to literature of equitable practices for English learners of Hmong descent.
Understanding of Education for Sustainability	A bilingual El program creates a new form of education that connects to the wholeness of a student helping to create problem solvers of society.
Culture, History, Language	The integration of culture, history, and language of Els of Hmong descent elevate their successes, socially and academically.
Systemic Oppression	Systemic oppression and marginalization are obstacles.

Integration in English learner Programs

First, this study contributed to my understanding of integrating culturally relevant, culturally responsive, and culturally sustaining pedagogies that encompasses the whole English learner child of Hmong descent at the center of academic, social, and language successes. This integration is done through biliteracy with the creation of multilingual and holistic perspectives looking into all components within the dual language immersion program for Hmong students

(Beeman & Urow, 2013). The biliteracy model operates in a 2.0 paradigm that serves students in a more multilingual, holistic perspective, opening the diverse pathways to the curriculum. Additionally, with the integration of content through two different languages levels the playing field for students of diverse backgrounds.

New Educational Paradigms

Second, although there is much literature about the different programs serving English learners and the need to incorporate teaching that is relevant, responsive, and sustaining when working with English learners, there is a lack of literature about educational paradigms meeting the specific needs of English learners of Hmong descent (Ladson-Billings, 1994), (Gay, 2000), (Paris & Alim, 2017). I conclude that this study helped close that gap.

English Learners to Sustainability Education

My third contribution is to the field of sustainability education (Nolet, 2016). He argued that education can be the ailment of sustainability and the method moving forward towards sustainability. Incorporating education for sustainability, Nolet argued, creates an atmosphere that will prepare students to solve problems of tomorrow. Evidence from this study proposes a new kind of education for English learners of Hmong decent (Orr, 2004). I assumed that models of ESL programs in Paradigm 2.0 best meet the needs of English learners of Hmong descent providing a more equitable type of education that questions inequitable hidden structures of the educational system.

Whole Child Learning to English Learners

My fourth contribution is whole child learning to English learners. Cultural, language, and history integration in an educational program enhances language development, academic achievements, and social well-being of English learners of Hmong descent. A close inter-

weaving of different aspects of the Hmong culture into a bilingual biliteracy model respects students' identities, backgrounds, histories, cultures, language levels, and abilities. Educational experiences that incorporate a child's language, history, and culture into the curriculum can elevate a child's acceptance of his identity as well as the ability to perform successfully in academics and in social abilities.

Educational Systems

My fifth contribution is that systemic oppression within educational systems is alive and well, dividing groups of individuals operating within the system and influencing the distribution of resources. I found empirical evidence that systemic oppression causes stress for those who operate within and conclude that systemic oppression must be tackled at the source in a manner that is cohesive and collaborative. As evidenced from this study, marginalization hurts not only the students but the teachers and parents. Relationships were strained and the best operations can't be adequately addressed when relationships are strained. Systemic oppression affects the distribution of resources and contributes to inequitable education for English learners of Hmong descent. Through a collaborative stand can oppression and marginalization at its source.

Implications

The implication of the challenges is that although the goal of the bilingual El program is to provide equity to its learners by integrating culturally relevant and responsive practices, there were obstacles that stood in the way of full implementation of these practices. In order to overcome these challenges, the overall systemic issue must be solved within the system as a whole: central administration, school administration, parents, stakeholders, and students. In order to address the implications, in the next section I propose ten recommendations.

