Providing Equitable Instruction for High School English Learners:

Teacher Candidates Define and Design Equality

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Abstract

This inquiry highlights a research study with secondary teacher candidates (grades 9-12) in a teacher credentialing program in southern California that has been recognized for its effectiveness in preparing candidates to teach English learners. Within the frame of creating critical leaders, data collected in this inquiry show that teacher candidates enrolled in the secondary multilingual education course individually define educational equity for English learners based on their own personal beliefs, commitment level and experiences. All the teacher candidates in this study provided definitions for how they were "providing equitable educational opportunities" for their high school English learners. The lesson plans the teacher candidates designed were the "actions" they developed to demonstrate their commitment to issues of social justice and equity they defined. Their definitions and actions were rooted both in the tenets of social justice and equity and "best practices" for English learners that were presented in the multilingual education course.

Keywords: English learners, high school, social justice and equity

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Introduction

It is becoming increasingly common for high school teachers to teach mixed classes of English learners and native-English speakers across the content areas – English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies. Under No Child Left Behind (NCLB), English learners' test scores are included in a school's Annual Yearly Progress (AYP), increasing pressure on teachers to understand how to effectively teach language and content to the English learners in their classrooms. It is high stakes for schools with an English learner subgroup who risk falling into program improvement if they cannot effectively teach English learners (Crawford, 2007). This is a particularly paramount issue to address in a state such as California where over 25% of students in public schools (K-12) are classified as English learners, either immigrants or the sons and daughters of immigrants (California Department of Education, 2009). English learners can become proficient in English and learn content knowledge when teachers combine language and content in their classes, when they have opportunities to interact with their native-English speaking peers, and when the curriculum is culturally and socially relevant to their lives.

This inquiry is a research study conducted with secondary teacher candidates (grades 9-12) in a teacher credentialing program in southern California. The philosophy of the program is rooted in the tenets of social justice and equity, and teacher candidates are taught they will become future change agents and teacher leaders in their schools. Data for the inquiry are collected in a course, Single Subject Multilingual Education where candidates learn how to equitably teach their future English learners in their content area classes. Within the frame of critical pedagogy, candidates make a commitment to providing equitable educational

opportunities to their future English learner students through their teaching practices. The following research questions guide this inquiry:

1. How do the teacher candidates define "providing equitable educational opportunities" to their high school English learners?

2. What actions do teacher candidates develop to demonstrate their commitment to issues of social justice and equity they have defined?

Equitable Instruction for English Learners

Research on second language acquisition shows that it takes five to seven years to develop academic literacy skills (for example, Colllier, 1995), thus at the secondary level English learners need English language development across all content classes in order to excel in school. Recent research shows that issues such as limited time in school, tracking, and high stakes testing are more consequential to English learners (ELs) at the secondary level and contribute to inequitable opportunities for them (Callahan, 2005; Rumberger and Gandara, 2004). Studies also show that secondary teachers do not feel they are prepared to equitably teach English learners in their content area classes (Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly and Driscoll, 2005). It is therefore imperative that teacher credential programs prepare secondary teachers to provide English learners in their content areas classrooms access to the core curriculum in ways that are both comprehensible and academically rigorous. It is also essential that teacher credential programs explicitly draw from the tenets of social justice and equity to prepare teachers to provide equitable educational experiences for all their future students.

Teaching High School English Learners

Based on the notion that all students learn when the curriculum is comprehensible, meaningful and relevant to students' lives, this inquiry draws from the theoretical foundations of multicultural education and critical pedagogy to provide teachers with the tools needed to motivate English learners and all students to learn. School achievement improves when

instructional practices address students' culture, experiences and learning styles (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 2001). Culturally responsive pedagogy is validating and affirming, comprehensive, multidimensional, empowering and transformative (Gay, 2000). Curriculum should go beyond simply including "bits of diversity" to focusing on "big ideas" while still addressing state standards (Sleeter, 2005, p.85). Improving educational experiences through understanding and respect of all students is the foundation of the theories and practices of multicultural education (for example, Banks and Banks, 2003; Nieto and Bode, 2008).

