LINDA M. GOULET AND KEITH N. GOULET

TEACHING EACH OTHER

Nehinuw Concepts and Indigenous Pedagogies

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1

Where We Are in Indigenous Education

We have cause to celebrate the significant gains that have been made in Indigenous education in recent years.[1] Those of us who were starting our teaching careers when "Indian control of Indian education" (National Indian Brotherhood 1972) was a call to action have seen positive changes in Indigenous education. The number of Indigenous students graduating from high school and postsecondary institutions over the last decades has increased. First Nations peoples now administer their own schools, and Indigenous administrators are moving into decision-making positions in various education systems. There is a large cadre of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit teachers and researchers working with Euro-Canadian allies involved in instruction and curriculum development in both First Nations and public schools.[2]

At the same time, Indigenous peoples continue to be under-represented at all levels of education. Changes to curricula continue to meet resistance, and schools continue to fail to ensure success for many Indigenous students. In 2009, when John Richards and Megan Scott (2009) conducted a comprehensive analysis of the statistics regarding Indigenous education in Canada, they identified key points to emphasize the need for all Canadians to attend to the education of Indigenous students. First, Indigenous populations have a higher proportion of youth and a faster-growing youth population compared to the Canadian population in general. Indigenous youth presently make up and will continue to constitute a significant proportion of the school population in Canada, especially in the western provinces and Ontario. As Indigenous peoples have migrated to urban areas, their numbers have increased in provincial schools.

In the past, high school achievement improved for Indigenous students, but the rate of increase in high school graduation for First Nations students has not been sustained. Thus, despite the educational successes of many Indigenous peoples, the gap between non-Indigenous and Indigenous student educational levels has widened, in part because of increased investment by non-Indigenous populations in education while First Nations schools continue to face chronic underfunding and in part because of the economic and social barriers facing many Indigenous peoples.

The social conditions challenging Indigenous peoples have been well documented and include "poverty, unemployment, family breakdown, physical and mental health problems, suicide, and incarceration" (FSIN 1997, 13). These social conditions and the growing number of Indigenous youth present the education system with its "greatest opportunity and challenge" (Tkach 2003, n.p.). In a study on schooling, workforce, and income status commissioned by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) in 2002, both the income levels and workforce participation of Indigenous people fall far short of those of non-Indigenous people (FSIN 2002b). The FSIN report asserted that workforce participation is directly related to school attainment, which remains low. For example, in Saskatchewan, the graduation rate for Aboriginal students is 32.5 percent (Pelletier, Cottrell, and Hardie 2013). One of the main conclusions of the FSIN (2002b, 23) report was that "the employment participation and unemployment rates of First Nations persons *cannot show any substantial improvement until there is a large increase in the number of [First Nations] youth who complete their grade 12*" (emphasis in original). According to this report, and a more recent analysis of the impact of education on lifetime earning for Aboriginal peoples in Saskatchewan (Howe 2011), improvements in educational success are the key to reducing the poverty facing Indigenous peoples.

Though these statistics can be disheartening, it must be noted that many schools have taken the initiative to make the changes needed to facilitate the success of Indigenous students. These successes have been documented in several publications (see, for example, Bell et al. 2004; Fullford 2007; Alberta Education 2007, 2008; and Pelletier, Cottrell, and Hardie 2013). More schools like these are needed: it is imperative that the rates of school completion and success of Indigenous students be improved. This will require a sustained effort and improvements by educational systems that have not been effective with Indigenous students (FSIN 1997; Sokoloff 2004). Enhancing teacher effectiveness has been cited as a key to improving educational systems and Indigenous student success (FSIN 2002a; Bishop 2012).

This book addresses effective instructional practice for teachers of Indigenous students in both theory and practice. Theoretically, one of the issues in Indigenous education is that educational theories are most often based on white, middle-class, Euro-centred views of teaching and learning. Many of these theories are useful, but they are limited and problematic when it comes to addressing Indigenous matters. In response to this issue, we present the Kaminstigominuhigoskak (Cumberland House) Nehinuw (Cree) theory of teaching and learning as an example of Indigenous educational thought.[3] We use stories of effective teachers of Indigenous students to illustrate the principles of Indigenous approaches to education. A conceptual framework based on these stories connects Indigenous thought to effective classroom practice. In this book, although the Nehinuw community of Cumberland House is located in Saskatchewan, Canada, and the stories are from teachers in Saskatchewan, the themes presented resonate with those emerging in the education research literature from around the globe on effective approaches to teaching of Indigenous students.

The teachers' stories of professional knowledge in this book demonstrate how Indigenous student success is related to success as defined by different Elders. For instance, the late Elder Ken Goodwill from the Standing Buffalo Dakota First Nation said that the purpose of education is to help students recognize who they are, to see their gifts, talents, and strengths and recognize the responsibility that accompanies these gifts, so they can survive, thrive, and contribute as they navigate through both the broader world and Indigenous cultures. Although effective educational practice for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students is good education for all students, there are issues specific to Indigenous education because Indigenous people have unique histories and world views. As teachers, we have a responsibility to ensure that Indigenous students are successful in school while developing as Indigenous peoples. Students should not have to leave their Indigenous identities behind to be successful in school. It is incumbent upon teachers to find and incorporate Indigenous knowledge and understandings (epistemologies) and to use Indigenous practices and methods to support learning and fully develop students' potential.

Who Are We?