Recommendations

I propose the following ten recommendations to guide stakeholders, policy makers and researchers in addressing embedding equity in their programs serving English learners of Hmong descent. These recommendations are focused on whole child learning with integrated practices that have been defined in this study as culturally relevant and responsive. These recommendations are meant to elevate and level the playing field for English learners of Hmong descent who, are mostly served in ESL programs functioning in a deficit model with subtractive approaches. From this study, I make the following ten recommendations

- Accountability and policy measures need to be put in place to help close the growing achievement gap between English learners of Hmong descent and mainstream students.
- Bilingual El programs should be expanded, because English learners of Hmong descent deserve the best service-delivery model.
- Hmong bilingual El programs must have equitable funding.
- Parent training must be provided resources for parents. Their voices matter.
- Funding must be equitably allocated for finding, training, and maintaining highly qualified bilingual teachers for the Hmong bilingual El program.
- Resources are crucial for social and academic successes.
- Professional development is needed regarding the needs of Els of Hmong descent.
- Collaborative efforts are needed because teaching English learners of Hmong descent should be shared among all staff members in school.
- Social-welfare resources should be available at every stage of planning, teaching, and assessment.

- Future research should be conducted on influences of Hmong bilingual El programs on students successes, as well as study from community and parent perspective son Hmong bilingual El program.

These recommendations are detailed below.

Accountability & Policies

The achievement gap between English learners and mainstream students continue to widen (Gándara et al., 2003) (Gottlieb, 2016). Current accountability measures do not follow through with the need to address learning gaps between English learners and mainstream students. The continuation of policies to mandate equitable processes in educational systems should be increased. A set of accountable measures should be created to monitor equitable practices in all educational systems. This accountability measure should be monitored frequently as a means to make certain that all English learners are given the necessary supports to succeed academically and socially. Should accountability measures not be met by certain educational systems, action plans should be implemented immediately.

Expansion of Bilingual El Programs

It is noted that a bilingual El program is best practice for meeting the needs of English learners of Hmong descent. It is part of what this study defines as a program fitting into Paradigm 2.0. The integration of culture and the students' language into content, comingled with English teaches students to have a multilingual holistic perspective of the world. Bilingual programs value the identity of students and bring a combination of academic and social successes. Beeman and Urow (2013), WIDA (2018), Ladson-Billings (1994), Paris and Alim (2017), Gay (2000), and the United Nations (2017) all support inclusive education for all stu-

dents regardless of ethnicity. The expansion of bilingual El programs can help close an inequitable gap in education that continues to widen and will contribute to a more inclusive learning environment.

Equitable Funding

Tung (2013) argued that adequate funding is not provided to El programs. García et al., (2008) asserted that the subsidy for English learners in Title III funding is not sufficient enough to level the playing field for Els. To level this playing field, I recommend that allocation of equitable funding needs to start from the State level and passed on to individualized educational systems. Equitable funding needs to be based on more than academic success and should consider all aspects of students. This funding should be transparent with reasons attached to the transparency in connection to allocation of funds.

Parent Training

According to García et al., (2008) parent involvement has a direct relationship to "better attendance, higher achievement, improved attitudes about learning and higher graduation rates" (p. 43). Having their support and advocacy supports an authentic sense of community and partnership. I recommend that parent training in student advocacy, involvement with student and school, and navigation between cultures should be topics of interest. Many times, it was mentioned that parents lack the skills needed to stay involved and advocate for the interest of their students. Without proper training and advocacy, parents of Els of Hmong descent may not understand their rights and may not realize that their voice matters. Trainings should be provided as a support to give them the proper tools; however, this training should be differentiated and be culturally relevant and responsive.

Staffing

Staffing was a challenge for the Hmong bilingual El program at Jackson Elementary School. Not only the St. Paul Public School District but all educational systems should make a concerted effort to recruit highly trained teachers. English learners of Hmong descent have the right to access highly trained teachers. Connected to this challenge is the equitable allocation of funds. García et al., (2008) argued that funding for Title III is not sufficient enough to level the playing field for English learners. Part of this leveling the playing field is ensuring that qualified and highly trained staff are available to meet the needs of English learners. Without this equitable allocation, access to highly trained teachers cannot be achieved for the English learners of Hmong descent.