Teaching methods such as sheltered instruction or Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) provide secondary teachers with the pedagogy, methodology and strategies to effectively teach English learners. In sheltered or SDAIE classrooms, language and content objectives are threaded throughout the curriculum so that English learners are able to learn content while improving English literacy skills (Echevarria, Vogt and Short, 2008). Sheltered or SDAIE lessons include multiple strategies and methods that help make academically rigorous content accessible to English learners at various language proficiency levels, and in multiple contexts including "mainstream" content classrooms (for example, Chamot and O'Malley, 1994; Diaz-Rico, 2004; Echevarria, Vogt & Short, 2008). However, high school English learners often take multiple English as Second Language (ESL) classes thus limiting their access to "mainstream" content classes (Barron and Sanchez, 2007; Rumberger and Gandara, 2004). This also limits interactions between English learners and high school "mainstream" content teachers.

"Mainstream" content teachers at the secondary level may be struggling to know who their English learners are, and how to effectively support them in learning language and content. In their study of the school culture at a high school in California, Hudley and Daoud (2008) found that how students perceive support by teachers affect their engagement in class and in school. Low-SES Latino students, predominantly English learners, perceived little support by

their "mainstream" teachers and consequently do not engage in those classes to the point of skipping the class to avoid those teachers. This perceived lack of support may be due to the limited contact that high school teachers may have with English learners. In an earlier study at the same California high school, Daoud (2003) found that high school teachers do in fact have limited contact with English learners, and thus identify these students through the societal lens of negative perceptions of immigrants and their children. These perceptions unfortunately lead to English learners becoming invisible in their classrooms, limited contact with their native-English speaking peers, and consequently inequitable opportunities to succeed both in school and beyond (Daoud, 2003).

The relationship between English learners and "mainstream" teachers underscores the importance for teacher education programs to prepare teachers to equitably teach students from culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) backgrounds. In a survey of California teachers, Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly and Driscoll (2005) report on challenges that secondary teachers identify in teaching English learners. The most commonly cited challenge for secondary teachers was the language and cultural barriers between themselves and their English learner students. The secondary teachers stated that professional development focused on "developmental and other characteristics of second language learners" was the most beneficial to them because it "provided them with cultural insights that helped them understand their students" (p. 17). The more knowledge teachers have about their English learner students, the better able they are to provide equitable educational opportunities to them.

Social Justice in Teacher Education Programs

Teacher education programs which are explicitly rooted in tenets of social justice and equity see teaching as the act of enhancing students' learning and their expanding opportunities both in and beyond school (for example, Cochran-Smith, et. al, 2009; Darling-Hammond, French and Garcia-Lopez, 2002). Programs highlight inequities that exist in schools and guide

teacher candidates in understanding theories and practices that will help them provide equitable educational opportunities for all their future students.

Cochran-Smith, et.al, (2009) studied teacher candidates in a teacher education program that, as described above, was explicitly centered on social justice and equity with the goal of improving student learning and increasing students' opportunities beyond school. The researchers wanted to know what the teacher candidates say about social justice and how their definitions translate into their practice. Teacher candidates' definitions of social justice and equity are placed into four categories; pupil learning, relationships and respect, teacher as activist, and recognizing inequities. Across the categories, the teacher candidates define and enact social justice through their own individual actions rather than through policy change or political actions (Cochran-Smith, et.al, 2009).

While many teacher education programs are centered on tenets of social justice and equity, candidates may not have the opportunity to translate their knowledge into practice. McDonald (2005) studied two teacher education programs in California to examine how each program implements social justice and equity across their programs. Using a case study approach, McDonald focused on two teacher candidates in the elementary programs. McDonald found that each program focuses on social justice and equity concepts and practices, with explanation of the concepts being more prevalent than actual practices. The teacher candidates also have limited opportunities to develop the concepts and to a lesser extent practices of social justice in their clinical practices that they learn in the program (McDonald, 2005).