Before introducing ourselves, we would like to comment that the writing style of this book combines Nehinuw (Cree) cultural cognitive structures with Euro-Canadian narrative. Keith introduces a distinctive Nehinuw style in a modern academic context. Another Nehinuw researcher, Shawn Wilson from Opaskwayak Cree Nation in Manitoba, also combined academic writing with an Indigenous storytelling style in his book, *Research Is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods* (2008). Wilson's use of a storytelling voice reflects the Indigenous narrative approach that is similar to the voices of the teachers in this book as they share their stories of practice. The writing style also moves back and forth from research based primarily on Western methods to analysis based on Indigenous thinking. As the styles change, we ask the reader to think of this as moving among different cultures, negotiating the differences in styles of communication as one does when negotiating the move from the Indigenous world to the world of the dominant culture and back again.

Linda's Story

I am a Euro-Canadian educator who has spent my teaching career in Indigenous education. I grew up in rural and urban Saskatchewan and thus had occasional interactions with First Nations and Métis people. In the public schools I attended, I was not aware that the First Nations and Métis students I knew were, in fact, First Nations and Métis. That awareness only came as a teenager. Although my parents taught me directly and through practice to respect other cultural groups, my parents and I were immersed in the racist ideology regarding Indigenous peoples in Saskatchewan, so, as a young person, I had non-critical racialized notions of Indigenous peoples. At the same time, I had a family history of connection to the Indigenous peoples of this land. My maternal grandmother grew up in Pincher Creek, Alberta, where her peer group and playmates were Blackfoot (Siksika) children. She chose to maintain friendships with Indigenous peoples when she was an adult in Saskatchewan at a time when it was not acceptable practice in middle-class Regina, which was dominated by British colonial beliefs about First Nations and Métis peoples. As for my mother, in her early career as a teacher, she worked for a year as a child caregiver at a residential school. She didn't have much power in the hierarchy of the church-run school, but she did what she could to bring fun to the students' lives. I have pictures of my mother with her students playing in the snow and skating on the slough by the school. But my mother, even with her English beliefs in the authority of the teacher, told me that the priest at the school was mean, so she left to teach in the nearby provincial school, with its mix of Euro-Canadian, non-status First Nations, and Métis students. Even as I recall my family connection to Indigenous peoples, these stories in no way exculpate my family and my ancestors from

Linda with Black Lake Denesuline First Nation Teacher Education Students. *Front row:* Shirley Sandypoint, Linda Goulet, Carrie Toutsaint, Rita Bendoni. *Back row:* Maggie Robillard, Darcy Sandypoint, Tina Alphonse, Albertine Sayazie, Tracy Cook, Rose Bouvier, Jackie Echodh, Marilyn Mercredi, Margie Sayazie, Rhonda Sandypoint, Colleen Renie. *Photo by Val Toutsaint.*

their role and complicity in the colonial agenda. I recognize the privileges that my family and I had being Euro-Canadian in a settler state.

My own journey in Indigenous education began in Churchill, Manitoba, in 1971 with Cree, Dene, Inuit, and Euro-Canadian students. I have a warm place in my heart for those students, who taught me so much as they challenged me to think about my teaching practice. I searched for appropriate materials and tried different strategies to get them involved in learning. As I learned about them and the community, I strove to bring the curriculum closer to the reality of the students' lives in that small northern community. That experience introduced me to the challenges facing teachers in Indigenous education. I asked myself, "How can I as a teacher more effectively engage Indigenous students in ways that would better serve them and their communities?" Searching for answers to that question has been the challenge of my professional life since that first teaching experience.

Over the course of my career, I was fortunate to have many Indigenous and non-Indigenous colleagues and family members who were educators of

Indigenous students. Copious amounts of tea and coffee were consumed at kitchen tables and in restaurants as we talked about improving the education for Indigenous students and critiqued our own practice. As my work took me into Indigenous teacher education, I questioned what I was teaching in my classes, since much of the research was based on Western views of childhood and teaching and learning, with a vast majority of the research of effective practice based on teachers of white middle-class students. Although this situation has changed considerably in the last few years, I decided I needed to delve deeper into the personal and practical knowledge (Clandinin and Connelly 1995) of effective teachers of Indigenous students. I undertook research for which I interviewed a number of Cree, Métis, Dene, Saulteaux, and Euro-Canadian teachers who were known in their communities to be effective teachers. I also observed three classrooms in a Cree community over a three-month period. This book is based on the stories of those teachers and others. As I wrote about my research, I could see many of the concepts articulated by my Nehinuw husband evident in the teachers' stories. We decided to combine our knowledge and share it as a book.

Keith's Story

I was born and raised in the Nehinuw community of Kaminstigominuhigoskak (Cumberland House), in northeastern Saskatchewan. The fishing, trapping, and hunting lifestyle was still a strong part our culture, so I was fortunate to have experienced life on a spring trapline for several years. We generally went to the trapline at the end of February and returned in the first or second week of May. I did domestic and commercial fishing with my dad, brother, uncles, and others. Except during mating season or other critical periods, we hunted all year round for big game like deer and moose. In the fall we focused on hunting grouse, ducks, geese, and swans. In my boyhood and youth during the winter, we snared rabbits and trapped squirrels and weasels.

Nehinuwehin is my first language; I learned English only after I started school.[4] Speaking the Cree language was the norm in our daily lives. We spoke English only in school and church. Most of the clerks in the stores were from the community, so they were Cree speakers. The services in the Roman Catholic church were carried out in Latin, while the prayers and songs were done in English, Latin, and Cree. Although I wanted to go to school at age six, I was not accepted until I was seven years old, because I was small for my age. My first teacher, Sister St. Joseph, was a good teacher. She taught us how to read using phonics and the Dick and Jane readers. Although the grouse I was

Family spring trapping on the Cumberland House Delta, circa 1950. Keith Goulet as a child *(far right). Photo by Jim Brady, courtesy of Glenbow Archives, PA-2218-441.*

hunting on the way to school was not reflected in the curriculum, I do remember learning how to say "cock a doodle doo." We didn't know any English, and she didn't know any Cree, so communication was often difficult and frustrating. Sometimes we laughed together, and other times she laughed alone. I also saw her wiping her eyes as she was looking out the window. Sometimes, the learning was exciting, but I do also recall the frustration, boredom, and the disciplinary practice of corporal punishment.