Necessary Resources

The United States Department of Education (1999) conducted a study that indicated students with necessary resources outperformed those that did not have the appropriate resources. Educators are expected to meet the needs of their English learners of Hmong descent. Without proper resources, it not only hurts the teaching process, but ultimately hurts the learning process of English learners of Hmong descent. Curriculum resources should be made available and kept current for educators and students. Current board and district policies should note this need and be transparent in the allocation of funds for this purpose.

Professional Development

Gándara et al. (2003) argued that part of making education more equitable and purposeful, educational systems should provide and increase staff developments for more in depth

understanding of the needs of English learners. Educational systems should take serious consideration of providing more professional development surrounding the needs of English learners of Hmong descent. This should include topics such as but not limited to: being culturally relevant and responsive, how to be equitable in providing supports for English learners using their English-language proficiency scores, equitable assessment of Els, how to integrate in universal teaching scaffolds that will enhance the learning experience for English learners of Hmong descent, and how to effectively communicate and collaborate with parents in their children's education.

Collaborative Effort

Honigsfeld and Dove (2010) noticed the need for English learner teachers, regular education teachers, Administration, and others to collaborate cohesively as one team in meeting the needs of English learners. They stated that educational systems still operate in a very disconnected paradigm. Often, El students are considered to be students of the El/bilingual teachers and are brushed off as their responsibility when they should be the responsibility of all staff members operating within the educational system. A more concerted and collaborative effort of collaboration should take place with the needs of English learners as the center of attention.

Social Welfare

Ladson-Billings (1994), Paris and Alim (2017), Gay (2000), and Beeman and Urow (2013) argued for the creation of a more equitable and inclusive school environment that teaches to the whole child. Similar to these authors, the United Nations (2017) stated that everyone has the right to an equitable and inclusive form of education and that this creation shouldn't be a topic of question but should already exists for all. These equitable and inclusive

environments need to address whole child learning, encompassing culturally relevant and responsive practices that should include the social welfare of each student. The social welfare of a student is very much connected to the wholeness of the child. This aspect (social welfare) is often missed in the planning, teaching, and assessment processes of teaching and learning, when it should be one of the first aspects considered in any process.

Future Research

It would be interesting to see the correlation of the effect of a bilingual El program on student successes, acceptance of identity, and how they approach complex issues in society. It would be compelling to know and understand the perspectives of the students who have gone through the program. The perspectives of students would allow for educational systems to make changes or keep the status quo.

Another recommendation for future research is to understand the perspectives of the community at large, other teachers who do not teach in a bilingual program, and administration about the bilingual program. Understanding their perspectives might help solve some causes of inequities and systemic oppression.

Parents' perspectives also present a great research idea. They are the most important teachers in their students' lives and, yet, their perspectives have not been heard. Understanding what they feel, think, and perhaps some fears of a bilingual program will help educational systems have a better understanding of how to best be collaborative partners with parents to reach student successes.

Limitations

This study yielded data from a small sample of eight participants at one program. There were no other participants at other El bilingual programs that could be used to compare and

contrast to the program at Jackson Elementary School. The data analysis, findings, and discussion came from this data and did not include the observations and perspectives of students, parents, teachers not working within the bilingual program, and central office administration.

Summary

This qualitative case study of a Hmong bilingual El program operating using the dual-language-immersion model in Paradigm 2.0 examined education of English learners of Hmong descent. Through analyses of data from interviews and observations, I found two main themes and eighteen sub-themes. I drew five contributions and made ten recommendations. Participants in this study faced challenges in adapting their practices under policies in a paradigm that did not foster equity, and that systemic oppression must be tackled at the source in a manner that is cohesive and collaborative.