Freeman, Bullock and Duque (2005) use another approach to help teacher candidates translate their knowledge of social justice into practice. In a secondary education course, they used consciousness raising activities throughout the course as a means of guiding the candidates in their future teaching. However, the researchers found that the teacher candidates, whom are predominately white and middle class, resist the consciousness raising

methods they use in the courses. The researchers concluded that "consciousness raising does not necessarily lead to transformative action" (Freedman, Bullock and Duque, 2005, p. 600). Drawing from these studies, one can establish that teacher education programs should; present social justice in ways that the candidates are open to learning; teach candidates to define social justice on an individual level; and help candidates translate their definitions into concrete actions in their future classrooms. This inquiry is unique in that it provides an intersection of these two areas of the literature, teaching high school English learners and social justice and equity in teacher education programs.

Methodology

The purpose of this study is to examine how teacher candidates define and design socially just and equitable instruction for high school English learners. These practices are examined in a required course in which the teacher candidates are enrolled during their first semester in the credential program, Single Subject Multilingual Education. The candidates provide their definitions for equity and how they will provide equitable instruction for their students who are English learners in a reflective statement written at the end of the semester. As evidence, the candidates write lesson plans to demonstrate how they have turned their definitions into actions.

Research Design

This study uses qualitative methods to facilitate the collection and analysis of data using a "naturalistic" approach (Miles and Huberman, 1994). This research approach helps explain "how" the teacher candidates define social justice and equity, and then turn their definitions into action through their lesson plans. Qualitative data analysis offers a variety of perspectives in which to examine the teacher candidates' processes within the context of the multilingual education course. Multiple sources of data have been collected and analyzed for triangulation. In order to explain the phenomenon of equitable instructional practices for English learners, the

researcher has observed the candidates in the teacher credential course, has collected course

assignments and instructional materials, and has presented an analysis of the data through a

"revelatory" approach. This research has been reviewed and approved by the University's

Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at which the researcher

teaches.

Context

The study takes place in a College of Education at a public university in north San

Diego county. The Single Subject Credential Program within the College of Education has been

in existence for over fifteen year, and the multilingual course where the data for this study was

collected is required of all single subject teacher credential candidates. The College offers

single subject credentials in the following subjects; English Language Arts, Foreign Languages

(Spanish), Mathematics, Physical Education, Science, and Social Sciences. In the past few

years, the Single Subject Credential Program consistently has received the highest ratings in

the area of "Preparation to teach English learners" by graduates of the program on the

California State University system-wide surveys. The program currently is the subject of a case

study by a research organization with the intent of identifying best practices in preparing single

subject credential candidates in California to teach high school English learners.

The College of Education is mission driven with the mission of collaboratively

transforming public education. The instructor (and researcher) of the required multilingual

education course is a faculty member in the multilingual / multicultural education program. The

instructor is personally dedicated to teaching for equity and social justice, and has designed the

course to guide teacher candidates to understand and do the same. The instructor uses an

array of instructional activities that are designed to move teacher candidates beyond simply

understanding textbook knowledge to providing equitable instruction for English learners in their

content area classrooms. Readings cover topics in bilingual education, culturally responsive

pedagogy, second language acquisition, and social justice and equity. Course assignments include critical examination of readings, understanding who their English learner students are and their educational needs, lesson planning and a reflective statement on their understanding and enactment of social justice and equity.

