

# Two Teachers of Aboriginal Students

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- argue effective teaching need to be framed in colonization context, struggle for self determination, decolonization
- issue of ethnocentric curriculum authoritative relations
- racist attitudes, prejudicial belief about inferiority
  - o leads to feeling stupid/failing
  - o others drop out (form of opposition to what being taught) mode of resistance
  - o due to involuntary minority status form strong peer groups to oppose institutionalized discrimination (don't see education and personal achievement as way to economic success permanent because of institutionalized opposition need collective action p 69)
  - o use collective action to get change in institutions and society → signs of self determination ie. Nunavik, Nisga'a, forest management (69) indicate opportunities created for economic and social

p 70 integration of cultural difference position and socio structural position

- o cultural difference: include culture specific behaviour patterns and culturally relevant curriculum
- o socio structural: with equalizing power relation between native and non-native
- o

Responsible self direction

- autonomy and success → use own language, learn own history, retain own cultures with pride
- found that the greater the sense of cultural identity, the better they perform in school
- - want to increase access to education and improve standard of living BUT keep lang/culture intake, all unique b/c different culture, history, language

Two teachers: Roxanne (Dene) Janet (non aboriginal but 25yrs experience)

- both became members of their local communities (live there as "home")
- important to have informal dialogue with students b/c integrated part of culture
- need trust because learning is about moving into the unknown and risk of failure
- Roxanne had parent meetings at beginning of year and through year to get to know families, gain idea of skills, and situation
- Worked on forming partnerships (especially important as parents may have had bad experiences with schooling – authoritative relationships) be on equal ground
- Use of circle meetings to let students express feelings and give teacher a barometer for class expectations that day

"Effective Aboriginal Education" addresses

- By brining culture and language, community values and norms into classroom help to balance power relations

- problems of internalized oppression → both colonizer and colonized affected and can continue in the classroom between teachers and students
- Teachers → holistic and synergistic practice
- Activities with multiple areas embedded → cult/language, values and norms, power relations and impact of colonization

#### Language and culture

- bring community into the classroom → teacher needs to learn about the community and be aware of cultural differences, acquaint self with culturally appropriate methods and resource material
  - o i.e. curriculum based on seasonal cycles (learn academic skill with familiar content) → taking students out into environment
  - o questioning elders/hearing their stories → lived experience, students own also an asset
  - o books from aboriginal authors
- traditional and contemporary culture dynamic
- lessons to prepare students for life in wider society without looking their culture
- Roxanne as speaker of dene uses it in her classroom, Janet had students teach her Cree words as she taught them english. Helped foster connection with students and comfort level

#### value and norms p 72

- important to foster relationships
  - o know people individually → bring community to classroom
- cultural norm and communication patten reflected
- observe and do traditional approaches → autonomy of individual in interdependent and dependant groups
- indirect management with students autonomy respected, telling of own stories and laughing at self
- learning preferences observed
- effective teaching observed → Active learning, group work, s-s interaction and 1-1 with teacher
- high expectations and trust, place importance on relationships
- importance of elders in the classroom because of their importance in the community → interaction done in way that was culturally appropriate ways

#### Equalization of power relations p 75

- Break hierarchy
  - o Respect autonomy, meaningful part with school and community
- a) make people feel like in there with them
- b) act in partnership with students, student ownership

#### impact of colonization

- o lack belief in self, low self esteem → breakdown of community
- sensitive respect
  - o make allowances for POV/personal problems
  - o colonization break of family, students own parents experienced this
  - o build self esteem identify things that they are proud of → give a sense of success
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