After attending school in Cumberland House from Grades 1 to 10, I took Grades 11 and 12 in Prince Albert. From there I attended university, then went to Ontario for my teacher education. My first year teaching was Grades 2–4 in an Anishinaabe community called Aroland in 1967–68. In addition to my experience-based approaches for curriculum materials development, my only other meaningful sources for materials were the fish and wildlife charts from the Lands and Forests government department. In 1969–71, I taught Grade 6 in Moose Factory in James Bay Cree country, where we integrated Indigenous knowledge in social studies, science, math, and language arts. In 1972–73, while taking classes at the University of Saskatchewan, I developed and taught a non-credit Cree-language course. In the following year, I taught a first-year university accredited Cree-language course that was designated as an anthropology class. I graduated with a BEd in 1974.

From September 1974 to February 1976, I was a Cree-language consultant doing developmental work on Cree writing systems, curriculum, and instruction as well as curriculum materials development. In summer of 1975, I taught a Cree course to language instructors, teachers, and civil servants in La Ronge. It was the first university accredited course taught in northern Saskatchewan. In February 1976, I was hired as the Northern Teachers Education Program (NORTEP) developer. I arranged and taught the first NORTEP class in September 1976 and remained there as faculty until 1979. I then became the principal of the La Ronge Region Community College, which had an array of programs, including trapper training, bush pilot training, diamond drilling, and truck driver training. In 1984–85, I became the executive director of the Gabriel Dumont Institute, a provincial Métis-controlled research and program institution. I completed my MEd from the University of Regina in 1986.

Beginning in 1986, I served seventeen years as a member of the Legislative Assembly in the Saskatchewan provincial legislature. I was a cabinet minister from 1992 to 2001. Although it was supported by all major political parties in Canada and the provinces, I voted against the Meech Lake Accord in 1987. In 1992, as a member of the Cabinet and as the provincial secretary, I chaired the Charlottetown Accord. I was also involved in Treaty Land Entitlement, the Métis Act, the Northern Development Board, the no-fault insurance plan, sewer and water for northern communities, and the Cumberland House Bridge. Presently, I am working on my PhD dissertation on the Cumberland Nehinuw concept of land.

Overview of Indigenous Education

Now that we have given you a glimpse of who we are and some of where we've been, let's take a look at "the lay of the land" of Indigenous education. Getting a lay of the land is something Keith does every time he goes to a new city. He stops to look around and orient himself to the four directions as well as to the rise and fall of the land. With this orientation, no matter where he goes in the new city, he knows roughly where he is situated in this new place. Similarly, we invite you to explore a brief history and overview of the emerging discipline of Indigenous education as it relates to classroom-based instruction.

Indigenous education is a broad term with different meanings to different people. Wikipedia defines it as "teaching indigenous knowledge, models, methods, and content within formal or non-formal educational systems."[5] In this book, the term is used to refer to the education of Indigenous students, usually to quality education for Indigenous learners in formal education settings. Because the term is used so broadly, it is multifaceted, and thus can include Indigenous pedagogies, Indigenous school systems, curriculum, staffing, and relationships. In contrast, Indigenous pedagogies view education from an Indigenous perspective and "are embedded in complex systems of knowing, inclusive of their own suppositions about knowledge and being" (Friedel 2010, 6). For example, in her discussion of Anishinaabe pedagogy, Rebecca Chartrand (2012, 152, 157) sees it as having a humanistic focus that explores the interrelationships among all things, "taking into account feelings, attitudes, and values that can add affective components to conventional subject matter curriculum" while specifically being defined "in living our [Anishinaabe] language, culture, and relationship to the land, space and being." Also closely related to the term *Indigenous education* is *decolonizing education*. Decolonizing education places more emphasis on the power relationships within education and serves to deconstruct past colonial systems of education and recreate new ones, usually based on equity and Indigenous principles. On the other hand, *indigenizing education* usually refers to the integration of Indigenous content, understandings, and processes into the formal education system.

Since the National Indian Brotherhood's call for "Indian control of Indian education" in 1972, there have been various initiatives to improve education for Indigenous students. Prior to the late 1960s and early 1970s, the high failure rate of Indigenous children was discussed in the educational literature but was often based on ethnocentric views that Indigenous peoples were racially inferior or culturally deprived (Swisher and Deyhle 1989). Because this research had an ethnocentric bias, it was not useful in improving education for Indigenous children. Since 1972, research has shifted from blaming Indigenous children, their families, and their communities for the lack of school success to an exploration and examination of effective educational practices for Indigenous students as well as an articulation of Indigenous pedagogies.

Early Initiatives

Forty years ago, it was clear that education was failing Indigenous children (National Indian Brotherhood 1972). Researchers entered classrooms to find out why schools were not meeting the needs of Indigenous students and what could be done to improve instruction. The focus of the early research has relevance to this day in that the issues identified in the 1970s remain pertinent today.

Judith Kleinfeld (1975, 318) has examined characteristics of effective teachers of Indigenous students and states in her research that effective teachers are those who combine personal warmth with the "demand for a high quality of academic work." These teachers show genuine caring for students and expect them do well at school. On the other hand, in examining why English-speaking Warm Springs Indian students were not doing well, Susan Philips ([1972] 1983) found that the communication structures of the teacher's English were different from those of the students. Differences in communication style included non-verbal signals and the grammatical structure of English usage, so even though they all spoke English, the Warm Springs Indian students often did not understand the teacher's instruction. Other studies have established that some teachers had negative beliefs or stereotypical views about Indigenous children (Rampaul, Singh, and Didyk 1984; Taylor 1995; Wax, Wax, and Dumont 1972), and in some communities, parents were reluctant to approach school personnel (Wax, Wax, and Dumont 1972). There was a gulf between students and teachers, and between schools and communities.