Concluding Thoughts

As much as this was a professional study with a significance to effect and aid in policy programming and setting culturally relevant and responsive structures to create a more inclusive learning environment for English learners of all descent, it was also a personal journey that became the restorative justice piece of my own story. My experiences as an English learner helped develop my sense of urgency for the need to advocate for a more equitable form of education that levels the playing field for all English learners. Coming to terms with critical theory gave me the power to ask questions of the type of education our English learners receive in El programs across the United States. Critical theory helped me navigate through my experiences as an El learner, an educator, a Hmong woman, and a minority in society. This navigation led me to expose hidden inequitable structures of El programs. Beyond the exposure of these inequitable structures is the restorative justice piece of critical theory, meant to counter

the inequities by coming up with an action plan. It was because of the need to move forward, the need for an action plan, and the need to restore justice for English learners, that this study was born to life.

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Appendix A. Literature Map

Table A1. For Educators

Item	RQ	Sources
Tell me something about your background. When and where were you educated? When and where did you begin teaching?	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3	Ladson-Billings (1994) (2005) Gay (2000) Beeman & Urow (2013)
How would you describe your philosophy of teaching? What do you believe "works?"	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3	Ladson-Billings (1994) (2005) Gay (2000) Beeman & Urow (2013)
Can you think of any characteristics that Hmong American youngsters as a group bring to the classroom?	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3	Ladson-Billings (1994) (2005) Gay (2000) Paris & Alim (2017) Grant & Sleeter (2007) Beeman & Urow (2013)
What kinds of things have you done in the classroom that have facilitated the academic success of Hmong American students?	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3	Ladson-Billings (1994) (2005) Gay (2000) Paris & Alim (2017) Grant & Sleeter (2007) Nolet (2016) Orr (2004) Beeman & Urow (2013)
What kind of role do you believe parents play in the success of Hmong American students? How would you describe the kinds of relationships you've had with parents of students you've taught?	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3	Ladson-Billings (1994) (2005) Gay (2000) Paris & Alim (2017) Beeman & Urow (2013)
How do you think the schooling experience of the students you	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3	Ladson-Billings (1994 & 2005) Gay (2000) Paris & Alim (2017)

Item	RQ	Sources
teach differs from that of white students in middle-class communities?		Grant & Sleeter (2007) Nolet (2016) Orr (2004) United Nations (2015) (2018) Cudd, A.E. (2005) Beeman & Urow (2013)

Table A2. For Administrators

Item	RQ	Sources
Tell me something about your background. When and where were you educated? When and where did you begin teaching?	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3	Ladson-Billings (1994 & 2005) Gay (2000) Beeman & Urow (2013)
How would you describe your philosophy of teaching? What do you believe "works?"	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3	Ladson-Billings (1994 & 2005) Gay (2000) Beeman & Urow (2013)
Can you think of any characteristics that Hmong American youngsters as a group bring to the classroom?	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3	Ladson-Billings (1994 &2005) Gay (2000) Beeman & Urow (2013) Paris & Alim (2017) Grant & Sleeter (2007))
What kinds of things have you done in the educational setting that have facilitated the academic success of Hmong American students?	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3	Ladson-Billings (1994 & 2005) Gay (2000) Paris & Alim (2017) Grant & Sleeter (2007) Nolet (2016) Orr (2004) Beeman & Urow (2013)
What kind of role do you believe parents play in the success of Hmong American students? How would you describe the kinds of relationships you've had with parents of students you've taught?	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3	Ladson-Billings (1994 & 2005) Gay (2000) Paris & Alim (2017) Beeman & Urow (2013)
How do you think the schooling experience of the students you teach differs from that of white students in middle-class communities?	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3	Ladson-Billings (1994 & 2005) Gay (2000) Paris and Alim (2017) Grant & Sleeter (2007) Nolet (2016) Orr (2004) United Nations (2015) (2018) Cudd, A.E. (2005) Beeman & Urow (2013)