Population and Sample

The subjects are students enrolled in the required multilingual education course in the Single Subject Credential Program. As the course is required, students pursuing credentials in all subjects are included in this inquiry. Purposeful sampling was used in this inquiry. This is a convenience sample based on the student enrollment in the required credential course, Single Subject Multilingual Education (EDSS 555) during the fall 2009 semester. During the fall 2009 semester, two sections of the course were offered, a total of 28 students were enrolled in the first section (16 females and 12 males), and 24 students were enrolled in the second section (11 females and 13 males). The sample of 52 students is typical of the student enrollment in the College's Single Subject Credential Program over the years. Of the 52 students, 11 were pursuing credentials in English Language Arts, 16 in Mathematics, 2 in Foreign Languages (Spanish), 2 in Physical Education, 11 in Science, and 10 in Social Sciences. The table below presents the student enrollment in the course for the fall 2009 semester by gender and ethnicity.

Table 1

Study Participants by Gender and Ethnicity

	White		Latina		African Am.		Asian/PI	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Female	19	70.4	3	11.1	2	7.4	3	11.1
Male	22	88.0	1	4.0	0	0.0	2	4.0
TOTAL	**41**	**78.9**	**4**	**7.7**	**2**	**3.8**	**5**	**9.6**

Data Collection

Data for this inquiry were collected during the fall 2009 semester from the two sections of the required multilingual education course. The data include student lesson plans, reflections, observations and course materials. Observations and data collection settings ranged from natural (in class) to artificial (contrived reflections), with relatively unstructured to highly structured elicitation tasks and category systems in the inquiry (Cohen & Manion, 1994). The multiple sources of data bring together *(triangulating)* multiple perspectives, methods and sources of information adding texture, depth, and multiple insights to the analysis and enhance the validity and credibility of the research results.

The lesson plans are developed by the teacher candidates throughout the semester course. The lessons are specific to each student's subject area and include standards and objects for that subject as well as English language development (ELD) standards and objectives for English learners. Along with the standards and objectives, the lesson plans also include assessment plans and instructional strategies that are differentiated for English learners at varying proficiency levels, as well as for students with special needs and/or learning accommodations. Throughout the semester, students work on lesson planning in all their credential courses but learn how to design equitable instruction for English learners in the multilingual education course. The culminating lesson plan for the course incorporates instructional strategies and pedagogical practices that students have learned across their credential courses during the fall 2009 semester.

Student reflections consist of a narrative each student writes at the end of the course describing his or her understanding of social justice and equity as it relates to English learners. The reflection is required across all credential programs in the College (Single Subject, Multiple Subjects and Special Education) to align the teacher credential candidates' commitment to social justice and equity to the College of Education's mission of collaboratively transforming

public education. All teacher candidates must respond to and provide evidence that they have

fulfilled the teaching expectation in their coursework of the following statement on social justice

and equity:

> Teacher candidates will be able to identify issues of social justice and equity in the classroom and can apply appropriate instructional strategies to ensure equal outcomes for diverse students. They will be familiar with ideas, definitions, and major theorists in the fields of multicultural education, social reconstruction, and democratic education. Pluralism and divergent perspectives on educating students will be the foundation of designing effective lessons and instructional practices for diverse students. Candidates will understand when and how to collaborate with others, especially curriculum specialists, community leaders, and parents on preparing relevant and appropriate instructional activities, curricular units, and school structures that would provide equitable outcomes for students from different linguistic, cultural, and social economic backgrounds.

Additional data sources are the instructor's observations during the course, and course

materials. The observations are unstructured and take place as students are discussing the

course readings, activities and modeling instructional strategies for English learners. Recorded

observations of these discussions and activities are kept by the course instructor with the

student reflections and other assigned work. Course materials collected as data sources

include the syllabus, power point presentations for each class session, course texts and

readings, course activities and handouts.

Data Analysis

Data analysis began by finding types of patterns in the various data sources collected.

In order to address construct validity, the researcher triangulated the multiple sources of data

collected in this inquiry. Data sources were merged to find common themes and trends of the

phenomenon established through the evidence in the findings. The researcher maintained a

chain of evidence through the data collection process to increase construct validity (Yin, 2009).