Differences between Indigenous students and their teachers have been examined in research on learning styles: the learning styles of Indigenous children have been compared to those of non-Indigenous children, and to the instructional styles used by teachers (Erickson and Mohatt 1982; More 1987; Swisher and Deyhle 1989). The premise of the learning and communication styles theories of this research is that cultural differences between the Euro-centred basis of school culture and the Indigenous culture of the home and community cause the lack of school success. Various authors have thus proposed that teachers improve instruction by integrating Indigenous languages and culture into the curriculum (Gilliland 1988; Reyhner 1988).

Curriculum Development

Curriculum change was a main thrust of Indigenous education in the late 1980s and 1990s and has continued into the new century with many international initiatives. In the 1980s, educators believed that if content relevant to Indigenous children was used in the various subject areas in the classroom, the students would be more responsive to learning in school (Gilliland 1988; Goulet 1987; Reyhner 1988). The goal then was to ensure that teachers used culturally accurate material to replace the biased, stereotypical information prevalent in curricula of the day (Hirschfelder 1982; Manitoba Indian Brotherhood 1977; Preiswerk 1981). Projects were undertaken to produce material that would identify the positive aspects of and reflect more accurately Indigenous history and culture (see, for example, Bopp et al. 1984; Mokakit 1992; Saskatchewan Education 1985; Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre n.d.). As culturally relevant curricula were developed, Tarajean Yazzie (1999) critiqued the often-used approach in which curricula are developed by those outside the community, often in isolation from those who are expected to implement cultural programs. In their review of Indigenous education in Canada, Jean Barman, Yvonne Hébert, and Don McCaskill (1987, 4) found that using culturally appropriate materials was more difficult than initially expected: "The need to incorporate a traditional cultural perspective into the contemporary context has been easier to assert in principle than in practice." Indigenous cultures have often been viewed as static or vibrant only in some distant time in the past. At times, the decontextualized "craft" approach to teaching culture has led to a trivialization of cultural knowledge (Stairs 1996). Superficial cultural programming has also been critiqued by Sheila Watt-Cloutier (2000), who decried the watering down of programming for Inuit children. In her research, she states that the purpose of any education is to prepare people for the opportunities and challenges facing them in their lifetime and argues that education must above all be empowering, thus preparing Indigenous students for "responsible self-direction" (122). Tarajean Yazzie (1999) states that successful curriculum projects are those that include historical and traditional knowledge as well as current tribal issues and concerns. In developing a curriculum for Indigenous adults studying early childhood education, Jessica Ball and Alan Pence (2006, 40) documented a method of curriculum development (the Generative Curriculum Model) that included both Western knowledge and local Indigenous knowledge. University personnel identified the program topics and consulted collaboratively with local knowledge keepers to identify important Indigenous concepts and understandings. The process demanded that participants be open to unpredictability and different ways of educating: "In the Generative Curriculum Model, the curriculum is dominated neither by the university's nor the community's contributions but is suspended in the space between – a space where disparate ideas can meet, combine, and transmogrify, with unforeseeable results." Similarly, in addressing issues in Indigenous science education, Herman Michell (2007) has identified the importance of linking curriculum development to the students' lives, community, culture, and language. He states that place, including the land and environment of the community, and local Indigenous knowledge and knowledge keepers, including Elders, are needed to indigenize science education. Summarizing the research on Indigenous science curriculum development, Herman Michell, Yvonne Vizina, Camie Augustus, and Jason Sawyer (2008, 47) conclude that "community-based, participatory, and action research projects with adequate funding are needed to support teachers and university researchers in the development of localized curriculum and alternate performance assessment indicators."

One of the problems of curriculum development at the local level is that it often places the burden for curriculum innovation on the individual teachers and can disappear from the school when the teacher leaves. In addition, funding for curriculum development projects has not been forthcoming. Jo-ann Archibald (2008) reports that it took a year to secure funding from eight different sources for their curriculum development initiative regarding First Nations views of justice. In addition to issues of funding, Glen Aikenhead (2006) asserts that locally developed curricula material may be difficult to transfer to other locations. He maintains that curriculum change needs to take place across educational systems, so that the entrenched beliefs about science education can be renegotiated. To have long-term impact, curriculum development needs to be addressed both systemically and locally. Educational authorities and governments responsible for curriculum need to provide the resources, including funding, to ensure that curriculum change takes place both globally and locally, because curriculum adaptation is a necessary first step but, as more recent research has shown, is insufficient by itself to make the gains needed in Indigenous education (Bishop 2003; Dion 2009; Tupper 2011).

Program Initiatives

There are and have been countless schools that have taken initiatives to improve education for Indigenous students. The characteristics common to these schools were summarized at a national conference called "Promising Practices in Aboriginal Education," and include strong leadership and governance structures, high expectations for students, focus on academic achievement and long-term student success, secure and welcoming climates for children and families, respect for Aboriginal culture and traditions to make learning relevant, provision of a wide range of programs and supports for learning, exceptional language and cultural programs, a high percentage of Aboriginal staff and quality staff development, linking assessment to instructional and planning decisions, and vigorous community partnerships and beneficial external alliances (Phillips and Raham 2008, 10).

Joanne Tompkins (1998) and Jerry Lipka (1998) were involved in school initiatives to create change in northern Inuit and Yup'ik communities, respectively. These educators found that the creation of an environment for Indigenous student success was multidimensional, and that the model of cultural inclusion alone was insufficient. Tompkins and her staff implemented program planning based on both traditional and contemporary themes that balanced student interest with culture and the demands of the mandated school curriculum. Theme planning supported Inuktitut-language program development that, over time, resulted in immersion programming up to Grade 4. Elders became a part of school programs, and learning activities that occurred out on the land increased. The structure of programming changed to emphasize hands-on activities and small-group work to address the wide range of student ability in each class.

