

Goulet, Linda. "Two Teachers of Aboriginal Students: Effective Practice in Sociohistorical Realities." *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 25.1 (2001): 68-82. *ProQuest*. Web. 11 Dec. 2013.

Article critique: Vitor Machado Giberti

In her article, Goulet argues that the education of Aboriginal students in the Canadian educational system must acknowledge their sociocultural context and be mindful of the colonialist power relations that still take place in Canadian society. To that extent, the author brings up the methods and stories of two teachers whom she has interviewed and considers to have successfully developed teaching strategies that address the unequal power relations these students and their families are situated within. She states that both educators attend to culture and colonization in their practice, and therefore "they develop more equitable power relationships and deal with the impact of colonization" (68). The article describes some of the different strategies the teachers use and frames their techniques within theoretical references that propose an Aboriginal education combative of the institutional racism in the educational system.

The text begins by drawing attention to the assimilationist trends and institutional oppression that has historically taken place in Canadian schools. Conversely, it then highlights the increasing collective action towards Aboriginal self-government and self-determination in the country and, within this context, calls for the responsibility of educators to meet the demands of Aboriginal students. To this end, Goulet warns that every situation is unique, and so teachers have to consider the specific circumstances of each place and case, especially with regard to the languages, cultures, and histories of Aboriginals. In the light of this, she raises four factors which must be considered for effective teaching to happen, as follows:

- Culture and language
- Values and norms
- Power relationships
- Impact of colonization

This division is used to organize the stories and description about the teachers' practice. As each of the topics is brought up, a brief theoretical overview is presented, so as to indicate the directions scholars set out as the most adequate for educators to follow in that area. Then, accounts of the two teachers' methods and experiences in the respective area are given. In the

end of the text, a conclusion is drawn emphasizing the important of a holistic Aboriginal education, which is concerned with connecting with students and their families, and is always mindful of their context.

In the article, Goulet manages to present with mastery a relation that is highly difficult to achieve: the bridge between theory and practice. The division of the text into four topics, each of which departing from a theoretical foundation and expanding to the real life situations experienced by the teachers is an ingenious structure that allows the readers to instantly establish the connection between what the theory says and how the teachers have successfully applied it in their classrooms. In parallel, the fact that the strategies developed by them are different, but equally successful, promptly conveys the necessity for adaptation in face of the circumstances imposed by each unique reality of each school– and thereby proves point of the article. Overall, this is a compelling guide on how to develop a better Aboriginal education in Canadian Schools.