Item	RQ	Sources
Do you think there is a shortage in resources? If so, what resources?	RQ1, RQ2	Gándara, P., Rumberger, R., Maxwell-Jolly, J., & Callahan, R. (2003) García, O., Kleifgen, J., & Falchi, L. (2008) Fry, R. (2007) Amadioha, S. (2009) Tung, R. (2013) Gottlieb, M. (2016)
Do you think the allocation of funding is equitable to your program in contrast to other programs?	RQ1, RQ2	Gándara, P., Rumberger, R., Maxwell-Jolly, J., & Callahan, R. (2003) García, O., Kleifgen, J., & Falchi, L. (2008) Fry, R. (2007) Amadioha, S. (2009) Tung, R. (2013) Gottlieb, M. (2016)
Do you feel your program adequately addresses the needs of English learners of Hmong descent? If not, what may be some barriers? If so, how do you measure this?	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3	Gándara, P., Rumberger, R., Maxwell-Jolly, J., & Callahan, R. (2003) García, O., Kleifgen, J., & Falchi, L. (2008) Fry, R. (2007) Amadioha, S. (2009) Tung, R. (2013) Gottlieb, M. (2016) Ladson-Billings (1994) (2005) Gay (2000) Paris & Alim (2017) Grant & Sleeter (2007) Nolet (2016) Orr (2004) United Nations (2015) (2018) Beeman & Urow (2013) WIDA (2018)

Item	RQ	Sources
How do you ensure that the curriculum is equitable for English learners of Hmong descent?	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3	Gándara, P., Rumberger, R., Maxwell-Jolly, J., & Callahan, R. (2003) García, O., Kleifgen, J., & Falchi, L. (2008) Fry, R. (2007) Amadioha, S. (2009) Tung, R. (2013) Gottlieb, M. (2016) Ladson-Billings (1994) (2005) Gay (2000) Paris & Alim (2017) Grant & Sleeter (2007) Nolet (2016) Orr (2004) United Nations (2015) (2018) Beeman & Urow (2013) WIDA (2018)
How do you ensure that delivery methods of content meet the needs of English learners of Hmong descent? In other words, how do you teach & how do students learn? Are the activities models of Western model of delivery?	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3	Ladson-Billings (1994) (2005) Gay (2000) Paris & Alim (2017) Grant & Sleeter (2007) Beeman & Urow (2013)
How do you ensure that the linguistic abilities of Els of Hmong descent are met?	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3	Ladson-Billings (1994) (2005) Gay (2000) Paris & Alim (2017) Grant & Sleeter (2007) Beeman & Urow (2013) WIDA (2018)
How are you integrating historical, geographical, and family structure/traditions in your teaching/curriculum?	RQ1, RQ2, RQ3	Ladson-Billings (1994) (2005) Gay (2000)

Item	RQ	Sources
		Paris & Alim (2017) Grant & Sleeter (2007)

Appendix B. Scope of Work

Table B1. Design

Process	Description
Action 1: Understanding myself	I reflected on my experience as a refugee, an underserved student, and as professional El educator. In this process, I realized that inequities are not the norm and what has been normalized by society doesn't have to be accepted by me. Understanding the different pieces of my experience helped me form my thinking in a more critical way. As a result, critical theory and critical pedagogy became my friends. Critical theory became my lens in this study.
Action 2: Understanding current El models, limitations to these models, and what constitutes what I call a 3.0 paradigm	In my literature review, I researched three different strands that paved forward in my study. The first strand helped me understand current El programs still in practice in educational systems today. The second strand helped me understand limitations to these current El programs. Additionally, the second strand focused on what researchers feel would meet the needs of English learners as the whole child is integrated into the equation of teaching. In this integration is included culturally relevant and culturally responsive practices. Finally, the third strand focuses specifically on the population growth and education trends of Els of Hmong descent.
Action 3: Observations, interviews, and data collection	I will observe Hmong bilingual classrooms and interview teachers and the administrator at Jackson Elementary School. During observations in the classrooms, I will take anecdotal notes focusing on teacher actions, delivery methods, supports used, types of curriculum used, assessment, and language used in the classroom. I will act as an observer with no direct interactions with students; however, student interactions with teachers will noted in my notes as a venue in understanding the teachers' actions, responses, and modifications, if any, to meet needs of students. There will