Other program initiatives have drawn from Indigenous language concepts in program design. Language with its embedded cultural concepts (Ah Nee-Benham 2000) was key to the Māori initiatives in New Zealand as they implemented their language nests or preschool Māori immersion programs (Te Kōhanga Reo). The early Te Kōhanga Reo were followed by primary schools (Kura Kaupapa Māori), secondary schools (Whare Kura), and postsecondary sites (Whare Wānanga). As the programming began, the movement was driven by the political will of the parents and community members. All these initiatives were based on Kaupapa Māori, or the use of traditional and contemporary notions of *whānau* (extended family) values, practices, and structures, as a theory and practice of transformation (Smith 2000). Extending the Kaupapa Māori principles to mainstream institutions, Russell Bishop (2003) found that Māori students were able to achieve success when deficit beliefs of their abilities were replaced by an emphasis on empowerment, co-construction of knowledge, cultural recognition, and the use of Māori concepts, values, and beliefs to guide program development.

Similar to the Māori initiatives, traditional cultural values, or key Indigenous language concepts, "bundle words" (Wheeler 2000, quoted in Absolon 2011, 155) are being used to guide innovations in Indigenous programming at sites globally and across institutions. For example, in Hawaii, traditional Hawaiian chanting is being used to achieve the educational concept of *Ho'olakalaka,* or, "calming the mind to make it ready to learn" (Alo, Hodges, and Taniguchi 2012). In Canada, Lorna Williams (2012; also see Williams and Tanaka 2007) uses many Lil'wat concepts as foundational in her program initiatives. Concepts such as *cwelelep* (being in a place of dissonance and uncertainty in anticipation of new learning) and *celhcelh* (each person is responsible for their own learning and self-care, finding answers, knowing how to fit into the community, self-knowledge) are but two examples Williams uses to teach from and within an Indigenous perspective. The use of these key Indigenous concepts creates new forms of teaching and learning environments – forms that are more culturally relevant particularly for Indigenous students.

Culturally Relevant Teaching

In her research on effective teachers of Black students, Gloria Ladson-Billings (1990, 24) introduces the concept of culturally relevant teaching, which has been applied in Indigenous education. Culturally relevant teaching uses the student's culture to help her or him achieve success. Ladson-Billings explains that the main difference between "mainstream" effective instruction and culturally relevant pedagogy is context: research on effective instruction has identified generic teaching skills that are decontextualized, while with culturally relevant teaching, effective teaching is tied directly to the context in which the instruction is taking place.

Indigenous authors Faith Maina (1997) and Cornel Pewewardy (1999) describe culturally relevant pedagogy as it applies to Indigenous peoples. In culturally relevant pedagogy, teachers use students' prior cultural knowledge and compatible classroom and community language patterns and social norms, reflect diversity in assessment, view students as assets, and help students function in multicultural, multilingual situations without the loss of their original culture. Maina argues that although Indigenous children can learn about other cultural ways in school, it is alienating to assume that the dominant culture's way of being is the only one.

Barry Osborne (1996), Linda Miller Cleary and Thomas Peacock (1998), and Jeff Orr, John Jerome Paul, and Sharon Paul (2002) have found similar classroom interaction patterns in their examination of effective teachers. Orr, Paul, and Paul (2002, 350) describe good teachers as "political agents, choosing to teach from a perspective that embodies cultural practical knowledge in relation to their students' lives in the present, remembering their collective ancestral past, and imagining a different cultural future." Miller Cleary and Peacock (1998) state that successful teachers of Indigenous students do not need to come from the same ethnic background as the child so long as they develop trust and respect and have close personal relationships with students. Successful management strategies are culturally sensitive and guide children indirectly rather than confrontationally. Effective programming includes culturally relevant curriculum, uses the students' first language, and involves parents and families.

Language is important in culturally responsive teaching. Cora Weber-Pillwax (2001) explains that it is both the Indigenous language and how the language is used that conveys knowledge, ways of being, and relating to the world. When Philemon Chigeza and Hilary Whitehouse (2011) examined how Torres Strait Island middle-year students developed their understandings of scientific concepts, they found that students who were more fluent in Creole than English had difficulty labelling drawings to show their conceptual understanding, yet were able to apply the concepts using direct actions and dramatizations when speaking in Creole. The students knew the concepts; how their knowledge was being measured was problematic.

The importance of Indigenous language to academic success is also evident in immersion programming. Russell Bishop, Mere Berryman, and Cath Richardson (2002, 49) report that in their research, immersion teachers used personal skills that were "culturally located." Teachers treated the children with respect but also extended the integration of respect into the children's interaction with others – that is, their peers, adults, extended family, and Elders. Students learned in ways that developed and reinforced their identity as Māori. Thus, "teaching and learning relationships are such that children are able to bring who they are and how they make sense and meaning of the world to the learning interactions" (58). In their observations, Bishop, Berryman, and Richardson state that Māori humour was valued and always present. The firmness of the teacher was contextualized in Māori intergenerational relationships that typically identify distinct roles and responsibilities for Elders, adults, youth, and children. Starr Sock and Sherise Paul-Gould (2012) conducted a follow-up study of a Mi'kmaq kindergarten to Grade 3 immersion program in their community. When the immersion program graduates were in Grade 7, their reading assessment levels were compared to those students who had not been in the immersion program. The immersion students had overall higher test scores. Teachers reported that immersion graduates had more focus and confidence in academic learning while being open to sharing and supporting other students' learning in the class. It would appear from these results that students are learning much more than language in the Mi'kmaq immersion program.