During the analysis, common themes in the social justice and equity narratives and lesson plans

were identified through an open coding process. Themes were reviewed and compared to the

other data sources. This process was followed until patterns were identified to move from broad analysis to the specific questions of "how" students define and enact social justice and equity through their narratives and lesson plans (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 1995). Ensuring that the stated research questions guided the analysis was done to address the study's internal validity, while external validity was addressed by identifying typical practices regarding equitable instruction for English learners that have been replicated from those identified in the literature.

Data analysis followed an explanation building process of the phenomenon of the teachers' equitable practices for English learners (Yin, 2009). The process of identifying "how" teacher candidates define social justice and equity in their narratives and enact them in their lesson plans was done to build an explanation as data were examined; re-examined and theoretical propositions were revised accordingly. For example, comparing the narratives and lesson plans of the teacher candidates across the content areas either presented similar outcomes or new perspectives about equitable instruction for English learners. The researcher referred back to the research questions guiding this inquiry, maintained consistent data analyses processes reduced potential problems in misinterpreting the data, and analyzed the multiple data sources within this explanation building process to strengthen the research results.

Positionality

The researcher has personal and professional interests in this inquiry. The researcher has been a professor in the College of Education in area of multicultural / multilingual education for the past eight years. She is from a working class culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) family and has research interests in the area social justice and equity. She shares a commitment to the College's mission of collaboratively transforming public education which is evidenced in the researcher's work and teaching pedagogy.

Results: Defining Equity

Data collected in this inquiry show that teacher candidates enrolled in the secondary multilingual education course individually define educational equity for English learners based on their own personal beliefs, commitment level and experiences. Once the teacher candidates "own" their definitions, they begin to discuss and design socially just and equitable actions they feel they can take on behalf of their future English learners. The teacher candidates' actions fall into the following categories when designing lesson plans for their future English learner students in their content area classes; instructional strategies that are student-centered and promote peer interaction, equitable outcomes through differentiated assessment, including both language and content objectives in lessons, and incorporating multicultural/culturally responsive curriculum into lessons.

Instructional Strategies

In the narratives and evident in their lessons, all 52 credential candidates describe and show how they will design instructional strategies in lessons to help their English learners access the content areas. Candidates stated they will use strategies such as modeling, explicit vocabulary development, heterogeneous grouping and think-pair-shares. While candidates stated these strategies would be designed for their English learners, they also believed the strategies would benefit all their students. For example, a candidate in the area of Social Studies wrote about how his students would work in small groups on a service learning activity. He wrote that, "…by having students work in groups, they will have the peer support to understand the learning goals associated with the lesson." While he stated the benefits to his English learners, he also felt that all his students benefitted from his grouping strategies. Another candidate in the area of mathematics stated that she would use a variety of instructional strategies for her English learners including modeling, heterogeneous grouping and appropriate wait time. In her narrative, she stated that, "…these modified strategies will address

the needs of my diverse students to ensure they all have equal learning opportunities." These

statements are representative of those of all the teacher candidates regarding designing

instructional strategies with the intent of making content accessible to their English learners.

The statements are also in alignment with the variety of instructional strategies designed for

English learners that were included in all of the candidates' lesson plans.

Equitable Outcomes

Forty-nine of the 52 candidates wrote about how they would design assessments to

provide equitable outcomes for their English learners, and included these assessments in their

lessons. As one candidate in the area of Mathematics wrote, "I differentiate my assessments

for students according to their diverse learning goals to make certain that they are able to

achieve learning goals equitably." In her lesson, she designed a rubric that provided varied

levels of mastery based on math content and her English learners' proficiency levels. Her rubric

assessed math content knowledge using varied levels that corresponded to her English

learners' levels so that all students were accurately assessed. Similarly, a candidate in the area

of English Language Arts wrote in his narrative that "…my lesson plan incorporates numerous

informal and formal assessments. By not depending on only one type of assessment and

providing assessments that are differentiated according to each individual's level, I am ensuring

equal outcomes for all my students."   These statements are very reflective of those written by

their colleagues regarding equitable assessments. It was in their assessments that most

candidates felt they directly addressed issues of equity regarding the education of their English

learner students. There was ample evidence of this in the candidates' lesson plans. The

candidates designed varied assessments that were differentiated for students who needed

accommodations, including English learners at various English proficiency levels.

