



Standing Beside Indigenous Literacy Scholars in a Language Curriculum Analysis

Context

To honour the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Alberta is committed to rebalancing the education system by including the history and legacy of residential schools and local Indigenous knowledge, wisdom, and oral traditions in the curriculum to advance reconciliation for all Albertans. (Alberta Education, 2024, p. 19)

Research Methods

- Policy as social practice (Levinson et al., 2009)
- Data Collection:
 1. The English Language Arts and Literature (ELAL) curriculum
 2. Semi-structured interviews (teachers and teacher educators)
- Data Analysis:
 1. First round for inductive/emerging codes (Bingham, 2023)
 2. Inductive codes were organized into the Four Resources model (Freebody & Luke, 1990) (two additional rounds of coding)
 3. Analytical/Theoretical coding with Peltier (2016/2017) model (three rounds of coding)
 4. Codes organized into the Four Resources model examined with Reese's (2018) model

What's Next?

Further decolonizing research needs to be completed alongside Indigenous communities where families, students, and teachers are brought in to critical conversations about the role of language curriculum in their lives and learning.

Participants

Teacher Educator	Previous teaching experience	Current teaching context
Charlotte	30 years elementary teaching	Teacher educator
Elena	English language learners, elementary teaching (beginning in 1980s), Africa, Indigenous communities (British Columbia/Alberta), college/university	Professor Emerita
Sarah	BEd (mid-1980s-2002), kindergarten teacher (Ontario), learning support teacher and ESL (Africa)	Current professor

Teacher	Gender	Grades taught	Current Grade	Number of Years Teaching	Teaching Context
Ashley	Female	2-5	2	15+	separate
Chris	Female	K-6	3/4	32	separate
Ella	Female	2	2	1	rural public
Morgan	Female	K-2	1/2	3	separate
Pat	Female	K, 2	2	3	independent
Taylor	Male	6	6	1	separate

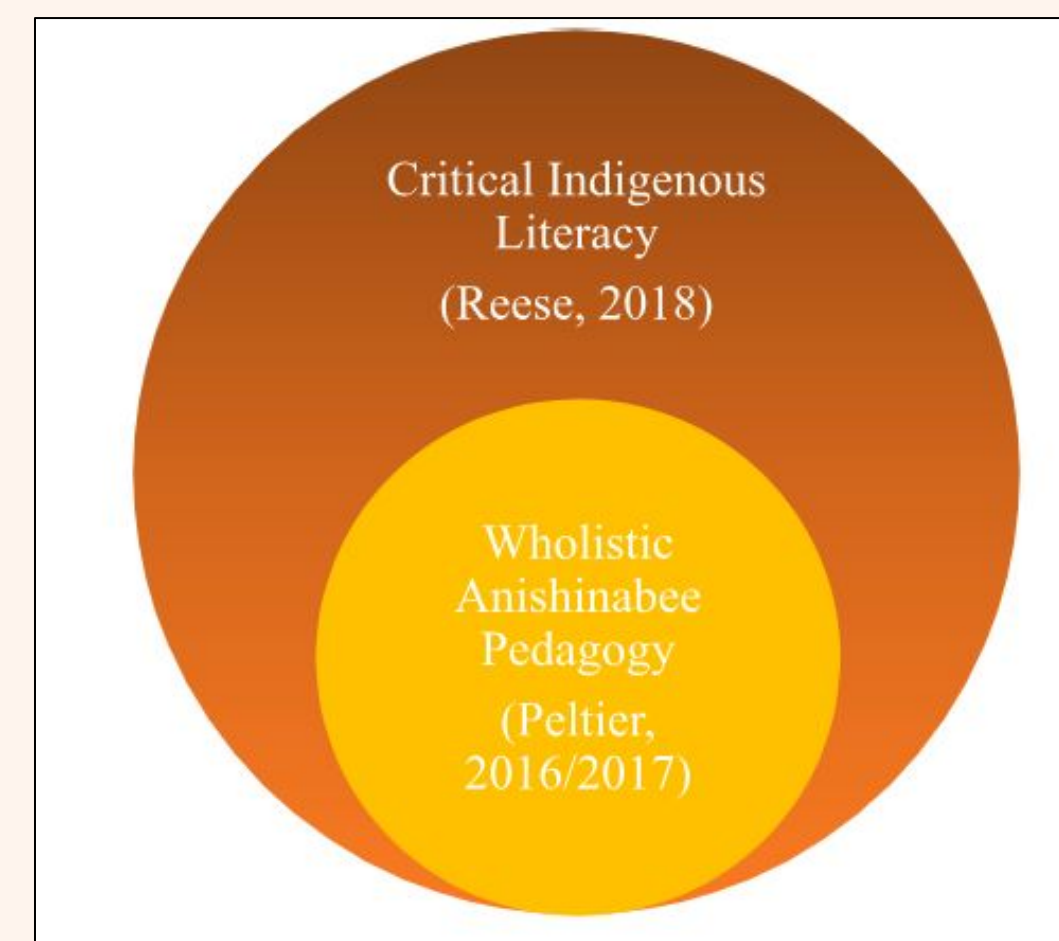


Figure 1 Theoretical Framework

Findings

1. English-only processes

"...if you have, let's say, kids that recently arrived from somewhere, or Indigenous kids that are speaking Cree, then bring in morphemes from that language as examples, right? So the idea is to bring in examples that the kids can explore and investigate and learn. I mean, just drilling it down to Latin and Greek". (Elena, teacher educator)

2. Feeling and Indigenous knowledge

"This framework is very, very much cognitively focused. It's all above the jaw line in their minds". (Sarah, teacher educator)

"I see it directly in social studies. And ELA, I don't see it. It's not as prominent for sure. Like most of my learning and outcomes regarding Indigenous, Métis, and so on is based off Social Studies. And then I just tie it into ELA outcome cross curricular". (Taylor, teacher)

3. Critical Indigenous literacy

"I know storytelling, there's elements for sure, storytelling, and whatnot, traditions and passing that down. That's important. But that's also important in everyone's culture. It's a little, yeah, at a surface level, it's a little superficial". (Pat, teacher)

"There were touches, for example, like the sharing circle element and then the part talking about legends and stuff. I was able to find a lot of books that were able to make connections between legends and Indigenous culture, and how they use, like the legend of the Black Raven, to explain different things that they believe". (Ella, Teacher)

References

Alberta Education (2024). The Guiding Framework for the Design and Development of Kindergarten to Grade 12 Curriculum (The Guiding Framework). Alberta Education.

Bingham, A. J. (2023). From Data Management to Actionable Findings: A Five-Phase Process of Qualitative Data Analysis. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 22.

Freebody, P., & Luke, A. (1990). Literacies' programs: Debates and demands in cultural contexts. *Prospect: A Journal of Australian TESOL*, 11, 7-16.

Peltier, S. (2016). Demonstrating Indigenous storywork Circle pedagogy: Creating conceptual space for ecological relational knowledge in the classroom. [Unpublished PhD Dissertation], Laurentian University.

Reese, D. (2018). Language Arts Lessons: Critical Indigenous literacies: Selecting and Using Children's Books about Indigenous Peoples. *Language Arts*, 95(6), 389-393.

Thank you to Scholarship and Research Awards Committee, Faculty of Education & Office of the Vice-President (Research and Innovation)