Indigenous languages are often present in the classroom when Elders are involved. Elders use their Indigenous language when they bring prayers, ceremony, and ritual to the classroom to "signal a time for caring and connection to the spiritual, to each other and to oneself" (Archibald 2008, 51). They are the holders of important Indigenous knowledge (Battiste and Youngblood Henderson 2009), especially that which relates to language concepts that hold important cultural values, as well as land-based scientific, biological, geographical, and historical knowledge, world views, and philosophies. Elders are seen as storytellers and historians who educate communities, sustain cultures, and "help each person to know who we are as Indigenous peoples" (Iseke-Barnes 2009, 69). This connection to the culture and contributions of one's peoples is especially important for those Indigenous students who are struggling with issues of identity (Fayant et al. 2010).

In addition to developing language skills, stories teach moral lessons, convey values, and promote emotional wellness. Orality, in both skill development and meaning making on the part of the teller and the listener, is an important aspect of traditional storytelling (Weber-Pillwax 2001). Stó:lō storytellers say we have "'three ears to listen with, two on the sides of our head and one in our heart' … Listening requires the concomitant involvement of the auditory and visual senses, the emotions, the mind, and patience" (Archibald 2008, 76). Traditionally, meaning making was primarily the responsibility of the listener; the teller paid attention to the context and needs of the child to know which story to tell and when and how to tell it. For example, Keith's mother often told scary stories in the bush while berry picking, to entertain the children and keep them close.

For teachers, the art of telling traditional stories can be very complex. Jo-ann Archibald suggests that teachers who are unfamiliar with the form of traditional storytelling seek a mentor or Elder to guide them in their development, or invite a community Elder to tell the stories and thus ensure they are shared in a way that is respectful of both the story and its context, including protocol. When shared respectfully, stories have the energy and power to engage students, causing them to respond positively to activities associated with the story. For example, Grade 5 Nisga'a students in British Columbia reported that they liked hearing "the stories being told, writing about the stories, drawing characters, crests and petroglyphs associated with the story but they didn't like the vocabulary exercises and dictionary work" (Archibald 2008, 132).

Stories are often about places, tied to the land, water, plants, and animals of a particular location. Many Indigenous educators have successfully implemented land-based teaching, primarily because learning on the land is holistic, and students are able to make many connections with what they learn (Elliott, Guilar, and Swallow 2009; Goulet and McLeod 2002; Greenwood and de Leeuw 2007; Lee 2007). For example, Kainai children in Alberta have their Blackfoot-language immersion program on the land with Elders and ceremonies that teach students their relationship to the human and non-human world. Similar to Starr Sock and Sherise Paul-Gould's (2012) findings, Alvine Mountain Horse (2012) reports that students in their land-based Blackfoot immersion program score higher on academic achievement tests. Lee (2007) has conducted research on a program that partnered with community members to focus on land-based issues facing the surrounding Pueblo communities in the southern United States. Reading student journal entries, she found that the students identified important academic and professional skills they wanted to learn and made connections between their learnings and the broader concerns of the community. The fieldwork actively engaged students, who did hands-on work. The embodied nature of this experience meant that learning was holistic and meaningful.

Challenges for Euro-Canadian Teachers

Euro-Canadians continue to make up the majority of teachers in all areas of Canada (Ryan, Pollack, and Antonelli 2009). Recently, questions regarding settler Canadian teachers of Indigenous students have received more attention in the literature.

John Taylor (1995), a Euro-Canadian educator, has reflected on the actions of non-Indigenous teachers in various First Nations schools in western Canada in which he taught for several years. In his observations he notes that many non-Indigenous teachers were not prepared for the cultural differences they encountered in Indigenous communities and thus experienced culture shock. While some teachers were able to overcome this shock and find suitable points of entry into the community, others isolated themselves to protect themselves from the mental and emotional strain of interacting within a culture different from their own. Taylor states that although these teachers were hard-working, well prepared, and well intentioned, students often viewed the teacher's isolation from the community as rejection of the students' community and, by extension, as dislike of the students themselves. Some settler Canadian teachers were unable or unwilling to deal with cultural differences in a positive way and instead complained about actions in the community that reflected values different from their own, while others found safety in feelings of superiority.

Yatta Kanu (2005) has examined the integration of Aboriginal knowledge and perspectives into the curriculum by urban high school teachers teaching diverse students. Using James Banks's (1989) typology of the inclusion of multicultural perspectives, Kanu found the Aboriginal teacher used the transformative approach, while Euro-Canadian teachers tended to use the contributions and additive approach. Challenges to integration identified by teachers were lack of knowledge and confidence regarding the subject matter, lack of resources, and racism. Susan Dion's (2009) study of settler teachers integrating Indigenous content and teaching non-Indigenous students shows similar findings. In her research, Dion reports that teachers tended to present Aboriginal content as factual personal stories of characters with whom students could empathize, but failed to engage students in broader, systemic issues. Dion theorizes that it was the teachers' "systems of reasoning" (80) that constrained their teaching approach. Even though students appeared ready for "disruptive" discussions, teachers led students away from controversy, bound by their beliefs and pedagogy of mastery and control when dealing with systemic issues that could lead to controversy, the disruption of Euro-Canadian beliefs about history and identity, and negative feelings on the part of their settler Canadian students. Teachers feared that this kind of controversy might lead to a backlash from parents and administration.