Language and Content Objectives

All 52 teacher candidates incorporated both language and content objectives in their

lesson plans, while only 27 of them wrote about how doing so provided equitable instruction for

their English learners. One candidate in the area of Physical Education designed a lesson on

developing motor skills (a state content standard) while allowing her students to deliver oral

presentations (a state English Language Development or ELD standard) on their knowledge of

the motor skills. She wrote that by incorporating ELD standards into her lesson, she was

ensuring that her English learners were "making adequate progress in their language

development as well as towards the state content standard, I am creating equitable

opportunities for all my students to be successful." Another candidate in the area of Science

stated that using ELD Standards alongside Science content standards gave his English learners

"opportunities to   practice their new language and vocabulary and gain confidence in its use."

He further stated that "English learners who learn science taught in English require accessible

levels of English language that helps them both understand content and to facilitate their

language development." While this process of incorporating ELD Standards into high school

content area classrooms was difficult at first for some candidates, particularly in the areas of

science and mathematics, by the end of the semester they saw the benefit for clearly

understanding and assessing their English learners' progress in their content area and in

English language development.

Multicultural / Culturally Responsive Curriculum

Half of the teacher candidates (26 out of 52) wrote about multicultural / culturally

responsive curriculum in their narratives and incorporated it into their lessons. One candidate in

the area of Science wrote an Earth Science lesson on Earthquakes which incorporated both

state content and ELD standards. In her lesson, students worked in small heterogeneous

groups to research earthquakes in different parts of the world and their impact culturally and

socio-economically on that region. In her narrative she wrote that, "…by incorporating

multiculturalism into the lesson, students are able to reflect on diverse issues" and further stated

that as a teacher she "will continue to learn to identify issues involving social justice and equity

in the classroom…to meet the diverse needs of students in the 21st century." Another candidate

in the area of English Language Arts wrote a lesson on poetry where her students read the

poems and then wrote their own poems about aspects of their lives they wanted to share. She

felt that the use of poetry in her lesson "supports multiculturalism and promotes social justice"

because the poems she chose were "written by mostly young people who come from culturally

diverse backgrounds." By making the content relevant to her students, she felt that her English

learners would be able to express themselves and that all her students would better understand

the backgrounds and experiences of their peers. Candidates who incorporated multicultural /

culturally responsive curriculum in their lessons did so in ways that helped their students make

connections between the curriculum and their lives or to the world in which they live.

Pulling It All Together

Results from this inquiry indicate that teacher candidates' actions encompass a broad

range of areas, and their actions are correlated to what they define as "doable" based on how

they individually apply their definition of educational equity for their English learner students.

Interestingly, only twelve of the 52 teacher candidates incorporated all four areas into their

narratives and lessons. While this was the "ideal" presented to the candidates by the

instructor/researcher, many of the candidates indicated in their narratives that this "ideal" was

something they would continue to strive for when they got permanent teaching positions. As

one Social Studies candidate wrote in his narrative, this ideal is what all teachers should

continue to work on throughout their careers. He stated, "Our job will be about much more than

teaching content and skills; it will be about developing the positive character in each student that

will bring about individual success and make constructive contributions to society."

Conclusions and Educational Significance

All the teacher candidates in this study provided definitions for how they were "providing equitable educational opportunities" for their high school English learners. The lesson plans the teacher candidates designed were the "actions" they developed to demonstrate their commitment to issues of social justice and equity they defined. Their definitions and actions were rooted both in the tenets of social justice and equity and "best practices" for English learners that were presented in the multilingual education course. The candidates' actions also were aligned with those actions identified in the literature in both areas. This study bridges those two areas; effectively teaching high school English learners and social justice and equity in teacher education programs in an attempt to focus on a group of students, high school English learners, who have been underserved in our public schools and understudied in the literature.

