

Research Summary: Corson 1998

Title: Community-based Education for Indigenous Cultures

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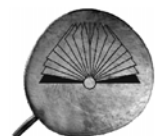
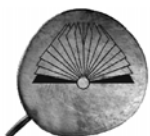
www.multilingual-matters.net/lcc/011/0238/lcc0110238.pdf

Main questions:

- How do today's education policies, based on capitalist, homogenous, centralist ideals, affect indigenous education?
- What is community-based education versus community education? What are the features and underlying principles of community-based education?
- How can community-based education contribute to indigenous cultural and linguistic revival?
- What process / framework can help communities consider and carry out gradual, radical change to transform their school system to community-based education? What actually changes and what processes do people use to change from the mainstream pattern to a more community-based institution?

Some background ideas:

- In our modern world, governments view education policies in terms of the marketplace. Education almost everywhere in the English-speaking world is set firmly within capitalist social relations.
- Many of today's politicians and the people that advise them tend to believe that for government to succeed they need to view and interpret the whole world in business terms. The quality of something depends on the price it can fetch, rather than on any intrinsic and real qualities.
- Capitalist social relations create a huge pressure towards cultural assimilation. People's real socio-cultural identities have little value in the marketplace.



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Main comments and conclusions:

- Community-based education is different from community education.
- Community-based education is a form of social action that extends beyond schools. It begins with community members and their immediate reality; people become meaningfully involved in shaping their own futures through the school and other agencies in their community. Community members become self-oriented participants to create the school's learning environment.
- Community education may question taken-for-granted structures that oppress people, but usually leave the structures in place. Community education is less concerned with changing formal structures and more concerned with studying them.
- In many places it's still a new idea for mainstream education to use community-based education to make schools more a part of the local culture. People use community-based education for other purposes.
- Indigenous people find that community-based education is central to help revive their culture and language.
- Community-based education can offer social support, encourage self-help for families, and help promote indigenous languages. Schools / other agencies can organize and carry out different extension activities:
 - ✓ Provide home visits from social workers that speak the indigenous language.
 - ✓ Organize parent groups and bilingual language exchange centres.
 - ✓ Have experienced parents teach other parents the art of parenting within their own culture.
 - ✓ Bring school activities and family activities closer together through programs such as child care or playgroup, and that offer contact with things such as tutoring, computers, dance, drama, writing, library research, sports, and after-school jobs.