On the other hand, in their research of effective teachers of Inuit students, Robert Renaud, Brina Lewthwaite, and Barbara McMillan (2012) report that when teachers are prepared to change their teaching to respond to their students and legitimize the local culture and community in school learning, students become more engaged in learning. The teachers developed a profile of teaching practices they used to create positive learning environments for Inuit students. Similarly, Russell Bishop et al. (2006, 1) report achievement gains for Māori students when mainstream teachers are supported in professional development using principles of the Effective Teaching Profile based on the experiences of Māori students, their *whānau* (extended relationships), principals, and teachers. Effective teachers reject deficit beliefs about Māori students; instead, they "care for the students as culturally located individuals; have high expectations of the learning for students; manage their classrooms to promote learning; engage in a range of discursive learning interactions with students or facilitate students to engage with others in these ways; implement a range of strategies that can facilitate learning interactions; promote, monitor and reflect upon learning outcomes that in turn lead to improvements in Māori student achievement and share this knowledge with the students."

Beverly Klug and Patricia Whitfield (2003), both non-Native educators, believe that non-Native teachers of American Indian children need to become bicultural. Bicultural understanding has been achieved through a process that includes interrogation of one's own prejudices; continuous reflection of one's teaching; incorporation of accurate, contemporary information regarding students' cultural groups; engagement with community members and attendance at appropriate social events; and communication with community members to solve educational problems. Bicultural teachers prepare students for successful functioning in both their home community and the larger society. These teachers understand students' resistance to learning as protection against distancing themselves from their own culture when they consciously or unconsciously interpret education as a tool of assimilation. According to Klug and Whitfield, education for American Indian students needs to move beyond content and method and address issues of social justice.

Sociological Issues

Beginning in the 1990s, many authors identified the need to examine sociological issues of colonization, racism, and oppression in classroom practice (Goulet 2001; Klug and Whitfield 2003; Lipka 1998; Miller Cleary and Peacock 1998). Educators asserted that in addition to culture, issues of racism (Friedel 2010; St. Denis and Hampton 2002; Osborne 1996; Wilson 1991) and the legacy of colonization (Goulet 2001; Orr, Paul, and Paul 2002; St. Denis 2002; Tompkins 1998) had an impact on the education of Indigenous students. These educators called for attention to social issues in the examination of educational practice.

Social Attitudes and Structures

Social attitudes influence perceptions of what constitutes effective teaching. In her work in Australia, Merridy Malin (1994) found that judgments of good teaching for Indigenous children were culturally based. For her research, Malin had three panels of Aborigine parents, Aborigine teachers, and Anglo university teacher educators from the university respond to videotapes of a Yup'ik Eskimo teacher, an Anglo Australian teacher, and an Aborigine teacher. Each group identified most with their own cultural background, and the results thus revealed the cultural differences that existed in the perceptions of the characteristics of good teachers and good teaching. Those in power positions in education, the Anglo teacher educators, felt that the "Aborigine teacher's discipline, preparation, and teaching strategies were wanting" (Malin 1994, 100), whereas both Aborigine panels preferred the Aborigine teacher's warmth and understanding to the Anglo teacher's efficiency and task orientation. The Aborigine participants were more concerned about human relations in the classroom. They maintained that regardless of the strategy or how well prepared the teacher was, if a child was not comfortable in the classroom, he or she would not learn.

Besides social attitudes, social structures – such as the use of power and racial stratification of our society and our economy – influence minority students' success. Sociological theorists such as John Ogbu (1991) argue that cultural differences between the home and school alone are not enough to explain minority students' failure; one must consider the historical and structural context in which those differences are embedded.

Power Relations, Racism, and Colonization

Social issues are evident in the research regarding classroom practice. In their review of Indigenous education, Donna Deyhle and Karen Swisher (1997, 147) state, "We believe that what teachers *do* to students – how power relations are negotiated in the classroom – is critical in understanding American Indian student performance in school." Similarly, Beverly Klug and Patricia Whitfield (2003, 155) advocate the development of a pedagogy that uses the knowledge of subordinated groups to address the issue of "knowledge production" and to "challenge racist assumptions" that inform social identity and power relations.

Recently, Indigenous educators have begun to use anti-racism theory in the analysis of Indigenous education (Friedel 2010; St. Denis 2002, 2010; St. Denis and Hampton 2002). When improvements in Indigenous education focus primarily on cultural programming, taught within the framework of current schooling practices, the initiatives do not expose or challenge power relationships within our society. Verna St. Denis (2002) argues that the theory of cultural difference that dominates the discourse of Indigenous education does not provide sufficient explanation for the failure of Indigenous students in schools. In her view, cultural programming alone ignores the reality of social and economic issues in the lives of students. In doing so, it fails to prepare students to deal with the rapid economic and social changes that have and are taking place in Indigenous communities. St. Denis asserts that cultural programming designed to support positive Indigenous identity development often privileges one form of cultural expression. Culture is frequently presented as existing in some past that has been lost and must again be found. The complex variations of cultural identities of Indigenous peoples are simplified, and only one form of cultural expression is seen as authentic. To St. Denis, when culture is identified as the problem, it can cause confusion rather than assist Indigenous students in sorting out the complexity of multiple identities and multicultural competencies. St. Denis asserts that an anti-racism analysis can address current issues to ensure the inequalities perpetrated in the past are not continued in the present. Anti-racism can also examine the unequal power relations in our society that affect a person's opportunities and choices. Ruth Paradise (1994) argues that the power relations of society are reflected in the everyday reality that is co-constructed between children and their teachers who live within historical, social, and political contexts. In specific instances, the teacher and students can construct or reconstruct their particular arrangement to make it more equitable.