Process	Description
	be a formal dinner interview group session with teachers and a one-on-one dinner interview with the administrator. The observations will take place at Jackson Elementary School while the dinner interview group sessions will take place outside of Jackson Elementary School at a mutual agreed upon restaurant. Interview sessions will be videotaped.
Action 4: Translate and Transcribe	Data collected from the interviews will be translated and transcribed. I will ask questions and respond entirely in English. The interviews are conducted in English; however, the norm in speaking between two Hmong individuals may include words from both Hmong and English mixed together in a sentence (even though I speak entirely in English). Because I am Hmong and understand the Hmong language and because the educators and administrator are also Hmong, at times answers from the educators and administrator might be in the Hmong language or include Hmong words in a mostly answered-English-sentence. Because of this, once I have transcribed and translated, I will have the transcription validated by another individual that is fluent in Hmong and English.
Action 5: Verification with educators and administrator	The transcribed script will be verified by all the educators and administrator. Changes will be made by the request of educators and administrator.
Action 6: Analyze data	Data collected will be analyzed comprehensively. A second reader will validate identification of themes and ideas.

Table B2. Data Collection

Method	Process	Rationale
Primary Source: Field notes by me from qualitative observations in classrooms	Qualitative observations in different bilingual classrooms will be done by me. I keep field notes of my observations.	Qualitative observations provide an authentic and intimate view of teacher practices, behaviors, assessment, language, and the curriculum used in the classrooms.
Secondary Source: Field notes that may need to be translated.	Field notes will be kept in my notebook and will be translated (if need be) and be validated by another Hmong scholar for accuracy.	Field notes are collected as a result of qualitative observations.
Secondary Source: Video recordings	Video recordings are used to record interviews in the group dinner interview sessions as well as the one-on-one administrator dinner interview session.	Video recordings are used for validity and to capture the educators and administrator answers in a more permanent form.
Secondary Source: Transcriptions of audio recordings	Video recordings will be transcribed, translated as needed, checked for accuracy by another Hmong individual, and verified by educators and administrator prior to data analysis.	Transcriptions and translations of video recordings will be used to check for accuracy.

Appendix C. Protocols

Items were are adopted and adapted from Ladson-Billings (1994, pp. 149-150), with the insertion of "Hmong American" instead of "African American."

The following protocol was administered to educators/teachers of English learners of Hmong descent.

1. Tell me something about your background. When and where were you educated? When and where did you begin teaching?
2. How would you describe your philosophy of teaching? What do you believe "works?"
3. Can you think of any characteristics that Hmong American youngsters as a group bring to the classroom?
4. What kinds of things have you done in the classroom that have facilitated the academic success of Hmong American students?
5. What kind of role do you believe parents play in the success of Hmong American students? How would you describe the kinds of relationships you've had with parents of students you've taught?
6. How do you think the schooling experience of the students you teach differs from that of white students in middle-class communities?

The following protocol was administered to administrators; items have been adjusted to fit their roles.

1. Tell me something about your background. When and where were you educated? When and where did you begin teaching?
2. How would you describe your philosophy of teaching? What do you believe "works?"
3. Can you think of any characteristics that Hmong American youngsters as a group bring to the classroom?
4. What kinds of things have you done in the educational setting that have facilitated the academic success of Hmong American students?
5. What kind of role do you believe parents play in the success of Hmong American students? How would you describe the kinds of relationships you've had with parents of students you've taught?
6. How do you think the schooling experience of the students you come across with differs from that of white students in middle-class communities?

The following protocol was administered to both educators/teachers and administrators.

1. Do you think there is a shortage in resources? If so, what resources?
2. Do you think the allocation of funding is equitable to your program in contrast to other programs?
3. Do you feel your program adequately addresses the needs of English learners of Hmong descent? If not, what may be some barriers? If so, how do you measure this?