Teacher candidates in this inquiry provided concrete actions they will take to equitably teach English learners in their content area classes. Returning to the literature on secondary teacher preparedness by Gandara, Maxwell-Jolly and Driscoll (2005), teacher candidates in this inquiry felt they were given the necessary tools to effectively teach English learners. In fact, teacher candidates in this single subject credential program rank "preparedness to teach English learners" higher than for other credential program in the statewide university system to which the program belongs (California State University, 2009). The teaching strategies taught in the program are rooted in both second language acquisition (for example, Diaz-Rico, 2004 and Echevarria, Vogt and Short, 2008) and culturally responsive pedagogy (for example, Gay, 2000 and Ladson-Billings, 2001). Within the context of the literature on integrating social justice into teacher education programs, this study contributes to that body of literature by highlighting social justice and equity for a specific group of students, high school English learners. Unlike the candidates described in the research conducted by McDonald (2005), candidates in this

study had opportunities to "practice" their social justice in their student teaching placements. Again, this could be due to the focused intent of this study, providing equitable instruction in content area classes, to an equally focused student group, English learners.

Also drawing from the literature, a clear limitation of this study is that the teacher candidates' definitions of equitable instruction and their subsequent actions were created in a university classroom setting. It is probable that teacher candidates in this study could face obstacles at their school sites which would inhibit their ability to translate their knowledge of social justice into actions. Availability of resources, school and community climate, and time constraints can be factors in determining what socially just actions teacher candidates can enact when they become teachers.

However when taking these limitations into account, it is noteworthy that the analyses from this research study make significant contributions to the research on English learners at the secondary level. The analyses of data show that teacher candidates can define and design educational equity for their English learners through individualized and specific actions. This study shares the processes and products of teacher candidates in a secondary program that has been recognized for its effectiveness in teaching English learners. Existing literature on critical action (Wink, 2004) takes readers from naming an issue, to critically reflecting on the issue, to address the issue through action.

When reviewing the findings of this study, it is important to note the teacher candidates define terms such as "equitable" and "social justice" based on the knowledge and experiences each one brings to the credential program. Within the program, teacher candidates are introduced to social justice and equity in a prerequisite course and then it is woven into all the courses in the single subject credential program. Using a definition proposed by Nieto and Bode (2008), within the context of this teacher education program social justice is defined as "…a philosophy, an approach, and actions that embody treating all people with fairness, respect,

dignity and generosity" (p. 11). The teacher candidates' social justice actions are more developed and "do-able" than the actions they state they will take in the prerequisite course. However, when the teacher candidates are hired and commence their careers as teachers, they will have more knowledge of their students, school, community, etc. and can better develop social justice actions that can address issues within and/or across any of these contexts. Further research is needed to track the teacher candidates into their teaching positions to determine what actions they are taking to provide equitable educational opportunities for their English learners or what is limiting them to take actions.

The course described in this study guides teacher candidates to take actions to directly benefit English learners. Course instructors ask secondary teacher candidate to define and design actions within their sphere of influence (e.g., home, classroom, school, community), that then becomes part of their praxis. Freire stresses the importance of teaching students, including English learners, how to read the word and the world. In high school content area classes with a mix of English learners and native-English speakers, students have the opportunity to learn from one another, and together learn about the world they live in from multiple perspectives. We can thus cultivate global citizens who can apply the knowledge they learn in the classroom and apply it to their lives both in and beyond high school (Banks, 2003). By teaching credential candidates how to define and enact social justice actions, they can facilitate learning in their classes so that all students, including English learners, will have the opportunity to be the global citizens that Banks describes.

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