However, it is not helpful to frame the issue of Indigenous education in a restrictive view or reduce practice to only sociological problems of inequality and racism. Culture and language revitalization complements the inclusion of decolonizing, anti-racism education. The history of racism is not only the rejection of peoples from a biological or sociological basis; it is also a cultural and linguistic rejection. In her study, Ruth Paradise (1994, 69) observed Indigenous and non-Indigenous teachers who taught in a way that allowed students to challenge the authority of the material used in schooling while the teachers implicitly practised "respect and appreciation of [Indigenous] values related to individual autonomy, respect for the person, and group solidarity." These educators used culturally congruent interactional and social organizational strategies that allowed children to choose to follow their leadership. Similarly, in her observation of a Cree teacher in an urban setting, Angela Ward (2001) notes that the teacher established more equitable relations through her use of cooperative learning techniques and a talking circle (an object was passed around a circle so that each person in the class was given the opportunity to participate).[6] Russell Bishop et al. (2006) used the phrase "culturally responsive pedagogy of relations" to describe effective teachers creating learning contexts in their classrooms such that power was shared, culture counted, learning interactive, and teachers and students shared a common vision of educational excellence.

Power relationships are also enacted in the students' sense of belonging or authority in the classroom. Eber Hampton (1995) states that since Indian peoples are and are seen to be a minority in their own land, a sense of land, territory, or place is crucial in Indigenous education. To Hampton, Indigenous peoples need a sense of belonging, a place where they can be themselves. The importance of land was a prevalent theme among Indigenous educators in Maenette K.P. Ah Nee-Benham's (2000) work, and, as in Hampton's research, this concept was also used to emphasize the importance of a safe place where culture could be nurtured, learned, and practised in educational settings without being under attack from a colonial system.

Social relations of power are also evident in school-community relationships. In his work with Yup'ik educators, Jerry Lipka (1998) found that the leadership of Elders and community members in curriculum development produced relevant curriculum change and created a forum for the production of Indigenous knowledge, thus changing power relationships in knowledge production in the school. Community members came to believe in their capability to take leadership in the process of formal schooling – capabilities that had been denied to them through past colonial practices. Through community involvement in curriculum production, Lipka and the Yup'ik educators with whom he worked changed the "what" (curriculum), the "how" (classroom interaction), and the structure of power distribution in the education system.

Poverty and Social Issues

Very few classroom-based studies have addressed the effects of poverty brought about by colonization as an aspect of Indigenous education. Rita Bouvier (2001) discusses the impact of poverty on educational programming for children who attend inner-city schools. She emphasizes the importance of additional funding received by community schools in impoverished areas: a necessary initiative if social justice is to be achieved.

At the classroom level, Linda Goulet (2001), Jeff Orr, John Jerome Paul, and Sharon Paul (2002), and Joanne Tompkins (1998) have found that effective teachers of Indigenous students deal with issues of poverty. Tompkins (1998, 49) states that positive results were achieved by implementing two interconnected streams of school change in a northern Inuit school: changes dealing with Indigenous language and culture and those dealing with "poverty and despair." In urban schools, LaVina Gillespie and Agnes Grant (2001) and Celia Haig-Brown et al. (1997) found that attendance was an ongoing issue because of social problems such as poverty and addictions, which played a significant role in students' lives. In their field of study, Haig-Brown et al. (1997) found that school staff were constantly trying to find the balance between teaching for healthy lifestyles and teaching academics. Mi'kmaw teachers in Jeff Orr, John Jerome Paul, and Sharon Paul's (2002, 348) study addressed personal problems faced by students by sharing stories from their lives and encouraging students to engage in conversations "supportive of their own struggles and concerns." They used curriculum content to teach about social issues, such as alcohol and drug abuse, that were affecting their community.

The Complexity of Indigenous Education

The modern era of Indigenous education began with an emphasis on curriculum adaptation and adjustment in methods of teaching. Cultural programming needed to include contemporary Indigenous issues as well as traditional practices and history. More recent research has included the examination of sociohistorical factors, illuminating the complexity of teaching Indigenous students effectively.

Successful Indigenous teachers use the Indigenous language and their cultural knowledge to build classroom relationships that encourage children to express themselves in culturally responsive ways. Successful non-Indigenous teachers bring culture into the classroom in a way that shows respect and encourages children to value the current culture and learn about past traditions. Both view Indigenous cultures as rich, vibrant, and diverse.

Effective teachers also deal with the results of colonization in their classroom. They attend to issues of poverty, address personal problems, and incorporate social issues into the curriculum. Historical, colonial, and authoritarian relationships are replaced with more equitable relationships in the classroom, in school decision making, and in the community. Community and context are integral to effectively teaching Indigenous students. Effective teachers view students, their families, and community members as contributing members of a learning community, not as outsiders.

Language, culture, social conditions, power relationships, the child, and the teacher, as well as the history of schooling, all interact and influence actions in the classroom. The education of Indigenous children, and indeed all children, requires a more comprehensive view of life in its totality. Culture, education, social development, and economic self-determination have to be combined with practices that challenge racism and colonialism in all its forms.

The above review is based primarily on research into school programs and classroom practice. Other research is recognizing the value of indigeneity at all levels of education. Many Indigenous scholars (see, for example, Battiste 2002, 2013; Smith 1999; Swisher and Tippeconnic 1999) have critiqued Western knowledge systems and are exploring concepts of Indigenous research that articulate principles of Indigenous epistemology that have the potential to support educational developments in the classroom. In addition, teachers can draw ideas from authors such as Kathleen Absolon (2011), Margaret Kovach (2009), and Shawn Wilson (2008) who have gathered stories of Indigenous researchers' methods to articulate principles of Indigenous knowledge systems and ways of coming to know.

As this chapter illustrates, teachers can make changes in their practice to improve education for Indigenous students. In this book, we begin our narrative by situating Indigenous education in the history of colonization, which continues to impact the realities of schooling. We combine Linda's research on effective teachers with Keith's educational experience and Nehinuw knowledge and understanding to help us think about how we can improve teaching and learning. We use various teacher narratives to illustrate this Indigenous understanding in practice. The path forward in Indigenous education is coming into focus. We hope this book can contribute to our growing understanding of Indigenous pedagogies in the reality of classroom practice.