4. How do you ensure that the curriculum is equitable for English learners of Hmong descent?
5. How do you ensure that delivery methods of content meet the needs of English learners of Hmong descent? In other words, how do you teach and how do students learn? Are the activities models of Western model of delivery?
6. How do you ensure that the linguistic abilities of English learners of Hmong descent are met?
7. How are you integrating historical, geographical, and family structure/traditions in your teaching and curriculum?

General protocol that was administered both teachers administrators ; it was adapted from .Creswell and Creswell (2018, p. 191).

1. Tell me more (asking for more information).
2. I need more detail (asking for more information).
3. Could you explain your response more (asking for an explanation)

Appendix D. Approval & Consents

6/5/19

Principal Investigator: Joy O'Neil
Protocol Number: 2019-24-05-27
Protocol Title: Equity in the education of English learners of Hmong descent
Protocol Approval Date: 5/27/19
Protocol Expiration Date: 5/26/24
Review Category: Exempt 2
UWSP FWA: 00017591

Dear Dr. O'Neil,

The above-referenced human-subjects research project has been approved by the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point Institutional Review Board (IRB) Committee. This approval is limited to the activities described in the approved protocol, and extends to the performance of these activities at each applicable sited identified in the application for IRB review. In accordance with this approval, the specific conditions for the conduct of this study are listed below, and informed consent from subjects must be obtained as indicated. Additional conditions for the general conduct of human-subjects research may be detailed below.

Informed Consent to Participate in Human Subjects Research

Xee Yang is a doctoral student at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and would appreciate your participation in this study. It is designed to understand inequities, if any, in the education of English learners of Hmong descent. If there are inequities, this study seeks to understand barriers to equity. Additionally, it seeks to understand how a bilingual school integrates culturally responsive and relevant practices in instruction with the whole English learner in mind. Finally, this study seeks to connect equity in the education of English learners to sustainability. You are asked to participate in allowing Xee to observe in your classroom and participate in a group dinner interview. Your participation is voluntary. The benefit of this study contributes to the understanding of root causes that (inequities, if any) that could contribute to the growing achievement gap between English learners of Hmong descent and their English-speaking peers.

I do not anticipate more than minimal risks to you as a result of your participation other than that the observation might cause disruptions of practices and routines in your classroom. The dinner interview sessions might lead to some discomfort that it asks you to be honest. This study asks that you commit time to the dinner interview sessions and allow me to observe your classroom.

By participating you contribute to the understanding of inequities (if any) in the education of English learners of Hmong descent. You help identify possible barriers that can be useful information in the creation of a pathway in achieving equity for English learners of Hmong descent. In doing so, it may help close not only the achievement gap between ELs of Hmong descent but all English learners and their English-speaking peers. Additionally, participating in this may serve as a reflection tool in your practice in meeting the needs of your English learners of Hmong descent.

While this information could be gathered by doing a survey, I felt it more authentic and more responsive to cultural and social norms that I interview and observe you.

The information I collect, record, and that you provide me through the dinner interview session will be kept confidential and anonymous. I will not release any information that could identify you. All field notes, translations, transcriptions, and audiotapes will be kept in a locked file cabinet at my home office.

Your participation is voluntary. Should, at any time, you wish to stop your participation, you have the right to do so. Anonymous information collected will be kept. Any information that could identify you will be destroyed or deleted.

Once this study is complete, you may receive the results. If you would like to receive these results or if you have any questions, you may contact:

Xee Yang
School of Education
University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point
Stevens Point, WI 54481
(920) 209-9257
Xee.v.yang@uwsp.edu

If you have any complaints about your treatment as a participant in this study or believe that you have been harmed in some way by your participation, please call or write:

Anna Haines, Ph.D.
Professor, Natural Resource Planning
Director, Center for Land Use Education
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Although Dr. Haines will ask your name, all complaints are kept in confidence.